



## **PITCHIT FINTECH STARTUPS PODCAST NO. 85-CHRISTIAN MAYNARD-PHILIPP**

Thanks for coming back for another episode of PitchIt, a fintech conversation amongst founders, investors and friends. I'm your host, Todd Anderson, Chief Content Officer of Fintech Nexus.

What we do is we take a peek behind the curtain, what motivates someone to start a company, how do investors make the right bet, what do accelerators do during and help enabling the process of growing your company, how do banks think of founders. Not to mention, we try to have some fun and what you'll see is we'll also do some special episodes, we have some new features coming so stick with us and you'll get all you need to know about the fintech startup landscape.

PitchIt is really a part of a larger podcast network here at Fintech Nexus, you've got my colleague, Peter, our Co-Founder & Chairman for Fintech One-on-One, you can subscribe to his feed or we have our newest podcast by one of our writers, Isabelle Castro, the Fintech Coffee Break. For everything produced by Fintech Nexus, you can check out Fintech Nexus Podcast which is really our content fire hose, all shows, webinar replays, even in-person event content, not to mention, our weekly new show. As always, we hope that you rate the show and write a review. I try to really take, listen to feedback seriously as it helps make the show better. You can also follow the podcast and all of our podcasts on the feed of choice, whether it be Apple, Spotify, wherever you like to listen, will come directly to [news@fintechnexus.com](mailto:news@fintechnexus.com)

Now, let's get on with the show. (music)

**Todd Anderson:** On today's episode I'm joined by Christian Maynard-Philipp, Founder & CEO at Pattern. Christian and I discussed Pattern's origin story, why Pattern is different from maybe some of the different investing apps that you might have heard of in the market, scalability and financial advisors, the investing education gap and kind of where that sits today as more retail investors enter the markets and enter investing maybe for the first time, her time in the public sector. She's worked at Treasury under the Obama Administration and some other roles in the public sector, the best fundraising story I've ever heard and much, much more.

A couple of short PSAs before we get started. We are still accepting applications for PitchIt at Fintech Nexus USA, just head to [fintechnexus.com](http://fintechnexus.com) for the details, the link will be in the show notes link. If you want to sponsor an episode, come on as a guest or sponsor one of our many digital or in-person offerings, feel free to reach out anytime, it's [todd t-o-d-d@fintechnexus.com](mailto:todd-t-o-d-d@fintechnexus.com)

Without further ado, Christian Maynard-Philipp, Founder & CEO at Pattern, enjoy the episode!

Welcome to the podcast, Christian, how are you?

**Christian Maynard-Philipp:** I am well, how are you doing?

**Todd:** I am doing well. So, I like to start off the show, if you can just give a little bit of a professional background, you know, where have you been before starting the current venture and tell us a little bit about yourself.

**Christian:** Yes. So, thanks for having me on.

**Todd:** Of course.

**Christian:** But, yes, started out at Treasury actually under the Obama Administration working on consumer policy. From there, met my husband at a wedding on the West Coast, such is life, landed in Oregon, that's where I'm from. From there, had to figure out okay, I've been working on policy at Treasury, how do I transition to kind of real life, if you will, landed in wealth management, had a great time, learned a great deal, a great foundation for the rest of my career, but it wasn't quite the pace that I enjoy, put it that way.

So, from there I reached out to a free product retirement savings app, this was really early days when there weren't a ton of kind of retirement savings apps and they were building a retirement savings app for 1099 workers which didn't really exist at that time and I knew the space really well from Treasury. So, anyhow, reached up to the CEO with a PowerPoint and said hey, can we get coffee, pitch my PowerPoint and all the things I would do to make his business, you know, sky rocket, whatever. Anyhow, I talk to students all the time and I'm always like, shoot your shot because you'll never know.

**Todd:** Yeah.

**Christian:** Anyhow, he hired me, I moved up to the COO and CCO role very quickly because I was the one on the team with the kind of traditional financial background besides the founders and that company launched, did well, it's called Vault led by Randy Fernando who was amazing, amazing, amazing, still a mentor of mine and that company was acquired by Acorns. So, went to Acorns, helped work on what is now the later product or the retirement product.

From there, a company approached me, Third Party Technologies, Michael Giles led that company at that time, another great amazing kind of CEO in the fintech space, he said hey, we need a COO/CCO for our brokerage API company. Again, knew the space well because we had built Vault, one of the only brokerage API players in the space at that time, I knew there was certainly room for competitors. Long story short, joined that company and then Cash App or Square approached us maybe six months after I joined, they were looking for a broker/dealer of a fintech product to launch what is now Cash App Investing.

So, Square is an amazing organization, went there, was part of a small C-Suite team at Cash App and ended up building, scaling, launching what is now Cash App Investing which is, I believe, one of the fastest growing brokerage firms in the US. And then 2020 hit, my husband was finishing his medical fellowship in New York, and I was in Oregon working on Cash App Investing, he gives me a call hey, you've got to get out here, there's a bridge stop going on, I don't know if you will be able to travel for much longer. Well, I went up to New York with a week's worth of clothes thinking it would be a short visit and long story short, was out there for much longer and really saw that things were kind of starting to run on auto pilot at Cash App Investing and the world was crazy and started to see what I saw as white space for what would eventually become Pattern. And really that is, everyone I knew was finally making some money and also preparing for big life events, having your first kiss, saving for a home, you know, maybe some life lows as well, you know, navigating the course, maybe that's a high.

But long story short, there really wasn't something in the market for the digital first kind of population that I knew really well. If you have a ton of money, in my humble opinion, you're probably not going to put it all at Acorns, hard to get a hold of someone, get that kind of next level advice on really complex questions so left Square or Block, whatever you want to call it, with some of my Square stock, started building a broker/dealer from my couch in New York.

I didn't have anything else to do (Todd laughs), built it so that we could underwrite alternative assets, like I saw that as a missing piece of kind in this next generational wealth tech, a product I really wanted to use and really the rest is history. But I would say, the vision was really there, white space between your Betterment, Acorns, Wealthfront, what have you and your traditional financial advisor. There's more we can do with technology, but also, we need that human in the loop, in the loop.

**Todd:** Yeah.

**Christian:** And so, that really laid the ground for Pattern.

**Todd:** Now, did you see yourself as being a founder one day, I mean, you've worked for a variety of founders, you've been in the kind of startup founder ecosystem, was that eventually something that you were striving for or is it the white space kind of, you know, through the story you just told us, you kind of found the white space and said hey, you know, I have the time now with COVID and this opportunity kind of fell to you.

**Christian:** No, not at all, I did not see myself as a founder. If anything, I would actually love to be someone doing all the work behind the scenes and never the face of anything (Todd laughs), that would be my ideal so there you go (laughs). I don't know if you're laughing because you felt similarly.

**Todd:** I'm not a founder and I kind of like the ability to be behind the scenes a bit, yeah, so I sympathize certainly with that point of view.

**Christian:** (laughs) I would also add that I didn't know any other women, I'm sure you've probably heard this before, especially in fintech, I've never seen or at least not seen up close another fintech founder that was a woman. So, I think that that representation, it was really hard to see yourself as kind of taking that leap and it felt like there was something that I couldn't articulate that was missing from my resume, but, again, couldn't articulate what that was.

But my Mom, moms are the best, like hey, Christian, you to start, I was, what are you talking about. You have been operating and running compliance and what have you and doing all those great work behind the scenes for this really successful and, you know, companies, why not, why not you. So, I now pay that forward, side note. My side hustle, I told people all the time, is convincing women to leave their really safe corporate jobs to basically start their own companies, if they're losing sleep at night about an idea, that's kind of my metric.

**Todd:** So, when coming to the idea, you know, tell us a little bit more about what you're building at Pattern and ultimately, how'd you come to the name Pattern.

**Christian:** Yes. I came to the name through some amazing investors, 25madison early, early at the table and they helped us, quite frankly, do a ton of market research about what landed best. If it were to me, it would be a terrible name. (Todd laughs) I bought a bunch of domains, always love to do, they're terrible, they're not visionary enough, and Pattern really gives us the flexibility to build a huge booming company over time and not just be, you know, fixated around the investing piece which is certainly our focus right now.

In terms of Pattern and kind of what we built to date, so if you, it's in my (inaudible) right now, before we were in the App and Google Play Stores plug, shame on us, and really what we envision, but kind of where we're at right now, we provide premium digital office tools in app, but we also match. We have a fun algorithm, everyone with a financial advisor that's a Pattern employee and from there you can either kind of self-start your financial goals or you could reach out on demand via chat to your financial advisor immediately, hey, I got this weird notice from the IRS, look, can you tell me about this or how shall I plan for this. The vision is really to be proactive and give folks proactive kind of tax savings advice over time and a full kind of digital office suite over time so that we're doing as much financial planning with technology as possible, but also kind of arming everyone with an AI-augmented financial advisor.

**Todd:** Now, in your mind is there an ideal, you know, customer and kind of what they look like in terms of how much they make and kind of what their profile might look like?

**Christian:** Yes. We've done a ton of research around this and this kind of plays into our go-to-market strategy, customer acquisition strategy, but two thoughts, they're a little bit separate. First, we actually position ourselves as an employee wellness benefit, I think that in a crowded space that's how we build trust so we can partner with your employee and give them advice on how to save for retirement if they're feeling like ah, I need to get my debt under control, we can help assist them with a plan for that so that is kind of the go-to-market strategy. In terms of folks, professional statements that are mostly excited about us, people in tech, people in finance, interestingly, I hear often from folks for instance in private equity oh, I understand my niche very, very well, but I don't know to manage my holistic financial picture.....physicians and attorneys.

**Todd:** Interesting. I wouldn't think financial people would be, you know, I guess you get so into what you do for a living that you don't necessarily think about your own financial situation as much as maybe what your job might be.

**Christian:** And then I also had our implicit focus is, you know, if there's one thing that's different about me than maybe many of my colleagues in the kind of investing wealth tech space and that is, you know, I'm a woman so it's really important to me that we get more women investing, kind of getting their financial house in order. We know that only 26% of women in the US invest, they hold about 70% of their assets in cash so if we can seriously tap into women as a serious customer segment and really serve their needs, which we're doing a ton of research around right now, we see them as the opportunity hidden in plain sight and that's our road to IPO.

**Todd:** You know, related to that, when it comes to, you know, you mentioned the Acorns piece, the Cash App piece, you know, what is some of the stuff that's missing with the investment market. I mean, we had this whole time during COVID where we heard on, whether it be CNBC or if you read The

Journal or something like that, of this retail onslaught of hey, all these people are now looking at investing in the markets.

They either have this disposable, you know, income from maybe the government that they want to put to work that they received or they're just not traveling and doing as many things so have maybe a little bit more disposable income to put to work. And so, we've heard that there is this big retail push into the markets, what is still missing there today that I know that you guys are obviously solving for some of that, but what is...maybe expand a little bit more on what that white space is in the market.

**Christian:** So, I would say white space in the market today really, again, that space between kind of Wealthtech 1.0 and your traditional financial advisor and also, kind of these asset classes and tools that millennials, etc. really want that they might not traditionally get in the financial advisor. So, for instance, you know, some of the stats today tell us that millennials are A) digital first but they're hiring financial advisors at the fastest rate of any other generation

**Todd:** I wouldn't have thought that.

**Christian:** Yeah, me neither. But anyhow, so we are arming folks in app with on-demand access to their match financial advisor, which is very, I think, millennial of us. But really as we talk to our customers, which I'm always doing, we're seeing us really meeting that need in the market of I don't really want to go into the office and you want a financial advisor, I don't really want to meet with my parents' financial advisor, I'm busy, I have a lot going on, I want someone on-demand. I also don't want to pay a traditional financial advisor 1% to get ETFs that I could Google on the market, that's not my pace. So, really also bringing that exclusivity for why we charge, you know, a fee for our services as well.

**Todd:** The financial advisors, are they actually working for Pattern or are they a network of like independent financial advisors that, you know, are working through your network and maybe working independently on themselves as well.

**Christian:** Yeah, great question. This was an early strategic decision and we really decided we wanted financial advisors working for Pattern for a couple of reasons. One, we saw that some earlier players in the space kind of worked more as a legion kind of fintech app and what we saw in interviewing customers and folks on those companies is that there was a really big issue with quality control when you're kind of, you know, doling out those relationships and also you don't have any oversight of the conversations and kind of how things are going.

So, it's really important to keep that in-house and really lead into this vision of creating the best, whether it's through technology, a human layer experience possible to our customers. We want people to walk away and never feel frustrated, they'll say oh, I got my question answered or they're going to come back to me and answer my question later, but that was a great experience, and they handled my finances and questions with care.

**Todd:** You mentioned that that's the road to the IPO so as you scale does the financial advisor piece become, you know, almost non-scalable?

**Christian:** Yeah. So, really leaning into that AI augmentation. In a really sparked responsible way, I actually just had a call with our compliance advisors yesterday and I have a long CCO background with working with regulators on that piece to do it very responsibly as we scale and grow, but trying to for instance, you know, scale our financial advisors in a smart way whereby maybe some really easy kind of underlying, low hanging fruit questions we respond to with some help from AI.

**Todd:** And then, you know, a lot of people I know that, whether it be my wife or others, that kind of are interested in how they can grow their money, but the education gap is still fairly large. With your background in the various investing related apps that you've worked with, I mean, where would you say the investing gap on the education side is today. You know, how much has been improved by fintech and I know you guys obviously are filling that gap with financial advisors and kind of connecting people to the right people, but, overall, how big is the gap would you say today?

**Christian:** Yeah. I would say there's certainly still a gap. Fintech has made strides to really fill that gap. I also think that there has been, in some cases, an industry made out of making things sound more confusing than they are. I think financial and finances are more simple than what people would anticipate until you get into taxes, that's always complicated (both laugh), at least in the US. So, there's certainly some gaps.

Another big piece is just beating people where they are. So, for instance, in a research with women which we're partnering with some really amazing students at NYU, should out to them where they're doing just heads-down research, customer discovery just with our women customers. But something that we're seeing is just that initial reach out where you sign up in the app you're matched with a financial advisor, we're seeing that in our simple size is smaller right now, but what we're seeing is that women are much less likely to reach out to their financial advisor than men, even if they say hey, I have all these questions.

So, doing simple things like reaching out proactively after a woman is matched with, you know, their financial advisor and say hey, how can we help you, we noticed that you said you are up every night thinking about how you're going to pay off your home in a timely manner and maybe retire early, let's talk about that. And I think that's really the key, just meeting people where they are in a way that's approachable and not intimidating.

**Todd:** So, you referenced earlier that, you know, it's hard to vision yourself as a founder when there's not as many women founders in fintech, in particular. You know, we hear all the time about fintechs "promise" on delivering a more equitable and a more inclusive experience, I mean, where are we on that mission and you always see the stat of 2%, I think startups are women, founded startups that get capital. I mean, how much more can be done to influence either investors or users that there needs to be more women in fintech overall.

**Christian:** I think the stat that I referenced earlier is a really good indication why we need more female founders in fintech so, again, only 26% of women investing. For instance, apparently, if you look at Robinhood's customer stats, something around 95% of their customer base are men which is great. I use Robinhood, I was an early user, I love Robinhood, I still use it, but there are certainly more room for more diversity and that goes further than women founders in fintech.



**Todd:** A lot of it goes to, even the language that a lot of these either apps or even financial firms use in their marketing and in the presentations and everything they present tends to speak more to men than it does to women and even in subtle ways is most of the time overlooked by a lot of these companies.

**Christian:** It could be. Something also that we see in some of our research is for instance, this is kind of well know, but women are much more risk averse than men are.

**Todd:** Oh, yeah.

**Christian:** So, kind of leaning into that piece and looking at Robinhood, it makes sense, right, that would lean heavily towards kind of men customers or male customers.

**Todd:** Yeah. We're recording this on March 16th and obviously the last five days has been quite interesting with the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank, Signature Bank, news this morning of First Republic and kind of their issues. As someone who's worked in the public space, you mentioned the Obama Administration, you're also in fintech, I mean, do you have any thoughts on kind of what's been going on with the banking crisis, I guess you can call it in some ways, and kind of just the way in which Silicon Valley kind of unraveled so quickly which was kind of I guess the first Twitter bank run.

**Christian:** Twitter bank run (both laugh),wow, that's so good.

**Christian:** Yeah, great question. This was an early strategic decision and we really decided we wanted financial advisors working for Pattern for a couple of reasons. One, we saw that some earlier players in the space kind of worked more as a lead john in a kind of fintech app and what we saw in interviewing customers and folks on those companies is that there was a really big issue with quality control when you're kind of, you know, doling out those relationships and also you don't have any oversight of the conversations and kind of how things are going.

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**Todd:** You mentioned that that's the road to the IPO so as you scale does the financial advisor piece become, you know, almost non-scalable?

**Christian:** Yeah. So, really leaning into that AI augmentation and in a really sparked responsible way, I actually just had a call with our compliance advisors yesterday and I have a long CCO background with working with regulators on that piece to do it very responsibly as we scale and grow, but trying to for instance, you know, scale our financial advisors in a smart way whereby maybe some really easy kind of underlying, low hanging fruit questions we respond to with some help from AI.

**Todd:** And then, you know, a lot of people I know that, whether it be my wife or others, that kind of are interested in how they can grow their money, but the education gap is still fairly large. With your background in the various investing related apps that you've worked with, I mean, where would you

say the investing gap on the education side is today. You know, how much has been improved by fintech and I know that you guys obviously are filling that gap with financial advisors and kind of connecting people to the right people, but, overall, how big is the gap would you say today?

**Christian:** Yeah. I would say there's certainly still a gap, fintech has made strides to really fill that gap. I also think that there has been, in some cases, an industry made out of making things sound more confusing than they are. I think financial and finances are more simple than most people would anticipate until you get into taxes, that's always complicated (Todd laughs), at least in the US. So, there's certainly still some gaps and another big piece is just beating people where they are so, for instance, any research with women, which we're partnering with some really amazing students at NYU, shout out to them when they're doing just heads-down research, customer discovery just within customers.

But something that we're seeing is just that initial reach out where you sign-in in the app, you're matched with a financial advisor, we're seeing that in our simple size is smaller right now, but what we're seeing is that women are much less likely to reach out to their financial advisor than men, even if they say hey, I have all these questions. So, doing simple things like reaching out proactively after a woman is matched with, you know, their financial advisor and say hey, how can we help you, we noticed that you said you are up every night thinking about how you're going to pay off your home in a timely manner and maybe retire early, let's talk about that. And I think that's really the key, just meeting people where they are in a way that's approachable and not intimidating.

**Christian:** Twitter bank run (both laugh), wow, that's so good.

**Todd:** In 2008, I think, it took Washington Mutual eight days to lose \$16 Billion and it took Silicon Valley Bank 24 hours to lose \$42 Billion in terms of deposits leaving.

**Christian:** I don't think that I could add anything else to this conversation that happened on Twitter, but what I will say as someone with a strong compliance background, diversify, diversify, diversify your deposits. I once managed money for an individual who's, suddenly his wife died and he had no idea where any of his money was, but when we dug into it, his wife had put \$250,000 across maybe 20 banks and part of it was just pulling it altogether. At that time, I was really early in my career and, this is crazy, is it crazy, I don't know (laughs). No, I won't suggest that anyone puts their money across 20 banks, but diversifying it is never a bad thing.

**Todd:** As someone with a compliance background, I mean, you know, does a time like this and in the business that you're in with investing, do you need to do anything to then reassure people that their money is safe? You know, as a business owner yourself do you then take time back and go where is our capital, where is our money, should we be doing anything different, I mean, it does give a little bit of like self-reflection of are we doing the right thing, should we be telling our customers different things?

**Christian:** It's certainly an important inflection point, I would say, to make sure that we're doing all that we can to protect our business and make sure that, you know, it's around for generations, but also making sure that our customers are confident in the service that they're getting from Pattern and they don't even have to think about, you know, where their money is. So, yes, I would say being transparent



with customers and proactive, in terms of communication, is important at this time or, at least, that's the way that I lead.

**Todd:** Thus far, you've been, I think you launched in 2020 so almost three years now, do you have a particular regret that you can share over the last three years that you've learned about your own company and kind of your founding journey?

**Christian:** Yes. So, side note, as a highly regulated business because we have a broker/dealer, a registered investment advisor transfer agent, a lot of kind of since 2020 has been building, getting those regulatory licenses and building the product. We just now launched two months ago, however, I would say biggest regret, that's what you asked, correct.....

**Todd:** Yeah.

**Christian:** ....is probably firing faster is probably what I would say.

**Todd:** And, you know, hearing the way in which you describe how much time it takes to build the regulatory piece to it, is there sometimes a misnomer about fintech that there's a lot of loose, you know, fast and loose with the rules these companies are not building compliance and regulatory companies, that they get a bunch of venture capital money, they're trying to break things fast, but the reality is a lot different than that.

**Christian:** I would say oftentimes it's very different from that, sometimes it's not. For instance, you know, you have kind of new banking apps and banking apps and the regulations behind both are very different. So, for instance, most, you know, prepaid cards, banking apps, those are neobanks so the compliance is very different than if you're opening an account at JP Morgan Chase. I will say, in terms of securities it's pretty, at least in my experience, cookie cutter and that you need certain licenses in order to do certain things and you can't really piggyback off of someone else's license, etc.

So, in securities, for instance, when the whole FTX piece happened, I was very clear that hey, this could not happen, we are regulated, we go through external financial audits, we are summoned by several different kind of bodies of regulators, we're not in the same boat, we are absolutely regulated differently, but this could not happen.

**Todd:** What's the biggest lesson that you've learned since founding the company?

**Christian:** Biggest lesson I've learned, that's so hard, there's so many, I learn new lessons every day. (laughs)

**Todd:** Or one that you want to share. Obviously, the firing faster was a regret, but maybe something more on the positive side.

**Christian:** Something on the positive side, oh that's so hard. I would say, you know, there's always this whole healthy tension between gut instinct, data, and kind of your expertise/knowledge base and sometimes you just got to lean into that gut instinct. And also, you don't always have the best answers so I think everyone says this, hire people that are smarter than you, but that are very, very passionate

about what you're building, and the rest will kind of come together over time as long as you're steering the ship in the right direction.

**Todd:** Speaking of the team, how big is the team today, where is everyone located and kind of what's the make up in terms of like engineers and what not.

**Christian:** Yes. So, we have about 10 employees, we're all over the US, we're distributed first and I found that that is one of the best ways to hire the best talent, most passionate individuals and it's really fun on the kind of recruiting for financial advisors side because we see people that traditionally are stuck in one geographical location, you know, with the traditional wealth manager, now able to move to be closer to their mom that's getting old or what have you. So, that's kind of been the fun part of building Pattern.

**Todd:** Have you raised investment capital and if you have, you know, kind of how was that process and what did you learn about the business when going through those pitches and talking to big investors?

**Christian:** So, wild story.

**Todd:** I like wild stories. (both laugh)

**Christian:** So, I started really kind of fundraising, hiring as I got pregnant with our now daughter, she's 15 months and so, of course, things were really ramping up once I was very pregnant, I would say eight months and I'm like racing against the clock trying to get things done and, you know, so much of fundraising is momentum and once you have that momentum you've got to close. So, that being said, of course the stress of fundraising, there's stress, so I ended up giving birth a month early in the middle of fundraising. I have women reach out to me all the time for hey, you know, what's your advice, I'm doing this, I'm pregnant blah, blah, don't do what I did, just don't do it because I had so much momentum, I was kind of on the end of the bell curve, kind of starting to close things.

And so, I literally have pictures of me on slack in my hospital bed and I went back the next Monday to pitching, didn't say anything about it, just, you know, continue those due diligence meetings and it wasn't until later on when I shared with some of investors that signed on like, why didn't you tell us, like I hope that you felt comfortable to tell us because we would totally have supported you, like that's not a, you know, a red check mark in our book. So, that was nice to hear, but it's also when you're in a work mode it's not always top of mind and like are you supposed to mention it, are you not, I don't know. I just have to get it done now which we did, we closed it. (both laughing)

**Todd:** Now, that's a fascinating story and certainly and probably the best fundraising story I've heard. This is, I think, Episode 85 so I think that tops every other fundraising story. It's funny because my wife would probably yell at me because I was always the one on slack, I know she's the one giving birth, but she would always tell me to stop working. In going through the fundraising process, I mean, you've obviously mentioned the lack of diversity in fintech, I mean, was that at any point a barrier, did you feel as if investors were asking either, you know, different questions, I mean, how was the fundraising process? As we talked about, only 2% of venture-backed companies are women-founded companies so how was that?

**Christian:** You know, I would say that it was overall not a terrible experience. Fundraising, you know, especially as an operator, you always want to be operating this, one, for fun. You want to be kind of envisioning, moving things forward, spending all your time there. I'm prepping the fundraiser now and still it's like oh, I've got to live this up because really, I need to get our deck done and actually, you know, move this forward. That being said, I had a mostly positive experience, I can say that there are a couple of questions that I know if I'm asked, it's not going to happen, this was going to be our last meeting (laughs), something about me is not going to work, but really, you don't want those people on your cap table anyhow.

**Todd:** Yeah.

**Christian:** I love our cap table, we have really, really incredible investors around the table that I can call and ask about hey, I have XYZ going on with, you know, this employee, what do you all think or I'm looking to put an offer out, I have two great candidates, can you interview one because I cannot, I don't know who the best candidate is so I need another opinion which is great. However, we need more women with big liquidity FS too, we just do, I'm hoping that I will be one of them, you know, in the near future or hopefully, five to ten years, but we do, we need more women that are empowered to build their companies to a place where they're bringing in this huge liquidity and then you'll see more change, hopefully, around women being funded.

**Todd:** What piece of advice would you offer to another founder, women or men, that might pick up the episode and listen.

**Christian:** It's going to be harder than you ever expected, but keep going because the highest, highest of the lowest lows aren't there when you're a startup founder but keep going because just at the moment and this is a famous covenant, it's true, you want to give up, there's always some sort of breakthrough. So, I think keep going, it's hard but do it.

**Todd:** We have just a couple of minutes left so I'd like to end a little bit lighter. Do you have a favorite book or the last book that you read. I see there's a nice collage of books behind you there it that's real. (laughs)

**Christian:** Oh, my gosh, it actually is real.

**Todd:** I know some people have those fake book background to make them look smarter. (laughs)

**Christian:** I actually get asked this quite a bit if it's a fake background. Okay, two books that I've read somewhat recently that are so good, "Ride of a Lifetime," Bob Iger from Disney, so good and I identified with so many things where he was like getting sidetracked by perfectionism, etc.. really interesting to kind of hear his perspective and he started off his career with several acquisitions, like oh yeah, I get that.

And then I also say oh, I can't see it from here so I can't see the author, but "Better Not Bitter," one of the individuals that was arrested and part of the Central Park Five, just had an incredible story about going through so much and so much injustice, but having the most, I would say, really inspiring

perspective coming out of that situation where it's like oh, this is, like i felt it like on a spiritual level, I was like okay, i this person went through this, I can go through this. This is his perspective, it's just incredible.

**Todd:** What do you do to unwind and kind of step away? Obviously, founders always risk.....you mentioned the fundraising story, but there was risk of burnout, how do you keep yourself kind of, your mind free at times and keep yourself fresh for the team?

**Christian:** Yes. So, a couple of things, 4:30 to 7:00, I always hang out with my daughter, I am offline, I go online like 7:00 till when I go to bed, but I always hang out with family, have family time and be truly present not even looking at my phone. And then I try to wake up early, this doesn't always happen, and do it like maybe a 15-minute workout and then some kind of me spiritual time and that really.....if I do all those things, I'm like setup to do really well for the day.

**Todd:** Do you have a favorite sport or sports teams that you root for.

**Christian:** No, but I love Serena Williams.

**Todd:** Yes, she is. It's funny, I mention this to people. There's a reason why I ask the question is probably 95% of founders don't watch like typical sports and it goes to, you know, the way in which they think. It tends to be a little bit different, and you have to be a little different to be a founder.

**Christian:** Oh, interesting. I can't remember the last time I watched like a sporting event.

**Todd:** Favorite vacation spot.

**Christian:** Probably Paris, lame answer, but oh man, I love that city.

**Todd:** And then final question, what is inspires you

**Christian:** Oh, the people that I meet on my journey that need help with their finances and I'm thinking about people, my inner circle, my Mom. You know, when she was probably a younger mom and kind of getting situated after divorce and really could have used a tool like ours like okay, how do I start, how do I do this, I'm going back work, but I've never managed my finances before. But those people are really inspiring, and I would love to be a small part of their journey to help them, you know, live their best lives.

**Todd:** Well, Christian, I appreciate you taking the time and coming on the show. If someone wanted to reach out, how would they do that, how would they find you or how do they find Pattern?

**Christian:** They could reach out to me via email [christian@patternfi.com](mailto:christian@patternfi.com) or they can take a look at Pattern, request more information, get a demo if you're an employer via our website which is [patternfi.com](http://patternfi.com)

**Todd:** Well, thank you again, best of luck to you and the team.



**Christian:** Thank you, you as well.

**Todd:** Thank you.