**final - S5E9**

you were listening to make your way, and this is another between a sewed welcome to make your way where we explore what it means to work and create on your own terms. Along with every episode, we post links to resources mentioned in the episode. Along with the full transcript, you can find these materials@drkatielinder.com backslash M Y w.

Hey Katie, how are you? Hi Sarah. I am doing super well because it is a between us sewed, which means we are about to launch season six, and I feel like the break between season five and six was incredibly short. Um, but. That's good. I guess. I guess it means for like actually doing a good job with our podcasting recording schedule.

Does that make us actually legitimate or, Oh, maybe because we're not waiting months in between a season. Um, but this is really fun to kind of. Get going with this season. And the between the sound of means it's coming out soon. So for people who are listening, um, make sure you're subscribed and I want to remind everybody that we are in a new feed.

So I will probably release this between a sowed, um, over on both feeds. But you need to go over to the new feed for, make your way to make sure you're getting season six, which is coming soon. Yay. Yay. Yeah, I am excited for season six. We have the spoiler alert already started recording a few of the episodes, and I am just really jazzed to share, uh, share what we've got in store.

I'm just really excited. Yeah, no, I think it's really fun. And so what we decided to do for this between a sewed was a Q and a. Episode and I'm, Sarah reached out to some of our Twitter friends and asked what people wanted us to talk about. And we have actually quite a few questions from people.

Yeah. Um, so let's go ahead and kick this off, Sarah. And um, of course the first one is like the easiest one in the bunch. Um, and that is, and we're not going to say who asked which question, just because we got a ton and I don't know that. People want us to say who asked which question? Um, but these are from our Twitter followers.

And hopefully if you're listening and you did ask a question, you will hear yours in the mix here. But the first one is, what does success mean to you right now in your business? Wait, you said that was supposed to be the easy one, and I actually feel like it's the hardest one, so let's get it out of the way.

Oh my goodness. Oh, what does success mean to me and my business? Right. How I should have an answer for this because I like to ask other people this question, but, uh, I don't have a great answer, but I will ramble on for a while and we'll see if we can come up with an answer. I guess. Um, I think for me, success is really finding this kind of ebb and flow back and forth between my work life and my personal life.

And in a way that works for me. So a lot of people talk about balance, work, life balance, and I think that that's fine, but I also feel like that puts a pressure on that everything has to be balanced at the same time. And I feel like sometimes that's not realistic, that sometimes it's more about rhythms and ebbs and flows.

So I've been thinking about this a lot within my, um, my own work and life. Um, just that there are certain periods of time where I'm really invested in growing my business and spending time working in those sorts of things. But then there are also times that I need to be invested in my personal life and whether those ebbs and flows are happening.

On a weekly basis on it, even a daily basis. I'm finding that that rhythm, um, has been a challenge for me in the past and is something I still continue to wrestle with. So I think success for me is feeling like that rhythm is kind of where I need it to be and is in sync, um, where I'm feeling both fulfilled.

In my work life. And I'm also feeling like my personal life is not, you know, just that thing I shove in the corner. Right? It is also, um, you know, very fruitful and, and, and fills me, right? Because if I can't, if I'm not engaging with that personal side, that wellness, that taking care of myself, that being with friends, those sorts of things that I know are important to me, then my work suffers.

So I know that those rhythms have to go back and forth a little bit. Um. So even though there's a lot of pressure to work all the time and do all the things, like I need to make sure that I'm finding that rhythm for me. So success for me, I think just means that rhythm and figuring that out and knowing it's going to change over time.

So I guess that's my answer. It kind of made sense. That made a lot of sense. I'm very impressed. What about you, Katie? What does success look for look like for you right now in your business? So I'm going to see an answer that might surprise some people or maybe not. I'm not sure, but I have several metrics.

But the first one is the one that I think might be surprising and that is money revenue. Like I'm just going to say it, it like businesses need to be making money. And so I definitely have metrics around that. And um, and sometimes it's tied to a specific product or service that I want to have a particular ratio of my business, you know, have revenue in a particular way.

Sometimes it's my annual. Income and right now that's been for the past couple of years and the six figures, and that to me is the successful year. If we, if we hit that six figure Mark, um, now I want to be clear that it's not the only metric of success, but for people who are wondering, is this one metric?

Absolutely. I mean, I think it, it has to do with the health of your business. It has to do with. Whether or not things are selling, and if things aren't selling, it may not actually be a business that you're running. So that is definitely something I think about. The other one I would say is that I really need to be using my super powers in my business.

That is something that feels really important to me in terms of success and. Kind of like what you were saying, Sarah. That's what feeds me in this work. If I feel like I'm really leveraging my strengths in a way that is not just powerful for me, but powerful for my clients and I, I can see that and I see that it's drawing people in to work with me in particular ways because that's, this is the work I'm supposed to be doing, you know, like the, it's kind of a constant affirmation that.

This business makes sense because my superpowers are kind of on display, and that comes out a lot through systems design, through creativity, you know, other things that I have kind of built in. Um, but that's, uh, that's a big thing. I mean, if I'm starting to feel not great about something going on in my business, or I feel like it's, it feels too hard and not that business shouldn't be hard, but sometimes difficulty is a sign.

That you're kind of not headed in the right direction. And so success for me is kind of a feeling of ease that there's at least some elements of my business, if not the majority of running my business. That feels easeful to me. That's it. That's a huge sign of success. I think that makes a ton of sense because what I keep coming back to is why build a business.

I hate the business. Right. Or if I hate the process of running the business, like what's the point? Athlete. Exactly. So that's a huge sign of success is I think if you like your business. Like, that's huge. That's a good sign when you're doing it right. Oh goodness. Well, so Katie, one of the other questions that we got, um, that's sort of a little bit related to, to your first metric that you mentioned in terms of revenue, um, was what do you do when a program doesn't fill?

And I think this is probably a little more relevant for you in the types of work that you're doing than it is for me. So I'll let you answer this one. I was actually really glad to see this question come in because I just had this happen. And I was like, Oh yeah, I can totally answer that. So I run several programs that I launched throughout the year.

So a lot of the group coaching is repeatedly launched, like my writing groups, like seven weeks to radical self trust. Um, I have some other programs that I kind of regularly offer and. This is something, actually I'm just launching coach training and it's totally on my mind about whether or not this is going to fill, because obviously you need people in the program to run it.

Um, but this past fall as we record this, it is. Kind of early October. Yeah, early October. Yep. I literally haven't looked out at my planner and be like, what is, what part of the month? Um, so it's, it's early October and my fall writing groups did not fill. I offered a couple different options.

There were eight slots and just zero bytes. And this was interesting because last year it filled summer filled. I've filled it every single time I've run it. I actually had to increase it in the summer by one group. So I know the program works like this is not a concern about the quality of the program or you know, anything along those lines.

But it was just like the timing wasn't great. And I was actually marketing that in the midst of marketing, at least a couple of other things for the fall. And so I just kind of used it to kind of get back to like, what do you do when this hasn't felt, I just used it as a learning experience of like, okay.

Um, this is, you know, not a great time to market to academics when they're coming back from, you know, being in the summer. Some of them are not checking their email. They're not really on social. I mean, they're busy doing a bunch of other things, and sometimes the writing groups really feel from clients.

I already have people come back, you know, in a repeated way. So it just kind of got me thinking about it in some creative ways. But the other thing I did was I really took it as an opportunity because this opened up a couple hours of my week. And, um. That actually felt really good. I was no longer running a Saturday morning group.

I really struggle to have multiple evening stuff going on throughout the weekend. I was going to have an evening group. I've been doing some evening podcast recording and some other things at night. And so, um, I saw it as kind of like a sign from the universe of like a gift. I mean, like, yes, I lost that revenue, but the business is doing just fine.

And so it just wasn't. A concern for me. I mean, honestly, I was like, okay, this is actually a good thing. Like I saw it as something that was actually really positive. So I've taken that time and I'm devoting it to things like the coaching training and to other things I'm working on. So it's really a, in some ways, like a, uh.

Rebalancing of energy, you just kind of shift your focus from one thing to another. Um, but for people where this is happening, I would say if this is the first time you're running a program and it doesn't feel, um, it may be how you're marketing or packaging the program, it could have something to do with the pricing of the program.

If it's a situation like this where you've been running a program for a long time and it doesn't fill, I consider this to be a fluke. You know, like, I will run it again in. In the January and see kind of how it does. Um, and if this is a situation where I'm really struggling to fill it, I've got all that other stuff on my plate too.

So it's, it's actually okay to kind of move on from that program into other things if that's indeed what happens. I don't think that's what's going on here. Um, but I need more data. So, yeah. So looking at your data, kind of learning from the situation, if you can. All of those things are how I would respond to that.

I think that makes a lot of sense. And, and what I hear you, um, kind of, you know, saying is basically looking at this from a really logical place. It can be really hard when, you know, you're like, you put all of this time and energy into this thing and you release it into the world and nobody responds to it and you're like, Ooh, this mean is this something like, you know, it can be an emotional thing for people too.

And so I think taking that step back and saying, okay. What is this actually telling me? Um, you know, is it something about my pricing? Is it about timing? What, you know, what's going on here? Um, really helps inform what changes you might make next time around. Um, I think because something doesn't work, even if it's the first time you try it, if it doesn't work right away.

Don't scrap the thing and run away. Right? Like, think about how do you massage this, change it a little bit, um, you know, lower the price a little or, uh, adjust the way that you're talking about it. That those are things worth trying when something doesn't work exactly the way you thought it would.

Yeah, exactly. Well, and the other thing I would say, if we want to go like, super psychological on this. Is when I got to the point where I thought, Oh, I'm not sure this is going to feel like I'm not sure this is going to be interesting, rather than do like a serious marketing push. I got really quiet about it because part of me was like, it's okay if it doesn't feel like I have so much going on this fall and so much travel and all these other things that I kind of was okay with it.

And I think that part of it is. I had never want to be desperate with my marketing. You know, like we talked about this before and just don't freak out about it. I mean, like, unless it's like money that was going to pay your mortgage, which again, is a huge benefit of having a full time job. I don't have to worry about that.

Um, you know, like it's okay. It's okay if things slow down for a month or two. And especially when I'm about to launch something else. I mean, it's like rhythms. There's just rhythms and I think it's okay. Yup. Yeah. Okay. Sounds good. Next question. Somebody said, um, there is so much out there about by this, by that, that you will make all this money.

What is the first thing you'd recommend for various facets of your income streams? Like what? For online courses, speaking engagements, member communities, et cetera, especially before you have much income. So this I think is basically someone saying, what do you invest in to help you when you're first getting started with your business?

So Sarah, what is your response to this? Um, I am a big proponent of doing things for free as long as you can. And what I mean by this is, is things like the free subscription to MailChimp, the free subscription to Canva, you know, all of those, those tools that have the different subscription levels.

Um, I think as much as you can, you know, just because you know, you're going to start an email list and you want it to grow to a point where you know, you need the all the bells and whistles right now you don't. So start with a free. And then when you need to step it up, it will tell you, Hey, you can't do this for free anymore.

And that's the point at which then you think about, okay, is this something I really want to invest my time and money into to continue to grow this? Um, you know, I think for me there are a few basic things that are worth getting. Katie, you and I have talked about this before about, um, accounting software, whether that's FreshBooks.

Um, I've used QuickBooks self employed previously, so. Something like that, which is relatively inexpensive but is really, really helpful for all of that back end to business stuff. Like it just makes life so much easier. Um, I am also a big fan of Canva, but again, I think you can get by on the free subscription for awhile.

I love the resize option, which is only on paid paid versions. So I stepped up my canvas subscription pretty early, but I'm still on a free MailChimp at this point. I ha I haven't had to upgrade that. So, you know, I think being thoughtful about. Um, where can I get what I need for free or for very low amount of money?

Um, you know, you don't need to jump in with both feet, uh, right away into all of these packages and things, uh, and all these online platforms and those sorts of things. So do your research ahead of time and figure out which things can I use. Um, you know, can I get creative with how I'm using, you know, free Google software, for example.

Um, just to get something started and kind of try out some things, um, because then you're not sinking a ton of money into something that you may not even like anyway. So I don't know. I'm a big proponent of, uh, you know, do, do the free thing as long as you can. So I agree with that. Um, and I also want to kind of approach this from the perspective of like, online courses and like information in addition to software.

Um, and also I do want to mention, I can check on this, but I don't think Canva has a free option anymore. Did they get rid of it? I think they did. Because I sent someone there the other day and I was like, Oh, nevermind. Um, so just, I'll make a note in the show notes. Um, so anyway, just wanted to put that out there.

But I think that this, the question of like, online communities, online courses, things like that, it's a little bit of a chicken and egg problem. Um, and let me describe what I mean by that. I think that some of the things that you would invest in for online courses, member communities are, they're actually not going to be valuable to you unless you have some experience under your belt.

But you feel like you need to invest in them to gain the information to, to get the experience. So that's kind of the chicken or the egg problem. But I do think that. When it comes down to it, there are free resources. And the one that I would point you to specifically is podcasts. I have listened to so many episodes of business podcast and you have to be careful that they're not trying to sell you stuff, but the ones that I started out with were being boss and there is now one called what works with, I'm Tara McMullin and I would just binge those.

And I learned so much about systems, about processes. The other thing I would say is you probably know some people who have at least some small business experience that they could talk to, and this is why we started make your way, was to really try to get people hearing about what we were doing and, and, and asking questions and kind of sharing our experiences.

That has been really helpful for me and I still listen to those things. I mean, I'm still kind of learning through that. Now, the other thing I would say is there are several books that are also very helpful. Being boss does have a book. Profit first was huge for me when I started making more money in my business to try to figure out how to manage it.

And a lot of these things are available at your local library. So if you're concerned about investing and you know, trying to buy all the things, I agree with Sarah, you know, like try, try to find the things for free. I would also say that oftentimes when people are like, Oh, if you do this thing, it will make you more money.

I'm always skeptical about that. We've talked about this earlier on the show, and I think that if you're thinking about something like a business community, um. Or an online course. The other question I would recommend you ask yourself is, how am I actually gonna use this thing? Like, am I going to go into the business community and ask questions every week?

Am I going to assign myself time to go through and look at the materials that are in that community? Am I going to go to events that that community offers? You know, like what exactly. Are you going to do? Same with the online course? Are you going to set aside two hours a week to go through the online course?

Because oftentimes we buy these things and it doesn't mean it's magically in our heads. You know, like it's same with books. A lot of people collect books and they're like, Oh, I own the book, so therefore I know all the things in the book. You actually have to read the book. You have to do the online course.

I know it's crazy. As academics, we should know this, but we really don't. I actually think we're the worst when it comes to some of this stuff, so I. After, and I wouldn't say I've bought like a ton of online courses, but I've bought a few, and the ones that were most impactful for me, shockingly enough, were the ones I actually went through.

So you do want to think about what is it that you are actually going to get out of the thing. And if you're going to go to like a, a mastermind or a conference or something like that. Go with goals in mind. You know, like go with specific things that you want to get out of that experience because it's not just that you went, it's that you're actually pulling something out of it for yourself.

agreed. Agreed. Oh yeah. What I really wished books worked like osmosis, but I know, sadly, leave me. That's why essentially all the novels I want to read, I wish it was magically like that. Oh, well, our next question, um, is one of the goodies that, uh, we often, you know, ask others as well, which is looking back at when you first started.

What's one thing that you would do differently or a piece of advice that you'd give yourself? If you could go back to that point and talk to past you, um, what would you, what have you learned basically, since then that would have helped you know, that thing then? That's kind of a tough one. Um, I know these are hard hitting hard, hard hitting questions.

They're good questions though. I feel like for me. One of the things. It's kind of a confidence thing, but I actually don't feel like I struggled with confidence. Even in the beginning. I did struggle with some imposter syndrome stuff, but I feel like that was very short lived. I do feel like if I could have told myself in the beginning what I had the capacity for.

Like, for example, in the beginning I was not thinking about this as a six figure business. I promise you that. I was thinking, Oh, maybe I'll make 25 a year or that would be great. I mean, I was just like not, I was not thinking about it. Um, and so I think, I guess what I would say, and I actually feel like this is a tough thing in the beginning, so I don't even know if it's possible, but basically like dream bigger.

Like, and I had gotten the advice early on and I didn't listen to it and I feel like I wasn't ready. So this is kind of the tough thing is like, I feel like when you go back and give yourself advice, it's like, well, yeah, it'd be nice to know that. But were you ready to hear it? And I'm not sure that I was, but people always say, you should think about your business and then multiply it times five and say, what would you need to do to bring in that money?

So if I wanted to bring in half $1 million right now, what would I need to do in terms of my systems and my processes, my services, whatever. And. I've always resisted that because I was like, I don't want that. Like, that's not interesting to me, that kind of scale. But I think that sometimes it is helpful to think bigger so that you can just have a sense of capacity.

You can have a sense of like, what, what do you care about? What would that look like for you? So that you can decide if you do want to do things differently. Um, so yeah, I mean it's, it's tough though, because I feel like what I know now. It's almost like my earlier self wouldn't necessarily have been able to process it.

I completely agree with you. This question always stumps me because I'm kind of a firm believer of that you learn the lessons that you're supposed to learn when you're supposed to learn them, you know? And so it's a little hard to think about like going back and like you said, giving yourself a piece of advice.

Um, you know, I, I think your initial answer around confidence resonates with me. I think, um. You know, telling, telling myself again and again and kind of reiterating this idea that, you know, just because you don't feel like the expert on this particular topic doesn't mean you don't have something valuable to offer.

Um, so just because you don't feel like, you know, everything there is to know about this particular topic or about running a business, right? There's a lot we don't know early on about how is this going to work and are people gonna pay me and how much do I ask for? And all of those sorts of things that.

That those are natural parts of the beginning of a business, and that it's okay to feel like you suck at that. Um, but to also be confident enough in your skills and your abilities to, uh, to ask for what you think you're worth. And then some, um. That was something I struggled with a little bit early on, cause I didn't feel like I was the only, you know, the person who was qualified.

You don't have to be the person. You can still be Apperson who is qualified to help somebody with a problem or to, you know, consult on a particular thing or to create a, um, a useful online course or whatever it is. Um, you have knowledge and expertise that is valuable. Um, and so recognizing that.

And kind of leaning into that a little bit more, um, would maybe be something I would tell myself that just to trust that, that like you've, you've come this far, you've learned a lot. You know, there's a reason you're jumping off into, into self-employment and into running your own business.

Trust that trust that you, you've got what you need to make it work. I think the self trust is huge, especially if, and we talked about this a lot in the previous season on marketing, if something feels icky to you, you know, like there's a difference between like. This doesn't align with my values and this is uncomfortable for me to do.

And I think that that self trust allows you to draw that line, especially in the beginning when people are like, do all the things and you're like, but I don't feel comfortable doing all the things. Um, and so I, yeah, I think that that's an important piece of the self trust as well. So we have another question that's kind of tied to this one.

For your first year of business, what types of goals did you set for yourself and how did you set them where they financial metrics for social or other things? List building. This person says, I'd like to set some goals to work on. What did this look like for you, Sarah. Longtime listeners of the podcast will not be surprised, but I didn't really have them.

I mean, I didn't have, um, particular metrics that I was trying to hit, mostly because a lot of this was still pretty exploratory and I was still kind of trying to figure out, and it's still am to some degree, but I'm was really trying to figure out where. Um, you know, where was I going to focus my energy and my work?

Um, which things made more sense and where was the energy and all of those kinds of things. So like, I was wrestling with that a lot. And, um, you know, Katie, you've talked about how you are, um, in this great position where you have a full time income coming in and, and so it didn't need to be, go whole hog into the business right away.

I was in a similar position where, um, you know, my husband is, is bringing in. Enough that, that we could weather some, uh, you know, some downswing on income on my side. So I could take that time and space, which I am incredibly blessed and privileged to be able to do that. But because I have that time and space, I, I didn't feel like I had to make those, um, huge metric goals about finances and all of that.

Um. I, I kinda knew that if I did, did too much of that, that it would feel like failure the first year out of the gate. And, uh, I didn't, cause I tend to make goals that are a little ambitious. Um, and so I didn't, I didn't want to kind of set myself up that way either. Um, I think again, a, as I've.

Always kind of said on the podcast, it's much more, um, energy based for me. So, you know, there weren't specific goals. It was more about, is this in line with my values? Is this in line with where I want my business and life to be going? Um, is this what I want it to feel like every day? Um, so it was much more about kind of checking in with myself and figuring out.

How does this work? Is this flowing okay? Do you know, am I doing the things I want to be doing? Then I'm getting energy from. Um, so it was, you know, there wasn't a specific goal or metric. It was more about just that, that constant check in of how am I feeling? Is this still going OK? Um, am I doing what I want to be doing?

Those kinds of things. I like that. Um, so I would say, aye. Had some metrics in the first year. I did have some financial metrics, but I was more in competition with myself than anyone else. Like, can I increase from last year to this year? Can I increase from, you know, each year? Can I go a little bit higher?

And, um, it's not necessarily for no reason. I mean, I do feel like I have kind of a enough number in my mind that I'm mu like kind of working toward, it's not just like. Grow into infinity. Um, and I am trying to keep my business reasonable where I don't have to hire people. Um, but so I, I did have those financial metrics.

Um, I also had more kind of mini metrics around specific programs. So I'm actually, when this person says, first year of your business, I'm taking that to me. In the first year I was selling products I had an entire year before that where I was doing content creation. So I also set metrics around that.

Like I wanted to have a weekly podcast episode. I wanted to have a weekly blog post, like, and so I was just checking off, like, have I done the things? But in terms of money and products and sales, um, I was doing that when I actually had things to sell. So, um, I would also say metrics around people visiting the website.

Um, but this is, this is the really challenging part, and I hate to say this because I know people listening are like, that's not helpful, but I feel like in some ways you don't know until you're more experienced what the metrics are that matter. Yeah. So some people are like, Oh, it's website visitors.

And I'm like, but is it like depending on your business, it might not be. And for me, it's actually like, if I send out a newsletter and I get a ton of people engaging with me around it. That's actually a really good metric to tell me, Oh, they care about that topic. Or if I have a bunch of people tweeting me about something, or even the fact that a bunch of people asked us these questions, that's a really good metric that we went out on Twitter and all.

We got all these questions. You know, like, so I think that that's part of the challenge is sometimes you don't know what the effective metrics are for your particular business because all of our businesses are a little bit different. So, um, yeah, I mean, is it that I booked eight speaking gigs in a year?

Is it that I filled the program or, I mean, it's, that's, that's challenging. I feel like it's very personalized. I can say I've never focused on list building metrics. I don't really care. I mean, I, I want people to join my list if they feel like it's helpful to them. I'm not constantly trying to do campaigns to build my list.

So that was not something I focused on. It's the, it's almost easier for me to say what I didn't focus on. I didn't really focus on growing social. I focused on, here's the thing I focused on. Okay. It's taken me this long to figure it out. Sorry for the rambling. I focused on learning. That was my metric.

How much can I learn and pick up and gain confidence in so that I felt like I was making decisions that need sense for me, and that had a lot to do with systems. It had a lot to do with how I should interact with clients. It had a lot to do with. The things that I didn't feel confident in because I just had no idea what I was doing, like finances.

Um, that was a metric for the first year of like, do I feel like I'm actually learning things where I'm like, Oh yeah, this makes sense. I understand. I can read this finance book and actually understand it because I picked up enough information. I like that. That's a, that's a great encapsulation of that first year because there is a ton of learning that happens and you can't necessarily build metrics for that, you know, cause you don't know what you don't know.

Um, and so I think that's part of it too. The other thing I would say as you were saying, Oh Hey, I finally came around to the, you know, the nugget of, of what I wanted that first year to look like. For me, it's uh, you know, not to go too cheesy, but it's sort of the title of our podcast here, which, which was I wanted to make my way and I wanted to do it my way.

I wanted to do the things I wanted to do, and I wanted to do it in a way that worked for me. And if I didn't feel like the things I was engaging with, you know, did that, then I was like, well, I don't need to be doing that anymore. So. It was a lot of figuring out on my own terms, what does this mean?

And for some people that's going to mean setting lots of goals and figuring out, you know, different metrics and those sorts of things. For me, it was much more of a field kind of thing. Um, and learning so much learning, so much learning. Actually, it goes back to the very first question we were asked about how you define success.

and you are, your definition of success will change over time. Yep. Um, but I think that in some ways that would be a place to start is in the first year of our business. What feels like success to you? Is it landing your first client? Yeah. Is it getting a system in place where you can invoice people?

Is it getting a website up? Is it articulating what it is that you offer? You know, like there are lots of things, and it may be that that's your metric is what, what is success to you in this first year? And it could be that you post a podcast episode on a regular basis or that you release a blog post or whatever it might be.

Yup. Whatever works for you. Uh, this next question is about, um. Some examples asking if we'd share some examples of how we use criteria to say yes or no to opportunities that come our way. I love this question. This is so good. I have a friend who recently, a year or two ago, instead of having the year of, yes, she had the year of now because she learned that she was saying yes to too many things, and so her default response when being asked, Oh, you want to go out and do, I think was always, no.

And then she'd kind of reevaluate and say, okay, do I really have time and capacity in my life to do that? And then maybe I'll say yes. And I think that's amazing. Um, you know, I think saying yes and no to things in your business is really hard, especially if there's money attached to it. Um, but staying true to yourself and your business I think is also really important.

And so you don't want to have too much of the like, mission drift kind of thing going on. Um, so I think this is a great question. Um. For me, uh, you know, a lot of it has to do with energy and interest. Um, am I interested in this project? Am I feeling like I could work well with these people for, um, you know, coming from a consulting perspective, that's a lot of, of the kind of, the decisions I'm having to make is that, is this a group of people that I.

Um, can work with, is the project something that I find interesting or something that will, um, you know, engage my creativity or my skills in a way that I find fulfilling. Um, because if my gut is telling me like something's off here, then it's probably going to be a painful kind of situation. So I do trust my gut a lot there.

Um, and again, a lot of that comes with, with experience of having some good clients and some bad clients and knowing what to look for. So. Um, but again, trusting your gut I think is a big one for that. Um, the other thing is money. Like if they're not willing to pay what I need them to pay in order to make the project worth it, then I'm not gonna take it.

So, um, sometimes that can be a hard calculation, uh, because you're thinking like, Oh, but this is at least some money coming in. But I would encourage you to think about, um, just because there's money, this amount of money coming in, if it's going to take up so much more of your time. Then you're going to get paid for.

That takes you away from other opportunities that you could say yes to. So be thoughtful about the money side of things. Um, because I think that that is a huge factor when saying yes or no to certain projects. Um, and be thinking about that, that sort of capacity that you have, that you could be pouring into this project that's not paying you enough, or you could pour it into something else that.

That might be more worth your time. yeah, this is, that's a really good point. I, it reminds me of this mantra I've had for a really long time, that you have to say no to the good. So you can say yes to the really great. And I think the challenge of that is, especially when you're leveling up in your career, there's a lot of good stuff that's coming your way, like cool collaborations, you know, interesting offers.

And the further along you go, the more you're able to distinguish like. Oh, this is good. But I could do better. And by do better, I don't just mean money. I mean, sometimes it's more aligned with, you know, what you really want to be doing and you have to kind of wait for the, the really good stuff.

You don't know when it's coming or what it will look like sometimes. Um, but this is actually something I recently recorded a podcast about saying yes or no. I will link to it in the show notes. And I also talked about going with your gut. I recently said no to something that was a pretty big deal, um, for my professional life and in, in at least partial because I had a pit in my stomach when I thought about saying yes, and I was like, okay, thank you universe for telling me, like, this is not the right direction.

Um. But I think that the challenge of it is, and I mentioned this in the podcast episode, you hear all the time, if it's not a hell yes, it's a hell no. And I feel like that is not always true. Like there's a lot in between hell yes and hell no. And it's really difficult to, there's a lot of gray in there.

And to really try to think through, you know, is this the right decision for me right now based on all these variables, based on what I know. And I, I guess what I would say is. I don't ever think that saying yes or saying no has to be as definitive as we think it is. Because I think sometimes where like this is changing the course of my life and it's like, okay, well then change it back.

You know? Like if you don't like it, change it back and not that it's going to be easy if you decide to move across the country and then it's a mistake and you decided to move back. I mean like that's a thing. I'm not saying it's not, but you know, I think sometimes we put this stuff in our heads and we wish we knew more.

We wish we could see it in the future. You only have the data that you have. You only have what's right in front of you, and you can talk with people that you trust. You can think about your values and whether or not something aligns with those values. Um, but I think that what I have always tried to do is get myself into a position where I have the freedom to say yes or say no.

And when this thing happened recently that I was asked to do, and it would have come with some money, I have the freedom to say no to that money. Like I, I am okay financially. Like I am in a spot where I can say no to things, even if there's money attached because I don't feel like it's aligned with what I'm supposed to be doing.

And that is a privileged place to be. But I have also very intentionally created a space for myself to be in that situation. I have a partner who supports me. Whether I say yes or no, you know, like those are the things that I think are really that matter. So that's an important piece is to feel like you do have the freedom and that you're not going to have these outside things infringing on you to pressure you to go into a direction that you don't want to go.

Agreed. The other thing I'm hearing from you, Katie, is that this changes across time. And I think that's really true too. So things I would've said yes to, you know, two years ago are really different than things I would say yes to now. Um, and I think that that's a natural evolution of being in a business.

Um, and so for those of you who are just getting started out there, like. You may feel like you have to say yes to more stuff right now, even if it's not perfect or not ideal to kind of get your feet wet. Um, I think that's okay. Again, as long as you're not compromising your, your values or your, you know, integrity or your, um, you know, you don't want to get yourself into a situation where you've burned yourself out in the first year of your business and you don't want to do it anymore.

Right? So think about. Things like longevity of your business and the health of yourself and your business as you're making those decisions. But you might have to push the yes button a little bit more early on, but know that the time for no is coming. You know, you, you will ha, you will experience that time to um, and just trust, trust that you kind of know what you need to do when you need to do it.

I think that's a thing you learn along the way. Well, and I would also say the question that is really helpful for me is what am I truly saying yes to? Yeah, it could be more money, but it could also be stress. It could also be working with a difficult client that I don't want to work with. You know?

Like, and what am I saying no to? I'm saying no to the money, but I'm also saying no to the stress. I'm saying no to the increased hours. I'm saying no. You know, like so in any situation, you're not just saying yes to the thing itself. You're saying yes to all the stuff that comes along with it.

And you want to think about that is, is that really what you want to say? Yes. To. Okay. Next question. What are some unexpected hurdles and things you never thought of when you were getting your LLC set up and running? I think for me, this, uh, this one's pretty easy and it's just. The basics of how do I set up an LLC?

How do I set up a bank account? How do I do, you know, all of those nitty gritty business pieces. Um, I felt really out of my depth for a lot of that, and a lot of it was just kind of diving in and learning stuff. Um, and so that was a hurdle in the, in the sense that it took longer and took more of my brain power than.

I wanted it to. It was stuff that like, I was like, I don't want to know this. This is not stuff that like actually adds value to my life, but in reality it does. It's helpful to know. Um, so a lot of that stuff was, was a hurdle early on, especially for me, and just just getting the thing off the ground and feeling like.

I did it correctly, ish, that I kind of knew how to do, like taxes and you know, keeping track of expenses and which things did I need to track in which way? And all of those kinds of things. I think for me, where were some of those unexpected things that just took up a lot of time, especially in that first year or so.

Yeah, and I, I've mentioned one of mine, I think in season one, which is. Um, I registered my bank account with a PO box, which was a mistake. It was like a whole thing. And I was like, okay, I have to have a physical address because of terrorism and like all these things. And so there's just stuff that you're going to do wrong.

And how would you know? I mean, this is why I talk about it, so other people don't do it. Um, but I would also say, and I wouldn't call it a hurdle, but one of the things that was kind of unexpected for me, I really didn't take any salary draw from my business for like the first. Year and a half, two years.

Um, I mean, I think I've mentioned on the show, at one point, we bought a new refrigerator. Um, and that was from the business, like salary. Um, but I didn't start pulling, you know, like a regular salary until I had my first year of taxes under my belt. I was very concerned. Um, I had no idea what the tax situation was going to be.

I was working with an accountant, but I had heard horror stories of people who got to the end of their first year of business and owed all these taxes and didn't have the money to cover it. And I was just Not going to have that happen to me or to my partner. So we were overly cautious. Um, but I also feel like it set us up to be in a really strong place.

We have business savings now that cover basically our entire next year of taxes. And that's how we've set up our business so that we have just a pot of money that we know will cover our taxes. And if no income comes in, okay. Like we're, we're still good to go. And I think that that's. Something I hadn't really thought about you.

I handle my finances for the business differently than I handle my personal finances. Maybe that's not a, not a good thing, but it is different in terms of just, you know, wanting to set up the health of your business. So that was kind of something unexpected. The financial literacy that I was going to need to do it in a way to feel comfortable for me.

Right, right. I would agree. Oh, things like that that you wish you knew, but also you just need to learn first year. I mean, I hate to say that cause it is so not what I would want to hear. And I know people listening are just like cringing them themselves. And I'm like, sorry. It's true. Well, a related question, um, what are your favorite resources that inform a business start up?

And you T you mentioned a few of these things already, Katie. Um, are there any other things that you throw out there? I would definitely say the podcast stuff. I mean, it's huge. There's so much free information out there. It is unbelievable and it's good. It is good solid information based on people's experiences.

There's lots of interviews that people have done with people from a range of business contexts that you can learn. Even from people who have product based businesses, like that's been really helpful. Um, and I would also say, and I feel like this is such a junkie answer, but totally the internet.

I mean, I Googled around all kinds of ways. So like when I needed to find a way to print my workbook for solo by design, I was like, just doing all this research, trying to figure out what the options were. We are in such a different space right now for online internet businesses. I mean, I had this conversation with my partner just like within the last six months.

He's a computer guy. He was like, you know, if the world had been what it is now in the mid nineties he's like, I would have been killing it. And I was like, you're totally right. Like it's like it has completely changed how we do business. And so I think that just this idea that the internet is this valuable resource of information about the options that are available to you when you have a question and you're trying to, how do I do this?

Or how do I do that? YouTube, I mean is how I trained myself to edit in GarageBand when I first started my podcast. Um, the help section of Devi is how I figured out how to run my website. I mean, I miss, I'm not kidding. I just feel like it's all out there. So once you kind of pick your lane of the kinds of things you're doing, um, it's hard to say kind of favorites because I do feel like.

You have to find the people who are most going to inform what you're doing. Um, but I will also say, I think, and I've mentioned this resource on this show before, wandering, aim Philly has been a really inspiring place for me, Jason Zuck and his wife, Caroline, um, in terms of just how they're running their business their way, and they're very intentional about it.

And, um, so that's one that I didn't mention yet on this show that I think is fun. Yeah. What about, you. Um, I don't have too much else to add there. I think, like you said, podcasts are great. I think there's a lot of great book resources out there, if that's more your thing. Um, you know, the internet, as you said, Google, Google is your friend.

Um, you know, let yourself go down some rabbit holes, but also don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good. Like no, when you've got enough information to take some action, um, you know, and try not to get to that place of completely being overwhelmed by it. Cause there's a ton of information, right?

Or too much in some cases. So. Try to avoid getting completely overwhelmed by the scope of information and get what you need and get out and keep moving. I think that that's, that's the big thing. Yeah. Don't let it paralyze you. I mean, the internet can be a scary place too. I understand that.

That it can. Um, okay. Just a couple of questions left. Someone asked, have you hired through Upwork or Fiverr? If so, I'd love to hear about that. Um, and just to clarify, for people who may not know, Upwork and Fiverr are basically freelance. Um, websites where you could hire people. The um, example I often hear is people want to do like a voiceover for their podcast.

And so they hire someone who's like a voice actor through fiber to, they give them the script and they record the audio. And then, so it's a way to kind of, um, have. Transactions between different freelancers who want to hire people for things. Is this something that you've ever done, Sarah? It is not.

Um, I know very little about it. Um, it sounds good, but it almost sounds too good to be true. I think sometimes it can be, I mean, this is, I did look into Upwork at one point when I was trying to do some website stuff that felt. Uh, a little advanced for what I knew how to do. And so I was kind of looking into, especially some work on like the programming side.

Um, that is not something that my partner or I know how to do. And so I looked into it, actually talked to a couple of people. And, um, I think the challenge, and this is so ironic that I'm saying this because Sarah, you and I both, I think offer some degree of freelance services. Some people are just really crappy at communicating and like telling you what they do, helping you to trust them.

Like I had situations where I was like ready to put down some money and then I was like, Oh, I don't like how you're talking to me about this. Like I do not have trust in your ability to do this project. It doesn't feel professional to me. You know, like all the things, and it did impact how I talk about my business and how I talked to people.

What I have done though is use services like pond five which is a website where you can do, I think they have like video clips and things like that, but I've used them for music. So I think actually the music for this podcast came from pond five so there are certain things like that where it's kind of a, an outsourced thing, but it's not really with, it is with an individual, but I'm not hiring them to do something bespoke.

Like I'm hiring, I'm choosing something that they have already created and I am purchasing that thing, which feels different to me than Upwork and fiber, because typically you're trying to get them to do something that's like very specific for you. So I don't think either one of us have really.

Dabbled it not too much. Not too much. Not not sure what to say about, I guess I would say, not to say that you shouldn't, and I'm not saying it's bad, I just, I have not had a need for it. I do know other people who have done it and have been very happy, so I think it just depends on what you're looking for.

Yeah. well, in our last question, Katie. Which is a great lead up to, uh, things to come for. Make your way. The last question is, when you started podcasting about your businesses, did you ever expect it to go five seasons and beyond? And what most motivates you to continue sharing? Please don't stop.

This is a very kind one. I like that. What did you think when you saw this one? Xero? Um, I mean. I didn't, I didn't expect it to go five seasons and beyond, mostly because I just had no expectation. I was like, Oh, this is cool. Girl asked me to do this cool thing and I, we're going to talk. I don't know.

We'll see where it goes. So I've, I've kind of felt like from the beginning, we're just kind of riding this wave until it doesn't make sense to ride it anymore. And, um, you know, I, I think. For me, what motivates me to keep sharing is that there's a lot that I've been through, both in terms of my business and in terms of juggling some personal hardship along with juggling a business that is valuable for people to hear about.

And I think, um, you know, if somebody else can take heart and something I've said or, you know, learn something from our conversations, I think there's incredible value in that. And I think that that's something that you should. You know, you don't always put a price tag on that, but I think those free resources, like we've been talking about throughout the whole podcast, Katie, like there's, there's incredible value in those conversations and in being transparent about how these things work.

Especially for people who are trying to get started and do something new and cool and weird in their own way or in their own niche area. So, um, yeah, I think that that's what motivates me is it's fun. First of all, we have a great time and, um, you know, I think there's, there's good stuff that we've learned that is worth sharing.

Yeah. Well, longtime listeners of the podcast will know. I always plan longterm for things, so I wouldn't say I expected it to go, you know, five students and beyond, but I certainly planned for that. I mean, I don't want to add something to my plate if I feel like I don't have capacity for it.

But also I would say, you know, like to our listeners, it is not difficult to have an excuse to talk to Sarah Langworthy on a regular basis. It's delightful. It's actually really great. And it's, I feel like we, we might not talk as much as we do if we didn't have the show because it's an excuse for us to get on and have conversations.

And typically, before we record you and I catch up and like talk about life and our businesses and what's going on, and then we hit record. So, um. It's actually a really nice way to build a friendship and to maintain a friendship. Um, and if you listen to our earlier episodes, Sarah and I really didn't know each other that well.

I mean, I totally pitched this to her. We, we talked like a couple of times yeah. For my book and then I was like, Oh, this is a really interesting person. So you know, over time, like this has been what has built our friendship, like make your way as very much in that. Um, so that's a very cool thing.

I would say what motivates me to keep sharing is very similar to what you said, Sarah, and that I feel like this business has been such an evolution. I mean, it is like ridiculous how much it has grown and changed in ways that I did not anticipate. But I would also say, um, one of my core kind of professional values is documentation.

And I think this comes out in my business in a bunch of different ways and how I work with my clients and I see podcasting as a form of documentation. I have. I didn't know in the beginning that's what I was doing. But now it's very clear to me that, um, podcasting, blogging, you know, even social media sharing is something that I feel really kind of pulled to do because it's a way for me to document my own journey and not to say I like to spend my weekends going back and listening to past episodes because I don't, and I don't have time for that.

But if I wanted to, you know, I can even go back to a year ago and like, look at some of the stuff I recorded for any of my shows, and it kind of puts me back into that space of like, Oh yeah, that's what you were dealing with. That's kind of the things you were talking about and thinking about.

And I feel like that's a fun thing to have a record of, you know, like what we were thinking of during that time. I mean, it's kind of a form of auto ethnography. So, um, that's what kind of motivates me, I think, to keep sharing aside from the fact that I get to jump on and talk with Sarah all the time.

Um. I think it is such an evolution and it's cool to put like a pin in what we're thinking about like right now in our businesses so that we could go back and look at it later if we wanted to. Agreed, agreed. And I always learn stuff. I think that's the other thing, like I am always learning from you, Katie, about many and various things.

But I, I leave these conversations energized and excited to like dive into something in my business or keep moving on. Something that I've been kind of dragging my feet about. So I always find our conversations really inspiring and, and I learned a lot. I like learning stuff. Same. That's great.

Okay. Should we give a couple pieces of info about. Season six that's coming soon, John. So exciting. Okay. So I don't want to give it all the way cause we are going to do an intro episode kind of talking about what we're up to in season six. But I think we can say. That we are doing some interviews with people.

We've brought a five people into the season, um, who are going to be chatting with us, which is super fun and I'm very excited about that. Probably we'll slightly shift our audio quality a little bit. I'll just warn everybody in advance because I'm the one editing all these episodes. Um, but super exciting to have those conversations.

And anything else you want to say about season six. Um, I think it's, it's, you know, more of what you have always enjoyed about, make your way, which is like hearing people talk about this business stuff. Um, and we've had a couple of these conversations already and they've been delightful and you really unique in their own way.

So I think if you listen to the full season, you'll just get a really broad spectrum of. Um, people at different places in their businesses and in their lives, and it's, I don't know, it's gotta be super cool and I'm really excited. Okay. Well, um, to our listeners, keep your eyes peeled for season six.

Um, it will probably drop in the next week or two after you see this between a sowed, depending on my own editing schedule and if I can get my act together. Um, but I, I hope to share it with you soon. And Sarah. As always. This is super fun. Thank you also to everybody who submitted questions.

These were really great. Y'all are awesome. Yeah. Thank you very much. All right. Talk to you later, Sarah. Bye. Thanks for listening to this episode of make your way show notes and a transcript for this episode can be found@doctorkatielinder.com backslash M Y. w if you found this episode helpful, please consider rating or viewing the show in Apple podcasts.

Thanks for listening.