

Carly coaching Matt 2 transcript

- Carly: [00:01](#) Hi, Matt. Thanks for allowing me to record these sessions, and yeah, thanks for the logistic stuff we just handled before this.
- Matt: [00:09](#) Oh, no worries.
- Carly: [00:10](#) Yeah, so how are you?
- Matt: [00:14](#) I'm good. I would say things are still going fairly smoothly for me in my job transition. I've been in [inaudible 00:00:24] now for a little over a month. A couple of things since we last talked, I did go through the exercise around ... If you recall, last time we chatted about how I define success. I think that was a key takeaway from our last chat. I did go through an exercise, where I wrote down two columns of how I define success, one of the columns being how I've defined it up to now in the past, past orientation, and then embracing this theme that we had last time, around being unfettered, jotted down a similar structure of bullet points from the lens of going forward in the future. I don't know if that would be a useful place to begin, or maybe you have other thoughts.
- Carly: [01:20](#) Sounds like a great place, if that's where you want to continue right now. It's totally up to you.
- Matt: [01:26](#) Let me share that with you and maybe get your reaction, and see where that goes. Let me just give you a sampling of some of the things I've written down for the past column. One of the things I started off with is just title and stature, and I think credibility or the idea that I've wanted to stand out among my peers and be recognized as "special" or leading or insert whatever adjective you'd like in that statement; I think the sense of doing better than my parents did and making my general family proud, maximizing my talents and my abilities, and avoiding failure.
- Matt: [02:35](#) Then in the future column, things are going to sound pretty different, some similar themes, but mostly different. In the future, building something new, reading as much as possible, being recognized as a thought leader, traveling and seeing more of the world, mental health and anxiety reduction, maintaining a personal and professional network that I can contribute to but also that sustains me, and then lastly, I think this is an important one, is leaving a legacy. I put two underlines under the word legacy, because I think that term is something that I'd like to explore a little bit further for myself. I wasn't able to dedicate as much time as I wanted to maybe putting more structure and thoughts around, let's say, 5-10 years, 20 years down the road.

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- Matt: [03:46](#) Looking back, how would I define my legacy? What do I want it to be? I think that's an important question for me to get an answer to. I have some initial inklings of what some of the things that could define that legacy are, so let me give you an example.
- Matt: [04:13](#) One of the things that I am starting to embrace is this concept that, and I think we may have touched on this last time, is just the realization that I'm the first millennial officer. I think that is an opportunity. In substance, it places some amount of responsibility on me, but I think it's also an opportunity to infuse new thoughts and be a little bit disruptive, well, maybe more than a little bit disruptive, be disruptive, period, and long-term, big picture focused.
- Matt: [04:53](#) One of the ways that came out recently is that I remember telling you I was struggling. Last time we talked, I was struggling with this selection decision for back-filling my old role. I was between a couple different candidates, but I talked it over with my boss a little bit and put it in this lens of what I want my legacy to be in the sense of this being disruptive. I ended up landing on a candidate that I didn't think that I was ... that was in my top two going in, but she's younger. She's a lot like me.
- Matt: [05:35](#) She's very smart, smart as a whip, but doesn't have the same number of years of experiences and pedigree as some of the other candidates, and so it's a little bit more of a riskier choice, in the sense that I'm going to have to defend it a little bit more around the organization, but I'm absolutely convinced that she's got the same disruptive, creative mentality that I want to promote. That's just an example of, I think, one of the ways this structuring or framing up of my legacy and what I want to be could aid me in my day-to-day, if that makes sense.
- Carly: [06:24](#) Well, Matt, you make a lot of sense. The amount of thought you do put into this already, and just the depth and breadth of how you've been going about looking at this whole legacy thing is, I have to say, inspiring to me. It's not something that is in my wheelhouse, and to hear somebody so connected to that and thinking about things in the way you do, I can imagine that you're inspiring to others, as well.
- Matt: [06:56](#) Yeah, thanks for saying so. I had a series of conversations in making the decision I made around this candidate, letting some people know they didn't get the job, and letting her know she got the job. One of the things I observed is the conversations that I had, where I was telling some very tenured, seasoned, professional people, really great people, qualified in their own

right, that they didn't get the job, because I struggled with that. I had some anxiety around those conversations. Most of them ended okay. A couple of them got kind of emotional, but they were fairly draining for me, emotionally.

Matt: [07:43](#) The conversation I had with the young woman that was successful ... She was absolutely shocked, speechless, that I had chosen her for this opportunity. I explained to her my thought process over how I went about this, and part of that process being is I don't necessarily care about your background, the time you've spent in your chair, who's the name of the person that recommended you. All that, to me, is superfluous. It's ancillary. Really, it's do you have the brain power to make a difference and be creative and innovative and push the envelope and have the passion and the energy to get that stuff done? Can you talk to people? Can you influence the leadership team?

Matt: [08:38](#) She's got all these things, even though she's still early on in her career. She's got all these things. I told her that I see all these things in her, and that she was the most qualified person for the job, even though she had gotten some advice from her current blind management structure that, oh, perhaps she shouldn't think too much about this job, because there are others in line ahead of her.

Matt: [09:08](#) I think she had had deflated expectations going into it, because of the way the organization has typically done things. When I was able to give her the good news, she was just so shocked that somebody, A, had recognized those things in her, and B, that somebody was willing to take a risk and break from the norm of what the organization typically does, in order to give her that chance. I explained to her that I was given that chance at a young age, and I feel like it's part of my responsibility and part of what I want to inspire, in terms of culture change around this building, just to pay that forward and recognize. It won't always be a young person, but anybody that maybe has ... Whether they fit the normal profile or not, but anybody who has those mix of ingredients, I want to surround myself with.

Carly: [10:12](#) Yeah, sounds like good leadership principles. Yeah, you're being exposed, obviously, to a lot of people, and to make your decision based on some criteria that may be disruptive to the organization, that says a lot about you and what you're about. You talk about this desire to leave a legacy and really explore that further. You've also talked about some of the anxiety. You have a number of times on this call already, and I know this is something you're working on, around having some of these

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draining conversations or whatever. I'm just interested as to what are you feeling is going to be a good direction for us to move in today?

- Matt: [11:01](#) Well, as I was thinking about this call and prepping for it, I mean, I do think going down the path and exploring that legacy and building that out, and maybe talking about what's possible and fleshing that out a little bit more, I think, would be a useful path to go down. I also think, in parallel with that ... I mean, you rightly point out that there is this theme of saying okay, well yeah, that's all great. That legacy thing, that sounds fantastic, but ... but there's this, but there's that. There are these nagging hindrances, these obstacles, these anxieties, that tend to percolate.
- Matt: [11:47](#) I think one of the ... I felt it today, this morning. I was in a conversation with one of my peers, and he was talking about some underperformance in his business area and how some HR issues were contributing to that. I immediately wanted to react to that by going into this mode of self-questioning and how could I have done something better, and this perfectionism type of reflex.
- Matt: [12:24](#) I think, when I go down that rabbit hole, I can even just feel it in my chest. That's where some of those negative types of emotions and anxieties ... They're so easy to just pop out and consume me sometimes and distract. They're really a distraction from, I think, this bigger picture, longer term focus on what I want to be, and how I want to show up, and what I want to be in the future. I do think that that ... There is a parallel path that I need to continue to work on, as well. I don't know if it's like an offense/defense type of a thing.
- Matt: [13:17](#) I mean, I've got this offense branch, which is I want to go on offense to define my legacy and the things that are important to me, and my priorities over the long term and stay fixated and focused on those things. Then there's a defense piece, which is like I'm constantly playing defense against these impulses of anxiety and perfectionism and self-doubt and constraining myself. I think what I'd like to adjust my tactics around is being more on offense and less on defense.
- Carly: [13:54](#) It's so interesting that you would say that, because my thought was like a game of football.
- Matt: [14:08](#) Right.

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- Carly: [14:09](#) How do offense and defense play together? I'm wondering whether there's something you want to explore around that, or in parallel paths, or do you feel like there's some other metaphor/analogy that you want to use as a possible exploration of this, as well?
- Matt: [14:32](#) Yeah, I mean, I struggle with this, because I guess I just don't know what the right metaphor is. I mean, I struggle with this idea of defense and how much of it do I want to keep, because it's part of my personality and it's served me up to this point, and integrate it into that overall game plan, as you reference. Is the right strategy integrating the good aspects of that defensive posture into the whole to make it more productive, or do I want to discard some of those elements of defense that are overly constrictive, overly risk averse, that hold me back and divert my energy from scoring, scoring goals. You know what I mean?
- Carly: [15:19](#) Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- Matt: [15:22](#) I think maybe it is an apt metaphor, and I think it's akin to this head coach setting the strategy and how much of an offensive orientation do you want versus defensive? It's been damn successful playing defense for many, many years, but I think it's come at a toll, and there's a major price tag associated with always being guarded. I guess, the realization that I've come to is that, just for my own sanity, I mean, if nothing else, I need to pivot to a much more offensive oriented mindset. I mean, will I ever eliminate the defensive part of my thought patterns and thought processes? Probably not. I mean, some of that's probably ingrained. It's so far ingrained from nature or nurture or whatever combination of it, that it's probably a fool's errand to say I'll get rid of those tendencies entirely, but I certainly want to de-emphasize them.
- Carly: [16:43](#) It's interesting to hear you speak about the differences between ... or how defense has really made you be successful, and your desire to play more on offense. I'm just wondering, if you were to consider what piece of this you'd like to bite off today ... I mean, we can bite off any part of this and play with it. Given that you want to talk about your legacy, and it seems like your way of being who you are and how you want to show up in the future is somehow related to this legacy ... Or am I making that up?
- Matt: [17:22](#) No, no, the offense piece is the legacy part that I'm referring to. I think it's the same thing. It's just different names for it.

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- Carly: [17:30](#) Okay, so if we were to explore this offense/defense and perceive what there is there to find, or however that would serve you, what do you think you would like to ... What would be hitting it out of the ballpark today, in terms of an outcome?
- Matt: [17:51](#) Well, I think if I could at least have a starting point for framing up what does going on offense more look like and, alternatively, to switch metaphors, what is that legacy? What are some maybe foundational elements of that, that I want to consume more of my mental energy than the defensive components? If I could at least start to get a handle around that, because to be quite honest with you, I haven't thought that over that much to this point, and I do view that as a next step.
- Carly: [18:35](#) Well, this is why we're here and you have this coaching, is you get to play in whatever way you want to. I'm excited to play with you in this exploration.
- Matt: [18:48](#) Okay, good.
- Carly: [18:48](#) You talk about foundational, wanting to get a handle on that and look at what's going on in the whole offense and what that looks like. Where would you like to take us next?
- Matt: [18:59](#) Well, I mean, I do ... The reason why I related that story to you around this individual that I just offered the job to is just it was remarkable to me how energizing that conversation was for me, personally, and how much I felt just totally right, just totally right in the decision that I made, not because I have no doubts. I mean, the transition for this individual will be tough, and we'll both face headway. I don't mean the decision was right in terms of I selected the right candidate, in terms of qualifications. I just mean it felt right, in terms of I was doing the right thing, in terms of my legacy. I was coming at that decision from the right lens, and so to serve as long term interest, to be the disrupter.
- Matt: [20:03](#) I think part of that legacy will include some amount of positive disruption. If I had to put the first phrase down, pen to paper, on what that definition is, I think positive disruption is going to be a part of it. When you think about disruption, I think what it entails is ... One aspect of it is creative destruction, right? You're tearing down assumptions, things about the status quo, to make room for the new, the improved, the novel.
- Matt: [20:52](#) I think another piece of it is, I guess, inherently iconoclastic. It's disruptive in the sense that others may view it as threatening, and that's okay. Some of that's healthy. When I look back, I

want to be able to say, "Here are the things that I achieved. Here are the things I helped build. Here are the new innovations and the new territory that I helped to forge, and yeah, I pissed some people off, but in the long run, I created some things."

Matt: [21:44](#) I guess, this sense of positive disruption and mold breaking and potentially controversy, I think, is something that is appealing to me, not controversy for the sake of being controversial, but controversy in service of doing the right thing. For instance, and stop me if I'm talking too long, but one of the examples of this is recent. I was an executive sponsor for our Pride Month here, for LGBT awareness issues. There's certain aspects of, or elements of, the company that aren't quite ready for that, but I thought it was important, and it was in service of something that I care about. It's something I think is right. That's an example of something where if there's detractors, I don't care, because I've got the long-term best interest of the company and my values at stake.

Carly: [23:19](#) Matt, I am interested in something. When you speak about being a positive disruptor, and I don't care, and I feel that this is important, this whole being an executive sponsor in Pride Month, and all of these things, I notice a very strong sound to your voice. I'm wondering where the anxiety and that emotional set is when you consider what you've just told me. Where is it?

Matt: [23:53](#) Yeah, well, it's definitely in a back seat. I mean, I guess when I'm speaking about a passion of mine, or about a value of mine, or something that I feel is right ethically or it's just maybe a value that I very much embrace, I'm much less worried about failure or my own anxieties. My anxieties tend to come out in just terms of my day-to-day worries. They don't come out in the big picture.

Matt: [24:37](#) You challenged me, the last time we talked, around this dual nature of optimism versus skepticism. I guess it's a similar thing. I mean, on big picture things about the future and my values and the world as it should be and things of that nature, I tend to be very optimistic, and I tend to be very passionate, and I don't really have any sense of anxiety around those things. I'm willing to take a stake, and I'm willing to expose myself and put myself out for risk, but it tends to be on the very minor, minute minutiae, the day-to-day, the to-do list, the individual conversations that are tough, with tough people, or feelings like this project or that project or this person or that person is unhappy or what have you. Those are the ... The little day-to-day things are the things that give me anxiety.

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- Matt: [25:39](#) Again, it goes back to offense and defense. When I say defense, those are the things that are tripping me up, where I'm just ... I dedicate so much of my mental energy to just spinning on these details of short-term issues, still important, still needs to get done, but they're, by definition, short-term. Will I be thinking about them six months from now? Probably not, but the big picture stuff, the long-term stuff, the things about right and wrong, and making the world better, as I see it, that's the kind of stuff where the anxiety just ... It's not even there. It's not even something that I'm suppressing. It's just not even there.
- Carly: [26:25](#) Why do you think that is?
- Matt: [26:33](#) I think it's because those things are not about me. They're bigger than me. They're me in service to a cause or something, or other people. Some of these things are about justice, and some of these things are about progress and equality and things that I care about pretty passionately. It's not me on the line; it's the ideas. Whereas, the day-to-day things are my personal life day-to-day successes and failures, and it's me and my record or performance and things of that nature that are on the line. I think that's the difference.
- Carly: [27:40](#) Given that you want to get a handle on the foundational elements, the starting point of what going on offense looks like, what insights or opportunities do you feel you've surfaced already?
- Matt: [27:57](#) Well, I think I've started to put at least some phrases around the definition of what legacy means to me. I think what I've also maybe pointed out is that the more I can frame those future pursuits in the context of being at service to something larger, the more likely it is that I'll be on offense and not wrapped up in the trivialities of the defense, so to the extent that I can, as part of that legacy, frame, yes, positive disruption, but in service to what? I think that's maybe the framework, the correct framework: Positive disruption in what ways and in service to what?
- Carly: [28:51](#) Mm-hmm (affirmative), sounds good. There's something about where you put your attention about in service of what that feels like a distinguishing factor here.
- Matt: [29:10](#) I agree, yeah, because it goes to purpose. As I look at the past, my past definition of success versus my future definition of success, the past definition of success was very incremental. It was hey, climb to the next ladder of the rung, because it's there. It's the next rung. Obviously, that's the next thing you need to

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do, right? The past is very defined. It's fixed. It's rigid. It's obvious. It's just this one step in front of the other type of success trajectory, but I think that can be unguided, right? I mean, there's no choice necessary in that model.

- Matt: [30:10](#) In this future model, where it's open, much more open road with lots of potential vectors and paths. There needs to be a compass pointing in a direction of some rationale, some motivation, for what steps are taken. I think that the idea here, this in service of what, is the concept of purpose, like purpose.
- Carly: [30:51](#) Is that what you want to explore now, or are you just making an observation about that's something as a foundational piece?
- Matt: [31:01](#) I do think it's a question. It has the danger of being so big that it doesn't have an answer, but because it's not obvious to me. Is it truly obvious to anyone? I don't know, but I mean, when you talk about what's the purpose of life, I could get philosophical on this, but I mean, it's certainly not obvious to me. I think some people might know, but the way my brain works is I'm not a very black-and-white person. I don't have very rigid or structured beliefs necessarily, so it's not a very clean answer for me, if that makes sense.
- Carly: [32:02](#) Yeah, yeah, I understand and feel that way, too. It's a murky something that one has to ponder over some time and come to a resolution for oneself, just what that means.
- Matt: [32:19](#) Yeah, I mean, for a lot of people, that's their religion or whatever else, not for me. When you don't have that, you have a question of well, what is it? I think, in some sense, it's just the general sense that ... For me, at least, it's progress. It's leaving the world better than I found it. It's enjoying relationships. It's being ethical. It's building something constructive, having some fun and some irony and learning, and generally trying to be a champion of things that will make life better for the most amount of people. I mean, I think that's it.
- Matt: [33:18](#) I think, for me, it's more about values, like progress, equality, freedom, self-expression, science. Those are the things that I think are my ideals. I think that's what I would have to be in service to.
- Carly: [33:54](#) Well, you're clear when you say those things. I'm wondering how they fit, if at all, with your foundational elements for going on offense.

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- Matt: [34:09](#) I think there's something there. I think it might be reverse engineering this, so maybe starting at the end, starting with those values, and then working backwards, so say, if I start with those values and say those are the things I want to be in service to, in what ways can I be of service to those things? Whether I'm doing them now, or whether they're close to my ability to influence now in my current job, in my current scope of activities, or if maybe they're just totally new or totally different from what I'm doing today, maybe not being super selective about those types of things and maybe put it in the lens of positive disruption, of maybe the more disruptive the better.
- Matt: [34:56](#) I mean, I think that might be if I can give ... I don't know if it's allowed if I can give myself homework, but I think that's maybe the next takeaway is maybe start with those list of values and start to think on or maybe jot some things down around in what ways can I be of service to those values over the long haul, within this frame of positive disruption? That might be a starting point for defining this legacy/offense orientation.
- Carly: [35:30](#) Mm-hmm (affirmative), that's some good worth in that. That's good. When you feel that totally right piece, or that energizing piece, how do you feel?
- Matt: [35:48](#) Justified, energized, resolute, fulfilled. I guess those are some of the adjectives.
- Carly: [36:10](#) Oh, well, I feel a sense of expansiveness, just hearing you talk about this. It seems like positive disruption is a very key ... I don't know whether it's a value or something, how you would name it. It seems really pivotal. I'm wondering how you could use that concept also around the short-term, the anxiety that comes up. What's the positive disruption possible for you?
- Matt: [36:54](#) Yeah. I think the idea of disruption implies a little bit of chaos, which is antithetical to having this neat, tidy, structured perfection, where all the bows are tied in neat little knots, right?
- Carly: [37:22](#) Yeah.
- Matt: [37:24](#) If I could mentally embrace the kind of chaos that I'm so eager and willing to embrace in the long term for big picture issues, if I could embrace that same spirit of chaos and trust that through that chaos something positive will happen, if I could embrace that same mentality in the short-term, day-to-day stuff, I wouldn't have nearly the same anxieties that I do.

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- Carly: [37:54](#) That's quite a ... I don't know if it's an insight. Does it feel new to you, or did you already know that?
- Matt: [38:04](#) I think I had some inkling of that. I guess my struggle has been taking that plunge. It just feels like you're on a high diving board, and it feels like you're looking down into some abyss. It just feels unsafe to me. Logically, I get it. I see that as an opportunity to embrace this chaos in the day-to-day, but it just feels dangerous.
- Carly: [38:50](#) What would you possibly or could you possibly experiment with that would have you be on the low diving board, where it's not so dangerous?
- Matt: [39:01](#) Yeah, I mean, I suppose there could be some experimentation with a few lower risk or even maybe, hell, even higher risk items and just see what happens. I mean, one failure is not going to kill me.
- Carly: [39:19](#) Unless you're on the 30 meter diving board, or whatever it is, with the cliff diving.
- Matt: [39:25](#) Right.
- Carly: [39:27](#) Then that might, but unless you really [crosstalk 00:39:30]
- Matt: [39:30](#) Exactly.
- Carly: [39:32](#) Watching the Red Bull Cliff Diving Series. Oh, my gosh! Are they going to live? What would you like to ... You've given yourself some homework around your values and that, but what else feels right, as I know we're coming up to the end of our session here soon, and what would you like to take on that feels like something that gives you positive disruption in a different way?
- Matt: [40:06](#) Yeah, I mean, I guess I see two maybe action items for me, here. One is to go ahead and explore that purpose, values, legacy topic and maybe do a little bit of thought on that. We already talked about that, but I think maybe another, maybe to do a little bit of experimentation, maybe to take an issue that comes up in the next week or two, one that would typically give me some heartburn, some anxiety, and just play around with it, maybe put it in the context of this positive disruption and play around with it, and see how I can approach it from a different angle, and just maybe see what kind of lessons I learn and what happens. I mean, does the worst case scenario that I'm envisioning truly pan out? Maybe there's some positives that

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come out of it. Maybe there's some creativity that comes out of viewing these issues differently. I mean, I think I don't know what experiment I want to run on that yet, but I think maybe looking for the opportunity to run that experiment over the next week or two might be a good takeaway.

Carly: [41:18](#) Mm-hmm (affirmative), okay, anything else come to mind that would help you?

Matt: [41:27](#) I think that might be enough.

Carly: [41:35](#) Yeah, they're just little things.

Matt: [41:35](#) I think that might be all I can commit to.

Carly: [41:37](#) Oh, my gosh, well that's ... Just let me check. How do you feel, in terms of getting somewhere around a starting point for what's going on?

Matt: [41:46](#) Yeah, I think it's great. The way I think is I think in terms of frameworks, and this helps me tremendously with the framework of how I might be able to attack that problem a little bit and maybe put some meat to the bones.

Carly: [42:04](#) Let me ask you, now what stood out for you, or what did you learn today, maybe about yourself?

Matt: [42:11](#) Well, I didn't think we were going to go down the path of life purpose, but I can see how that is, if not central, it's certainly a component of some of these issues that I'm grappling with. That was surprising to me that we went down that territory, but in retrospect, I can see how that's linked and how that could be a motivator for this legacy definition. I guess, I'm pleasantly surprised that we headed in that direction.

Carly: [42:48](#) Oh, good. I'm just wondering, any ... How are you feeling right now?

Matt: [43:00](#) Sometimes this sort of probing and thinking about introspectively, it's a little taxing, but I think that's okay. It's like maybe getting a good workout in, you know what I mean? You feel tired, but you feel like you accomplished something.

Carly: [43:23](#) Yeah, I know exactly what you mean. Yeah, I like to sweat it out on the yoga mat, hot yoga mat.

Matt: [43:31](#) Yeah, there you go. That's the way I feel.

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Carly: [43:33](#) [crosstalk 00:43:33] Anything else you feel we need to address before we close today?

Matt: [43:39](#) No, I think that was another great session, and I've got some good takeaways. I appreciate you being willing to provoke some of those thoughts.

Carly: [43:52](#) Well, it's a pleasure and a joy to experience your amazing [inaudible 00:43:59] of, I'll call it, duality, the whole positive disruption, and the right and the wrong, the future and the present, and the black and the white, and the whatever. I mean, it's just a pleasure to hang on for the ride.

Matt: [44:24](#) Well, good, good.

Carly: [44:24](#) I've made a time ... We've got another time for just over a couple of weeks, given it's Labor Day coming up, and there's a few things on there, so I'll look forward to hearing how you're doing and whatever you want to talk about and report on when we speak next.

Matt: [44:39](#) Okay, excellent, excellent.

Carly: [44:41](#) All right.

Matt: [44:41](#) I'll look forward to it, as well.

Carly: [44:43](#) Thanks, Matt. Bye for now.

Matt: [44:48](#) All right, talk to you next time.

Carly: [44:48](#) Okay.

Matt: [44:48](#) All right, bye-bye.

Carly: [44:48](#) Bye-bye.