



Podcast Episode 207  
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## “Avoiding Conflict at All Costs Is Very Often Costly”

**David Loy:** Hi and welcome to *In the Loop* with Andy Andrews, I’m your host David Loy. Andy, how are you today?

**Andy Andrews:** I’m doing great buddy, how are you?

**David:** I’m fantastic. Excited to be here, love doing these.

**Andy:** Matthew, how are you? Matt’s doing good.

**David:** He gave us the thumbs up, no microphone over there, but Matt, our producer punches the buttons, holds this thing together. He is the glue of *In the Loop*, he holds the whole thing together, without Matt, it falls apart. So Matt thank you very much. Oh gosh, the three of us have been working a lot together lately. I think we’ve mentioned this before but some of the online products, and coaching sessions, and webinars that have been going on.

**Andy:** I’m glad we are, I told you, I’d be hanging out with you guys if we weren’t working together.

**David:** But we’ve been doing podcast, we’ve been doing the *Unshakeable Entrepreneur*.

**Andy:** That was awesome.

**David:** It really was.

**Andy:** I mean, for me. I hope it was good for everybody else.

**David:** Yeah, and we're, you know, now I guess a month or more, removed from when that took place live but still.

**Andy:** I'm hearing a lot about that.

**David:** Yeah, the reaction, it's just been outstanding. I feel like we've hit on some pain points, really pushed a hot button with a lot of people out there, that either already have their own business, want to start their own business. But that program *The Unshakeable Entrepreneur*, it was a blast to do and because of the reaction we've received, we're already planning the next one. We're planning the next iteration of something along those lines. So if you enjoyed that or if you missed it, either way stay tuned because there's more of that material coming.

**Andy:** You know, I keep hearing and I have for a while, people will say, could I talk with you for an hour or can I take you to lunch? And it just kills me because I have had to go to the office and said no for a while, but I have had to learn to say no myself. It just kills me, because I had to say, there's just, I'm so sorry but there's just not enough time. And when I'm home, I really have to be with Polly and the boys, I have to be. And I haven't had lunch with Kevin Perkins I don't know when and he's my best friend. And so, I am so excited about this and I would love for people let us know, if you and I were going to do lunch, what would you want to talk about, what is your topic? Because David, the thing that hit me about doing this with and we did, the topic was being an unshakeable entrepreneur, that was that topic. And I'm willing and excited to do other topics, because that was like being in a room with just a few people and we were able, I mean, this was live.

And they were able to ask me questions and I'm able to think through it, and we're talking. And it was not, you know, we did, the first part was general and then we went into two nights with just the people in the room. And so everybody in the room was kind of, they wanted to talk about the same topic.

**David:** Right, all like-minded go through the same situations.

**Andy:** So even when somebody else came out with the question, it was the question, well I'd like to know the answer to that too. And so, it was awesome.

**David:** It really was.

**Andy:** And finally I thought, finally, this is a way I can have a couple of evenings, cup of coffee and hangout with people for a couple of evenings, personally.

**David:** Yes, personally, absolutely, and interact. And that live Q&A session, you talking back and forth with people and I really think there was some great value there, it built a great community in the last month. Everyone that joined, that was in that room, on those two nights, that got a community together.

**Andy:** And they keep that, they keep the recording of that and all the graphics, they keep that, that's theirs forever. And it's one of a kind thing. That was the conversation we all had.

**David:** Yes, so we're excited about that and the reason we're bringing it back here is, as those of you who listen regularly know, this podcast is the conversation, it's Andy's perspectives and thoughts on different things that listeners and different people from around the world are going through, but it is very general. You know, we cover all different types of things. We cover family, we cover business, life,

faith, humor, personal things. So it's all very general and it covers a wide range of topics. But these webinars that we've done, specifically *The Unshakable Entrepreneur* was honed in and laser focused on that specific topic. And so this was a chance to really dig deep into some actionable items and it was fantastic. So stay tuned for some more of that, the response has been outstanding and we'll look forward to doing more of those in future. Alright Andy, let's get to this week's question. This came by email from Simon. Let me read you Simon's questions and we'll get started. Hi Andy, I was recently asked by one of my friends to write a letter of recommendation.

**Andy:** Oh oh, I can see where this is going.

**David:** Yes, yes. Simon goes on to say, the thing is, I would not hire this person myself for my business. Because of how they act, they have a bad attitude and I just think they're negative all the time. So I did not write a recommendation. So here's my question, should I be straight up and honest with them and tell them why I can't write the letter or is there a different way to handle situations like this? Thanks for your time, I really love the podcast, they have changed my thinking a lot since I've first started listening. And that comes from Simon. Andy that's kind of a sticky situation that he finds himself in.

**Andy:** That is a sticky situation because you're tempted to go, yeah, I'll be glad to write that letter, and then not write it and go, wow, they didn't get it? What? Oh Lord. But this is, I think this really dials down to, and we didn't even have a question like that.

**David:** No, I don't remember.

**Andy:** That's a great question Simon. And I think it's such a great question because this dials down into who we are as much as it dials down into who they are. I mean, we're asked to do something for somebody and so how authentic are we going to be in our lives. You know, there is pain and confrontation that can be avoided here but should it be avoided? There is the opportunity for retreat here, should we retreat? There's an opportunity for deceit, should we deceit? You know, this is an odd situation that certainly I found myself in and I know you have too. We've all found ourselves in this kind of quandary. And I'm going to, I obviously am not going to tell you what to do, ok, but here are some thoughts about this. When we are asked to write a letter of recommendation for somebody that we absolutely love and that we think, oh yeah man, they could get this situation. We're excited and our imagination starts working and we start thinking of other ways that we could possibly help and what we could say in the letter. You know, one of my best friends, Mike Jakubik, his daughter needed a letter of recommendation.

And so I have watched those kids grow up and I know their parents and so I also knew some other people on that arena whose voice in that arena would be more powerful than my own. So I not only wrote the letter for her, I contacted my friends who they trust what I say. They trust me. And I said, this is somebody who deserves your help. You know, I can set up a meeting if you want to but here's what I want to. So this was a deserving person from a deserving family that needed to be known. So I went the extra mile. And we all have people like that and then there were the opposite is what Simon's talking about. We've all also been asked, would you write a letter of recommendation for my son, or would you write a letter of recommendation for me? And you're like, oh, you mean would I write a letter of recommendation for your son that I saw handcuffed by the police the other day? You know, that's over the top but you understand what I'm saying.

So we have to think through this and we have to determine, you know, we have a responsibility I believe, to the world in which we live. We should be purpose driven. And here's another situation that Polly and I saw one time. We saw a situation that there was, in fact Polly, we were in this place and Polly saw this person, who is in a leadership position and she said, I do not like this guy. And I'm like, what? She said, I don't like this guy. And I said, when did you meet him? She said, well I haven't but just watching him there. And I'm like, really? And she said, I'm just telling you. Well I mean, literally within a month, this guy was on the front page of the newspapers, had been literally caught, not just child pornography but like molesting a child.

**David:** Oh no.

**Andy:** And I mean, it wasn't a smoking gun type of situation, it was like, there it is. Alright, as this played out, I mean, this person's in prison now but as it played out, this place hired him with a letter of recommendation from his former employer who had suspected he was doing that.

**David:** Oh wow, but they still gave the letter of recommendation.

**Andy:** But they still gave the letter of recommendation. And so not only, I mean, they didn't just pass on a problem, they never addressed anything about it. And so can you imagine the parent of this child saying, wait a minute. Because they said, as the investigation went on, it wasn't that they suspected, they had pretty much caught him without getting pictures and seeing him. But can you imagine being the parent of this child and going, you knew?

**David:** And knowing somebody else could've.

**Andy:** And you passed this guy to us? And so there I think, that's obviously a huge example, ok. Most of us, we're talking about the opportunity to recommend somebody who would just not be good. Ok, well think about your business, would you like somebody to throw a hand grenade into your business? Would you like somebody to throw a wet blanket into your business? And so what we expect, we really are to do. I mean, right?

**David:** Right, if you expect it from others than you should treat others the same way.

**Andy:** Now another aspect of this, here's another angle. You've got something you want to say?

**David:** No, go ahead.

**Andy:** Here's another angle. Another angle is whatever influence you have built up in your life, whatever respect, level of respect you have built in your life that the outside world respects you and the business community respects you and believes you, ok. When we write a letter of recommendation, we actually send somebody into a situation like that, and that person fails miserably, not because they're incapable of developing the skills, they fail miserably because of a character flaw or because of bad habits, or because of the way they act, or something like that. And it's not just them that gets the bad mark, it's this bozo that said, like, you told me in your letter how great friends you were, how long you've known him and everything and are you really? And are you so dense you could not see that in them or you're just lying to me? And so it's not just them, who's reputation suffers at that point, it's you. Alright, now back in our way into, you really at this point, you really only have a couple of choices in my opinion. I have determined that in these situations I only have a couple of choices. One of

those choices is to write and I have done this once. And that is when the person, the letter was supposed to be sent and you're not going to give it to the guy to give it in. Right, he's never going to read it. Ok, here's the address of the people that are needing the letter of recommendation. And one time I have, because this was a person I was not particularly friends with, ok, but I was asked to do this. And so, and I was asked more than once, and it was like, wow, I can't ignore this, I can't just kind of say, I can't just blow it off and they're gonna forget about it. And so I said, I will write a letter. And so, what I did, I didn't say I was gonna write a letter of recommendation, I said, I will write a letter, give me the address. And what I did, is I wrote basically a short note saying that I would welcome a conversation about this if you wish. And I left a number. And so I had a conversation with them, they called. And I had a conversation. And I told them my opinion and what I knew. And so then the other way, the other choice we have is sometimes we are asked by people who you're thinking, man I'm gonna have to give them the letter, I'm going to have to give it to them. Because a lot of times you give it to them and they turn it in. And I mean, I'm going to have to talk to them. So this last choice has two choices of its own. You can either write them a nothing letter, ok. The kind of letter that said, I have known them since they were kids. And I have watched them graduate from high school. I have seen them around the community; they even played baseball with my son.

**David:** Which says a lot while saying no.

**Andy;** Yes, yes, it says nothing. So you can do that if you want to but the alternative that I have found a couple of times is, and this is very hard but I also think, who are you wanting to be around and who do you want to become? Because at this point, this is, this becomes a little less about them and a little more about you and who you are. And so who do you choose to be around? Now, curiously if you say, well I do want to be around, I do. Ok, well then, you're telling

me there's things that you wouldn't even hire them and you do want to be around them, well now I've got questions about you. Because you're basically telling me, this guy is enough of a fool that you would not hire him and you're questioning whether you would ever recommend him to anybody, but you're telling me now, oh I wanna hang around him? Well now I may have a problem with you.

**David:** Question of both of you.

**Andy:** Yeah. alright. And so you think, ok, I really probably, this is probably an acquaintance not really a close friend, because knowing you, you would not have a very close friend with these kind of habits and these kind of ways to influence you and your family and your children. You wouldn't have a close friend that your children would think is the greatest person in the world and really you wouldn't even recommend him for a job, ok. And so since this person is not that close to you and you're not really wanting to hang out with him anyway, you have the opportunity not only to tell the truth but you have the opportunity to tell the truth with concern and love, and the possibility of their life being set on a different course. Because a lot of times, people do kind of crazy things and they're not even really aware. You know, are you aware you're clicking your teeth with the fork every time you take a bite? Really I am?

**David:** And they have no idea.

**Andy:** Yeah, and that's really annoying and it makes people, you know, you're going to dinner and you're interviewing for this job and they're gonna like run screaming from the restaurant. They're not gonna hear, I didn't even know.

**David:** It'll be over before it ever starts.

**Andy:** Right, I didn't even know I was doing that at all. And so, in any case to sit down with a person, now I know and I'll close this out pretty quickly but I know if we don't, the next question is, ok, how am I supposed to tell somebody that? Well I think what you do, what I've done in the past, is when somebody said, hey write that letter, and I've said, hey come here a second. Let me, let me ask you a couple of questions, something I just want to run over with you quickly. And they say, ok, and I'll pull them aside or I'll say, hey can I call you on this or something like that. And I'll get the opportunity to say, you know, I'm thinking about writing this letter and you wanna be really, really honest, because I think one of the reasons somebody would accept my word is because over the years, I've built a reputation of not lying, ok. And so as I thought about this, I've got a couple of questions for you, because I've got a couple of, you know, there are different things in our lives that we all need to work on. I have issues, I can kind of, I can get kind of been out of shape or I can get kind of grouchy, I find myself sometimes having to ask forgiveness of my boys. And you know, that's not a really good, you know, being grouchy is not really good business attribute. If I had to work in an office, and somebody says, hey write a letter, yeah, they're always really grouchy. And there's several things, and we all have things to work on. And when I write a letter like this, I want to be very, I want to be very open and very honest. And this is nothing horrible or anything like that, but knowing that we all have different things to work on, there are some of the things that I can think of with you, that I would not feel comfortable saying that, gosh, you're very punctual. You know, because, you're late all the time. And so there are several little things like that and I'm not sure that I am your person to write this letter. And it gives them the opportunity to say, well ok, you know, don't worry about it, it's not a big deal. Or it also gives them the opportunity to say, man, I appreciate that, can you tell me some other things, what are some of the other things?

**David:** Right. And I think right there, there's a big distinguishing factor of, is the person wise or are they a fool? If they respond with anger and storm out of the room, that you won't help them, then that pretty much guarantees that they're a fool. If they respond by.

**Andy:** You'll be very glad you didn't write a letter for them.

**David:** Yes, exactly. If they respond by asking for more, hey thanks for pointing this out, what else, you know. Then you're dealing with someone who wants to learn, who is seeking wisdom.

**Andy:** I mean, the greatest response you can give is, you know what, I can't tell you how much I appreciate that and now I wanna ask you, do not worry about this, I'm asking you, don't write the letter, do not worry about this at all. I don't want you agonizing over this. But I'm also asking you, would you tell me the other things? Because obviously I need to work on some stuff. You know, Simon, I think you are an awesome guy and I think you're very discerning and Simon whatever you think is gold to me. And the fact, you know, it's kind of embarrassing but the fact that you can't write a letter for me feels kind of bad, but it also, it lets me know that you would even say this to me, that you do care about me and that you do want the best for me. And so, it might be more embarrassing, but would you tell me the other things? Can you tell me what I need to work on?

**David:** And that's a real friendship, right there. That conversation is real friendship.

**Andy:** Even if it's just an acquaintance at that point, it's something you go, ok, this is somebody I want as a friend.

**David:** Yes, and he's willing to learn, ready to go.

**Andy:** Right, you're just not down the road enough or they're not down the road like they would like to be. But you say, this is a wise person, somebody I can help, somebody I'd like to be a friend. And it's somebody that you want to tell that story to your children because your children are just like them, it's just that they're adults, supposedly. And so to be able to tell your children, let me tell you a very smart thing I saw today. Here is a person and you don't have to say their name obviously, but here's a person who I had to turn down for something and I had to tell them the reason is because, you have these couple of things and most people would get mad, most people would deny it, most people would say da da daa, but this person said, really, knowing that I want to be a great person, help me with this, I did not know, this is a blind spot in my life, help me with this. And kids that is a wise person indeed. And you know, a wise person that the beginning of wisdom is to realize you need it.

**David:** Yes, that's the beginning. And I think Simon you have clearly shown some wisdom here, just in the fact that you're asking the question and appreciate that. By the way, that's a fantastic question, very specific, very real life. And Andy I love digging into the actual situations, that people are going through. Obviously theory and high level stuff is great, but I love the specificity of this situation.

**Andy:** Exactness.

**David:** There you go. Of the situation that Simon told us about. So Simon if you have any other questions, please, reach out, that was fantastic. And everybody else, if you want to jump in on this conversation, the phone number is 1800 726 2639, that's 1800 726 Andy. Or you can email us at

[intheloop@andyandrews.com](mailto:intheloop@andyandrews.com). And we will try to get to your question on a future episode. Andy thanks for your time, we will talk to you next week.

**Andy:** Thank you buddy.

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**Would you like to run something by Andy? Contact us and your question might be featured on the show!**

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