Corey Andrew Powell ([00:02](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2.48)):

Hello everyone. I am Corey Andrew Powell, and I am joined today by Guy Vaknin. He's a world renowned chef, celebrated for his distinctive and approachable plant-based creations. He grew up in Israel in a kibbutz and I tried to practice that, so hopefully I pronounced that correctly. <laugh>, where he was immersed in agriculture and raising livestock for the community. So together with his wife today, uh, his wife Tali, they've established their signature vegan brand called Beyond Sushi. They've got multiple restaurants around New York City and additional restaurants, Willow and Coletta. So Guy, welcome to Motivational Mondays.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([00:36](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=36.36)):

Thank you very much for having me.

Corey Andrew Powell ([00:37](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=37.76)):

You're welcome. You're welcome. So was my, was my intro accurate? I'm gonna make <laugh>.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([00:41](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=41.76)):

Yeah. About, it's, it's always ever changing, right? Yeah. So, uh, so Beyond Sushi was the beginning and today it evolved to, um, you know, different beast animal, Coletta, Willow. I opened another restaurant two weeks ago called, uh, Nixi. We run a catering company, uh, an ice cream brand. Oh my goodness. A bunch. A bunch of other things.

Corey Andrew Powell ([01:01](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=61.16)):

Yeah. Well, I know, that's why I know you have a lot going on. That's why I was making sure that at least what I covered was accurate <laugh> in the intro.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([01:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=67.8)):

Yeah. I mean, it's ever changing, right? Evolution.

Corey Andrew Powell ([01:09](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=69.87)):

Very cool. Yeah. Well, that's good. That's good. And I wanna begin though, your story. Cause I'm really intrigued just about people's backgrounds and we have such a diverse community here as part of our members of the NSLS. I love the story of you growing up, uh, in Israel in this very sort of communal environment because I was researching, and of course the, the term, um, kibbutz, if I'm not mistaken, it, it means gathering. Is that correct? Yeah. Right. That's right. That's right. And so my mind went to like you just as this person really taking in all this knowledge as you're working and learning about things. So tell me about that experience and how it shaped you to be who you are today.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([01:44](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=104.09)):

So the kibbutz part was, it was a part of my life. I, I didn't, not, my whole childhood was there. So for a fraction of it, I lived in a kibbutz in two of them. One for two years and another one for another two years. Uh, but the kibbutz part is, uh, very interesting cuz it's the only place still in the world where communism, I know it's a bad word, <laugh>.

Corey Andrew Powell ([02:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=127.97)):

It is what is.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([02:08](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=128.44)):

In our world. In our world. But that, but that's where, the only place in the world where that concept still exists. So basically everybody works as hard as they can for the community. Everybody eats together in the same, in the same place. So breakfast, lunch and dinner you eat in a, in a hole. It's all free. Everybody gets a budget that they can go in the store and buy things. Your laundry is done in the laundromat that people from the kibbutz work in. You go to school in the kibbutz in the community. So you would go to school and then you have after school programs that you're there at about 15. You're already working in the fields, pulling carrots and working at, uh, with livestock and so on. It's a really cool system. Great for kids. It's kind of failing lately. <laugh> and a lot of them are breaking up. But it's, um, it was very interesting and it brought a lot of good, uh, observation of how life could be and how a community could run and what working for the next person means, you know, and not just working for yourself.

Corey Andrew Powell ([03:15](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=195.57)):

Yeah. Basically. Yeah. I know. I mean, it's funny the term communism when we, when we use it, we definitely have this one distinct idea about what that means. You know, we think of like the Cold War with Russia and this sort of cold, icy environment. But you described more of something that was almost like a communal environment where everyone looked out for each other.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([03:32](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=212.81)):

And I, and I think that it ba back in the day when everything was extremely simple and uh, and it, it worked for Israel cause it was a growing country and they, those little communities formed around them, uh, even bigger communities, it's not working today though. <laugh> all communist, uh, ideas at the end, human nature, uh, unfortunately breaks the utopia of what it could be. But it is what it is. Uh, but it was a great experience as a kid. I mean, it was the best experience you could have. Cause you're always around other kids. You grew up together, you know, it's, uh, it's life-changing. Mm-hmm. <affirmative> in my mind. Yeah. And you learn the value of work. You wake up at five o'clock in the morning and you go to the fields, you know, it's, uh, it's important I think.

Corey Andrew Powell ([04:18](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=258.95)):

Hmm. And then I know you also spent time in the military as well.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([04:22](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=262.64)):

Yeah, so I grew up, uh, I grew up, my mom and my dad split when I was young and he came over here. That's how I ended up here, by the way. Uh, but I grew up with my mom and then we went to the kibbutz and we lived in a small town, probably like 20,000 people at, uh, south of Israel. Mm. Uh, right by Gaza actually, which was, uh, a weird thing cuz I had to serve in Gaza afterwards. I was an infantry. It's right close to home. So it's a little bit different than, you know, serving in other armies where you're shipped out to other countries. This was like, you know, a little bit different, complicated situation. I try not to, um, not to get into it too much, but I, uh, I served in infantry for three and a half years. Went through the whole process two and a half years in, uh, in Gaza Strip all over, uh, right before there was the pullout out of Gaza. So 2002 to 2005, two weeks later, New York City, <laugh>. Wow. That's, that's how it happened.

Corey Andrew Powell ([05:25](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=325.32)):

That's the evolution. Well, I mean, I recall during that time the Gaza Strip, that whole, that like, the conflict going on. And that was very,

Chef Guy Vaknin ([05:32](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=332.16)):

That was on fire.

Corey Andrew Powell ([05:32](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=332.36)):

Yeah. It was really, really terrible to see. So, um, I'm happy that you did survive that and that you were able to continue to share your gifts with the world, sir. And how did that, you know, for, for, well, I, I asked you this question because I had, um, Chef Robert Irvine on to maybe three weeks ago, and a part of his story too, that was really anchored him in his life was his military experience. So I am going to ask you as well, I mean, what impact did that have on you today as an entrepreneur? Or did it at all?

Chef Guy Vaknin ([06:02](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=362.77)):

Oh, 100% touch in every aspect of my life. I mean, I was, uh, as much as I worked in, in the kibbutz and as much as I valued work and I saw my mom working really hard and, you know, single mom trying to raise two of us, uh, a 24 year old, you know, I still was a mommy's boy and she always took care of me. And then when you go into the army, it puts life and pain and suffering and, and a different perspective. You learn how to suffer through things and overcome things that you would never imagine possible. And it shapes, it shapes a lot going forward. I always give that example, they made us go 80 miles on a trek with 40 kilos on our back. Hmm. Not because we were gonna do it in the Army afterwards. A lot of it is like a mental training.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([06:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=418.45)):

Right. So you do that and then everything else seems, you know, simple seems like, Hey, I overcome this. I can do this. You know, so it definitely shaped everything. And in terms of the kitchen commanding in the army, I had, uh, one point a hundred soldiers under me. So commanding in the army, commanding on their fire, commanding under pressure, making decisions that are a lot more substantial than, you know, is my food gonna come out on time or, you know, but it's still, it's like getting things thrown at you from all angles at all times. And you have to stay calm and make sure that you, um, that you, uh, are making the right decisions and under fire, it definitely helped start my career.

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:43](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=463.4)):

Yeah. Yeah. I know he, he has a similar story as well too. And he said it just sort of prepared him for, I mean, you know, if he can make it through that, then he can definitely handle like a fire in the kitchen. Right. <laugh> basically. Yeah. Yeah. You know, so that's very cool.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([07:56](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=476.65)):

It is. It is. That tickets coming at you, it's just like bullets coming at you.

Corey Andrew Powell ([08:00](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=480.29)):

<laugh>. Right, right. Same thing. Well, you know, it's really um, an interesting, too an interesting thing too because your journey has just been so full of very different nuances. And so I know that you have this sort of, not sort of, you have a passion for this notion that, uh, you know, you can start from nothing and achieve your dreams because you've done it. So I am curious to know, like what are some of the important lessons along the way that you learned while you were from point A with nothing to where you are?

Chef Guy Vaknin ([08:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=508.84)):

Yeah, so beyond, usually literally started from, from scratch. So we were me and another guy and the first restaurant was, it wasn't even a restaurant, it was a hole in the wall, 12 seats, uh, a counter. So I kind of have a Cinderella story, but I believe from the get-go that the promise of of this country is real. You know, you want to put in you, you want, you need to put in the work, uh, you need to learn. And as long as you are driven enough, and as long as you are disciplined enough, uh, you'll make it. I saw my dad make it. He had also restaurants beforehand. I saw him go from being a police officer in Israel, coming immigrating to this country, building a good life for himself, doing a lot of work. But we butted heads. So I went on my own way.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([09:20](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=560.34)):

But I saw that there is a, there is that possibility and as long as you worked and you really worked to learn, cuz I had, I, I had a platform working at my dad's, but I've never worked under a chef. I've never, never worked under somebody that taught me, okay, this is what you're supposed to do or that what you're supposed to do. It was all trial and error. And, and I believe that's the best way to keep your imagination working and vibrant as long as you keep on trying, failing and not quitting and just making another step. And another step. I learned very early the key was to aim low.

Corey Andrew Powell ([09:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=598.04)):

<laugh>.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([09:59](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=599.15)):

I know everybody says like, oh my.

Corey Andrew Powell ([10:00](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=600.76)):

That's interesting. Yeah. Right, right. So wait, so is that because, oh, if you, if you aim a little lower, it's something that's more attainable that you can actually accomplish, right? Then that's one goal, then you just kind of then raise up the ante.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([10:11](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=611.95)):

I mean, my, my vision is, my vision is big. Okay. So I see far, but I don't, I try not to, not for me and not for my team. I don't try to extend into a place or have over expectations. Mm. I want to have an expectation above what the capability is right now, but learn how to aim low and raising the ante, brick by brick. Okay. And be patient. I mean, it's been 12 years since the first one. And you have to be patient. You can't expect people or even yourself to know the things that you need to know in 12 years from now. You gotta know the things that you need to know now, raise the ante a little bit and raise it up a little bit and bring everybody up with you as you go. Or raise the standards. But you can't, I saw so many people go and try to do a three MICHELIN Star right off the bat. No, you can't. You gotta build up for it. You gotta build up your business. You gotta build up your knowledge. It takes time. Yeah. And, and patience is, is is my, uh, you know, my demon, but I try to contain it.

Corey Andrew Powell ([11:18](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=678.76)):

<laugh>, I mean, it, that goes across any industry, right. People. Yes. Nowadays, especially, I think want things fast and quick. And, um, I have a dear friend who was a, a winner of Chopped actually a few years ago. Okay. And he has, he opened up his first restaurant in New York City, which of course, as you know, one of the most difficult places ever. It was a success off the bat. Still doing well. He's got like three other restaurants in different areas around, you know, Connecticut, New York. I watched restaurants open and close within days. Yeah. I mean it was, I mean, you know, I, I saw the construction happening in the West Village where his restaurant was, and I saw all the money being put into the facade, the table, the, this, the that. And then it opens these restaurants. They opened everything around him. I was just watching. And they would be closed in like a week or two weeks. And I could not imagine why or how so many restaurants fail so quickly. I mean, do you have a theory on that or why that happened so easily?

Chef Guy Vaknin ([12:14](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=734.35)):

I do. I mean, I, I, I've closed restaurants, don't get me wrong. I, I've closed them not because of, I closed because of Covid. I closed because I was changing the model. I closed, uh, not because they couldn't survive or I closed because of lending, uh, lease ending and stuff. Like the biggest fault we have as chefs. We are very, very passionate about what we do. We're very, uh, we try to be creative. And sometimes the creativity or the is detached from reality or from numbers. One of the things that I had going from here early is I, I was always good with numbers. I'm the CFO for the company as well. So I run all the numbers of the company. I make the decisions where the funds go. We self-fund all our restaurants. So I don't have money coming from outside on all anybody, anything nice.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([13:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=787.19)):

It's a buildup of my team building and, you know, and growing the company. But that detachment that chefs have is, I believe the fault in all of these. I got lucky. I can do the management part, I can do the finance part and I can do the, the cooking part, which I'm more passionate about. But numbers are extremely important. And at 1.4 years into this, uh, journey, told my wife, listen, I, you won't see me for the next three weeks. I locked myself in the, in the office and I learned how to do QuickBooks and I learned how to balance everything. And I learned how to, I knew the numbers, but I, I needed to know the programs from the back end. Cause I had problems with people that were sitting at this, at this position. And today I don't do all of it, but I can still manage it and I can still see those numbers and translate 'em into what's going on in the business. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, so I can see the numbers. It's enough for me to know if bar is not running well or if there's overstock of something or if there's an, as long as you are savvy with that, you should have a better chance of surviving New York. New York is not easy for sure.

Corey Andrew Powell ([14:20](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=860.55)):

No, no, not at all. And, um, you raised a couple points there that I think there's a two-pronged situation there. One is you can go and learn things to better arm yourself as an entrepreneur. Like you said, you know, you went and learn and all that. But there are some people like me, terrified of math. Like I look at a math equation and I get, like, I start, like I break out in hives. Oh sure. When, when I see numbers <laugh>, you know what I mean? So, but, but, but, but the point is, in those situations when it comes to leadership, especially be smart enough then to hire someone trustworthy who's skilled to do that for you. But, um.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([14:59](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=899.49)):

I agree. I don't do all of it. Right. At the end of the day, I don't do all of it. I don't believe that you need to do everything. Uh, we are 180 people in the company. It's not a small company. I mean, I have a corporate team that does what they're supposed to do. And the only time that I made the leap of growth, uh, that I made is when I let other people do what they're supposed to do in the company so we can grow. I don't, I don't, I don't disagree with that, but with all that being said, I wanna be savvy enough so the men next to me, I can audit them. Right. So I can see that they're actually doing their job or have somebody there next to me that can do that as well. I mean, I trust people, but you need to be able to be savvy enough as a CEO of the company. You need to be savvy enough that, uh, okay, uh, social media content creation person is doing what they're supposed to do. I don't like Instagram, but I have to learn <laugh>, you know, I have to learn what, what's going on in it. I mean, I, I gotta see the progress. Uh, you are shelling a lot of money, a lot of funds towards those things. You gotta see that you're getting the reward that you're supposed to get for it.

Corey Andrew Powell ([16:06](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=966.25)):

And then there's also, like, when it comes to businesses, there's the immediate r o ROI that, you know, we wanna see right away. And then of course something like social media, it's, it's a bit of an elusive place, right. It's just sort of like

Chef Guy Vaknin ([16:19](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=979.03)):

All of it.

Corey Andrew Powell ([16:19](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=979.57)):

Yeah. You don't even know like what the outcome is supposed to be. Maybe people just know you more <laugh>. It's like, you know.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([16:24](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=984.57)):

Yeah. No, but, but all of it. All of it. Yeah. Yeah. It's not only social media, it's, it's the team's corporate team. All of that is an investment. And I'm not gonna see the return until I get to a certain point. The goal is to get to a certain point. The return comes when those positions, uh, in my business at least, uh, are positions that are managing. And now we have six restaurants and a catering company. The idea, my three year plan is through 2025 to add another three units, and then you get to a certain number where that one Director of Operation is running operation. That one content creator is creating the content and then, and then you become profitable. So it's all an investment. Yeah. Right.

Corey Andrew Powell ([17:09](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1029.65)):

Yeah, absolutely. Again, another funny similarity with what with Chef Robert Irvine is something very similar, cuz I didn't know how much it really would cost to run a restaurant. You know? I mean, I know it's like different things, but, but I mean, as far as like the, the boxes, you should definitely check to make sure you have those things, um, accessible. Like what happens if your freezer breaks, what happens when you're, you know, what backups do you have? Uh, you know, the, the overhead cost, your product cost. I mean, all these things that people often don't think of. So he said, he, his analogy was, um, you ask somebody why they opened the restaurant and they're like, oh, my mom loved my meatballs. <laugh> okay, <laugh> any, anything else? And then, you know, it's, and it's closed like in three days. Right. You know, cause so that's pretty much what.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([17:57](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1077.68)):

You gotta be a nutcase to open a restaurant that, that the first one, the first one is pure passion. It's not a business. You're not making money. You're, you're slaving yourself to something that you are, that you love to do, right?

Corey Andrew Powell ([18:13](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1093.359)):

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([18:14](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1094.39)):

Then it becomes a business later on, uh, if you grow. But just one, there's no way, like, it doesn't matter how busy you are, how, like you have to have your son, your daughter, your uncle and everybody working there, and you're enslaving them for no, no pay, you know?

Corey Andrew Powell ([18:31](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1111.47)):

Yeah. Yeah. They're just getting food, which is I, which I've done, I've done with my restaurant friends. I will work for food. But you know, you also, in that same vein, you know, in that same token there, you talk about why the struggle is important. The struggle is important to success. So share your thoughts on that.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([18:49](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1129.859)):

I, I do it to my team. I do it to myself more than anybody else. I think that if I don't go through tough times and I never, like, it's always tough. Like, okay, it becomes it calm down. Okay, now let's do a new menu. Oh, it, calm down. Let's open a new restaurant. Okay. And at least once a year we open a restaurant. Now that's since I opened this business, the reasoning for that is more. And I, I discovered this while the pandemic happened. I mean, I was at this feeling in my stomach that all of it can disappear. Right? One day something happened and all of it can disappear. And then the pandemic happened and it almost did. Right? <laugh>

Corey Andrew Powell ([19:32](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1172.109)):

It almost, yeah, it did for a lot of people. Yeah.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([19:33](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1173.63)):

It did, it did. For a lot of people. I had to make crazy moves to stay in business. We went from 120 employees to six. Today were bigger and stronger. But it's, it, I, there was certain things that I had to do, right? Yeah. But I believe that through those struggles, releasing the, the fear, right? Releasing the fear. Even though I had seven restaurants and I was doing well, I was still always afraid. So as soon as I released that fear, as soon as I let it go, Willow came to life. And that took us to another level. And then Coletta came to life, and that took us to another level. And the whole catering thing came to life. And that took us to another level. And I pushed myself and I pushed the team to endure struggles and endure. But that's the only way you grow. I mean, there is like, you, you, you, it's like, it's like a muscle right there. You have that analogy and uh, and uh, you putting pressure on the muscle in the gin, it grows. It's the same with us. It's the same with the business. It's the same. And without it, if we get comfortable or if we don't grow, I think we di we die, right? Mm-hmm. That's, that's the analogy in my head at least.

Corey Andrew Powell ([20:50](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1250.31)):

Yeah. And I think you're right. The lessons get learned along the way. So the struggles, the mistakes, the failures, that's where your education comes from.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([20:57](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1257.6)):

The systems that, that are built from it, like the way that things are run, these are the things that, that the, the whole construct of this company is built on, right?

Corey Andrew Powell ([21:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1267.68)):

Yeah, absolutely. Now, on the more creative cooking side of things, and this is what I wanna know, I always try and use this platform as an opportunity to educate. Now of course someone can easily Google this, but I wanna ask you as a, as an expert, what does it mean to eat vegan? Like what is vegan? Because I get mixed up with vegetarian or pescatarian or, you know, so what is veganism, exactly?

Chef Guy Vaknin ([21:31](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1291.45)):

It's very simple. Anything that has any animal product in it that disqualifies from being vegan. So from honey to milk to uh, of course meat products, fish products. If you destroyed the ecosystem, uh, for any animal in the process of making your food, you are, uh, it's

Corey Andrew Powell ([21:55](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1315.5)):

So, even honey, you said,

Chef Guy Vaknin ([21:56](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1316.47)):

So

Corey Andrew Powell ([21:57](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1317.21)):

Extracting honey is also not vegan. Yeah. Because you've taken it from the

Chef Guy Vaknin ([22:02](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1322.03)):

Exactly. So for some people it is, and for some people it's not. And, and again, it's all like whatever you decide for yourself, right? Uh, but if you are looking at it in a pure sense, that's what it is. I was not vegan before I opened my restaurant, which is a weird, like, way in getting into this world. I was very ignorant about it. Uh, I was a regular chef, but we, me and Tali, uh, she was vegetarian. So I created that, all those items in our catering company, in my dad's place. And then we tried it out and it was great. And we decided to open a restaurant. And even the first restaurant wasn't vegan. It took me three weeks after, and a lot of people pounding on my head, you gotta make it vegan. You gotta make it vegan to make it vegan. And it took me six months after to try a vegan diet. And since then I've been there. But I never, I, I believe that people eat from the memory and remember certain foods and they want to have them. So today we take it to the extreme. I have steak kebabs and chicken kebabs and lamb kebabs and lamb cigars and uh, cheeses and pizzas with mozzarella on it. But it's all vegan.

Corey Andrew Powell ([23:14](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1394.06)):

All vegan. Wow.

Chef Guy Vaknin ([23:15](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1395.21)):

Yeah. The idea is that, yeah. That, that's, that's the idea that you will come to my restaurant, eat, have a great meal, not even know, or not even notice or not care. Cuz it's great cuz it's good food. That's all.

Corey Andrew Powell ([23:30](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/AKWlvFau8YdDVYWGbYNPhgNLdgi96f_x9-sfaHFgaI7_uWUa6K_1u7rP7RpEBIC70-FuLcr1FOBGfHvvX4GU1X3t3po?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1410.88)):

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