



Jake 00:10

Thank you so much, Lucy for coming on the show and taking the time to talk to me today. I really appreciate it. And looking forward to this conversation. You are primarily investing right now I believe, but prior to that started a really successful company. For those who don't know you, I think the best way to get started would just be to sort of take people through your story a little bit and then we can, you know, dig into various things and have a fun conversation.

Lucy Guo 00:34

Yeah, definitely. Hi, everyone. I'm Lucy, I grew up in the Bay Area, I got into tech pretty early on, learned how to make websites back in second grade and then realize that I could make money on the internet by selling Neopets items. So I started creating bots to auto buy endgame items, and I sold items, accounts, etc. And then just started making various websites. After that I'm created one of the first Twitter bots out there. And then after that, I ended up going to Carnegie Mellon double majored in CS and HCI. And got very into hackathons. During my time in college, I was going to collegiate hackathons, every few weeks competing, and then through that, I ended up just applying to the CIO fellowship, and got it back in 2014. So I dropped out of college and then ended up pursuing that. Afterwards, I be committed product design at Quora, and then became one of the first female product designers at snap ad was still just building stuff every single weekend, one day, ended up in an Uber car where someone told me to go meet a guy that coined the term silicon beach. So I look at this guy on Twitter, he's already following me, I ping him and I asked him for advice, because I'm like, Hey, I think I want to start a company again. And we meet up and he offers to invest. And then around the same time, I get into Y Combinator, so I leave snap to go join yc. And during yc, I end up co founding scale AI. Back then it was called skill API. And our whole tagline was API for humans, and the scale AI so we basically use AI and humans to accelerate machine learning and other companies by giving them the most accurate training data. So I built up the operations team ran product there. And then afterwards decided I really liked early stage. And I wanted to figure out how to essentially scale building that many early stage companies and landed on venture. So I was visiting la add, a good friend of mine gave he started the largest hackathon in the world, mentioned, he wanted to do venture funds. So in three days, we like made a pitch deck had our first commit, and that ended up being back in capital, and back in capital. Our whole thing is we invest in brilliant engineers as early as possible. So we really enjoy being the first check in and our check sizes now range from between 250 K to one mil. So we're usually either like co leading or leading now.



Jake 03:10

Great, well, I appreciate you sharing the story. It's really interesting. I'd like to sort of start by going back to the beginning, you talked about sort of starting businesses and building products from a young age talked about like the Neopets project, but I remember that from way back, how old were you when you started sort of doing these business type things?

Lucy Guo 03:29

I got into trouble in school for selling colored pencils. I don't actually remember that but my parents told me how they got many calls from my teachers and principals. I wasn't supposed to be selling things that our kids but I was second grade when I really started body Neopets.

Jake 03:49

That's pretty funny. I love asking people sort of, I think I might have to make a recurring question on the podcast like what was the first thing you did for money? I think it's just you know, in terms of work, I think it's just like so revealing about sort of the you know, inherent hustle and like a given person and just like business minded nature and like building sort of tendency and things like this. So then you know, growing up obviously you're doing this sort of stuff all the time any other stories that that come to mind from you know, the early days

Lucy Guo 04:20

from the early days I don't know I just kind of just like I would get Pokemon cards and trade them for more. I hustled with like colored pencils, I guess. But I think that body Neopets was when I really did first like make money online and I got my parents I think for this because they realized at some point that the best way to punish me was just stealing my money. And I figured if I had a PayPal account, they wouldn't be able to do that. So I got like a Visa Debit Card and back then you can make a PayPal account with just Visa Debit cards, so fake my age made a PayPal account, and I was a little bit of an asshole like other websites. I made up You know, those streaming websites, I would find popular TV shows and just buy the domain like watch x.com or watched x dotnet, whatever. And then I would find episodes that were being filmed in the future, and then just take a screencap from that, and an overlay a play button, and then overlay a survey. And every time someone completed a survey, it'd be \$5. And they wouldn't be able to view the video because it didn't exist, because it wasn't filmed yet. And I was submitted to all these streaming websites to do that. So that actually



ended up being very successful, just for Google ads and serve as literally random websites like that.

Jake 05:41

That's funny, cuz, you know, I was probably on the clicking end of a few of those back in the day trying to find a good, good movie or TV show. So now I know who I have to thank for the survey that leads to nothing.

Lucy Guo 05:53

Yep.

Jake 05:55

Cool. Well, you know, obviously, you started grow up and start doing these more. No, I guess I would say legitimate ventures you're going to hackathons throughout college. First of all, I have to ask you about your major. I think it was something like human computer interface, along with computer

Lucy Guo 06:10

science doubled in computer science and HCI, which is human computer interactions.

Jake 06:16

Yeah, human computer interaction. So that strikes me as like, you know, not an obvious or popular major, maybe maybe I'm wrong, but how did you sort of decide to go that route?

Lucy Guo 06:28

I would say Carnegie Mellon specifically was known to had the best HCI program in the world. So I was probably just drawn to it for prestige To be frank. But also I knew I wanted to do design and HCI was my way into design. I realized, in college at hackathons that I learned to code, because I liked creating products, and that it was my method of design. And I wanted to get better at that. So I was like, kind of a self taught designer, just through these hackathons. And like everything I did beforehand, but like, I guess, I don't know how much I learned in my HCI classes. But they were good. It was interesting, for sure.

Jake 07:12

Yeah, totally, at the very least I led you to where you are now whether or not they really played a part. So that's, that's good. But when you think about design, you know, you mentioned a few times that that's just sort of like the core of sort of what drives you and you know, inspires you to build



products and things. What are like the first few things that come to mind in terms of like, design principles, or just sort of, you know, you said, you're self taught, like, what were these things that sort of occurred to you over time that you think about, like, first and foremost, when it comes to design?

Lucy Guo 07:44

I think the way I view design actually, is that our view products in general, because it's a more product oriented, is that people think that design matters a lot. But I think it really only matters for one thing, which is trust. Because if someone wants a product enough, no matter how broken it is, they will go through many hoops to try and use the product, even if it's super buggy, etc. But when it comes to like, if you're selling to enterprise companies, for example, then that's when it breaks, like you can't just have it be buggy. And because there's a lack of trust, and there's a lot of things you can do within design to build trust. And some of it is very simple. It's just like colors and UI. Every product has different I believe design principles. Like consumer, like something like snap is gonna be very different than something like CSI.

Jake 08:39

Right? Can you sort of recall a time where you sort of explicitly built something into a product that sort of, you know, enhanced the trust from your perspective, or like that really sort of clicked with you whether it was like snap or scale or otherwise. For trust, I

Lucy Guo 08:55

would say it's generally been more UI. I would say like for the scalars, that was very important because they're like trusting this random website to pay them for labeling tasks. I would say there was like little gamification elements we made to make it feel not so tiring to do autonomous tasks, and to make them feel happy. Like we would have like a little congrats thing after they do 10 tasks with playful sounds. And then we did separate it like pen tasks at a time. Because you can imagine that like you'd want to break after 10 tasks and that doing like labeling for two hours straight with nothing in between would feel very fatiguing.

Jake 09:41

Right? Yeah, that makes a lot of sense. And I definitely want to dig into scale super interesting projects super successful obviously. Recently, most recently, I saw it's valued at over a few billion dollars I think, and really got to like a billion dollar valuation and just a few years.



Lucy Guo 09:56

Oh, side note, actually on trust. I have an interesting one about snap

Jake 10:00

Okay, go for it go for the snap.

Lucy Guo 10:03

We're designing chat at snap. We were thinking about, like users trust snap, because it's private, right? So we were really thinking about how to keep the privacy of users. So we were thinking from like, a male man's perspective. And we decided to make the stickers like the most recently used stickers, unique for every single user. So for example, if like, a girlfriend looked over and notice a sticker that a guy sent our I was, like, most recent, but it wasn't something that he had said to her that she wouldn't have any questions.

Jake 10:45

Right. So it's like a unique sticker thing. That's interesting. It's not like super obvious, but I get it with. Yeah, with the way that you framed it. How was well, before we get to snap? Carnegie Mellon, you're there, you're studying the the What is it? HCI is what it's called. Right? And then, and you're doing these hackathons. But you decided to drop out you have I guess, you said, you basically came upon the teal fellowship, through the hackathons. We'd love to hear like, sort of how that played out. And then also, you know, how did you make the decision to drop out I personally, like, dropped out after my freshman year of college and then, but but sort of viewed as like something where I could always go back and then ultimately started a company failed the company and went back to not back to my old school, but to a new school after a year. And it all worked out, I think, but dropping out and never looking back is another story. I'd love to hear sort of how you consider that decision.

Lucy Guo 11:44

Yeah, so I actually met the teal fellowship team, back in my senior year of high school, and then through the hackathons are pretty active in the community. So I just kept in touch with them. And I believe I got the teal fellowship, because I had won almost every or I won a prize. There's multiple prizes, almost every hackathon I've been to, if not every single one. And I applied with really no idea I like literally use the hackathon project that built the week before. But and I'm pretty sure it was accepted because of my performance at hackathons. And not because the idea was good or anything else. And then as for how I decided to drop out is fairly easy. Like, for me,



I was like, I already have full time job offers, I'll be fine. Like this is this is just to not feel like a risk. I was like, I could go back to college, I could go full time at one of the companies that gave me an offer. Or I could do the shift fellowship.

Jake 12:46

So So how did you go about maybe the what sounds like maybe like the more difficult part of the decision, which was like, do you join one of these companies? It's given me an offer go the teal fellowship? How do you decide on the teal fellowship?

Lucy Guo 12:58

I think I was always very entrepreneurial. And I wanted to start a company immediately. which I think was a good experience. But like, obviously, what I dropped out, I don't think I had enough experience a real world experience. So it didn't last too long. I think I like worked on my own thing for just six months before I was like, Okay, I want to get a job.

Jake 13:21

Yeah, so So how does it work? Exactly. I'm not actually super familiar. Like, it sounds like you had to have at least as a part of your application, some sort of idea for a company, even though you said, you know, they probably took you mostly for just your success at these hackathons. But but it sounds like you applied with the company. And then like, what's the actual extent of the to fellowship? Because I think of it as like, sort of a, you know, a lifelong network, basically. But I'm curious like,

Lucy Guo 13:48

and I would view it as just like free money, lifelong network of free money. I'm really close with a lot of shuffles still. But if there was like, it was very unstructured. A lot of people like they'll just you know, travel and work on research projects for a while, you can really do almost anything but take a job at like Google.

Jake 14:09

Yeah, you can't take something that basically just like takes all of your attention away towards that thing. Going, you know, moving beyond the teal fellowship, you sort of you go on you work at snap, it sounds like I know you spend some time at Cora as well. Ultimately, you decide sort of your big project, you're gonna work on scale. Can you tell sort of like the founding story for the company, and you sort of hinted at it earlier for, you know,



helping to develop AI by sort of pairing humans along with along with AI. We'd love to hear hear sort of like the founding story there.

Lucy Guo 14:39

Yeah, so we entered yc not really sure what we wanted to do either. But I heard this like trick. I don't know if it's true story, but Rumor has it that part of the script came out because the founders made 50 landing pages, and then those were like two that worked. And that just sounded smart. To me, whereas I get traction before building out the actual product. So built out a bunch of landing pages and buddies are actually on the weekend ever. So around the same time that we came out with the scale and the page because we were like API for human sound super controversial. I built a crowdsource Pokemon GO map that ended up getting 5 million users. The first week yc basically told us, hey, scale is going to fail. It's not as good of an idea as Pokemon GO map I really like it's, it's a Pokemon Go back. But they're like, you can extend it to something else. Like you have this great user base right now, etc. I was actually pretty crazy. A lot of people were using that Pokemon GO map. But I guess like we were known as a team that was pivoting like way too much. And then Excel, that we found out this later, but they told us like, Hey, we basically gave you a series A so you stopped pivoting. Because we knew that you guys were about human, we wanted you to work on scale. We didn't really like you're too embarrassed to tell yc that we had fundraised before Demo Day. But we finally told them like, hey, so we have a series a term sheet or scale? And they're like, oh, okay, cool. You should take. And that was the how we finally landed on one idea. And then as for how the idea came about, we were working on the healthcare app before, it was called Eva. And the whole idea is like, hey, well, I connect you to the best doctors were specialized procedures. And we were just calling doctors and wishing they were an API that would call doctors for us. So we're like, yeah, like API for humans. That sounds great. So maybe that at first, we very quickly realized phone calls was a very bad endpoint to have for like multiple reasons, including quality control, we were getting very weird API requests when people were essentially asking us call people to scam people, etc. So we took down that API endpoint, but also like, you can't really train machine learning on API calls, or like not nearly as much versus image recognition was much easier. So yeah.

Jake 17:19

Are there any of these ideas from like, when you were pivoting around, as you know, during your time at yc, that you sort of still want to see dope that haven't really come to fruition yet?



Lucy Guo 17:30

Um not really know. I mean, our ideas are so dumb to start to be honest, I still think there's probably a better reason like, we wanted to build legally build a better dock dock. And I would like to see that come to fruition. But the way we were doing it was just not great. Because we had like this whole mobile first app, etc. We're like, well, young people, all people that have health problems that need specialized procedures are probably not going to use the mobile app and young people, it's going to be like a one time use app and and you're never going to use it again. So I think it would take a lot more thought to create a better Sock Doc. But yeah,

Jake 18:06

yeah, it makes sense. I would the Pokemon GO thing that you mentioned, I never really used it myself. I mean, I think I like download the app at some point to sort of test it out. But I basically did enough to realize that like, it was actually pretty cool in terms of just the technology behind it like that, you could sort of walk around and sort of stumble upon things. And there was like an interactive element there. And I expected to see like a whole flood of sort of different types of apps that, you know, weren't necessarily Pokemon, but more of like, real life applications, like you sort of you go to different restaurants or whatever it might be. I don't remember exactly what I was thinking at the time. But did you sort of appreciate Pokemon Go is like some special thing? And do you sort of view that as like the, you know, a harbinger of like things to come? Or you just sort of saw it, I thought it was fine. And I got this mapping app.

Lucy Guo 18:56

I built the mapping app. But then like, when we were thinking about whether to actually pursue this, we did think like what are the possibilities that other apps like Pokemon GO come out? And it's like, whole, ar VR whatever, or just like gaming in general is gonna, like how would this be useful towards other apps like Pokemon Go, but it just at least I haven't kept up with the space to be Frankly, I haven't heard of anything be as good as Pokemon Go. And I when I built that map, it was more so for my own use case. Because I I love Pokemon, and I was definitely very addicted. That's actually another way I made money when I was younger, I would just sell hacked ROMs or hack Pokemon GO games.

Jake 19:41

Yeah, no, I I definitely was into Pokemon as a kid as well. And I think probably the number one reason I stayed away from the app was like, I generally try to stay away from things that I think could sort of suck my

attention. I don't want to really be spending a lot of time on that thing. So I sort of stayed away from for my own sake, but It certainly seemed like something that was a lot of fun. So you know, moving past that you get the series from scale, move on from yc. Tell us about like the early days of scale, what it's like to bring a company from scratch to a billion dollar valuation and just a few years.

Lucy Guo 20:20

Yeah. Well, the very, very early days, we was customers first. So we were essentially doing le every pilot ourselves. We're sleeping in office, like literally sleeping in the office, labeling things ourselves. Like before we had any scalars there was literally a Twilio call coming to me, whenever someone sent an API call that would go like Wake the fuck up, we see. It's time to ask. Yeah, it was a lot of manual labor. And then I think what we realized very quickly is just like hiring was the hardest thing. So like, we got very lucky. Hiring like, I just literally called up two of my Carnegie Mellon friends, like my CS little and my old roommate. I was like, hey, like, what you guys work for me. And one of them didn't even ask for their equity package. They just said yes, and sign off for a letter. But after that, like, when the other friend I hired, quit, and then we were like, Fuck, we don't have any engineers now. So the next engineer took a little bit to hire. And then afterwards, it like, did get easier and easier. But yeah, I guess like, initially, it was just like us manually doing tasks and attempting to hire people. And then afterwards, it was figuring out how to hire people in the Philippines, and then like, scale that efficiently and maintain high quality and then hiring engineers to build out all the automation.

Jake 21:51

That's funny, I hope the the one who didn't care too much about her equity package ended up figuring something out in the end, because that was probably worth

Lucy Guo 21:59

I actually had to I negotiated that up for her after we upped every HUDs equity packages. I was like, man, like she was one of the first aside, she's literally the second person to sign we have to offer equity package.

Jake 22:11

Yeah, well, that's that's good. Good for her. It's an interesting negotiation strategy, from her part, basically, like a no negotiation strategy, but it seems to have worked out. Yeah. And it's cool. That sounds like the you know, the biggest sort of focus for scale to be successful was scaling was it was

the challenge itself. And I guess I'd be curious to know, you know, for people who don't like I'm sort of familiar, I read up on scale, and sort of what it does and what it did in the early days. But for people who aren't as familiar, it'd be great to sort of, you know, you hinted at like this tasking element and the fact that you were doing it yourself in the early days. But can you sort of lay out scale from like a very fundamental perspective, sort of how you talked about it in the early days, at least, for people who aren't as familiar?

Lucy Guo 22:55

Yeah, so it's AI and humans to label data, essentially. So the main use case very early on, and actually still now is image recognition. So labeling images, and recognizing what objects are in images, well, images and other things like LIDAR data, etc. So we would get sent these images. So cars ended up being our like self driving cars, automobile companies ended up being like our first very, very large customer group. Just because we had mass ban people and crews ended up trusting us. And after that, we realized that there is a very large market and the self driving car industry. So we were getting these images, or we had to essentially do like pixel perfect boxes around the cars, pedestrian stop signs, etc. And we didn't have enough scalars to like, handle the volume. So we were manually doing it ourselves.

Jake 23:55

Yeah, those are the sorts of stories you hear from, from early companies that Yeah, always take something like that to sort of make it work. It seems like

Lucy Guo 24:01

Yeah, and I think that that's like why it worked, too. Because I don't think that many founders would be willing to spend eight hours a day just label anything to make a customer happy or to like, do a really good, well, good pilot.

Jake 24:17

Yeah, no, it definitely takes a certain type of work ethic to be willing to literally sleep in the office for sure. Working with all these self driving car companies like cruise imagine and some others I know. Did you sort of get any insights as to, you know, or like, do you have a perspective basically on on that whole industry and like sort of what we can expect to see in the next few years or, you know, longer term than that?

Lucy Guo 24:42

I mean, quite frankly, I think that the technology is there. I think it's more going to be regulatory.

Jake 24:49

Yeah, I was interested to see like in I don't think you guys you didn't work with Tesla at all, did you?

Lucy Guo 24:56

I can't say,

Jake 24:57

Okay, well, so that's fine, but Regardless, yeah, that's totally fine. But I remember seeing in there must have been a little over a year ago, I think q3 2019, they reported that basically, with like, autonomous driving turned on, or whatever their, their, you know where it is for that. Basically, the the accident rate was like, you know, nine times less than what it is for the average human driver. And it was just like, you know, one line in this big, you know, earnings deck, and I didn't really hear anything about it, but it was like, astounding to me, and I just realized that sort of this technology is, is very much here. And it's going to be an issue of people sort of wrapping their heads around it and learning to, you know, trust these machines, more so than sort of themselves. And of course, you can get in human error accidents, when it's not your fault. It's someone else's fault. But I think the regulatory battle is going to be real. And, and of course, there's, you know, edge cases and things like this, that Tesla and these other companies may or may not have sort of figured out sufficiently yet, but I don't know, I think a lot of people die in car accidents, like, I'm hoping that the autonomous vehicles can be a lot safer, and hopefully, comment and, you know, be commonplace a lot sooner than then some people might think. So let's see. So your you decided to leave scale after a couple of years. I know, you talked about how, like, you enjoy the early part of the startup, sort of the most, was that sort of the thinking around, you know, deciding to step away, and now sort of move into what you're doing today, which is mainly, you know, looking at these early stage companies and investing.

Lucy Guo 26:40

Yeah, I chose that along with a combination of it became mean very, very enterprise heavy. And that was just a lot less fun overall as well. I mean, it's the reason why skill is doing incredibly well nowadays. But I had always wanted it to be more like stripe. And that was just like a vision class clash there. So yeah, my I so when my kill fellowship friend like, actually, it'll roommate, he wanted to start a company with me, and was like, I'm gonna quit

stripe though. We can start a company together. I was like, Oh, my God, amazing. Now feels like the right time. So he had quit stripe, and we were ready to do another startup together. And that was my mentality. I was like, okay, like, going to build a company with you, this will be amazing. But ultimately, like, I think it's my fault. It didn't work out, I think I was burnt out. And he really wanted to build a like social consumer app. And that was not what I was trying to build as well. Like, I love consumer, just like more marketplaces or something where money is transacting through wasn't trying to build the next Facebook. And that plus bar now just like I helped them get this job that stripe back. negotiated it for him, and then that's when I decided to do bad. Sure.

Jake 28:04

Yeah, it seems like investing is like a little bit more of a certainly you don't have to sleep in the office, I would assume and, and you can sort of take take a backseat a little bit and work a little bit more passively until maybe the time does come when like the right idea or the right partner comes in and you're ready to do something again, do you think that you're going to be a founder again?

Lucy Guo 28:25

So I think I really like atomics model where they essentially co found companies. And then we've seen like people from Founders Fund like DeLeon and Keith incubate companies out of the venture fund as well and essentially co found them. I do think that eventually I will do something like that. Right now even I'm like starting to run experiments. So I'm not sleeping much anymore. This was a mistake on my part. But I'm running a residency program in Taiwan right now, where I have 20 founders that I building companies with. And this the reason why it's a mistake is because I'm now working on us time and Taiwan time, which means essentially meetings from 6am to 1am. Every day. And I yeah, this is this might be burnout. Number two for me. But yeah, this is like my first I'm gonna experiment with like, what's the best model here to like scale, building up companies early stage and incubating them?

Jake 29:30

Right, so as if that's not enough, I saw that I think, are you replicating this model in Miami now as well?

Lucy Guo 29:36

Yeah. So I'm currently running it in Taiwan. And we were running it in New York before the pandemic and after the Taiwan batch. I'm going to start in Miami.



Jake 29:45

Right. And so what is it? What exactly is this look like? You have like 20 people sort of living and working together. Can you explain I think it's called like h f zero. Is that right? Can

Lucy Guo 29:52

you just explain hacker fellowships zero, because it's a zero to one process and it's so Sometimes we accept teams, sometimes we accept solo founders. And sometimes they come in with ideas, and sometimes they don't. But what essentially happens is that like, let's say they come in as a solo founder and look in front of the founder. We run, I think, optional programming. So we do weekly hackathons around a theme where they have to build something, and that they could be like, make as much money as possible give you within a space that we think is very large that we want people to look into. So like, let's say, like, build a really awesome developer tool. And then we'll bring in outside judges that are other investors and founders, just for fun and offer like a fun little prize. And this way people can test out who they like working with. And we do view coke ownership as like a marriage. And I think that a good way to test whether you can be married is actually living with someone and working with someone. So that's kind of how the residency program came to mind. Also, Dave and I have lived in hacker houses for a lot, many, many years, like the teal fellowship was one and I've lived in ones between 20 to 70 people in size, so and so is here. So we've had experience that we've like seen people find co founders and these houses as well.

Jake 31:20

Hmm, yeah. How did you decide? You know, to start with the first one in Taiwan?

Lucy Guo 31:25

Well, the first one was in New York, and we decided in New York, because we just asked everyone that we accepted it, this program could be anywhere in the world, where would you want it. And it was basically New York or some tropical destination. The next one was in Taiwan because of a pandemic, where I like, just in case, we don't want to give everyone COVID if 20 people are living together, so Taiwan felt like the safest place to send people.

Jake 31:53

That's interesting. So I assumed that it was sort of like people from Taiwan, but it sounds like a lot of people you're sort of sending out to Taiwan from America, or



Lucy Guo 32:01

pretty much everyone out to Taiwan, we got the visa.

Jake 32:04

Oh, wow. That's interesting. Cool. Well, and then the next one's Miami, obviously, I think you're living down there now. Right? Yeah. So what were you in Miami? I'm assuming you move as a result of like, everything going on with the pandemic?

Lucy Guo 32:20

Yeah, yeah. I moved in December.

Jake 32:24

So what are the initial thoughts? Obviously, there's a lot of hype going on there. I was able to talk with him there. I think, at some point, I saw a picture of the two of you curious to hear like your, your sales pitch on Miami, or at least sort of what you enjoyed so far.

Lucy Guo 32:38

I mean, quite frankly, I think that I'm, I've navigated Miami very well, and almost everyone that visits me, if they're like half considering Miami, they end up moving here. So I've had a lot of friends that at least signed six month leases, Delhi and just bought a house, etc. And I think the one concern that people have about Miami, well, two concerns one, like can I be productive in Miami? And number two, are there smart people in Miami, so I show them the like, the number one is up to them to figure out like for me, I just put myself in a room I block it out. I literally have no view and I just work zoned in. And I think that people figured out they can do that too. And then number two, I just throw events, right? Like, you know, you have dinner, and then you invite a few people over and everyone is incredible. Like if you asked me to put together a guest list of 100 people for like, let's say it's post a pandemic, you're like, invite 100 people to a party, I could put together a guest list of 100 people who are all like top tier investors or started a unicorn or at least a nine figure company, and pretty easily. And I think that the good way to describe the caliber of people in Miami right now, where we don't have as many like engineers, maybe as New York or Boston. But the concentration of mega talented people that have started like nine to 10 to 11 figure companies. Or like having that like they're like the best angel investors or VCs in the world is super, super high and they're all willing and open to meet people. Like I think I'm hanging out with people of a



certain caliber in Miami that probably wouldn't have hung out with me in San Francisco.

Jake 34:28

Yeah, that's wild. It sounds like it's almost like a you know, a quality over quantity thing where there might not be quite as much of like a deep talent pool but the people who are they're just like absurdly talented and accomplished. Obviously, you know, Keith is one of the first people to go down there and be sort of like an evangelist about it. But now like you just mentioned, like you got you convinced DeLeon to, or at least half convinced DeLeon to sort of make the move. I was just actually I went back and forth with him on Twitter because he came on the podcast a few, maybe two months ago and I asked him if he's gonna move down to my Because he had that sort of viral initial exchange with the mayor, and he was like, No, no, you know, San Francisco for at least the next couple years, I'm working on Varda, etc. And then like two months later, he's like, I'm moving to Miami. So,

Lucy Guo 35:12

but he was here a weekend, like what happened was he came to one of my events, he saw a bunch of really smart people. And he was like, holy crap. Like he saw the guestlist. He was just like, this caliber of peoples in St. Lucie. I was like, I know, he came and everyone showed up, I was like, wow, like, this is apparently, like his girlfriend says that he came home. So happy that day. And then, you know, Keith showed him a little bit more of Miami than he explored Miami in a zone. He's like, I have to move here. And he realized he could be productive.

Jake 35:43

That's awesome. Yeah. And I think like you, you certainly are showing people the the caliber of talent in Miami, but also, that it's not impossible to to be super productive. And to do a ton of work. One of the things that sort of stood out and like preparing for this conversation is just like everyone says about you, and sort of like your, you know, your work ethic just seems to be like, basically in saying, we talked about, you know, sleeping on the, on the floor and doing all of the work for the early days of scale. And, you know, even just going back way, you know, when you were a kid, just the level of hustle. How do you sort of, you know, what do you do on like a daily basis? How do you think about how you sort of maintain this, this crazy level of productivity? And like, do you think when you're one of those people who just like, doesn't need that much sleep? Or do you just sort of power through?

Lucy Guo 36:30

You know, I think I probably overdose on caffeine. For example, I start my day with two scoops of C four and a Celsius before it's four Celsius is that I just do berries. I think that berries is like another extra cup of caffeine, because it's a lot of adrenaline. And I think that berries does keep you very mentally focused, it puts me in a routine right where I'm like, I have to wake up at this time, or I have to do this. And it's my way to like, let out the day. I'm pretty sure Keith like his only fun time is berries as well. And then I just get in the zone. In terms of like, needing sleep. I obviously feel better if I get like seven hours of sleep. But to be afraid, I haven't seen it correlated to my athletic performance. So I don't know if it's needed, like Sunday's like on three hours of sleep, I'll perform a lot better than seven hours of sleep. And I think that like if we were talking about actual mental capacity of meetings wise, that's like very hard to tell, like it's hard to measure, but I think it's easy to measure when I'm on a treadmill and I'm like, okay, like I'm running this fast. So we're gonna measure it potentially don't need sleep or I've overdosed on caffeine more on like three hours of sleep because I definitely have more caffeine if I'd like suck three hours.

Jake 37:55

So two questions going off of that first of all, I think that's like a really interesting answer. I mean, the caffeine and the C four is one thing but but the I don't know if that's like a broad recommendation but it sounds like it's working reasonably well for you but but you know the berries class and sort of kicking off your day that way and then being able to actually like measure your athletic performance is very like quantitative way to determine like, Oh, am I not sleeping enough etc. How are you? Well, first question is like what exactly are you actually doing at berries? Because I hear a lot of people who like love the classes they're curious to hear know what that's about. And then second of all, how are you how do you go about like measuring Is there anything like sophisticated you're doing to sort of like measure your performance or is just like speed and mileage or whatever?

Lucy Guo 38:36

I think overall speed and mileage I usually go by mileage nowadays because I'll go by speed and mileage but every run is different at various various is a hit workout it's I guess around 25 minutes on a treadmill 25 minutes on the floor and the floor is all weight training with weights I berries you really don't count reps to be frank so it's hard for me to measure quantitatively there because I always just the same weights. So it's like I don't know if I like did more reps one day than another day also like every body part like every day the body part is different and like sometimes you have weird moves

so it's much harder to measure quantitatively on before when the treadmill I mean every class is a matter of time like some classes is more Sprint's some classes more endurance but overall like you should be getting around the same mileage. So well today I guess I had like a great night's sleep. I don't know because I don't know what happened I IPR on my lunch today. So that was nice. But on speed, it's like, I know that I can usually max out at 20 miles per hour on the treadmill. So if I don't max out or I'm unable to then I know I'm having an off day.

Jake 39:49

You set up art and mileage as well. But is that is that just you ran further.

Lucy Guo 39:53

Normally in a class I run around three miles I did 3.5 today, which made me feel happy.

Jake 40:06

Wow, that's, that's great. And that's in, what, 25 minutes or so segment that's running. It's not it's like spreads. So it's not even just like a

Lucy Guo 40:14

Yeah. So that one of the costs was, I guess, like I used to be 25 minutes now it's actually 21 and a half percent. I was in 21 and a half minutes.

Jake 40:23

Oh, wow. Yeah, that is really fast. Okay, cool. Well, so I'm impressed by the Wii Fit performance, for sure. But you got through the Barry's class in the morning, what time like about is that and what are you doing with the rest of the day? It's just like meetings. Do you have any other sort of habits that sort of keep you going?

Lucy Guo 40:41

arrangers is generally just meetings, I actually need to organize my weeks better, because I realized that now I have so many meetings, I have no time to even check my emails, which is obviously bad. So I think I need like, a day off just or just block off time to do emails.

Jake 41:00

Yeah, no, that makes sense. And I don't know where you're going to find the time to do that system design type of thing. But, but hopefully, you're able to do it to clear up some time for the emails and things like that. Talk about let's let's talk about back end a little bit with with your investing

approach. You talked about like these hacker has, is that sort of becoming the majority of sort of your your investment activity? Or are you also investing in people outside of those, you know, the Taiwan project and the upcoming Miami? Yeah, we're

Lucy Guo 41:29

investing people asked how to Taiwan project at the moment, it's certainly not the majority, we view it more as like proprietary deal flow. But also we are getting a significant portion of equity. Like we get 2.5% of every person. So you can imagine that like, let's say two people join up, then that's 5%. Three people join up 7.5%. So economically, it does work out very well for us. But you were definitely still investing outside of that.

Jake 41:58

Cool. Yeah, that makes sense. So I guess, you know, a couple a couple of themes of the podcast that I like to talk about, I don't know your familiarity or interest in either of these things, but one of them is crypto, maybe let's just start there. Are you you know, do you think about crypto at all? Is it interesting? Do you do you? are you investing in Bitcoin and things like this?

Lucy Guo 42:18

I know nothing about crypto and I'm not invested in client, I have a new fascination with NF Ts, but don't add too much. Just following the crowd with that trend, to be honest.

Jake 42:31

Yeah, you got to at least talk about it with the mayor right when you're having the talk or whatever it is. So then the second one is longevity. I don't know if you're at all familiar with this. But basically, like one of my initial reasons for actually like starting the podcast, like something I thought I could do would be just bring some additional attention to this area that I thought was really interesting and not receiving enough attention, which was basically the idea that we could, you know, basically take an engineering approach to aging, and potentially, like slow and or reverse aging to add like meaningful, healthy lives to our years, and now give you maybe a lot more time, you wouldn't have to squeeze so much into every day. But I'm curious, because there's sort of like a, you know, it's sort of polarizing this question, even though it seems not. So, you know, it seemed obvious to me, but if you could, for example, live like 150 years, relatively healthfully, like sort of having the biological age as if you were like



between, you know, 30 and 60, or something like that. Is that something that would be, you know, would you be down for that?

Lucy Guo 43:36

Absolutely, I actually invest in a company because I'm hoping they become one of the first to successfully work on anti aging. And for humans, they're making a shot for dogs to extend dog's lifespans. But I figured that if it works on dogs, it could be the first step to actually test it on humans, because aging is not a disease. So you can't test it on humans. Although menopause is a disease. So theoretically, you could use that because that comes with age to like test on humans.

Jake 44:02

Huh? Yeah. It's interesting. Is that, that loyalty, by any chance are loyal to different companies. Yeah, they're working with dogs.

Lucy Guo 44:12

It was 1130. And it could I think it renamed oil. Yeah.

Jake 44:16

Yeah, yeah. Cool. I'm not saying a few years ago, actually, that was sort of the first one of the first things that caught my interest in space. But anyway, all really interesting stuff. appreciate you taking the time today and talking about this wide range of subjects. If there's anything else that sort of we didn't cover that that you'd like to sort of share with the audience, but we'd love for you to do so. And then if you could just tell us like where where people can follow you. You know, on Twitter and elsewhere, that'd be great.

Lucy Guo 44:44

Yeah. I guess to the audience, I would just say, I think that if you are interested in starting a company, it's a lot less risky than I think most people make it out to be because Usually a lot of companies like if you get a venture fund to, like seed you if you end up failing, chances are you'll get Aqua hired and your Aqua hire package is going to more than make up for the last time you spent attempting to build your startup because you still own the company and like Aqua hire packages are trying to like they're still trying to return investor money as well. And your stock package like I've heard of like, most high seven figure Aqua hire packages. And then outside of that. Yeah, I guess follow me on Twitter. It's just Lucy underscore gwo, which is my name and then on Instagram. It's nomadic techie.



Jake 45:47

Awesome. Well, thank you so much again for coming on Lucy and good luck with everything that you're working on.

Lucy Guo 45:52

Thank you. Thanks for having me.