



## *From Firefighter to REI & Entrepreneur Coach: Colby Amerine's Story - Part 1*

Host: Josh Cantwell

Guest: Colby Amerine

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Josh: Hey everybody what's going on, Josh Cantwell, CEO of Freeland Venture Real Estate Private Equity at StrategicRealEstateCoach.com. Welcome back, welcome back to our Strategic Real Estate Coach Podcast, an interview series and as always, I'm super excited to be with you to be sharing some amazing coaching training and stories about real estate entrepreneurship, leadership and CEO talk and love to bring on guests and talk to them about their expertise and share their story about real estate and about their journey of having success in business. Hope you've enjoyed all the podcasts. I don't know what your favorites are, but if you have a favorite, definitely leave us a review or a rating on iTunes or YouTube or whatever platform you find this interview.

Today I am joined by a relatively new friend, his name is Colby Amerine and he is one of the nation's leading experts in real estate education specifically for sales conversion, meaning his expertise is really in working with real estate investors, helping them convert more motivated sellers in the contracts, finding the pain, finding their motivations and converting that into a sales contract. And he also has a great story which we're going to share today. So, Colby, thanks so much for joining me. How are you?

Colby: Thanks Josh. Doing well. Glad to be here.



Josh: Fantastic. So Colby, your story begins, you were a firefighter, you were working and you know, you were a first responder and had a pretty major injury on the job and then moved on and really found a passion for real estate kind of out of that devastating injury. So just talk a little bit about, you know, what I find for a lot of people when they get into real estate or entrepreneurship or building a business, a lot of times it starts with some sort of pain that they're experiencing. They're trying to either run away from something that went wrong, some pain that they're experiencing run away from that or run to some sort of pleasure, some new experience, whether it's lifestyle design or more income. And for you it sounds like you're running away from pain, some physical pain, right? So tell us a little bit more about that journey.

Colby: Yeah, it's not, it's not a super sexy story, but here's the thing, man. I got like most Americans out there working a job. You know, I was 10 years into a 20-year career. I had a, we were not a township yet, so we had a four one k, so it was like working for a corporation, so I had a plan and it wasn't a pension necessarily, but it was, hey going to work here 20 years, retire at 52 and go do something else, right, like most fireman do. And 10 years into that, just counting the days and having a good time and boom I got injured was one of many injuries but it really took me out of the game for like 18 months and it couldn't go back to work long, long of the short of it is I couldn't go back to work and I was really stuck with, okay well bills come in every 30 days then what do I do, right.

And it wasn't really like, you know, I could pump a fire truck starting IV, you know, do all that kind of stuff, but you can't just go get a job with that skill set. Didn't have a college degree or anything so like most people who venture in this real estate space, I kind of went to a couple seminars in town and I was like, okay, this is cool they're telling me I can make money in 30 days or telling me I can make money in 60 days that's what I need to do. Now it was hard I didn't make money in my first 30 days it actually took me about four months to make some money. However I had that choice to, you know, what do you do? So I dove headfirst into entrepreneurship and it was hard. I mean, I had to study real estate of the terminology, the language.

Colby: I mean, I didn't understand the language. So studying that all night long and then running calls during the day, I was door knocking for pre-foreclosures. And really I have to attribute the fire services to helping me. I understand now how you know that accountant or that engineer, when I talked to them, how they might be scared to knock on a door, but literally my job every day for 10 years was to go into a stranger's home ask them, introduce myself, ask them what was going



on. and what's the matter and how can I help you? So it was kind of easy, easier, if you will, for me to approach people, walk in their home and kind of assess the situation. So I just treated them like a medical call, you know, it's a sick house and ask them the question that made it a lot easier for me. So I share that with folks when I talk to them about, you know, getting in this game and getting out there and don't be scared, but I did have a little slight advantage on that. And then I found it's kind of funny for you out there listening, I found through my journey that you don't have to start with wholesaling, then do flipping then do buy and hold. That was kind of what I had heard the journey I took, and if I could kind of say if I could do it all over again kind of thing, I'm focused, I'm six years in now, I'm focused just on rental property. And so it's like I should've done that in the beginning. I mean, I would be done, I would have enough passive income to be done, but instead I wholesaled and flipped. Now it's great income, but it's a job, it's a career, it's a job, it's work, right?

Colby: Even though you own the company, it's a lot of work, but it's very, very rewarding. So I went on that journey of wholesaling, but in that journey I had developed a great skill set. I don't want to say I'm a natural salesperson, but I'm a natural people person, I have a disc profile and I had spent it living talking to people. So, but I found that niche that I really was comfortable talking to people I knew how to be persuasive and then I studied and studied and studied all kinds of sales type. Everybody's programming out there, I was listening to it and digesting and taking little pieces from it and using what I could and kind of developed a little simple process to talk to sellers, started doing that, started working really well. In this journey I was with a program and the instructor guru, they call him or whatever, he liked me and he said, hey, you're good at sales, do you want to come and start selling?

I started selling for him at the seminar, at his seminars and I started really enjoying that because, you know, my heart of hearts was to help people, that's why I was a firefighter. Yes, you can help people with just a distressed property and that's really good, but the volume of people that could help in the real estate education space was ridiculous. I mean, it was so rewarding to be able to talk to 50, a hundred people on a weekend and be able to take 15 or 20 of those and put them on a journey to change their life. And so I really kind of fell in love with the, the impact I could make in the seminar, a real estate space. So I dove in and while I was doing the properties, I was also doing this on the weekends and studying and learning this process and kind of getting behind the curtain, if you will, of the seminar business, understanding that little process and how it works, fell in love with it, did that for several years, very successful at it and kind of



really kind of built a little niche for myself as becoming kind of a consultant on, on how to build that out because there's a lot of local folks in Florida, New York, Cleveland, Ohio, Jersey, LA, Houston that they're really experts in their area or what they do in their field. They have no clue how to, how do I take my message, my system, my process, and get 100 people in a room and, and, and show them how to do it, show them how to do it.

Colby: And so that's kind of what I do now for mostly a full time basis. And it's a lot of fun, I mean, one or two weekends a month, I'm doing that and it's it... I like it because what I find is this, and I'm sure it will break down this here in a little bit more, but with all the experts and gurus across the nation that I kind of let that part of the story out. I flew around and met a bunch of all the big names that you know, everybody will know who they are. I've met these guys and talk to them and these ladies and what I found is this, and here's my complete advice. When you want to get a guru or a mentor or a coach, just make sure you look at what they're doing and if that's what you want to do and they're really good at it, then that's the perfect fit for you.

I mean, there's guys that are fantastic and owner finance, fantastic at subject two, fantastic at wholesaling. There're some guys here in Houston that are great at fixing and flipping they do over 100 houses a year. Just fix and flip, you know, so they have processes and systems that are above and beyond and I find people bouncing around to these seminars and seminars get a bad rap because people, what they do is they shiny penny, they go to the owner finance, they try it for 90 days. They go, oh, this is hard I want to do wholesaling. They go the wholesaling seminar, they pay that guy 10 grand and then they go that for 90 days and like, oh, this is hard. And it's like they keep bouncing and truth be told, it's all hard work, right? You just got to pick a lane and running it.

Josh: The way I look at real estate education is a lot like a roller-coaster and what I mean is not that it's up and down, up and down, up and down, that's not the parallel that I'm trying to make. What I'm trying to say is if you look at a roller-coaster, the roller coaster itself, all the hard work is in getting you up the first hill, right? All the hard work of the roller coaster, all the engineering, all of the chains or the magnets or whatever it is on the roller coaster is getting up the first hill and a lot of people who are students of mine, I talked to them about this roller-coaster and I say, look, if you're going to get into wholesaling or you're going to get into owner financing, you're getting into apartments. You're going to raising money. Getting up that first hill is like your first 90 days, and if after that first 90 days you say, oh, this is too hard, then you're like getting off the ride



at the top of the hill after all, the fun is about to begin. If you just stick with it now, there's still going to be some ups and downs, but it's fun. Once you get down that first hill, the roller-coaster, it's exciting. It's thrilling, you're moving, you're going flipping upside down, you're going a million miles an hour and it's all the excitement. Then you stopped at the end, you're like, oh my God climbing up that first hill was so scary, but the rest of the ride was amazing.

Same thing with real estate education especially for somebody who's brand new. You're going to go in the first 30 days, go in the first 90 days, 60 days. You're learning all kinds of new things about the wholesaling or apartments or raising money or flipping and right when it's about to get fun, a lot of people say, oh, shiny object I going to go back and start a new 90 day process and go back up another hill with another speaker, another education company, I'm going to do that over again, and then they do that five, six times in a row, they leave at the exact wrong time five, six times in a row, and then they're like, oh, this isn't for me. All these gurus made money and I didn't make money. That's because they're getting off the ride at the exact wrong time and that seems like very similar to what you're talking about.

Colby: This is a fantastic analogy. I've never heard it put that way and that's perfect that is the absolute truth. They do all that hard work and all the blood, sweat and tears and like it's just about to break but pop and then they just like quit or they say it's too hard, let me do something else. And so I'm very transparent. I'm a very transparent dude. I just tell them exactly like it is. Hey, this is hard, it's hard work, but you work hard right now. You know, everybody gets up and work hard. It's like there's no easy a flick a switch overnight money, that's for sure, but...

Josh: Colby it can be pretty easy, right? If you're trying to say, okay, I want to do my first wholesale deal in the first 30 to 60 days, like one deal, two deals that can be easy to build a business and you want to change your life, change your entire family future, the difference between doing a deal that's easy and building a business and building legacy, nobody's going to tell you that building a business or building legacy wealth is easy, but doing one or two deals yeah that can definitely be easy, right? So big difference there. You obviously talked to a lot of people both dealing with motivated sellers, also coaching real estate investors to work with motivated sellers and you're obviously working with a lot of students who attend seminars and hearing a lot of stories, so just specifically talk to that last point to it for a minute. You know, people are at a seminar, could be my seminar, somebody else's. They're excited about their future and they apply for a coaching program and you're sitting with them one on one. What is going



through your mind to help that person get to the next step? What's going through your mind to coach them, give them the right advice to move up, move on with their life and not just being like the, the webinar world or the info product world, but to jump into some sort of mentoring and take the business seriously.

Colby: Right. So the first, you know, a little bad, so bad that I had with the seminar business, I was just a typical sales guy trying to get sales and then as I started talking to hundreds and hundreds and then thousands of people, patterns started to develop and I started to see different types, you know, a couple of different types of people sitting in front of me. And what I developed in that, in the seminar sales space was I really just sit down and say, you know, hey, are you enjoying the, enjoying the show enjoying the material and everything, enjoying the training and you know, that's all good. But bottom line, one question, what are you trying to do? What are you trying to do? Because just like, yeah, well just like you just lead into, there may be an accountant or an engineer he's got a good career who says, man, I'm just trying to build a little retirement and I'm like, you know, we build out and I sit down and build out a plan. This, this guy or gal may want to buy a house a quarter, two houses a year, over the next five years, but a little rental income.

And if that's the case, they don't need to build huge systems and processes. Now they need to get an education, they still need to buy the education piece so they understand the language and all that kind of stuff, but they're educated folks so they understand that as well. But then I customize and kind of build them a plan on where they want to go.

Colby: And then you've got the type of person who's like, man, I hate my job or I just lost my job and I want to do this full time. And those are the folks that need to go full tilt and all in and still we build a plan around them as well. And that is, but you got to get, I get complete buy in, not financially from them at that table, but like, are you ready to make this leap and make this change because you're right, it is that roller-coaster. It's a long climb to that first hill and not going to be easy, it's going to be a lot of hard work. But that's my bottom line. I find out what are you try to do? Because what happened to me in my personal experience was the guy in the front of the room told me what I needed to do and I was too ignorant in the field or naive or however you want to put it, that I just was like, okay, I'll go do that, right.

And that's why I say you need to get in front of a good, make sure you're in front of a good person and a good expert in the field of what you want to do. Because



I got to sent on that journey of wholesaling and subject two and chasing all that and in fact, I probably wouldn't have chased that in the very beginning of it because nobody said, hey, what are you trying to do? And with me, it was like, hey, I would like to have \$5,000 a month in passive income at the time, that's what I wanted. And you know, there's a lot of different ways to do that as opposed to just, hey, go wholesale, there's nothing wrong with wholesaling but they didn't equip me with, hey, you're going to work 15 hours a day and be beating on doors, right?

Josh: Sure, yeah, it's definitely one of the things I was going to ask you was, you know, what kind of advice would you give your younger, former self and you've already answered that, right? It's kind of begin with the end in mind. If your goal is passive income, which is, let's be honest, that's why almost everybody gets into real estate. That's the allure of it is passive income and how do I get \$5,000 a month, \$20,000 a month, \$250,000 a month of passive income. But it's like, well I need income today too and I get it, people need some income today. And Colby and honestly I do the same exact thing. If I could start over, you know, 12, 14 years into my journey here and it just kept every property that I flipped or 700 of them, that's why I got into being a really, really big private lender is because that became my way to scale and make passive income was to lend out the money that I have and lend out of the money that I managed for others is to create passive income.

I would have done that right from day one and sacrificed some of my current income in order to just build passive passive, passive passive and kept all those properties and all those private lender loans because, you know, my portfolio is really big now we have \$100,000,000 portfolio, but it'd be five times bigger. So why wouldn't have I just done that sooner, right. So that's definitely something I'd pass back to our audiences.

Colby: Yeah. It's you know, the ultimate goal is for a lot of people to is be the private lender because that's the, that's the most passive income you can do and that is an ultimate goal too. And it's funny you say that, there's a couple of gentlemen here that did, I think it was over 500 houses and we were doing a little seminar in LA and just kind of joking with him actually, I don't want to say I broke their company up, but he got bought out by his partner because he was putting his numbers up there and it was like 500 houses and I said, hey, what if you would have just get every other one and we sit down and did the math and it was something like \$11,000,000 worth of property and, and \$90,000 a month in passive income, like it was ridiculous, right. What if you would have just kept



every other one? Not even all of them, just like every other one or every fourth one or something like that. And when he did the math on that, he was like you could see his face just dropped. He was like, he's been working hard, you know, it would make a lot of money but working really hard. He's like, wait a minute, out of \$90,000 a month and like \$11,000,000. So he actually, within the next four months, really approached his partner and then got bought out, you know, said, hey, buy me out because I want to just, I want to go buy properties.

Josh: Yeah absolutely. My focus now is almost 100 percent in just owning assets, cash flowing assets, apartment buildings, rental portfolios, we're a really big private lender with my own money and the money we manage and I love to coach people and that's it. Those two things, so we have a really successful coaching program, but my personal focus on a daily basis is just how much more money can I go get? How much more money can I recruit? How many more assets can I go buy or own or control for the long-term? And that's it. So, Colby, as we were getting prepared for this. You had mentioned a couple things that really, when you're coaching students, whether it's coaching them one-on-one and you're mentoring where you coach people on sales success or whether it's coaching someone in the back of the room in front of a room at a seminar. You talked a lot about focus about avoiding the shiny object syndrome and really focus on one thing, focus, focus, focus, focus. Just tell me what your interpretation or your definition of focus is and why is it so important to success?

Colby: Well, that's a great question. You know, because most of us with this entrepreneur bug have this inherent, I don't want to call it a flaw, it's an inherent trait that we just shiny penny everything and you know the eyes and then we just get the ball rolling. I mean entrepreneurs about creating, right? So entrepreneurs, it's, I almost want to call myself a business owner, not an entrepreneur because you just, entrepreneurs get a ball rolling and quite frankly usually go find another ball to start rolling. They usually fail to build out the system processes and teams to keep the initial ball, the second ball and the third ball rolling, right?

So some things fail and all that kind of stuff. So focus to me is absolutely critical, it is the key cornerstone to success. You want to get traction, you want to get ahead, you've got to get into a lane, you've got to get focused. Yes, you can do apartments. Yes, you can do private lending. Yes, you can do wholesaling. Yes, you can do owner finance, but man pick one, get really good at it, get focused, get some success under your belt, let's build you up mentally and then financially, and then once that system is rocking and then you can always



offshoot into these other pieces and build these other things out. I visit another entrepreneur and know they're going to struggle when they're, when they're struggling with their wholesale business and then they've got this thing going and then they come in and say, Hey, I just started a construction company and I'm like, you're going to be in so much pain man. How are you going to start this one over here? Yeah, it's crazy, right.

Colby: Yeah, I just go, oh my God. So a lot of things I can attribute to my success is, I met through different channels in life and different people, very successful people, a couple of billionaires and a couple of, a desi-millionaires and had some blessed opportunity to sit with those guys, which is just amazing to be in the room and just listen to them. And three of them have all at different times, not even together in a room have all said my success is because I have laser focus, I can burn a hole in the wall with my laser focus. And I just took that to heart when they were like, you know, I don't even want to know how you made your money, I don't need to know how you made your money, but if you tell me the reason you did and you know why you're successful is because I have laser focus I can burn a hole in the wall...

Josh: Yeah, laser beams of focus coming out of my head like Austin powers.

Colby: Yes that's it, that's it. And you know, the ability to, and also you've heard these other successful people say this, but like the ability to say no, like it's so hard because when you first start in mindset and in these journeys and you're reading these books, you're listening to the Tony Robbins of the world and the and the and the Jim Rhones and all that stuff and you're about positivity, positivity and you do need to be around positive people and cut negativity out of your life. That's huge and powerful. But it's always like say yes. Say yes, say yes and opportunities right there. And then, it's so counterintuitive. Like you get on this journey and you're like say yes, say yes, say yes. You get into this thing and like all these opportunities come and then at some point, and I can't tell you where I have to kind of be your coach, you need to, you know, go to your coach and hopefully they can guide you on this.

At some point you hit a, I guess when the roller coaster goes over, right? And that journey starts rocking, now you've got to flip the script and you've got to say no, no, and it's hard for me to say that. It's hard to do that after you've programmed yourself to say yes and look at every opportunity because there's always something, one relationship, one transaction away from the tipping point, right? But then when that's rocking, when that construction company comes or that opportunity for this or that comes around man, it may look good.



Like my thing was focusing on single family and getting that rocking and when I got in apartments, people were getting out of selling apartments. But I took a course in Dallas on that and I started looking at that. I started looking at development. One of your questions for me was, what's like the worst deal or you lost a lot of money on.

Colby: I'll go into that because this is about focus. This is about focus. So I was looking at single family and I thought because it was all in the real estate space that I was staying focused, but it wasn't. And I was looking at apartments, I was looking at this and I lost 25 grand on a development because it was this part of town and everybody's like, oh, it's re-gentrifying, you know, by the dirt, build some town homes and they're going up. I was seeing roofs, it was everywhere and I got a great deal on this land I bought two pieces and then another deal came in front of me and I was playing in a space that I didn't have a mentor, I wasn't educated in the space. It appeared to be just like working the numbers on a SFR, single family real estate, but it wasn't.

Colby: And I put 10 grand down hard, I'm sorry, 15 grand down, hard hard money. The option money went hard immediately because I had a person who said they could finance it for me, you know, had a bunch of people, they were out of another state and then they have the California group. And I learned really quickly that a lot of people in this business, say yeah, we can do that if you need to dig a little further and make sure because there's a lot of, yeah, we can do that for you it doesn't end out. And so I got strung along for another week or two and the option was about to end and he wanted to extend it and I learned a really good lesson from this guy. This is a big real estate player here in town. And he said, he said, if you want me to go another, another two weeks, I need another 10 grand hard immediately and I was like, unless I call the person doing the loan, I'm like, are we good? They're like, yeah, we should need a couple more pieces of paper. No problem, talk to the people we've got you covered, land looks good, deal looks good.

I put another 10 down long of the short of it is right after the end of that two weeks, phone calls, emails, phone calls, emails, time to close. Nope. No loan, no deal. Yeah and that guy, he's like, I said, a big, big player here. He was, he was nice. He didn't give me my money back. But what he said was, I mean, he, it was a learning lesson for me. It was a learning lesson for me and it hurt. But what I learned, I mean talk about getting whooped. I mean that was, you know, that was an education for me to know, to stay in my lane, stay focused on things that I know that I'm getting education about that I know about and I can get advice



from, you know, there's not a development guru here, right. And it's different space for sure.

And so that, to me it was relative. Also I use that story when I'm talking about coaching because people's programs are 10, 20, 30, \$50,000, right? For these coaching packages that people buy. And I'm like, that was a \$25,000, one month class and I got one lesson and you could spend 20 grand with a local mentor who could, you know, \$20,000 and they coach you for six months or a year, right? And give you all the tools and all the systems they use and be there for calls and have a class. Like you can get all that for \$20,000 or you can get a \$25,000 an hour, one lesson, stay in your lane.

Josh: Yeah, yeah, yeah, right. So, right stay in your lane, do what you do best, right? And I liked your analogy of, you know, as you're going going, going say yes, say yes, say yes. But then when you were having some success, kind of stop and say no. And what is interesting about that is as you become more successful, more and more and more opportunity comes your way. Like more people are going to say, Hey, can I just take you to lunch and pick your brain? Hey, I got this deal can you take a look at it? Hey, I've got this opportunity, this land development, what do you think? Hey, I've, you know, this person's got this house that they want to sell, or hey, I've got this apartment deal, can you come in, can you raise money for me? And it's like, now it's, that's all we do is really raise money and deploy that money with really good operators, both debt and equity. And you know, I've, I've learned over time like sure, wholesaling works, we could go wholesale, but we don't.

Sure, buying single family rentals works, we could do single family rentals that works, but we don't. Sure we could focus on doing a massive rehab flips with, which we used to, we used to do massive, massive rehab deals \$40,000 profit was the minimum that we would shoot to make, a lot of times it was more than that. We're not even doing very many of those anymore, were kind of winding that down just to focus on recruiting capital, raising capital and funding other operators. And that's it because all these other things do work. But for me, I've said, no, no, no, no, no and the better and more often I've said that the better and better and better we get at recruiting capital, raising capital and deploying capital and getting our investors amazing, amazing returns.

Josh: So Colby, just as we kind of wrap up here, any kind of final parting shots, words of advice, anything else that you'd like to pass along to our audience?



Colby: Sure. First of all, thanks everybody for listening. I appreciate you listening to me. And then also following the Josh and coming on this podcast. You know, to circle back to one of the main things we said, focus, focus, focus, focus. It's absolutely critical. It feels weird at first because you want to kind of chase pennies or shiny pennies, but focus, stay in your lane, get a good mentor that's doing what you want to do, right? Because you're going to do what they do, your going to do what they teach you to do and you can be successful. So stay focused, follow a good mentor. That's the shortest, shortest path to successes is follow a mentorship, but man, focus, that's the biggest thing I can tell everybody out there.

Josh: That's awesome Colby. Appreciate it man. Appreciate your time guys. You've enjoyed our time with Colby. Again two step because we're going to break this up into two interviews because we got a lot of great material, a lot of great things we discussed. Leave us comments again, we monitor all different platforms where you'll find this for comments. We'll feed those back to Colby and we'll get answers for you. You enjoyed this. Leave us a five star rating review. If you didn't like it, still leave us a five star rating or review because it helps everybody else share it and I know this was a great interview so I'm not worried about that. Check out the show notes in the video beneath the video for more information, contact information for Colby and for his website and other resources. So thanks so much for being here, Colby. We really appreciate it.

Colby: Thanks Josh.

Josh: Hey guys. Go out. Be Daring like I always tell you to get out in the field, do your thing, be daring all your goals and objectives are on the other side of being daring. Go out, make it happen. We'll talk to you soon. Take care.

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