

Webinar

ULI Philippines: Fireside Chat with Ho Kwon Ping

Date: September 14, 2021

00:00:02 --> 00:00:07: Good morning everyone. Welcome to the ULI Philippines webinar hospitality,

00:00:07 --> 00:00:12: reimagined before we begin a few housekeeping reminders.

00:00:12 --> 00:00:12: This

00:00:12 --> 00:00:17: session will be recorded. We encourage all attendees to ask

00:00:17 --> 00:00:17: questions.

00:00:18 --> 00:00:21: Please use the Q&A button found at the bottom of

00:00:21 --> 00:00:22: your screen.

00:00:22 --> 00:00:23: To start our

00:00:23 --> 00:00:26: event, let us welcome are you alive Philippines Chair

00:00:26 --> 00:00:30: Jean Decastro. Mission

00:00:30 --> 00:00:33: is to shape the future of the built environment for

00:00:33 --> 00:00:35: transformative impact in communities worldwide.

00:00:35 --> 00:00:40: We connect, inspire and lead in solving real estate challenges

00:00:40 --> 00:00:44: through a collective global and local experience,

00:00:44 --> 00:00:46: and we hope to do that with you today as

00:00:46 --> 00:00:50: we reimagine hospitality with our very special guest.

00:00:50 --> 00:00:52: When I think of a ship in harbor,

00:00:52 --> 00:00:54: I think of Cindy, Cindy Arribada,

00:00:54 --> 00:00:58: even during the pandemic, she fearlessly but safely traveled not

00:00:58 --> 00:01:01: just to support the industry she loved.

00:01:01 --> 00:01:04: So much through her work with the Jar Leisure and

00:01:04 --> 00:01:05: Hospitality group,

00:01:05 --> 00:01:08: but also because it was what her body and soul

00:01:08 --> 00:01:08: longed for.

00:01:08 --> 00:01:12: A human need that was there pre pandemic and that

00:01:12 --> 00:01:16: will remain to be part of who she is and

00:01:16 --> 00:01:18: of us as human beings.

00:01:18 --> 00:01:20: So I could not think of a better person other
00:01:20 --> 00:01:22: than Cindy to help me in uali to support the
00:01:22 --> 00:01:26: hospitality industry in the Philippines and connect them to
other
00:01:26 --> 00:01:29: members worldwide. I turn it over now to Cindy,
00:01:29 --> 00:01:32: who will introduce our very important speaker for today.
00:01:35 --> 00:01:37: Thank you Jean for that introduction.
00:01:37 --> 00:01:41: It means I actually just can't stay put.
00:01:41 --> 00:01:45: OK, so welcome to the inaugural event of the ULI
00:01:45 --> 00:01:47: Philippines Hospitality Committee.
00:01:47 --> 00:01:51: We are joined by our colleagues from utilize Singapore,
00:01:51 --> 00:01:54: Japan and Hong Kong. Also members from EO,
00:01:54 --> 00:01:56: Philippines and hotel owners for tomorrow.
00:01:56 --> 00:01:59: A hotel owner support group we have created at the
00:01:59 --> 00:02:01: start of the pandemic.
00:02:01 --> 00:02:03: I am very excited to introduce to you,
00:02:03 --> 00:02:06: our speaker, Mr Hall comping,
00:02:06 --> 00:02:10: the founder and Executive chairman of Banyan Tree
Holdings and
00:02:10 --> 00:02:12: Laguna Resorts and Hotel,
00:02:12 --> 00:02:15: A company he and his wife Claire Chang who is
00:02:15 --> 00:02:16: senior vice president,
00:02:16 --> 00:02:19: have founded almost 30 years ago.
00:02:19 --> 00:02:24: Banyan Tree has over 40 hotels and resorts and also
00:02:24 --> 00:02:25: over in 25 countries,
00:02:25 --> 00:02:28: 60 spas, 70 retail stores.
00:02:28 --> 00:02:31: He is also the founding and current chairman.
00:02:31 --> 00:02:33: Off the Board of Singapore,
00:02:33 --> 00:02:37: Management University and chairman of the Singapore
Summit,
00:02:37 --> 00:02:42: Mr Hall has received several awards and recognitions for his
00:02:42 --> 00:02:45: accomplishments in the hospitality industry,
00:02:45 --> 00:02:47: one of which I was actually in the audience when
00:02:48 --> 00:02:51: he received the Lifetime Achievement award in high CAP.
00:02:51 --> 00:02:54: The Hotel Investment Conference Asia Pacific in 2019.
00:02:54 --> 00:02:57: This is also the first time high CAP has awarded
00:02:57 --> 00:03:01: one person twice since its inaugurated 30 years ago.
00:03:01 --> 00:03:02: He is also an author.
00:03:02 --> 00:03:06: Of two books asking why reflects his journey in journalism,
00:03:06 --> 00:03:10: in entrepreneurship and the ocean in the drop Singapore in
00:03:10 --> 00:03:11: the next 50 years.
00:03:11 --> 00:03:14: I compilation of lectures he has given.
00:03:14 --> 00:03:18: It gives me great pleasure to introduce whole comping.

00:03:18 --> 00:03:22: Good morning KP. Good morning Cindy.
00:03:22 --> 00:03:26: Oh, so I thought you were in in Singapore.
00:03:26 --> 00:03:28: What's the backdrop? I mean,
00:03:28 --> 00:03:29: what's the background now?
00:03:29 --> 00:03:33: Well, I I think I told you and yesterday,
00:03:33 --> 00:03:36: a few days ago that since you're allowing me to
00:03:36 --> 00:03:39: do some advertising and we really need to do advertising
00:03:39 --> 00:03:39: very,
00:03:39 --> 00:03:41: very much in these troubled times.
00:03:41 --> 00:03:44: So I'm actually doing a virtual background of our latest
00:03:44 --> 00:03:45: resort,
00:03:45 --> 00:03:49: which open, but it is actually a I think the
00:03:49 --> 00:03:51: response unintended.
00:03:51 --> 00:03:53: When we started it, but it is going to be
00:03:53 --> 00:03:55: our response to the pandemic and and we see a
00:03:55 --> 00:03:59: lot of these things happening more in the future Wellness
00:03:59 --> 00:04:04: oriented, nature oriented small scale community tourism.
00:04:04 --> 00:04:06: So this is in in Bali,
00:04:06 --> 00:04:08: in Ubud, but it could just as well be in
00:04:08 --> 00:04:11: some beautiful a space in the Philippines which we hope
00:04:11 --> 00:04:13: to do something very soon.
00:04:14 --> 00:04:16: That's very good. With KP.
00:04:16 --> 00:04:20: You've always mentioned. Also in some interviews in the
00:04:20 --> 00:04:23: password
00:04:20 --> 00:04:23: in luxury tourism is susceptible to event risk,
00:04:23 --> 00:04:28: natural disasters, riots, terrorists and then now of course the
00:04:28 --> 00:04:29: world pandemic.
00:04:29 --> 00:04:32: How has Banyan tree transformed as a company in the
00:04:32 --> 00:04:33: past year and a half?
00:04:33 --> 00:04:34: Or I'd say almost two years now.
00:04:37 --> 00:04:40: Thought for that before I sort of pandemic response.
00:04:40 --> 00:04:43: I mean there are lot of words about euphemisms,
00:04:43 --> 00:04:48: the the positive transformation is still something in the works
00:04:48 --> 00:04:51: and is hopefully going to be seen when we really
00:04:52 --> 00:04:52: do reopen.
00:04:52 --> 00:04:55: I was going to say to euphemism for transformation right
00:04:55 --> 00:04:55: now,
00:04:55 --> 00:05:01: in the present context is actually restructuring and the.
00:05:01 --> 00:05:06: Deleveraging UM and actually in fact quite a lot of
00:05:06 --> 00:05:08: retrenchments.
00:05:08 --> 00:05:12: The last 18 months, the transformation of the company and
00:05:12 --> 00:05:15: the positive side is that has become a much leaner

00:05:15 --> 00:05:16: company.

00:05:16 --> 00:05:21: This side, of course, is the devastation to the livelihoods

00:05:21 --> 00:05:24: of so many people who depended on us and which

00:05:24 --> 00:05:26: we did not restructure.

00:05:26 --> 00:05:28: Partly because you know in a good times,

00:05:28 --> 00:05:31: roll more, more lazy to take the.

00:05:31 --> 00:05:35: Difficult steps and more human and humane to take steps,

00:05:35 --> 00:05:39: which would mean the loss of livelihoods for many people.

00:05:39 --> 00:05:41: But but for me you know it's an euphemism.

00:05:41 --> 00:05:44: It's good to say, well we've transformed ourselves,

00:05:44 --> 00:05:45: which we have, but it's been very,

00:05:45 --> 00:05:49: very painful, not just the company's bottom line,

00:05:49 --> 00:05:52: but to the livelihoods of so many people who who

00:05:52 --> 00:05:55: have been such a valued members of banyan tree and

00:05:55 --> 00:05:56: we've all had no choice.

00:05:56 --> 00:05:59: It's you, you know, you have to.

00:05:59 --> 00:06:02: You have to survive. We've let go more.

00:06:02 --> 00:06:04: About depends on the places.

00:06:04 --> 00:06:06: Of course. In certain places I can make in the

00:06:06 --> 00:06:09: Americas in in China we didn't let anybody go,

00:06:09 --> 00:06:12: but in Southeast Asia in the Asian countries where we

00:06:12 --> 00:06:13: own our resorts,

00:06:13 --> 00:06:17: weather in Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand,

00:06:17 --> 00:06:24: Vietnam and the Philippines. Devastation has been lost and

00:06:24 --> 00:06:27: people

00:06:24 --> 00:06:27: are leaving industry forever too.

00:06:29 --> 00:06:36: Specially spoiled victim the you're actually used to also

00:06:36 --> 00:06:40: adversity.

00:06:36 --> 00:06:40: And I mean if you are going through this,

00:06:40 --> 00:06:43: but you then actually start in the hotel business now

00:06:43 --> 00:06:45: from the beginning.

00:06:45 --> 00:06:47: I think if you track back and I've you know

00:06:47 --> 00:06:50: I've during the week and they've actually check also part

00:06:50 --> 00:06:52: of the interviews have done in the past.

00:06:52 --> 00:06:55: You actually started as a journalist in jump,

00:06:56 --> 00:06:59: so hotel was not really what you want to get

00:06:59 --> 00:07:00: into from beginning.

00:07:00 --> 00:07:03: So what was? And at the same time as a

00:07:03 --> 00:07:04: journalist you were,

00:07:04 --> 00:07:08: you were detained twice for your political views.

00:07:08 --> 00:07:11: Time and how you know from from,

00:07:11 --> 00:07:14: let's say, about from from being a student activist,

00:07:14 --> 00:07:16: actually moved into the family business again.

00:07:16 --> 00:07:19: And then, of course, you know your course to banyan
00:07:19 --> 00:07:19: tree.
00:07:21 --> 00:07:23: Well, you want me to chronicle all that for you
00:07:25 --> 00:07:27: baby briefly. I know I'm
00:07:28 --> 00:07:32: I'm the accidental. You know you've heard of I think
00:07:32 --> 00:07:35: movie called The Accidental Tourist.
00:07:35 --> 00:07:37: I am an accidental journalist.
00:07:37 --> 00:07:44: I'm an accidental hotelier. Everything has been sort of
accidental.
00:07:44 --> 00:07:46: My own training was in development economics,
00:07:46 --> 00:07:49: and because of the interest in development economics,
00:07:49 --> 00:07:51: I became a correspondent for the Far Eastern.
00:07:51 --> 00:07:53: Economic review spent a lot of,
00:07:53 --> 00:07:56: visited the Philippines umpteen times.
00:07:56 --> 00:08:00: In so many anecdotes and stories that journalists would have
00:08:00 --> 00:08:02: like meeting Imelda and sudden.
00:08:02 --> 00:08:05: And how crazy really crazy she was already in those
00:08:06 --> 00:08:06: days.
00:08:06 --> 00:08:08: You know meeting the kenos,
00:08:08 --> 00:08:10: both the sun and the and the mother and and
00:08:10 --> 00:08:13: and you know the Philippines is a great place for
00:08:13 --> 00:08:17: any immediate be everybody so accessible and it's the only
00:08:17 --> 00:08:20: paid to Singapore. It's a place where the politicians are
00:08:20 --> 00:08:22: dying to invite you because we want.
00:08:22 --> 00:08:24: Their mouthpiece so you know,
00:08:24 --> 00:08:28: and and I've done tourism in the Philippines hentai Highlands
00:08:28 --> 00:08:29: to Nick Subu.
00:08:29 --> 00:08:31: It's a country that I really love,
00:08:31 --> 00:08:34: but my yeah, I started out as a journalist.
00:08:34 --> 00:08:36: Got into trouble with the authorities.
00:08:36 --> 00:08:40: I've been banned from the United States.
00:08:40 --> 00:08:44: For 20 years I've been kicked out of Stanford University
00:08:44 --> 00:08:45: and now the,
00:08:45 --> 00:08:48: incidentally, I've never graduated from Stanford University.
00:08:48 --> 00:08:50: He considered me an alumni.
00:08:50 --> 00:08:53: Now that I'm in a position to be able to
00:08:53 --> 00:08:53: donate.
00:08:53 --> 00:08:58: So this is the irony about universities,
00:08:58 --> 00:09:01: so my life has been completely checkered,
00:09:01 --> 00:09:06: and I and I can only say that banditry is
00:09:06 --> 00:09:08: the the clan I landed,
00:09:08 --> 00:09:10: and where we found it is the.

00:09:10 --> 00:09:14: People first to do everything that has been of purpose
00:09:14 --> 00:09:14: to us.
00:09:14 --> 00:09:16: We both love to travel.
00:09:16 --> 00:09:21: We love communities. Claire was into development
sociology.
00:09:21 --> 00:09:23: I was interested in economics,
00:09:23 --> 00:09:25: so through tourism and leisure,
00:09:25 --> 00:09:30: we've actually been so excited about the bling bling of
00:09:30 --> 00:09:31: luxury tourism.
00:09:31 --> 00:09:34: It has been about the values of Community tourism,
00:09:34 --> 00:09:37: the values of sustainability which we embarked on.
00:09:37 --> 00:09:40: You know, 30 years ago before the term sustainability even
00:09:40 --> 00:09:41: was.
00:09:41 --> 00:09:46: Acknowledged our venturing into spas and tropical spice
where we
00:09:46 --> 00:09:51: highlighted the beauty of Southeast Asian remedies and
cultures as
00:09:51 --> 00:09:55: opposed to the sort of Barden Barden hot European our
00:09:55 --> 00:09:58: culture, which was the only thing that people had in
00:09:58 --> 00:09:58: those days.
00:09:58 --> 00:10:01: So it's been a long journey with by entry and
00:10:01 --> 00:10:03: and I would say that for us,
00:10:03 --> 00:10:05: for the inner journey or by entry.
00:10:05 --> 00:10:07: Hey, as we now sort of,
00:10:07 --> 00:10:11: you know, on the the better onto other younger people.
00:10:11 --> 00:10:14: The journey by entry has been about the growth of
00:10:14 --> 00:10:14: Asia,
00:10:14 --> 00:10:17: the Asian culture, the end.
00:10:17 --> 00:10:19: To me. It's all about rainbow tourism,
00:10:19 --> 00:10:22: which have spoken a lot about and and in the
00:10:22 --> 00:10:24: post pandemic period.
00:10:24 --> 00:10:27: I think that the one one sort of silver lining
00:10:27 --> 00:10:31: about this whole terrible crisis is that it has accelerated
00:10:31 --> 00:10:35: what I call rainbow tourism and that to me is
00:10:35 --> 00:10:37: the real promise. Fall for Asia.
00:10:39 --> 00:10:42: OK, so I'm not it's banyan trees and Asian brand,
00:10:42 --> 00:10:45: but now of course on globally or I'd say in
00:10:45 --> 00:10:48: the world in such a short time when you actually
00:10:48 --> 00:10:49: set it up with your wife,
00:10:49 --> 00:10:53: Claire. But what makes your brand different from?
00:10:53 --> 00:10:56: I mean, how can Asian brand now be known worldwide?
00:10:56 --> 00:10:57: What's your advice to that?
00:10:57 --> 00:11:01: Say some you know, developers getting into not only in

00:11:01 --> 00:11:02: the hotel space,
00:11:02 --> 00:11:04: but being an interpreter themselves.
00:11:05 --> 00:11:08: I I suppose, yes, you're absolutely right that one of
00:11:08 --> 00:11:10: the proudest things that we we.
00:11:10 --> 00:11:14: We do have this that we've been able to create
00:11:14 --> 00:11:18: an international brand with its origins in Asia in a
00:11:19 --> 00:11:23: space which has up to now still been largely dominated
00:11:23 --> 00:11:27: by Western brands. If you even take other areas like
00:11:27 --> 00:11:29: automobiles or televisions,
00:11:29 --> 00:11:34: could electronic consumer appliances in Japanese and now
Korean brands
00:11:34 --> 00:11:38: and eventually Chinese brands with while we fall for
smartphones
00:11:39 --> 00:11:42: and so on in the area of technology based consumer
00:11:42 --> 00:11:46: brands, Asia has been very very strong in the area
00:11:46 --> 00:11:48: of lifestyle and service oriented,
00:11:48 --> 00:11:53: hospitality oriented brands. Asian brands haven't actually
been that successful.
00:11:53 --> 00:11:55: So what we have really.
00:11:55 --> 00:11:58: Big international brands that are very successful in Asia and
00:11:59 --> 00:11:59: from Marriott,
00:11:59 --> 00:12:03: Starwood, who you know. HG too high it and everybody
00:12:03 --> 00:12:03: else.
00:12:03 --> 00:12:08: They all very international but their whole values and ethos
00:12:08 --> 00:12:10: is still very much Western.
00:12:10 --> 00:12:12: Although they're very successful here and they really,
00:12:12 --> 00:12:15: truly global. A few brands have been able to be
00:12:15 --> 00:12:18: quite global that have originated from Asia.
00:12:18 --> 00:12:21: A shangrila is clearly one of them.
00:12:21 --> 00:12:25: There, the Japanese brand started doing so in the 1990s,
00:12:25 --> 00:12:27: which Japan. Was really expanding around the world,
00:12:27 --> 00:12:32: but they've been so culturally insular that Japanese brands
have
00:12:32 --> 00:12:33: failed.
00:12:33 --> 00:12:36: My sense is that most of the Asian brand that
00:12:36 --> 00:12:40: started out in their own countries have been so insular
00:12:40 --> 00:12:42: about their own culture,
00:12:42 --> 00:12:45: so that some of the big Thai brands Indian brands
00:12:45 --> 00:12:48: have not really grown that far.
00:12:48 --> 00:12:51: They have seen themselves as basically Thai or Indian and
00:12:52 --> 00:12:52: so on.
00:12:52 --> 00:12:56: My hope is that as an Asian brand in Orange.
00:12:56 --> 00:13:00: But not necessarily a Thai brand or Singapore Brandon

Indonesian
00:13:00 --> 00:13:01: bread.
00:13:01 --> 00:13:04: We can actually take the best of what is in
00:13:04 --> 00:13:08: Asia and and essentially extract those into what I would
00:13:09 --> 00:13:13: call really international values and then spread that around
the
00:13:13 --> 00:13:17: world so that we are not going to be seen
00:13:17 --> 00:13:18: as a in Cuba.
00:13:18 --> 00:13:21: We won't be seen as eight Singapore brand where we
00:13:21 --> 00:13:24: are in Cuba with the largest Asian player in Cuba,
00:13:24 --> 00:13:27: where in Mexico and we want all our Mexico associates.
00:13:27 --> 00:13:30: And our American guests were 90%
00:13:30 --> 00:13:33: of the clientele. To not see us as eight Asian
00:13:33 --> 00:13:34: hotel in Mexico.
00:13:34 --> 00:13:38: But as if hotel, that really has a strong sense
00:13:38 --> 00:13:40: of eight of Mexico and so on.
00:13:40 --> 00:13:44: So there has to be certain values that underpin ours
00:13:44 --> 00:13:48: and we think we've discovered that with our service culture
00:13:48 --> 00:13:52: and and what I mentioned earlier about the slogan that
00:13:52 --> 00:13:55: we have that which is long story about empathy as
00:13:55 --> 00:13:57: being the the binding value.
00:13:57 --> 00:13:59: That drives on ethos and so on.
00:13:59 --> 00:14:03: So that's what we are really embarking on doing,
00:14:03 --> 00:14:06: and it's the soft side rather than the technological side
00:14:06 --> 00:14:08: of the hospitality industry,
00:14:08 --> 00:14:12: which excites me and my wife the most and which
00:14:12 --> 00:14:15: underpins what we want to do because I think that
00:14:15 --> 00:14:19: soft side of it is what underpins the asianness of
00:14:19 --> 00:14:20: Asian hospitality.
00:14:21 --> 00:14:23: It's good to hear from Banyan tree.
00:14:23 --> 00:14:28: You've also developed other brands such as on now and
00:14:28 --> 00:14:29: also Kasia.
00:14:29 --> 00:14:32: But this I think it's one way for you to.
00:14:32 --> 00:14:35: Also what you said earlier to also address maybe the
00:14:35 --> 00:14:37: what the rainbow community,
00:14:37 --> 00:14:40: but was it? Was this always like part of your
00:14:40 --> 00:14:43: original plan or it was part of the evolving business
00:14:43 --> 00:14:44: strategy
00:14:44 --> 00:14:46: was never well? First of all,
00:14:46 --> 00:14:47: I never had a plan.
00:14:50 --> 00:14:54: Everything has been accidental, everything accidental and
and I've said

00:14:54 --> 00:14:56: this in my book and also and I and I
00:14:56 --> 00:14:56: tried it.
00:14:56 --> 00:14:59: I I tried to give this advice to younger entrepreneurs
00:14:59 --> 00:15:01: 2 that you have to have a sense of direction,
00:15:01 --> 00:15:05: but very few people really have a plan and not
00:15:05 --> 00:15:05: that.
00:15:05 --> 00:15:07: Not that I use a surfing analogy,
00:15:07 --> 00:15:09: not that I know how to surf,
00:15:09 --> 00:15:12: but to me it's a great analogy because you know,
00:15:12 --> 00:15:13: I see all these people who are going out surfing
00:15:13 --> 00:15:15: there on our paddle board and then they sort of
00:15:15 --> 00:15:17: try to get up and then the wave has passed
00:15:17 --> 00:15:19: them by or they're too soon.
00:15:19 --> 00:15:20: And the wave hits them.
00:15:20 --> 00:15:22: So to me as successful businesses.
00:15:22 --> 00:15:25: Where you you generally know where you want to go?
00:15:25 --> 00:15:26: Which is the right to serve.
00:15:26 --> 00:15:27: And then every time the self comes,
00:15:27 --> 00:15:30: you try stand up and write the surf and and
00:15:30 --> 00:15:33: it's a it's a convergence of luck and intent and
00:15:33 --> 00:15:35: skill that you're writing that certain.
00:15:35 --> 00:15:39: That surface entry is a social trend in economic trend,
00:15:39 --> 00:15:42: a travel trend you. So it's a it's a convergence
00:15:42 --> 00:15:43: of luck,
00:15:43 --> 00:15:46: skill and intention that you write that.
00:15:46 --> 00:15:48: And sometimes you write the surf.
00:15:48 --> 00:15:50: It's a short, right? Go back out again and you
00:15:51 --> 00:15:53: do it again and you when you hit the good
00:15:53 --> 00:15:55: big one it takes you all the way to shop
00:15:55 --> 00:15:57: and that's what I think we have to be in
00:15:57 --> 00:15:58: business.
00:15:58 --> 00:16:01: So when we started out Banyan tree I'd never even
00:16:01 --> 00:16:04: had the idea that it was going to work because
00:16:04 --> 00:16:07: prior to this I had studied a rig in offshore
00:16:07 --> 00:16:11: oil exploration business. Can you imagine anything as as far
00:16:11 --> 00:16:14: away from hospitality as that and we nearly went bankrupt
00:16:14 --> 00:16:17: so went back to the drawing board and we did
00:16:17 --> 00:16:19: banyan tree and it resonated.
00:16:19 --> 00:16:23: There was no plan, it was just doing something that
00:16:23 --> 00:16:27: was authentic and would excite us and people like us
00:16:27 --> 00:16:29: by entry took off.
00:16:29 --> 00:16:31: So I've been into luxury tourism,

00:16:31 --> 00:16:33: but it was the only thing we could do.

00:16:33 --> 00:16:36: We could not do midscale and upscale brands because those

00:16:36 --> 00:16:40: were dominated by by Westerners and Western brands and there

00:16:40 --> 00:16:41: wasn't.

00:16:41 --> 00:16:45: And truly there wasn't enough domestic or regional tourism and

00:16:45 --> 00:16:49: why luxury work was because it was always unidirectional 30

00:16:49 --> 00:16:49: years ago.

00:16:49 --> 00:16:51: The only thing you could do if you were a

00:16:52 --> 00:16:54: hotel here and you didn't have much money would be

00:16:54 --> 00:16:56: to do a nice small boutique resort because all the

00:16:56 --> 00:16:59: Europeans would come and stay.

00:16:59 --> 00:17:03: Look, the whole picture has changed the Asia and low

00:17:03 --> 00:17:08: and budget carrier volution has meant we potentially have within

00:17:08 --> 00:17:12: option 600 million young Asian people and older people like

00:17:12 --> 00:17:15: me who are retired and want to travel.

00:17:15 --> 00:17:19: That's a huge market, but for the years of my

00:17:19 --> 00:17:23: career in the past the Asian market was not wealthy

00:17:23 --> 00:17:24: Martin at all,

00:17:24 --> 00:17:26: but now it's relatively wealthy.

00:17:26 --> 00:17:29: Young Filipinos want to travel not only within the Philippines.

00:17:29 --> 00:17:31: They actually want to go to Thailand.

00:17:31 --> 00:17:33: Times actually want to go to Indonesia and the Philippines,

00:17:33 --> 00:17:36: so that is to me the starting point of what

00:17:36 --> 00:17:37: I call rainbow tourism,

00:17:37 --> 00:17:41: where people of color brown,

00:17:41 --> 00:17:46: yellow, black and pink like to be inclusive.

00:17:46 --> 00:17:51: All colors, all races. All cultures now to travel around

00:17:51 --> 00:17:53: the world and RCN,

00:17:53 --> 00:17:55: and for us why we started eight brands.

00:17:55 --> 00:17:59: Now we are actually a multi hospitality product with people

00:17:59 --> 00:18:01: is because luxury has never been part of what I

00:18:02 --> 00:18:02: wanted to do.

00:18:02 --> 00:18:06: I wanted to bring a sense of place to people

00:18:06 --> 00:18:10: and so we have now these midscale brands growing up

00:18:10 --> 00:18:15: in Thailand populated and most of the travelers are going

00:18:15 --> 00:18:17: to be ties and regional people.

00:18:17 --> 00:18:20: And some Westerners backpacker types and so on.

00:18:20 --> 00:18:23: But the potential now is huge and the general managers

00:18:23 --> 00:18:26: were happy now are also rainbow colored.

00:18:26 --> 00:18:29: So I think the industry in Asia has evolved over
00:18:29 --> 00:18:33: the last 30 years and everybody who was there when
00:18:33 --> 00:18:36: I first started in tourism would not know what it
00:18:36 --> 00:18:40: is like today and the potential that is still so
00:18:40 --> 00:18:41: exciting today.
00:18:43 --> 00:18:46: You did mention about the evolution that at 1.0,
00:18:46 --> 00:18:49: so I think about two or three years ago you
00:18:49 --> 00:18:51: had a partnership with.
00:18:51 --> 00:18:53: And it was. It came to me,
00:18:53 --> 00:18:58: surprise. No, yeah. I mean during this situation this time,
00:18:58 --> 00:19:01: was it also the right decision you've made in?
00:19:01 --> 00:19:03: How do you see the partners in the next few
00:19:03 --> 00:19:03: years?
00:19:04 --> 00:19:07: Well, I I actually see partnerships like like what we
00:19:07 --> 00:19:08: have with the call.
00:19:08 --> 00:19:13: Probably growing in importance in the whole world over the
00:19:13 --> 00:19:16: next weekend for simple simple reason.
00:19:16 --> 00:19:21: You're now having a buy for kated travel industry globally
00:19:21 --> 00:19:25: are on one hand on the globalization of the big
00:19:25 --> 00:19:27: global company.
00:19:27 --> 00:19:31: Did not start until few years ago when banking,
00:19:31 --> 00:19:36: global consolidation of banks started much earlier years ago,
00:19:36 --> 00:19:40: but only recently when you beat the game.
00:19:40 --> 00:19:43: Changer was when Merritt and Starwood merged.
00:19:43 --> 00:19:46: Big entities, I mean, you've read about ISC in a
00:19:46 --> 00:19:48: call thinking about merging now.
00:19:48 --> 00:19:52: So when you are at that truly mega scale globally,
00:19:52 --> 00:19:56: you cannot survive as a as a smaller company.
00:19:56 --> 00:20:00: You really have to call mega scale so that no
00:20:00 --> 00:20:03: one hand they truly mega scale global companies.
00:20:03 --> 00:20:07: On the other hand, you have the much smaller companies
00:20:07 --> 00:20:12: like ours that want to remain independent with many of
00:20:12 --> 00:20:15: us have family owned from Roy.
00:20:15 --> 00:20:17: All that sort of stuff.
00:20:17 --> 00:20:21: Although public companies we don't particularly want to sell
our
00:20:21 --> 00:20:23: hotels to the big guys.
00:20:23 --> 00:20:25: But then you need to have the end of strategic
00:20:25 --> 00:20:26: relationship,
00:20:26 --> 00:20:28: so that's what our relationship with the call is all
00:20:28 --> 00:20:29: about.
00:20:29 --> 00:20:31: It's a strategic relationship. They have a 5%

00:20:31 --> 00:20:35: stake in Pantry and and we have a relationship whereby
00:20:35 --> 00:20:39: if they find properties that could fit into our brands,
00:20:39 --> 00:20:42: we would go and do it together.
00:20:42 --> 00:20:44: And I think you'll see more and more of this.
00:20:44 --> 00:20:48: These kind of strategic relationships between smaller
independent companies and
00:20:48 --> 00:20:49: the big global companies.
00:20:49 --> 00:20:53: That's happening. I think all over the world now.
00:20:56 --> 00:21:00: Dumb sandbox, the cricket sandbox program for those who
actually
00:21:00 --> 00:21:03: don't know much about the sandbox.
00:21:03 --> 00:21:04: I mean the cricket sound box.
00:21:04 --> 00:21:08: It's open to vaccinated tourists from green to amber zones.
00:21:08 --> 00:21:12: That's what we discussed yesterday to stay in pocket forward
00:21:12 --> 00:21:14: for let's say 14 days without quarantine.
00:21:14 --> 00:21:17: What is your view on the pocket sandbox and how
00:21:17 --> 00:21:20: do you think the tourism industry will recover in Asia?
00:21:20 --> 00:21:22: Is this the right path to go?
00:21:24 --> 00:21:27: It's interesting you mention that because I was just chatting
00:21:27 --> 00:21:30: with Gene before we started this thing about the cooker
00:21:30 --> 00:21:33: sandbox I I actually think the band up sandbox is
00:21:33 --> 00:21:37: critically and strategically important for the whole of Asia,
00:21:37 --> 00:21:41: and it's a very different concept than a travel bubble
00:21:41 --> 00:21:42: gum travel bubble.
00:21:42 --> 00:21:43: I don't need to go into,
00:21:43 --> 00:21:45: but people tried to establish travel bubbles,
00:21:45 --> 00:21:48: whether between Hong Kong and sink in Singapore between
Australia
00:21:49 --> 00:21:49: and New Zealand,
00:21:49 --> 00:21:51: and they've always opened and closed,
00:21:51 --> 00:21:55: open and closed. The idea about a sandbox in the
00:21:55 --> 00:21:59: terminology sandbox is that it means that you're taking one
00:21:59 --> 00:22:00: part of the country,
00:22:00 --> 00:22:04: preferably an island, that can be isolated from everybody
else
00:22:04 --> 00:22:06: that becomes the sandbox.
00:22:06 --> 00:22:09: It's basically closed off from everybody else,
00:22:09 --> 00:22:13: and it becomes the quarantine place for everybody else who
00:22:13 --> 00:22:15: wants to enter the country.
00:22:15 --> 00:22:17: So anybody who wants to enter a country,
00:22:17 --> 00:22:18: whether it be the Philippines,
00:22:18 --> 00:22:22: Thailand, or Vietnam, which not just now made full court
00:22:22 --> 00:22:23: into the sandbox.

00:22:23 --> 00:22:24: They all have to come.

00:22:24 --> 00:22:28: If there W vaccinated, all have to come to that

00:22:28 --> 00:22:30: that sandbox.

00:22:30 --> 00:22:33: Now that sandbox itself, which is an island the country

00:22:33 --> 00:22:36: would have a vaccination rate of about 80%.

00:22:36 --> 00:22:38: And why this is so necessary is because even in

00:22:38 --> 00:22:39: Australia,

00:22:39 --> 00:22:42: New Zealand, Vietnam and the rest of us in our

00:22:42 --> 00:22:45: vaccination rates compared to Europe are very very low.

00:22:45 --> 00:22:48: So if you wait until the whole country is fully

00:22:48 --> 00:22:50: vaccinated until you open up,

00:22:50 --> 00:22:52: you're going to wake up very long time.

00:22:52 --> 00:22:55: It's the same time. Just allow vaccinated people to come

00:22:55 --> 00:22:58: in Willy nilly into any airport in the whole country.

00:22:58 --> 00:23:02: You also may have a huge spike in infections,

00:23:02 --> 00:23:06: so the idea was you take you take to get.

00:23:06 --> 00:23:10: All Philippines case you take Cebu Ormoc Tan Island.

00:23:10 --> 00:23:12: You take for clock in Vietnam.

00:23:12 --> 00:23:16: You even take Tasmania for Australia.

00:23:16 --> 00:23:18: You vaccinate everybody there very quickly,

00:23:18 --> 00:23:21: which you can do because of corporations are so small

00:23:21 --> 00:23:24: and you can close them off because their islands and

00:23:24 --> 00:23:27: then essentially anybody who wants to visit the larger country

00:23:27 --> 00:23:30: of Vietnam, Thailand. They go first for two weeks on

00:23:31 --> 00:23:34: to that island and they can stay anywhere on the

00:23:34 --> 00:23:34: island.

00:23:34 --> 00:23:36: They can travel anywhere. They added that.

00:23:36 --> 00:23:39: All Island is the quarantine.

00:23:39 --> 00:23:42: They don't want to spend 2 go to the rest

00:23:42 --> 00:23:43: of the country.

00:23:43 --> 00:23:45: They can just spend 5 days and they go out.

00:23:45 --> 00:23:47: They go, they go back to wherever they are and

00:23:47 --> 00:23:50: that means that that the tourism benefits that island.

00:23:50 --> 00:23:51: But if they stay there,

00:23:51 --> 00:23:54: if they want to stay longer after 14 days,

00:23:54 --> 00:23:56: they can go to the rest of the country.

00:23:56 --> 00:24:00: Now this is not just to help tourism via real

00:24:00 --> 00:24:02: foreigners coming in.

00:24:02 --> 00:24:07: Returnees are super critical. A lot of the initial.

00:24:07 --> 00:24:10: Traffic in to book it for the sandbox has been

00:24:10 --> 00:24:13: from the United States and we used to wonder why

00:24:13 --> 00:24:14: because?

00:24:14 --> 00:24:18: Typical Americans don't necessarily go to Thailand right now,
00:24:18 --> 00:24:20: but most of them were naturalized.
00:24:20 --> 00:24:22: Ties have been living in the US from teen years
00:24:22 --> 00:24:24: and want to visit friends and family.
00:24:24 --> 00:24:27: So Can you imagine how many Filipinos there are?
00:24:27 --> 00:24:31: The Filipino diaspora, not your contract workers and others
00:24:31 --> 00:24:33: who
00:24:31 --> 00:24:33: have lost their jobs and have to go back to
00:24:33 --> 00:24:36: the Philippines in quarantine and a state facility.
00:24:36 --> 00:24:39: But wealthy Filipinos, middle class Filipinos,
00:24:39 --> 00:24:43: professionals, and America who would basically all want to
00:24:43 --> 00:24:44: go
00:24:43 --> 00:24:44: back to the Philippines.
00:24:44 --> 00:24:47: Happy to do two week quarantine in Mactan,
00:24:47 --> 00:24:50: let's say, and the benefit it would give to the
00:24:50 --> 00:24:51: economy.
00:24:51 --> 00:24:55: The emotional resonance of having people of the same
00:24:55 --> 00:25:00: culture,
00:24:55 --> 00:25:00: nationality, not nationality, necessary culture and ethnic
00:25:00 --> 00:25:02: background be able
00:25:00 --> 00:25:02: to get together again.
00:25:02 --> 00:25:04: It's a huge boost, so I think the book at
00:25:04 --> 00:25:06: Sandbox is a game changer and I was really surprised
00:25:07 --> 00:25:09: that most people in the Philippines don't know about it
00:25:09 --> 00:25:13: because you really, really should encourage your tourism
00:25:13 --> 00:25:14: authorities to
00:25:13 --> 00:25:14: look into this.
00:25:15 --> 00:25:17: When I talked to the Department of Tourism,
00:25:17 --> 00:25:19: one of the things that they said was they wanted
00:25:19 --> 00:25:22: to find out first what's going on around the country
00:25:22 --> 00:25:22: before we act.
00:25:22 --> 00:25:26: And it's always like this chicken and egg situation and
00:25:26 --> 00:25:29: I would just say choose to be the chicken,
00:25:29 --> 00:25:32: just no. That's why I think that's why I think
00:25:32 --> 00:25:36: within within the RC and I thought authorities you should
00:25:36 --> 00:25:39: ask them to actually talk to the book.
00:25:39 --> 00:25:43: It authorities. There have been something like 30,000
00:25:43 --> 00:25:45: travelers to
00:25:43 --> 00:25:45: the book it sandbox.
00:25:45 --> 00:25:47: A real disappointment compared to,
00:25:47 --> 00:25:49: you know, the initial hope that they had,
00:25:49 --> 00:25:52: but the silver lining is here out about 30,040.
00:25:52 --> 00:25:54: I don't know what the numbers are now.

00:25:54 --> 00:25:56: It's something like 10 people.
00:25:56 --> 00:26:01: Ten tourists were infected and that ratio is such.
00:26:01 --> 00:26:05: Now that doesn't mean that there's no outbreak of of
00:26:05 --> 00:26:08: of COVID in Bukit itself.
00:26:08 --> 00:26:09: There had been a few 100 cases,
00:26:09 --> 00:26:13: but all we generated domestically.
00:26:13 --> 00:26:16: So I think at a broader picture now,
00:26:16 --> 00:26:19: the game has to change all across ASEAN.
00:26:19 --> 00:26:23: Everywhere now we are seeing that the the the Delta
00:26:24 --> 00:26:28: variant is causing havoc to all our societies,
00:26:28 --> 00:26:30: but the game changing the game,
00:26:30 --> 00:26:34: changing the mentality the paradigm shift will have to have
00:26:34 --> 00:26:37: now is that it's not the foreigners coming in and
00:26:37 --> 00:26:38: bringing in the delta.
00:26:38 --> 00:26:41: The train has already left the station.
00:26:41 --> 00:26:45: Delta has already come into all our economies,
00:26:45 --> 00:26:48: so to the extent that we still have to have
00:26:48 --> 00:26:50: controls within our own economy.
00:26:50 --> 00:26:51: We definitely need to have it,
00:26:51 --> 00:26:54: but it ain't the foreigners will bring it in anymore.
00:26:54 --> 00:26:57: So the whole of Thailand now is thinking of moving
00:26:57 --> 00:27:01: beyond the pocket sandbox and opening up the whole of
00:27:01 --> 00:27:05: Thailand because the recognition is if you have local controls
00:27:05 --> 00:27:08: like in Thailand, they have the curfew hours,
00:27:08 --> 00:27:12: opening hours for restaurants and all.
00:27:12 --> 00:27:13: The lot that you have in the Philippines.
00:27:13 --> 00:27:17: If you have all that to battle your own delta
00:27:17 --> 00:27:18: variant.
00:27:18 --> 00:27:21: The the fact that more foreigners come in is not
00:27:21 --> 00:27:24: going to worsen the situation because they still have to
00:27:25 --> 00:27:28: abide by the same rules that you have within within
00:27:28 --> 00:27:33: the Philippines, right? The whole mentality of being a
00:27:33 --> 00:27:37: fortress,
00:27:37 --> 00:27:40: closing yourself off from all these terrible variants that are
00:27:40 --> 00:27:44: coming to the country that doesn't work anymore.
00:27:44 --> 00:27:46: The variance already have infested your countries.
00:27:46 --> 00:27:49: All our countries, including Singapore,
00:27:49 --> 00:27:53: so the enemy is within the enemy is not without,
00:27:53 --> 00:27:56: so we might as well open up the borders.
00:27:56 --> 00:28:00: That's what I think is the new the new talk
00:28:00 --> 00:28:02: of the tourism industry within ASEAN as a whole.
00:28:00 --> 00:28:02: Let's not be left behind.

00:28:02 --> 00:28:06: Yes, foreigners are no longer the threat to our own
00:28:06 --> 00:28:07: people's health.
00:28:07 --> 00:28:11: We have our own domestically generated problems.
00:28:11 --> 00:28:13: The foreigners are not the problem.
00:28:13 --> 00:28:15: Open up the borders. I think that has got to
00:28:15 --> 00:28:18: be the new the new game plan that everybody sings
00:28:18 --> 00:28:20: from that same song sheet.
00:28:21 --> 00:28:24: And thank you. Thank you for that.
00:28:24 --> 00:28:29: So Katie, Uhm, maybe we talk about the life lesson.
00:28:29 --> 00:28:32: I mean, you're also looking are the suggestions that say
00:28:32 --> 00:28:34: you're doing a transition now,
00:28:34 --> 00:28:38: maybe a generation transition because your children also
works with
00:28:38 --> 00:28:39: you.
00:28:40 --> 00:28:43: They you know, like like you know that you know
00:28:43 --> 00:28:43: the line,
00:28:43 --> 00:28:47: I mean gosh. Asian family owned companies have the line
00:28:47 --> 00:28:50: where the where the Patriots says yeah,
00:28:50 --> 00:28:51: I'm heading over the range.
00:28:51 --> 00:28:53: Then the kids said yeah where when their twin?
00:28:53 --> 00:28:57: Yeah my parents also is buying.
00:28:57 --> 00:28:57: Look everybody
00:28:57 --> 00:29:00: you. We all know that story line and I think
00:29:00 --> 00:29:02: we all know on the more serious side.
00:29:02 --> 00:29:03: I think we all learned the lessons.
00:29:03 --> 00:29:07: We just need to look around in the Philippines.
00:29:07 --> 00:29:12: I'm sure you've got cases where family squabbles have
destroyed.
00:29:12 --> 00:29:15: You know well run family companies that have been handed
00:29:15 --> 00:29:17: down and then they've been,
00:29:17 --> 00:29:19: you know they've been destroyed.
00:29:19 --> 00:29:21: I I'm giving quite a lot of talks,
00:29:21 --> 00:29:25: totally voluntarily to two forums where they talk about family
00:29:25 --> 00:29:26: succession.
00:29:26 --> 00:29:28: I'm going next week this week.
00:29:28 --> 00:29:30: In fact with DBS, Bank and some other,
00:29:30 --> 00:29:33: and it's part of the responsibility of older generations of
00:29:33 --> 00:29:34: people like myself,
00:29:34 --> 00:29:36: an important generation, by the way,
00:29:36 --> 00:29:40: because our our parents were the post World War Two
00:29:40 --> 00:29:41: generations.
00:29:41 --> 00:29:43: They really just built up from scratch.

00:29:43 --> 00:29:46: Now Banyan tree I started from scratch but you have
 00:29:46 --> 00:29:49: other family business at my my father started so I
 00:29:49 --> 00:29:50: see it from,
 00:29:50 --> 00:29:54: you know being being a pioneer creator of a business
 00:29:54 --> 00:29:56: handing over to second generation.
 00:29:56 --> 00:30:00: I'm also myself second generation wanted to make sure that
 00:30:00 --> 00:30:04: what I inherited and have been the custodian of for
 00:30:04 --> 00:30:07: the last 30 years does not end up with the
 00:30:07 --> 00:30:08: third generation losing at all.
 00:30:08 --> 00:30:12: As the saying goes that you know.
 00:30:12 --> 00:30:17: Everything dies after examination, so I think succession is a
 00:30:17 --> 00:30:18: very critical.
 00:30:18 --> 00:30:21: Issue, and particularly in hospitality too,
 00:30:21 --> 00:30:28: because Asian hospitality, most Asian hospitality players
 today are still
 00:30:28 --> 00:30:29: first generation.
 00:30:29 --> 00:30:32: And only now are passing on to second generation.
 00:30:32 --> 00:30:36: So the issue of succession is quite important.
 00:30:36 --> 00:30:39: So what is your advice your children?
 00:30:39 --> 00:30:43: I mean, in terms of managing the future Banyan tree.
 00:30:44 --> 00:30:47: My my advice to all people to begin with is
 00:30:47 --> 00:30:49: you have to have an honest chat.
 00:30:49 --> 00:30:52: Well the very first part is I think one has
 00:30:52 --> 00:30:57: to know the difference between ownership and management.
 00:30:57 --> 00:31:00: In the huge Genesis and we we try to teach
 00:31:00 --> 00:31:04: that in single management university also and I've told many,
 00:31:04 --> 00:31:09: many families that especially those that have got multi multi
 00:31:09 --> 00:31:10: generational.
 00:31:10 --> 00:31:13: So therefore at the last generation they may have many
 00:31:13 --> 00:31:15: many people in their family.
 00:31:15 --> 00:31:16: The clans will just speak.
 00:31:16 --> 00:31:19: I mean the first thing one has to do is
 00:31:19 --> 00:31:22: to ensure that everyone who is a shareholder or part
 00:31:22 --> 00:31:27: of its shareholder stakeholder have to understand what
 professional.
 00:31:27 --> 00:31:30: Ownership is about. If you do not want squad to
 00:31:30 --> 00:31:32: occur within the audit,
 00:31:32 --> 00:31:35: the next few generations then everyone of them,
 00:31:35 --> 00:31:38: including those that are going to be just housewives and
 00:31:38 --> 00:31:43: receiving dividends to those who are artists and receiving
 dividends
 00:31:43 --> 00:31:46: to those who are lawyers or receiving dividends.
 00:31:46 --> 00:31:50: Anybody who's going to benefit from the family business but

00:31:50 --> 00:31:53: not necessarily be in the management of it,
00:31:53 --> 00:31:55: have got to understand what ownership means.
00:31:55 --> 00:31:58: It means it means understanding.
00:31:58 --> 00:32:02: Governance means understanding the mission of a key stakeholder,
00:32:02 --> 00:32:05: which is to provide ballast and strategy.
00:32:05 --> 00:32:06: But staying out of management.
00:32:06 --> 00:32:09: So there's a whole host of issues to being an
00:32:09 --> 00:32:11: owner but not a manager.
00:32:11 --> 00:32:14: I think that's very critical and then secondly you have
00:32:14 --> 00:32:18: to ask the children or the you know generations below
00:32:18 --> 00:32:21: how many of them actually interested in management.
00:32:21 --> 00:32:23: You can differentiate the two.
00:32:23 --> 00:32:27: I think it's critically important and I've told my children
00:32:27 --> 00:32:30: they must all if we want our business to to
00:32:30 --> 00:32:32: go on into future generations,
00:32:32 --> 00:32:34: they all must know what it means to be an
00:32:35 --> 00:32:38: owner and to be professional in being an owner.
00:32:38 --> 00:32:41: And then if they also want to be a manager,
00:32:41 --> 00:32:42: great and good. But if not,
00:32:42 --> 00:32:45: if they all want to be just owners and higher
00:32:45 --> 00:32:46: management to do it,
00:32:46 --> 00:32:49: there's a very important role for people who are owners
00:32:49 --> 00:32:50: and not managers,
00:32:50 --> 00:32:52: and that is to provide.
00:32:52 --> 00:32:57: A very stable. Environment strategic as well as operational
00:32:57 --> 00:33:03: from
00:32:57 --> 00:33:03: management authority and some of the great European
00:33:03 --> 00:33:06: family businesses
00:33:03 --> 00:33:06: that have lasted for three 400 years.
00:33:06 --> 00:33:07: Practice exactly that.
00:33:09 --> 00:33:12: I think we have a couple of questions.
00:33:12 --> 00:33:15: OK, just maybe one last question from my end in
00:33:15 --> 00:33:16: the next 10 years.
00:33:16 --> 00:33:18: What else do you still want to achieve?
00:33:20 --> 00:33:22: In the next 10 years.
00:33:23 --> 00:33:26: Well, first of all, I've always said to also younger
00:33:26 --> 00:33:29: people that I think the key thing to to happiness
00:33:29 --> 00:33:31: in life is to have a sense of purpose and
00:33:31 --> 00:33:33: you would find it also.
00:33:33 --> 00:33:36: I also find it very important to state that purpose
00:33:36 --> 00:33:37: and career is not the same thing.
00:33:37 --> 00:33:41: You can have one overwhelming purpose in life,

00:33:41 --> 00:33:44: but it can be manifested through different careers.

00:33:44 --> 00:33:48: I've had different careers from being an amateur journalist to

00:33:48 --> 00:33:50: accidental Italia and so on,

00:33:50 --> 00:33:53: but the purpose has always been pretty much the same

00:33:53 --> 00:33:57: developmental orientation towards the society I grew up in watching

00:33:57 --> 00:34:01: Asian and Southeast Asia becoming prosperous and helping it to

00:34:01 --> 00:34:06: become prosperous. That has been the overarching purpose that purpose

00:34:07 --> 00:34:07: continues,

00:34:07 --> 00:34:11: and it will be through the vehicle of battery.

00:34:11 --> 00:34:14: And you know, I hope not too.

00:34:14 --> 00:34:16: I I I don't know,

00:34:16 --> 00:34:19: uhm. I have to define what retirement is,

00:34:19 --> 00:34:23: right? I will be turning,

00:34:23 --> 00:34:26: you know. Just going to say that you know,

00:34:26 --> 00:34:30: I think the Japanese have have redefined old age very

00:34:31 --> 00:34:31: nicely.

00:34:31 --> 00:34:37: They really find that you only become owed at 75.

00:34:37 --> 00:34:43: And anything below 70 of 65 to 75 is advanced

00:34:43 --> 00:34:44: Middle Age.

00:34:44 --> 00:34:47: Well, I'm in advanced middle age now,

00:34:47 --> 00:34:50: so in advancement or he just took a long way

00:34:50 --> 00:34:50: to go.

00:34:53 --> 00:34:53: OK,

00:34:53 --> 00:34:57: so some people actually also messaged me.

00:34:57 --> 00:34:59: So first question from the audience.

00:34:59 --> 00:35:02: What advice you give someone starting in the hotel business?

00:35:04 --> 00:35:05: No, I would. I

00:35:05 --> 00:35:08: would say the hotel business.

00:35:08 --> 00:35:12: It depends of course you know who that.

00:35:12 --> 00:35:15: Yeah, they you know wanted to be says or not

00:35:15 --> 00:35:15: etc.

00:35:15 --> 00:35:18: But I was going to say that hotel business is

00:35:18 --> 00:35:22: one beautiful hotel business is that is that does not

00:35:22 --> 00:35:24: actually require a lot of prior knowledge.

00:35:24 --> 00:35:26: It's not like tech, for example,

00:35:26 --> 00:35:28: where if you don't know how to code and you

00:35:28 --> 00:35:30: want to go into text into tech,

00:35:30 --> 00:35:31: it's going to be pretty difficult.

00:35:31 --> 00:35:35: So the barriers of entry in the hospitality industry.

00:35:35 --> 00:35:37: In fact, it's very low,
00:35:37 --> 00:35:40: whether it be at frontline level to be a service
00:35:40 --> 00:35:40: provider,
00:35:40 --> 00:35:42: odd at the investment level,
00:35:42 --> 00:35:44: you want to build a hotel in your dad is
00:35:44 --> 00:35:45: giving you \$100 million.
00:35:45 --> 00:35:47: You can go and build a hotel they use,
00:35:47 --> 00:35:48: you know, but if your dad is giving you \$100
00:35:49 --> 00:35:49: million,
00:35:49 --> 00:35:52: you might not necessarily be able to do it in
00:35:52 --> 00:35:53: AI company that he said,
00:35:53 --> 00:35:55: so the barriers to entry are.
00:35:55 --> 00:35:59: Very low, so one really makes you really succeed in
00:35:59 --> 00:36:01: this business or not,
00:36:01 --> 00:36:02: and it would sound like a cliché,
00:36:02 --> 00:36:04: but I really do mean it and I think it's
00:36:04 --> 00:36:05: it's a passion for the business.
00:36:05 --> 00:36:09: It's for what I've called in this COVID period,
00:36:09 --> 00:36:12: and I'm spreading this message now to all my colleagues
00:36:12 --> 00:36:14: in all our hotels that have been hit so hard
00:36:14 --> 00:36:15: by the pandemic.
00:36:15 --> 00:36:16: Because for the last 18 years,
00:36:16 --> 00:36:18: 18 months, it's been about,
00:36:18 --> 00:36:24: you know, despair, desolation, just cash flow and so on.
00:36:24 --> 00:36:28: And I'm just. Reminding everyone of the magic of hospitality.
00:36:28 --> 00:36:31: This business is really very magical in the things that
00:36:31 --> 00:36:32: you can do well.
00:36:32 --> 00:36:36: I've opened 30 over hotels because all our hotels up
00:36:36 --> 00:36:39: to now have been built from scratch.
00:36:39 --> 00:36:41: We have not taken over existing hotels,
00:36:41 --> 00:36:43: so every single hotel has opened from scratch.
00:36:43 --> 00:36:47: We've designed them and I've always often said having been
00:36:47 --> 00:36:48: an amateur again.
00:36:48 --> 00:36:51: Everything is Amateur II did stage production for as a
00:36:51 --> 00:36:52: kid right in high school.
00:36:52 --> 00:36:55: Like many of you had done network professional.
00:36:55 --> 00:36:58: Boys in high school, but you might if you've done
00:36:58 --> 00:36:58: it.
00:36:58 --> 00:37:00: I think you would get the sense indeed that you
00:37:00 --> 00:37:03: know on opening night you might actually be a prop
00:37:03 --> 00:37:04: guy.
00:37:04 --> 00:37:07: You might be a production manager in a high school

00:37:07 --> 00:37:07: production.

00:37:07 --> 00:37:10: You might even be an actor or actress in it,

00:37:10 --> 00:37:12: but everything is like a holy mess.

00:37:12 --> 00:37:16: Brightly, everything starts, everything is chaotic and you think it's

00:37:16 --> 00:37:19: never gonna work and then suddenly the curtain lifts up

00:37:19 --> 00:37:20: the audience.

00:37:20 --> 00:37:24: Is there? Most of them are your parents by the

00:37:24 --> 00:37:24: way.

00:37:24 --> 00:37:26: But but you know the magic.

00:37:26 --> 00:37:28: The magic of a of an opening night to me

00:37:28 --> 00:37:31: is like the magic of opening night.

00:37:31 --> 00:37:34: For for a school production it's magic.

00:37:34 --> 00:37:36: Everything seems to just fit together.

00:37:36 --> 00:37:41: Everybody is important so we've all lost that that that

00:37:41 --> 00:37:42: sense of drama,

00:37:42 --> 00:37:45: that sense of magic in hospitality,

00:37:45 --> 00:37:47: particularly in the leisure business.

00:37:47 --> 00:37:49: Of course, it's not so easy if you are mid

00:37:49 --> 00:37:51: scale hotel in in a business environment,

00:37:51 --> 00:37:54: but there's some magic to this and I think we

00:37:54 --> 00:37:55: need to restore that.

00:37:55 --> 00:37:59: If we ever are going to do something that would

00:37:59 --> 00:38:01: take us out of this terrible pandemic,

00:38:01 --> 00:38:05: wait, there's nothing but talking about treatments and so on

00:38:05 --> 00:38:05: and so forth.

00:38:05 --> 00:38:08: So I see the magical hospitality as being the thing

00:38:08 --> 00:38:10: that has to drive a young person.

00:38:10 --> 00:38:13: You must feel like you really thrive in this buzz

00:38:13 --> 00:38:17: and you really thrive in seeing people get together and

00:38:17 --> 00:38:18: enjoy themselves.

00:38:18 --> 00:38:20: Because if you don't and you're only doing it for

00:38:20 --> 00:38:21: the money,

00:38:21 --> 00:38:23: I don't think you go very far.

00:38:23 --> 00:38:23: Do

00:38:23 --> 00:38:27: you agree? We have a question from actually a common

00:38:27 --> 00:38:28: friend of ours,

00:38:28 --> 00:38:30: also Bill Barnett. Yeah, I

00:38:30 --> 00:38:31: saw that I saw that.

00:38:32 --> 00:38:36: Why doesn't the Philippines have more world class resorts

00:38:36 --> 00:38:38: when

00:38:36 --> 00:38:38: it has some of the best beaches in the world?

00:38:38 --> 00:38:40: And how to change that perception?

00:38:40 --> 00:38:44: I think it absolutely. I mean you know Indonesia and
00:38:44 --> 00:38:45: the Philippines dollar.
00:38:45 --> 00:38:49: Pick up my computer goes with beautiful islands and
beautiful
00:38:49 --> 00:38:50: quotes,
00:38:50 --> 00:38:53: right? I mean the Philippines and Indonesia is very similar
00:38:53 --> 00:38:56: that Indonesia is mainly Islamic in Philippines.
00:38:56 --> 00:39:00: Mainly Christian. But you have other races and you have
00:39:00 --> 00:39:03: other religions and so huge sense of place.
00:39:03 --> 00:39:07: Uhm, I think infrastructure is definitely one big issue.
00:39:07 --> 00:39:12: Travel infrastructure. Come and I think Indonesia is moving
quite
00:39:12 --> 00:39:15: fast and I and I lament the Philippines.
00:39:15 --> 00:39:17: I don't know. I don't know the numbers,
00:39:17 --> 00:39:20: but I've been to the Philippines many times as I
00:39:20 --> 00:39:23: have to Indonesia and and I totally agree with Bill.
00:39:23 --> 00:39:26: But you know Indonesia has got under Jokowi,
00:39:26 --> 00:39:29: a budget to do 10 new bodies.
00:39:29 --> 00:39:33: They're investing in airports over Indonesia,
00:39:33 --> 00:39:38: and I think the investments in airports investment in high
00:39:38 --> 00:39:43: speed ferries at the investment in transport infrastructure is
so
00:39:43 --> 00:39:45: critical for this to happen.
00:39:45 --> 00:39:48: Now I I'm hopeful because we hope to be doing
00:39:48 --> 00:39:52: some smallish projects in Palauan we are doing some
projects
00:39:52 --> 00:39:53: elsewhere,
00:39:53 --> 00:39:56: big projects. Traditional type, but I think in a post
00:39:56 --> 00:40:01: COVID environment with with so many Filipinos not being
able
00:40:01 --> 00:40:04: to travel but only seeing the beauty of their own
00:40:04 --> 00:40:06: country. As I've seen in Thailand,
00:40:06 --> 00:40:10: two wealthy discovering Thailand region never did before.
00:40:10 --> 00:40:14: I think many wealthy Filipinos who potentially have money to
00:40:14 --> 00:40:17: put into tourism who don't have gone to London,
00:40:17 --> 00:40:20: Paris, New York and so on are discovering the beauty
00:40:20 --> 00:40:21: of the Philippines.
00:40:21 --> 00:40:24: We are discussion with a few of these people to
00:40:25 --> 00:40:26: do small boutique resorts.
00:40:26 --> 00:40:28: And under our brand by entry,
00:40:28 --> 00:40:33: escape throughout the Philippines and they need not be
super
00:40:33 --> 00:40:34: luxury.

00:40:34 --> 00:40:37: They just need to really.
00:40:37 --> 00:40:39: Build on the beauty over the Philippines has,
00:40:39 --> 00:40:41: in terms of beach resorts and I,
00:40:41 --> 00:40:45: I think there has to be more discussion about doing
00:40:45 --> 00:40:46: this now.
00:40:46 --> 00:40:47: Then they're also mundane issues.
00:40:47 --> 00:40:51: We were going to do a beautiful resort in Coron
00:40:51 --> 00:40:54: and then all issues with land titles and so on.
00:40:54 --> 00:40:57: So there's going to be a meeting.
00:40:57 --> 00:40:58: I think of tourism authorities,
00:40:58 --> 00:41:02: players, investors and sitting down and listing out all the
00:41:02 --> 00:41:06: problems that are impediments to development of of resorts
and
00:41:06 --> 00:41:08: islands in the Philippines.
00:41:08 --> 00:41:11: And the government has systematically deal with it in terms
00:41:11 --> 00:41:12: of land titles,
00:41:12 --> 00:41:14: transport, infrastructure and so on,
00:41:14 --> 00:41:19: but. If if anything at all for the Philippines,
00:41:19 --> 00:41:23: I think in the post COVID environment tourism can generate
00:41:23 --> 00:41:27: a lot more contribution to GDP I believe,
00:41:27 --> 00:41:29: so I think its role at all.
00:41:29 --> 00:41:29: I'm
00:41:29 --> 00:41:32: not what trends do you do you foresee for the
00:41:32 --> 00:41:35: hospitality and real estate industry?
00:41:35 --> 00:41:36: Post pandemic.
00:41:37 --> 00:41:40: I see a lot more domestic tourism for sure.
00:41:40 --> 00:41:45: I think that's that everybody can see right and domestic
00:41:45 --> 00:41:46: tourism of course,
00:41:46 --> 00:41:49: has been happening at a two level.
00:41:49 --> 00:41:54: One is the not so wealthy who cannot afford to
00:41:54 --> 00:41:57: travel overseas that easily.
00:41:57 --> 00:41:58: I'm I'm going up at numbers,
00:41:58 --> 00:42:02: so the base is growing right though the entire base
00:42:02 --> 00:42:05: of the younger middle class is growing,
00:42:05 --> 00:42:08: so they are traveling more frequently within their own
countries.
00:42:08 --> 00:42:12: Again with budget carriers, and so on and so forth.
00:42:12 --> 00:42:15: That has been happening irrespective of COVID and it will
00:42:15 --> 00:42:16: continue.
00:42:16 --> 00:42:20: The interesting thing about cold course is that the wealthy
00:42:20 --> 00:42:23: classes that used to only go overseas to Europe and
00:42:23 --> 00:42:26: America and so on have now had no choice but
00:42:26 --> 00:42:28: to look at their home countries.

00:42:28 --> 00:42:32: And lo and behold, they suddenly discovered that in fact
00:42:32 --> 00:42:35: there's a lot of beauty in their own country and
00:42:35 --> 00:42:36: and,
00:42:36 --> 00:42:39: and quite frankly, quite a lot of pride in their
00:42:39 --> 00:42:40: own country too,
00:42:40 --> 00:42:42: because the geopolitical scenario is changing.
00:42:42 --> 00:42:45: So that many of us and I'm not talking about
00:42:45 --> 00:42:45: China,
00:42:45 --> 00:42:47: US necessary, but many of us are saying,
00:42:47 --> 00:42:50: you know, the West is not the epicenter of everything
00:42:50 --> 00:42:51: is happening.
00:42:51 --> 00:42:55: We even and America under Trump basically woke up a
00:42:55 --> 00:42:58: lot of us after saying it is not the Mecca
00:42:58 --> 00:43:02: for everybody who's westernised oriental.
00:43:02 --> 00:43:05: There is so much beauty in our own culture and
00:43:05 --> 00:43:06: our own places.
00:43:06 --> 00:43:12: Let's discover that. So I think having the wealthier classes
00:43:12 --> 00:43:13: in Asian.
00:43:13 --> 00:43:17: Forced to undertake domestic tourism is going to lead to
00:43:17 --> 00:43:21: more investments in domestic tourism of a wider nature,
00:43:21 --> 00:43:24: and I think that's going to be very positive.
00:43:24 --> 00:43:26: OK, so there's one question for you.
00:43:26 --> 00:43:27: What
00:43:27 --> 00:43:32: drastic physical changes are necessary to address
pandemics in terms
00:43:32 --> 00:43:33: of design in OMB?
00:43:34 --> 00:43:38: Sorry, can you repeat again or physical address and what
00:43:38 --> 00:43:40: drastic physical changes
00:43:40 --> 00:43:43: are necessary to address the pandemic in terms of design?
00:43:43 --> 00:43:47: Well, I I think you see that in in every
00:43:47 --> 00:43:48: aspect.
00:43:48 --> 00:43:50: Ventilation or open air living.
00:43:50 --> 00:43:53: I think that's a positive part.
00:43:53 --> 00:43:56: Interesting thing as people have now seen more and more
00:43:56 --> 00:43:59: is it's not just a matter of ventilation,
00:43:59 --> 00:44:02: right? Airplane ventilations are very safe.
00:44:02 --> 00:44:07: It's only you know super congested areas that endangers,
00:44:07 --> 00:44:10: but I think it's more personal behavior now than actual
00:44:10 --> 00:44:11: designer buildings.
00:44:11 --> 00:44:15: People in offices have not actually generated a lot more
00:44:15 --> 00:44:17: COVID that we thought the signs of it.
00:44:17 --> 00:44:18: If you follow the signs.

00:44:18 --> 00:44:22: It's basically saying that especially now with Delta and so
00:44:22 --> 00:44:22: on,
00:44:22 --> 00:44:23: it's not just droplets, right?
00:44:23 --> 00:44:28: It's aerosol borne, so, so if you so obviously practices
00:44:28 --> 00:44:33: like singing all the churches that have singing sing for
00:44:33 --> 00:44:37: karaoke lounges had it when you even breathe in or
00:44:37 --> 00:44:40: cough and so on in the aerosol environment.
00:44:40 --> 00:44:45: So therefore closed environments have to have much better
ventilation,
00:44:45 --> 00:44:47: a lot more alfresco activities,
00:44:47 --> 00:44:52: both of. Entertainment, nature and even congregational
nature.
00:44:52 --> 00:44:55: I think it's going to be more popular,
00:44:55 --> 00:44:57: so those are the changes I see in terms of
00:44:57 --> 00:45:00: how people live their lives and how people want more
00:45:00 --> 00:45:01: fresh air.
00:45:01 --> 00:45:04: Even hospitals are recognizing that I see you should have
00:45:04 --> 00:45:07: just have fresh air rather than highly ventilated here.
00:45:07 --> 00:45:11: So back to nature openness and that will be incorporated
00:45:11 --> 00:45:14: much more into buildings and more natural ventilation.
00:45:14 --> 00:45:17: You actually see quite a lot of office buildings and
00:45:17 --> 00:45:18: hotel rooms now.
00:45:18 --> 00:45:20: It used to be fully air conditioned,
00:45:20 --> 00:45:23: not you know, resorts which have already got balconies,
00:45:23 --> 00:45:26: but a lot more city hotels are looking at having
00:45:26 --> 00:45:29: balconies where you could open up the windows so those
00:45:29 --> 00:45:32: design changes would definitely come about.
00:45:33 --> 00:45:35: We still have a few more questions here,
00:45:35 --> 00:45:38: K P. So here. How are you looking at the
00:45:38 --> 00:45:42: tourism industry and how we will pick up in Asia
00:45:42 --> 00:45:43: Pacific?
00:45:43 --> 00:45:45: What will you? What will your advice be to government
00:45:46 --> 00:45:47: on how they must go about this?
00:45:47 --> 00:45:49: I think you kind of answered this a bit earlier,
00:45:49 --> 00:45:51: but maybe if there's other thoughts.
00:45:56 --> 00:46:00: So how what will be your advice to government on
00:46:00 --> 00:46:03: how they must go about opening up the tourism II?
00:46:03 --> 00:46:05: Think Pacific.
00:46:06 --> 00:46:08: Talking about opening up Asian Pacific in terms of the
00:46:08 --> 00:46:09: pandemic,
00:46:09 --> 00:46:11: right? As opposed to long term views and sort of,
00:46:11 --> 00:46:15: I think sense is that I don't think we can
00:46:15 --> 00:46:17: blame government said he's silly.

00:46:17 --> 00:46:20: This is really, I think for all of us who
00:46:20 --> 00:46:21: have been CEO's and so on.
00:46:21 --> 00:46:24: We recognize that when when we are hit by something
00:46:24 --> 00:46:26: we've never expected that.
00:46:26 --> 00:46:29: But there's no playbook to go by,
00:46:29 --> 00:46:32: right? And countries made mistakes along the way.
00:46:32 --> 00:46:36: I think what will mark a good government and a
00:46:36 --> 00:46:37: good good leadership?
00:46:37 --> 00:46:40: In any situation, whether it be a company like mine
00:46:40 --> 00:46:41: or government,
00:46:41 --> 00:46:45: what will make good leadership is the ability to pivot
00:46:45 --> 00:46:49: to changing situations and to pivot and always be looking
00:46:49 --> 00:46:52: towards the future rather than being stuck in something and
00:46:52 --> 00:46:54: you try. It doesn't work.
00:46:54 --> 00:46:56: You try again, and if you look at the pandemic
00:46:56 --> 00:46:57: in particular,
00:46:57 --> 00:47:02: there has been one immediate response which was
absolutely superb
00:47:02 --> 00:47:03: in the beginning,
00:47:03 --> 00:47:07: right? Because of the collectivist view of most Asian societies
00:47:07 --> 00:47:08: rather than individualist.
00:47:08 --> 00:47:12: Because of the more authoritarian nature of most
governments and
00:47:12 --> 00:47:14: the willingness of people to accept it,
00:47:14 --> 00:47:17: all of Asia came out fantastic in phase one of
00:47:17 --> 00:47:20: COVID because we basically were very disciplined.
00:47:20 --> 00:47:25: We locked down internally. We locked out everybody else
and
00:47:25 --> 00:47:29: our infection rates were world class lowest among
everybody.
00:47:29 --> 00:47:32: That was great. That game plan and that playbook is
00:47:32 --> 00:47:35: out the window now as we now know because of
00:47:35 --> 00:47:39: mutants and particularly the mutant the the Delta variant has
00:47:39 --> 00:47:44: made that idea of being a fortress not workable.
00:47:44 --> 00:47:48: Thailand tried to pivot towards opening up.
00:47:48 --> 00:47:52: Sandbox my argument today. Now is I think even a
00:47:52 --> 00:47:57: sandbox is outdated and we recognize now the enemy is
00:47:57 --> 00:47:57: within.
00:47:57 --> 00:48:00: It's not outside and if somebody is willing to come
00:48:00 --> 00:48:03: into the country but they're vaccinated,
00:48:03 --> 00:48:07: they had no greater risk to the population than someone
00:48:07 --> 00:48:09: who's been vaccinated in the country.
00:48:10 --> 00:48:13: So now I think the what governments have to recognize

00:48:13 --> 00:48:16: quite quickly is change that thinking.
00:48:16 --> 00:48:18: You have to have paradigm shift to start.
00:48:18 --> 00:48:21: Thinking. The enemy has come in already.
00:48:21 --> 00:48:23: It's within us. It's spreading within us,
00:48:23 --> 00:48:24: so we have to have.
00:48:24 --> 00:48:27: We may still have to have some lockdowns within the
00:48:27 --> 00:48:27: country.
00:48:27 --> 00:48:30: We have to have controls and so on,
00:48:30 --> 00:48:32: but the enemy is not outside.
00:48:32 --> 00:48:36: If they're vaccinated, let them in because they're not going
00:48:36 --> 00:48:38: to infect anybody,
00:48:38 --> 00:48:40: but at least they will help the economy,
00:48:40 --> 00:48:42: whether they be business travelers,
00:48:42 --> 00:48:45: whether they be leisure travelers,
00:48:45 --> 00:48:49: whether they be investors, you cannot go on forever.
00:48:49 --> 00:48:53: After almost two years of a complete closing up and
00:48:53 --> 00:48:57: locking out of the whole international economy,
00:48:57 --> 00:49:00: you cannot go on like this forever because delta rates,
00:49:00 --> 00:49:03: our infection rates are still going to go on quite
00:49:03 --> 00:49:04: high and even Singapore.
00:49:04 --> 00:49:06: We've got an 80% vaccination.
00:49:06 --> 00:49:10: And we're still having the Delta variant causing a lot
00:49:11 --> 00:49:12: of infections.
00:49:12 --> 00:49:16: So I think, what? What some epidemiologists have said is
00:49:16 --> 00:49:18: absolutely correct.
00:49:18 --> 00:49:24: Herd immunity is a fallacy with the delta variant.
00:49:24 --> 00:49:30: The COVID virus is going to become and flu virus.
00:49:30 --> 00:49:33: It's going to actually spread until every one of us
00:49:33 --> 00:49:35: has got common flu.
00:49:35 --> 00:49:39: Every of us has gotten either vaccinated or you're gonna
00:49:39 --> 00:49:40: get COVID.
00:49:40 --> 00:49:44: So with that, the whole treatment protocol have to change.
00:49:44 --> 00:49:48: We opened up the world to everyone who's been vaccinated.
00:49:48 --> 00:49:51: Everyone who's not willing to be vaccinated mandate that
00:49:52 --> 00:49:54: they
00:49:52 --> 00:49:54: be those who are too unhealthy to be.
00:49:54 --> 00:49:56: Vaccinated protect them as much as you can,
00:49:56 --> 00:49:59: but even in a normal normal year,
00:49:59 --> 00:50:01: the number of people will die in the Philippines of
00:50:01 --> 00:50:04: common flu are still quite high and you just have
00:50:04 --> 00:50:05: to accept it.
00:50:05 --> 00:50:10: I think governments need to rapidly change their thinking

because
00:50:10 --> 00:50:11: if they don't,
00:50:11 --> 00:50:14: 90% of the people are going to be suffering very
00:50:14 --> 00:50:16: deeply for the 2%
00:50:16 --> 00:50:20: of the people who are protected because of the current
00:50:20 --> 00:50:22: protocols about lockdowns and so on.
00:50:23 --> 00:50:26: OK, thank you for that KP.
00:50:26 --> 00:50:28: I am. I actually just allowed to ask one more
00:50:28 --> 00:50:29: question.
00:50:29 --> 00:50:32: There's a few more coming in Thailand and Bali seemed
00:50:32 --> 00:50:35: to have a strong sense of their own style of
00:50:35 --> 00:50:36: hospitality.
00:50:36 --> 00:50:40: What type of process or would you undertake to determine
00:50:40 --> 00:50:43: what exactly is Filipino hospitality?
00:50:43 --> 00:50:46: You, being? I mean, you've traveled to the country.
00:50:46 --> 00:50:48: What makes Filipino hospitality different?
00:50:49 --> 00:50:51: Look I, I think that's a good question,
00:50:51 --> 00:50:53: but I think my answer is it's going to be
00:50:53 --> 00:50:54: a very simple one.
00:50:54 --> 00:50:58: Uhm, I. As an outsider,
00:50:58 --> 00:51:02: I only would know the cliches about Filipino hospitality,
00:51:02 --> 00:51:05: but I do not believe hospitality is about cliches.
00:51:05 --> 00:51:07: I think hospitality is about authenticity,
00:51:07 --> 00:51:10: authenticity and about the uniqueness of each culture.
00:51:10 --> 00:51:13: I could you push me too and don't.
00:51:13 --> 00:51:14: I could say what I think is,
00:51:14 --> 00:51:17: you know, unique about Philippines and so on,
00:51:17 --> 00:51:22: just like Mexico, Mexican hospitality is incredible.
00:51:22 --> 00:51:25: But you know it has its own uniqueness,
00:51:25 --> 00:51:28: so my answer is, we all know the Philippines has
00:51:28 --> 00:51:32: such a rich historical and cultural heritage.
00:51:32 --> 00:51:36: It is a very rich culinary heritage.
00:51:36 --> 00:51:39: If same type of heritage that all of us have
00:51:39 --> 00:51:44: in us in a colonial a colonial heritage and indigenous
00:51:44 --> 00:51:50: heritage and architectural heritage linguistic Regmi the the
00:51:50 --> 00:51:55: diversity of
00:51:55 --> 00:51:58: the Philippines itself. It is amazing the differences in culture
00:51:58 --> 00:52:01: between Mindanao and Visayas and Luzon,
00:52:01 --> 00:52:03: you know, and you know so many things your cuisine
00:52:03 --> 00:52:06: is different and so on.
00:52:06 --> 00:52:06: It it it takes so therefore my point would be
00:52:06 --> 00:52:11: I don't think there's anything about Thai or Indonesian or

00:52:11 --> 00:52:17: Balinese hospitality that makes it more unique than Filipino hospitality.

00:52:17 --> 00:52:22: At least in my history of experiencing Filipino hospitality.

00:52:22 --> 00:52:24: I think Thai hospitality is unique.

00:52:24 --> 00:52:27: I think Filipino hospitality and Indonesian hospitality is unique

00:52:27 --> 00:52:30: and I think it's that uniqueness you need to build

00:52:30 --> 00:52:30: upon,

00:52:30 --> 00:52:33: but I certainly do not find I.

00:52:33 --> 00:52:36: I would be really aghast if anybody thought that Thai

00:52:36 --> 00:52:40: or Bali Nice hospitality is superior in any way than

00:52:40 --> 00:52:41: to the penal hospitality.

00:52:41 --> 00:52:44: I think you have a wealth.

00:52:44 --> 00:52:47: Of hospitality to showcase to the rest of the world,

00:52:47 --> 00:52:50: and very importantly to your own people too and have

00:52:50 --> 00:52:52: pride in their hospitality.

00:52:52 --> 00:52:53: Thank

00:52:53 --> 00:52:55: you so much KP uhm.

00:52:55 --> 00:52:58: Silver lining of course. We talked about pandemic,

00:52:58 --> 00:53:00: but I'd like to ask about you.

00:53:00 --> 00:53:05: So what has anything changed about you as a person?

00:53:05 --> 00:53:07: I mean, what are the things that they were doing?

00:53:07 --> 00:53:11: You were not doing before that you're actually doing now?

00:53:11 --> 00:53:13: Urgency, well, one thing I'm doing more now than

00:53:14 --> 00:53:16: before was not caused by the pandemic,

00:53:16 --> 00:53:19: but I'm I've become a grand father of four of

00:53:19 --> 00:53:20: oh,

00:53:20 --> 00:53:22: I'm thankful to those of my children who who had

00:53:22 --> 00:53:25: the time and the inclination during the pandemic to to

00:53:25 --> 00:53:28: give me two more grandchildren who are pandemic.

00:53:28 --> 00:53:34: Wow, congratulations yeah. You know,

00:53:34 --> 00:53:37: but if nothing else, I think for both my wife

00:53:37 --> 00:53:40: and I we've come out of work coming out of

00:53:40 --> 00:53:44: this with a much greater sense of gratitude.

00:53:44 --> 00:53:48: Purpose. Uhm, difficult times of this pandemic has made us

00:53:48 --> 00:53:53: more resolved that in whatever little time we have left,

00:53:53 --> 00:53:58: we have the ability thankfully and the and the responsibility

00:53:58 --> 00:54:02: to build back better for our own company after the

00:54:02 --> 00:54:05: pandemic because it has been so devastated.

00:54:05 --> 00:54:08: We are the leaders of this organization.

00:54:08 --> 00:54:11: We need to build it back better so that that

00:54:11 --> 00:54:15: is both a responsibility and it gives us a sense

00:54:15 --> 00:54:16: of purpose.

00:54:16 --> 00:54:20: And then there's also the sense of gratitude to to
00:54:20 --> 00:54:21: come out of all this,
00:54:21 --> 00:54:24: knowing that we really appreciate much,
00:54:24 --> 00:54:28: much more family and friends who you you wake up
00:54:28 --> 00:54:31: and you walk into this surreal world.
00:54:31 --> 00:54:34: It's almost like a science fiction world where everything is
00:54:34 --> 00:54:35: so beautiful.
00:54:35 --> 00:54:38: Nothing has been physically touched at all.
00:54:38 --> 00:54:42: But it's eerie calm, as if you know,
00:54:42 --> 00:54:45: as if it's like out of a science fiction movie.
00:54:45 --> 00:54:48: And so you're grateful for so many.
00:54:48 --> 00:54:52: Things that have still. You are still able to enjoy
00:54:52 --> 00:54:56: in life and we're coming out of this whole surreal
00:54:56 --> 00:54:57: nightmare.
00:54:57 --> 00:54:59: At least we are not with a sense of gloom,
00:54:59 --> 00:55:02: a sense of despair, but a sense of gratitude and
00:55:02 --> 00:55:03: a sense of purpose.
00:55:03 --> 00:55:08: And very importantly, a sense that time is ticking by
00:55:08 --> 00:55:10: I as an older person,
00:55:10 --> 00:55:13: now advanced, middle aged or may not own.
00:55:15 --> 00:55:18: Yeah, I remember that, so I'm getting there pretty quickly
00:55:18 --> 00:55:18: too.
00:55:18 --> 00:55:21: But you know, you realize the young people don't feel
00:55:21 --> 00:55:21: it,
00:55:21 --> 00:55:25: but certainly I feel two years have gone by just
00:55:25 --> 00:55:26: like that.
00:55:26 --> 00:55:29: It's been wasted years as if I was like Rip
00:55:29 --> 00:55:30: Van Winkle,
00:55:30 --> 00:55:32: and you've been in a coma for two years.
00:55:32 --> 00:55:34: When you come out of it,
00:55:34 --> 00:55:36: you sense that there's a sense of urgency.
00:55:36 --> 00:55:38: I only have that much more time I've got to
00:55:38 --> 00:55:38: catch up.
00:55:38 --> 00:55:41: I've got to do a lot of things more so
00:55:41 --> 00:55:42: there's there's energy.
00:55:42 --> 00:55:44: There's passion, this purpose. This gratitude.
00:55:44 --> 00:55:46: Those are the feelings that.
00:55:46 --> 00:55:48: That I feel coming out of this crisis.
00:55:50 --> 00:55:52: KP it's an honor to have you today.
00:55:52 --> 00:55:54: Thank you very much.
00:55:54 --> 00:55:56: Thank you, thank you very much.
00:55:56 --> 00:55:57: Yes,

00:55:57 --> 00:56:01: gene. Thank
00:56:01 --> 00:56:04: you so much for such a great conversation.
00:56:04 --> 00:56:06: It was inspiring. KP to hear your background,
00:56:06 --> 00:56:09: your journey and also your insights into the industry.
00:56:09 --> 00:56:13: Thank you for opening the session with your vulnerability
admitting
00:56:13 --> 00:56:16: how painful the journey was because we can all relate
00:56:16 --> 00:56:19: and yet shifting us back to that sense of gratitude.
00:56:19 --> 00:56:23: Interestingly, you said everything your journey was accidental
about not
00:56:23 --> 00:56:24: having a plan.
00:56:24 --> 00:56:26: So when you were saying that expression you know you
00:56:26 --> 00:56:28: have to have a sense of direction.
00:56:28 --> 00:56:29: But I thought it meant,
00:56:29 --> 00:56:32: but also a sense of humor when things don't go
00:56:33 --> 00:56:33: your way so.
00:56:34 --> 00:56:37: But I believe that what was constant now almost like
00:56:37 --> 00:56:39: your compass was your value of community.
00:56:39 --> 00:56:41: Your emphasis on empathy, right?
00:56:41 --> 00:56:43: The soft side of hospitality,
00:56:43 --> 00:56:45: your passion in creating a sense of place.
00:56:45 --> 00:56:47: And as you said, that sense of purpose,
00:56:47 --> 00:56:50: development, orientation towards society. You grew up in.
00:56:50 --> 00:56:53: This is a great reminder because a lot of us
00:56:53 --> 00:56:56: are enough and the hospitality industry are in great despair,
00:56:56 --> 00:57:00: right? Seemingly lost. It's a great reminder to reflect back
00:57:00 --> 00:57:03: on why we do what we do and how that
00:57:03 --> 00:57:05: will guide where to go next,
00:57:05 --> 00:57:07: as we kept this event I wanted to highlight you
00:57:07 --> 00:57:08: three things that you well.
00:57:08 --> 00:57:11: I also sees in the hospitality sector and the need
00:57:11 --> 00:57:14: to build and maintain that trust specifically on health and
00:57:14 --> 00:57:17: safety on whether the virus is indeed here to stay
00:57:17 --> 00:57:20: or not. The hospitality sectors continue to build that
confidence
00:57:20 --> 00:57:23: that can deliver that safe experience and at the same
00:57:23 --> 00:57:24: time embracing courage,
00:57:24 --> 00:57:28: right? Explore new ways to address the situation second.
00:57:28 --> 00:57:31: Did you sell? Technology is now being used on the
00:57:31 --> 00:57:34: front and back end of hospitality to reduce costs for
00:57:34 --> 00:57:36: resilience for future resilience.
00:57:36 --> 00:57:39: Now whether this means more touch points online in place
00:57:39 --> 00:57:43: of human interaction or rather invisible technologies rather

that just
00:57:43 --> 00:57:45: drives back office efficiency.
00:57:45 --> 00:57:49: Time will tell as emphasized today that soft side,
00:57:49 --> 00:57:53: the human side of hospitality remains very important.
00:57:53 --> 00:57:55: Third is the focus on customer experience.
00:57:55 --> 00:57:58: I mean, amid changing consumer behavior,
00:57:58 --> 00:58:01: the. Emphasis on creating experiential travel.
00:58:01 --> 00:58:05: Was there pre pandemic and now further boosted made
people
00:58:05 --> 00:58:07: were are hungry for more memories.
00:58:07 --> 00:58:10: And as Katie said, this is where all the magic
00:58:10 --> 00:58:12: and enchantment happens right?
00:58:12 --> 00:58:15: The authenticity, the uniqueness. So may we never lose that
00:58:15 --> 00:58:16: sense of wonder,
00:58:16 --> 00:58:20: the magical hospitality we are excited to continue exploring
the
00:58:20 --> 00:58:23: future of hospitality and real estate and what we can
00:58:23 --> 00:58:26: do collectively to aid in its recovery.
00:58:26 --> 00:58:29: So under UL idea formed the hospitality committee.
00:58:29 --> 00:58:32: Led by our very own Cindy Arrabiata for members of
00:58:32 --> 00:58:33: the sector to come together,
00:58:33 --> 00:58:36: share experiences and learn from each other.
00:58:36 --> 00:58:39: We invite you to be part of our growing community.
00:58:39 --> 00:58:43: As Katie mentioned, a lot more conversations and
discussions need
00:58:43 --> 00:58:44: to happen.
00:58:44 --> 00:58:46: If you're interested in being part of UI or the
00:58:46 --> 00:58:47: UI Hospitality Committee,
00:58:47 --> 00:58:49: please feel free to reach out to any of us
00:58:49 --> 00:58:51: here or through any of you alive.
00:58:51 --> 00:58:54: Social media you can reach out also to Luis Losada
00:58:54 --> 00:58:57: Lasala who is here to answer any of your queries
00:58:57 --> 00:58:59: to our Members are recording of this webinar.
00:58:59 --> 00:59:02: Will be available through our digital platform.
00:59:02 --> 00:59:05: Knowledge Finder. So again, thank you everyone for joining
us
00:59:05 --> 00:59:07: and we hope we left you informed,
00:59:07 --> 00:59:11: inspired and reignited. Thank you to our partner for this
00:59:11 --> 00:59:11: event.
00:59:11 --> 00:59:14: Pajaro Leisure, hospitality group and again,
00:59:14 --> 00:59:17: thank you so much to our speaker for being with
00:59:17 --> 00:59:20: us today for inspiring the audience and the future of
00:59:20 --> 00:59:21: our industry.

00:59:23 --> 00:59:24: Thank you KP,
00:59:25 --> 00:59:26: thank you, thank you very much.
00:59:26 --> 00:59:27: Thank you.

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