**final - S6E9**

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Katie linder.com backslash M Y w. Sara. Langworthy Katie Linder. How's it been awhile oil. And I should tell our listeners that Sarah and I have been doing some relatively consistent catching up, you know, during this period. But it has been a long time since we have sat down in front of our microphones.

And so let's update our. Our dear listeners about 2020 and our businesses, and what's been going on. And we can talk a little bit about the future of make your way as we kind of get into this. Um, but let me kind of preface this listeners by saying, and I decided to do kind of an update episode. This is not the start of a new season, and you will soon hear why we can not kind of fit another season into our schedules right now.

Um, but we are not planning on kind of shutting down the show. We just cannot produce a season right now and may not be able to until like 20, 21 that said, we know you're really interested in what's going on and in our lives and businesses. And so we thought, Hey, let's do an update. So Sarah, tell us kind of what's been going on for you since Covitz started.

Cause I feel like our last season released like. Just before they're in the before times as I like to. Yeah. Them times the before times. Oh yeah. The before times, uh, yeah, things, um, it's been a whirlwind like it is for everybody. Right. I want to acknowledge that, that. Like this, this year has not gone the way that we all anticipated.

It would. And you were so hopeful at the beginning of 20, right? I was like, you guys, this year, it's going to be different. And then, you know, was different just in a different way and not a bad way necessarily, but yeah. Um, I think for me, the, the main takeaway, um, and as we dive into some of these topics a little bit more, you'll hear some of the details of this, but the main takeaway for me has really been and about, um, you know, Kind of the reminder that you make plans and then the universe leaves and then you have to make more plans and the universe will probably continue to laugh at them.

Um, but that, that you have to be flexible and you have to be, um, kind of able to figure out something new. Um, And a new direction that makes sense on the fly. And sometimes that works really well and sometimes it doesn't. So, um, for all of you out there who are just kind of in the middle of this going, like, I'm trying to keep my head above water.

Yep. Totally hear you. And there is a lot of that going around. Um, and I think we all have periods of that. You know, if we're not living in it currently, you know, constantly of just like, how is this going to. How are we even going to get through this? But, um, for me, at least you figuring out how to be flexible again, again and again and again, um, is, is sort of the hallmark of this time and also just kind of owning a business in general.

Um, but that constant reminder of. Plans or plans are funny, but plans are cute. They are, they are well, okay. So Sarah, I feel like you're talking about this and kind of broad. Yeah. But COVID like this whole new area for your business and you and I have had some discussions where we're like, what is happening because we've seen, we have seen so many people through social media and various other things who are.

Really struggling right now through a lot of brick and mortar businesses, as I'm sure everybody is well aware, have really struggled. Um, Sarah and I are not brick and mortar businesses. We can operate virtually and we have both seen pretty massive growth in our businesses during this period, which is honestly a little bit weird and feels kind of odd and a little bit difficult.

Um, just from the perspective of being in the, the context of watching other people struggling. And we're not necessarily. Struggling. I mean, we're maybe in certain ways, but you know, in terms of revenue and things like that, this has actually been a growth period for both of us. Tell us a little bit about what has.

Happened in your business during this period. And we're going to dig into this a little bit deeper in this episode, but I want to give people just kind of a, an introduction to what, what, what is going on with your business. Yeah. So, um, as, as long time listeners will know, um, I have been kind of. Working in this area of consulting and video production and, uh, you know, digital engagement and those sorts of areas, um, for several years now in a variety of different content areas.

Um, but primarily sort of in the early childhood world, in the beginning of 2020, I was like, you know what? I can't continuing to work in that area for a variety of reasons. Some of them personal and some of them just, you know, it wasn't. It wasn't really exciting me in the same way as anymore. And so I had shifted to thinking about doing more of the video production and consulting more full, full time.

I had developed a whole video, your way series, which I was launching and then covert happens. Um, but positioned me in a really interesting way. So, um, you know, some listeners may not know I am a choral singer. I have been singing in choirs my whole life. Uh, I sing with a choir here in the twin cities and, um, one of the big casualties of COVID has been coral organizations because people cannot gather and sing.

Um, w early on it was believed that singing would be a super spreader event, um, because you are expelling particles from your, you know, from your airwaves and say like, are we living in a science? They should movie super spreader events. Like I feel like we've kind of accepted these things and I'm still kind of in this mode of like, is this really the life we're living right now?

And it is, and I'm trying to accept it. Yeah. It's, it's real weird. It's true. Um, so, so yeah, so girl organizations were like overnight hit with this. We can't perform, we can't rehearse, we can't do anything in group settings. And so. Everybody was sent scrambling to try to figure out how do you survive in a pandemic that is going to last for an indeterminate length of time where you're not going to be able to gather for a very long time.

And the only option available to you is virtual. And so I, early in the pandemic, I heard, you know, I kind of was listening and knew that there were organizations kind of struggling with this. One of my long time clients, um, who I was preparing a, uh, you know, uh, video for their upcoming fundraising gala was like, okay, we have to move everything online.

How do we do that? And I was like, Hey, I can help with that. That's the thing I know how to do living in virtual spaces for years now and working in those spaces. Um, and so I pivoted pretty quickly too, to the area of, um, producing virtual acquires virtual ensemble. So all of those, you know, viral videos, you see if people.

Singing with their headphones in and kind of, kind of, sort of singing together, but not really, uh, everybody's recording there. So yeah, their parts separately. And then it's all put together on the back end by a producer. I was like, Oh, I could do that. Like, I know, I know kind of how to edit and I also am a singer, so I know what it's supposed to sound like.

I, you know, I know, I know choral music well enough. And so, um, Kind of early in, I jumped into that and I jumped into sort of doing some presentations and some, you know, online virtual events and things to, uh, help people learn about how to do those things. Um, and how to think about how do you plan a season, right.

And you have no idea the next time you're going to gather. And what does it a well produced, um, online virtual fundraising event look like? Or how do you think about ticketing when. Um, you're producing your virtual program. So all of those kinds of, um, questions and things, I was really well suited to answer and sort of helping those conversations.

And so it sort of was a right time, right. Place kind of situation, which has, Katie mentioned feels really weird to say in the middle of a pandemic, like it's, it's a very weird place, but I'm also very grateful to be able to help a lot of organizations that are struggling right now and trying to figure out a way forward.

Um, so. You know, I, I'm trying to figure out how to do that business in a way that is ethical. And in a way it feels, you know, appropriate to me given the context that everybody's living in. Um, but also recognizing I'm bringing a lot of value here and, and that there is, there is something I can do to help in this small way for organizations who are struggling.

So. That's kind of where I've landed. Uh, I told Katie before we hit record my calendar for the rest of the fall and holiday season is completely full, which is not well, I mean, take this the way in which it's intended, Sarah, but this is like the weirdest niche. Yeah. Ever heard of it. When you first told me about this, I was like, of course, it's like perfect for you.

And I was like, this is so weird that you're like able to step into this very strange, but this is really what I was talking about this with my partner the other day. And he was like, how are you finding these like weird niches of people? And I'm like, this is what you do. I mean, you find these like odd little leashes that you fit into for whatever reason.

Yeah. And you just slot yourself in and you create a product or service and all of a sudden, like you have this ready-made audience for it, because there was no one else who's kind of doing that. Yeah. Yeah. It's, it's been very weird and great. And I've gotten to meet some wonderful people and work with people.

I never would have gotten to work with, like one of my favorite people to work with now. Is in Albuquerque. I there's no reason our lives would have crossed paths, had this not happened. And so I'm really grateful for those opportunities to kind of connect with people I wouldn't have otherwise, um, and meet some really incredible musicians and, and others who are just trying to like, get good art into the world in the ways that make sense right now.

And we all need some good arts, so yeah, but Katie. Tell us what's happened with you since the, before times what's happened to you. What's happened with you. What's going on?

How's our listeners left us and last season, I think they were, I honestly haven't, I should've gone back and looked. And when we talked about last season and I did not. I mean, listeners, this is where we are. We're flying by the seat of our pants a little bit. Yup. Um, but I, um, as well, our listeners may know, started a new job in Kansas.

I had moved to Kansas in early January, started my new job in early February was in that job for about six weeks. And then, um, COVID hit and we all went remote. And so, um, that, because I work with an online learning organization with Kansas state university, I will just leave it to the imaginations of the people who are listening of all the things that had to be done, um, to shift our institution to remote in the spring.

And then as we had to consider what that would look like, you know, into the summer, into the fall and that work continues, um, I was like, why, whose phone is busting? What's going on? It's my, my phone is buzzing. So yes, fixing that. Sorry. Um, so the, the transition in my job, um, to remote was kind of one transition and then kind of hot off the presses.

I haven't really talked about this publicly last week. And this week I actually just transitioned into a different leadership role where instead of overseeing one team, I'm overseeing four teams. And, um, that was definitely in kind of response to some of the stuff that's been going on. So my actual job job has been shifting, changing, really kind of keeping me.

Engaged in a lot of different things. Some of which I was hired for some of which I honestly wasn't, um, because I, they just needed me to do things right. So I did. And the other thing that is probably, um, maybe a little bit obvious to our listeners who are in the higher ed environment is there's a lot of online stuff going on right now.

There's also a lot of blended stuff going on right now. May I remind you that four years ago, I published a book on blended course design. So that was a thing. Um, and I started getting a lot of people contacting me. So very similar to you, Sarah. It's like I had a little weird niche and all these people kind of started reaching out.

And so in may I kind of put my head down and created a new product called blend by design. Um, very similar in some ways to social by design terms of structure, which is, um, I think we talked about that in season three, where we built our products. And so that launched in June and, and really the purpose of that was to try to head off all of these one off requests, because I was getting requests to do a lot of virtual speaking workshops, retreats for people around this.

And I just could not. Do them, um, because I have a full time job and it was like, I can't do this. And I really felt like in some ways, coming to kind of the ethical point that you raised, Sarah, I would be like abandoning my own institution to go do all this stuff for other institutions. And I just didn't feel comfortable with that.

So I built this course, um, And from kind of a business perspective, it is my highest price product. At this point, I do have in kind of open institutional licensing option. It's unlimited for $30,000 within the first week. And institution purchased that. I mean, it was like, You know, I mean, it just blows your mind.

I mean, it just blows your mind that you could spend a month creating a thing. I E six years of your life learning about content and then creating a thing. I mean, it's, it's not just a month, but, um, and then, you know, we've been selling that, um, in the summer, so. That was kind of an interesting, uh, unforeseen thing that happened in my business this year, that we were not expecting to build that product.

And then we did. Um, and I have also been doing some virtual speaking, but I really kind of pivoted toward. Topics away from technology, which is kind of interesting toward like resilience, self care, more coachy stuff. Um, and so I've been really been hired to do quite a bit of that. Um, and that's actually been really enjoyable because I really like bringing that coaching part into my keynoting.

Um, so that happened, coach training has been going great. Like everything's been filling, which has been surprising. I think we weren't sure how the pandemic would affect. Discretionary income. And so my June coach training cohort did fill my summer writing group did fill, you know, like there's, there's these programs that we're running, that are filling.

Um, and my partner keep saying, well, it's just cause everyone's stuck at home. So what's the pandemics done, you know, nobody's going to sign up for this stuff anymore. And I'm like, okay, fine. Like maybe so, but for now we're busy, you know, like running these programs and there's quite a bit going on there.

Um, and then just because I'm me and I needed some extra things in my life, I decided to take a yoga teacher training, um, which started in June and wraps up. September end of September. And as we record this, it's kind of early September. I'm not sure when this will release. So I'm still in the midst of that.

And then I also decided, um, in preparation for a possible new product, I want to create in 2021 on project management, I decided to get my PMP credential, which is a project management, professional, um, credential. And it's an exam that you sit for. And so I'll sit for that in late November. So it's been a weird mix of like, Random just like random stuff at work, random, some random stuff in the business.

I mean, some of this stuff been very planful. The coach training is just being executed in the way that I originally thought it would. So, so that's not feeling random. Um, but I am taking on a lot of new coaching clients. Um, there are a lot of people, um, as you can imagine, who are just trying to think through transitions, realizing that their life is not the way they want it to be.

I mean, like. COVID has really just opened that up, you know, for a lot of people. So that's been really kind of interesting to engage with. Um, on the personal side, I now have pigtails in my hair because my little pixie has grown out. I haven't been able to America. Um, so that's happened very identity shifting to be able to grow your hair out.

Um, so yeah, I think that's the big stuff of, kind of, what's been going on with me in the business of over these past six months or so. That's a lot. Yeah, no, yeah. I mean, 2020, I just, yeah. And the fall is going to be so interesting too, so, okay. So Sarah and I have kind of a series of topics that we thought we would kind of run through and just give some commentary on as a way to kind of give additional like, Details flavor to what we're talking about here, in terms of some of these changes.

So Sarah, one of the things that you and I have kind of talked about, um, when we're not recording, is this concept of how we felt like we'd kind of set ourselves up to pivot a little bit and that we had some kind of helpful skills or things that were kind of already in our toolboxes that allowed us to kind of make some shifts like pretty immediately once we knew what was going on.

And this was something that I feel like when I looked around and I saw like brick and mortars and other people. Some people immediately were able to do this and they just kind of like it and that's not to say it wasn't difficult or hard, but they like got into the mode of like, okay, what do I do now?

Because I can't do this other thing. So let me kind of shift. And I feel like you kind of were one of the people who were able to do this and what kind of help you be set up for that? Like in terms of like the structure of your business or just your own kind of personality and skillset, what would you say was helpful for that?

Yeah. I mean, I, uh, I want to answer that question, but I also, I want to start with a, with an acknowledgement, which is that like everybody, everybody deals with the stress of this situation differently and especially early on. I saw a lot of, kind of different coping styles arriving. Well, I'm a scene. Um, and I don't think any, I want to say that I don't think any one of those is right, right.

And I don't think any one of them is necessarily wrong either. It's just sort of how you, how you, um, respond to stressful situations. I. W which, uh, so one of the things that set me up for success frankly, is the way that I respond to stressful situations is to pour myself into my work because that feels like a thing I can control when everything else is chaos.

Yeah. Help me help you. Not, you know, there have been significant downsides to that too, over the years and even this year. So like, I, you know, I want to acknowledge that though. I was able to sort of jump in and pivot very quickly. That's not, that's not to say that that is the only way or the best way to cope with the pandemic.

Let me just be clear. Um, so though I was able to kind of recognize where are the gaps going to be and where, um, you know, where do I see this kind of panning out if people aren't able to gather, especially in the choral world, like, you know, how does that, um, how does that fit? And then thinking about what are the skills I have now that I can apply to that situation?

Um, you know, That was my stress response kicking in was like, Hey, here's my coping. Um, I know for a lot of people, there was a period where it was just like, you got hit by a bus and he didn't know what to do. And I will say that for me personally, I think one of the only reasons I was able to. Kind of jump and run with it as well is because of the several years prior, I'm going through some really hard stuff personally.

And, um, and I've gotten pretty good at yeah. Rolling with the punches because of that extended breath, this of rolling with some punches. So, um, you know, I think in some ways that previous personal experience set me up to be kind of more able to weather that, uh, in the moment. But also my stress response, you know, gets activated and I'm like, let's work hard.

It seems like a good thing to do. Um, so, you know, I think Katie to answer your question, a few of the sort of tangible things that set me up for that, um, were like, I knew how to edit my website very, very quickly. And one of the best sort of, uh, things that I had done just before the pandemic, just because I had planned on doing it was revamping my website.

So I had done a complete overhaul of it a month or so before the pandemic hit in preparation for video your way and some of those other, other, um, things that I was working on. And so when it hit. I, I was very well versed in like, Oh, here's how I need to redesign this. And here's how I make it searchable.

And here here's how I provide content for people in a way that they're going to need it. Um, and so I think that helped not only for, uh, kind of asserting that, like, yes, you know what I'm talking about, even though this is an area that I'm kind of new to too, um, It also helps with things like search results.

So, um, you know, I, I have really good SEO numbers suddenly for the first time in my business, which is great. Um, but applying some of those, those really weird, like niche, technical skills about like, how do you present your business and how do you talk to your audience and how do you, um, build trust and kind of create that space where you're like trying to be helpful, especially in this, in this period where, um, a lot of businesses in places are looking for.

How do I help, you know, or how do I solve this problem? And so if you can provide some tangible, um, you know, advice or options or resources for how to solve a very particular problem in the middle of this pandemic, you're going to do okay. Like that, that was another thing too, is thinking about how do you help solve problems and, um, and also remaining, uh, as positive as I could given the context.

Right? So, um, Providing choral organizations with some hope that like this does not have to be the end of choral singing, right? There are ways to approach this that are different than you've ever done before. This is going to push you outside of your comfort zone, but I'm here to help with that. And I'm here to tell you that like, There's going to be some exciting stuff.

That's going to come up for you. If you kind of dive into this virtual world too, there are things that you can do in a virtual space that you can't in an in person space, um, and vice versa. But you know, this is what we have, so let's work with that. Um, so those kinds of are the things I think were, were helpful.

Um, as I was thinking about how do I. Best to be of service in this time. And also how do I make, you know, how do I, uh, make my, my skills, um, and knowledge, um, relevant for people and useful for people in this time. So, Well, and if anyone is listening to this and you're like, Oh my God, I'm like completely exhausted.

Just listening to her, talking about SEO and building my website and doing all the things. And I'm kind of listening to some of this and I'm like, I couldn't have done that. I mean, like, I just was not in a place to some of the ethical things, like sure. I feel like I pivoted, but yeah, I also was coasting on an audience that I already had.

I was letting word of mouth kind of market for me. I fell off of social media in a lot of ways. Um, and I really, and I think you did this too, just in a different way. We both kind of pivoted towards self care of, you know, what do we need to, to manage this? But I feel like the first six weeks of COVID I was, I don't know, I would say barely functioning, but functioning at a way, lower a component of what I normally would.

And I dialed it back. Like I could feel it happening and I was like, okay. You know, I, I just powered down because I was physically exhausted. I was very stressed, very high anxiety, and I needed to be able to do my job. So it was like, okay. Let me kind of funnel everything I have, you know, into my day job.

And my, a lot of my clients on the side also felt that, so it's like my coaching hours, you know, just kind of dropped because people weren't scheduling and then we all came back and then we all had this kind of moment where it was like, okay, we've kind of settled into this. The, the initial kind of shock of collective trauma.

Is settling into us a little bit and it doesn't mean we're okay, but we're, we're entering into a new phase. And I feel like that was when I had this moment where I was like, Oh Glen, by design. I mean, and that was my first kind of willingness to do almost anything creative in like late April early may, you know?

And so it took me a, and some people are going to be like that. Didn't take you very long, six weeks of summer long, I guess that, you know, like we're all different. And like, this is very relative to people, but. For me, that's a long period of time to go without like any creative urges whatsoever to just be like, no, like powering down, not, not doing anything I don't have to do.

I was, I, my whole morning routine shifted, I started sleeping. In which I have not done, like as an adult. So, I mean, it was just, it was a very strange time, like physically to kind of deal with everything. And literally this week, the first time I've gotten back to my 5:00 AM morning routine, which. I mean, it's like that, it took me that long to kind of come back to a place where I felt like I had more control over that.

And, and that I wasn't like in desperate need of additional rest and recovery time. One thing I'll say about that, that was interesting as it was all happening. Um, from my perspective is, is I recognize, as I said, like a couple of several different coping strategies, and there were a lot of my colleagues who were similar to you, Katie, where it was just like, Whoa.

Okay. I need to process this. I need to sit with this. And there were others like me who were like, no, I've got to put my head down, gotta do stuff. Pretend that this isn't real. But I also knew that there was going to be a point at which. I couldn't keep up that pace and keep up that sort of frantic work energy and that I was going to crash.

And I also knew that the people who were processing on the front end were going to come out of that into creative spaces again, and, and that, that was going to overlap. Right. But that was going to flip and that totally happened for me. So kind of the period that you're talking about, like, I was a little bit like, okay, Can I not work for a little bit.

That would be great. So I kind of dialed back a little bit kind of in that early, early or late spring, early summer period, because I knew I needed to write like that. That's the thing about recognizing your coping strategies, um, and acknowledging the positives and negatives about them. Right? So I think we have a tendency in this society to glorify hard work at all costs, right there, all those like social media posts about like this is to write a novel when other people were like, What the heck is wrong with you?

There was not a time to write a novel, you know, it takes different, you know, different personalities to make the world go. Um, but recognizing that for me, hard work, yes, is a coping strategy, but I also need to make space for that time when I know that it's going to fall off. And I know that like, I'm not sure be able to sustain this.

And so, you know, taking time, spring and summer to kind of step back and let others lead in that time, when they were feeling creatively energized, That was super important for me personally. I love that idea of thinking about it from that bigger perspective of like, we're, we're kind of like tagging each other in and out, you know, as like a bigger creative space.

And some of these people, we don't even know. I mean, it's, but when I would look around and I was really conscious of like, Not self judging because other people were doing something that I thought moment, I was like, no way, like, and I would watch people doing it and be like, good for you. You know? Like, I'm so glad that you can do.

And in a very genuine way, I mean, I'm not being sarcastic, you know, like I was really pleased that there were people who were able to do that, like you in the beginning. And it's been like ebbs and flows. You can see the ups and downs. If you're watching certain creatives online or whoever you follow that people have been able to kind of.

Figure this out, you know, for themselves, but the self knowledge is really important. And like you said, Sarah, you had kind of past experiences that prepared you for this. I feel like I've had past experience of just like sitting in discomfort. I mean, that's what anxiety is. And so there was just a lot of that that was very familiar to me.

And there's been these great internet memes that it's like, Oh, so do you want to feel like what anxiety feels like all the time, welcome to a pandemic. I mean like now you get to be here, the mind of someone who has anxiety. I mean, like, this is what we deal with all the time. Like, I mean, it's just constant.

So for some, in some ways it was very like familiar to be like, Oh, okay. Yes. I've had this, I know what this is. Um, it does, it was hard and, you know, challenging or whatever, but, um, okay. So I want to talk a little bit, we kind of both mentioned this concept of like rapidly spinning up new products. Is there anything else you want to say about like timelines, logistics around what that look like for you?

I mean, you've mentioned kind of changing your website and things like that. I didn't even really, I mean, I felt led by design and I built a website for it, but I didn't really change my main site. I mean, I really was just like, If you hear it, that I can do this. Great. I mean, I was kind of like really, depending on word of mouth, but I know you were doing some other structural things around that too.

I was doing a little bit around. Um, but the other thing I would say that, that I did very intentionally early on is, you know, when I, when I saw that this was going to be an issue for the choral community, um, I, I put myself out there in ways that I wouldn't typically, um, and this, I think hearkens back to stuff that we've talked about a long time ago, Katie, on the podcast about like, kind of coming into your own as a professional in, in certain spaces, um, And, you know, th th the first kind of imposter syndrome or hesitancy that you feel in engaging in a new space, and then eventually you're able to be like, no, here I am.

And I can, I can do this. Um, I, I kind of pushed myself a little bit to kind of step into that space a little more assertively than I would otherwise. But I did that in a way that was like, how can I help you? Here's what I can do. You know, I'm happy to give a talk for your organization. I'm happy to come in and talk to you.

I'm happy to give you some free consulting hours. You know, I just like made myself available to people so that when, you know, when an opportunity came up to talk about virtual events in a coral space, I was on that panel or, you know, I, I kind of produced my own little, um, Talk about that sort of thing too.

So like there were ways in which I was making sure that I was, I was, I was kind of reaching out and making those connections to make, uh, make my skills known to people and like, I want to be available and helpful for folks. So, um, that was maybe the more intentional marketing quote unquote that I did. Um, I like UK to kind of fell completely off social media and I'm still kinda not really there.

Um, I haven't seen a lot of value in it lately, frankly. It's a, it's an intense place right now for a number of reasons. Yeah. There's a lot going on, on social. Yeah. Yeah. So, um, I've kind of stepped away from that because I don't find it to be a healthy space for me to be in necessarily. Um, but I have been working hard to kind of develop those, those networks and those relationships, um, in ways that are helpful for people.

Um, again, that's from being useful, uh, for me as a big motivator, um, that's a big like kind of, um, identity thing for me is, is being useful. And being helpful. So, um, that was kinda my focus early on and, and just sort of put myself out there. I don't know. What about you? Any other kind of structural things?

The things I was thinking about before we, and we kind of talked about this before we hit record, was there are things you do in your business where it's like, you already know the steps and you're just executing the steps and it doesn't take like a ton of creativity. And I feel like in. That in some ways, blend by design felt like that for me, because I had the templates, like I had the slide templates, I changed the colors.

I mean, obviously I wrote new content, but this was an area that I felt super comfortable with. I've been speaking on this topic for years. I wrote a book on it already. I mean, like, so it was work, but it didn't feel, you know, super strenuous in terms of like creating something. Really, um, that had me like at the edge of my capacity.

Um, and I think that there was something really comforting to that, of like, I can create something that other people need that will be helpful to them that only I can create, you know, because I have the skills to kind of together, but it also doesn't feel like I'm. Like putting myself at risk, you know, with my mental capacity or my emotional capacity or my physical capacity in order to do that, even though it was a, it was a push, I mean, for sure inmate, but I think that that's different for me than like reconstruct shall I think a totally new thing.

Um, and I think both of us were kind of I'm on the side of like executing some things that we already had. We knew how to do, and it was like a very comfort area for us. And I feel like that's part of what. Set me up to be able to do the pivot on the keynote. I'm excited as well. That's probably the biggest pivot that I had is other than kind of creating this new product, it was still in the realm of what I already did or what I'd already written about and spoke about, but the pivoting to new keynote topics around resilience, self care, um, some stuff around trauma informed pedagogy.

Like these are not areas that I. I feel like I'm an expert in, um, but I felt like I could bring those things to an audience in a way that was allowing them to feel accepted of like where they are right now. And I had several events that were already booked, some of which got canceled, some of which got pivoted toward these virtual events and.

I w I went to them and I'm like, what I originally planned to talk about is just no longer appropriate. So I had to like pitch new ideas. And when I pitched the resilience talk in particular, people were just like resonating with that. Like, we really need to talk about that. And so I feel like part of it too, was like, I just went with my gut, which was like, we don't want to talk about new technology tools right now.

We need to talk about emotional resilience. We need to talk about trauma like that. This is, and that this is hard and it's okay. That it's hard and self care and like all these things. And so that's what I've been talking about with people like all summer long is, is those topics. So I feel like part of it too was like, And I've talked about radical self trust before.

There was definitely an element of that where I was like, okay, so I know you hired me for one thing, but no, I'm not doing that. Yeah. I'm not going to stand up in front of a crowd and be like, let's talk about high impact practices online, like high impact practice right now is an ethic of care. Yeah. So let's talk about that, you know, like, so, and, and that again, really resonated with people and it's not like they were fighting with me, you know, we shouldn't do this, but I had this kind of gut sense of, you know, where the direction I wanted to take that in.

So I would also say my decision several years back to them diversify my business. Um, I have never been more grateful that he did that. Then in this period, it was like, I'm not relying on speaking engagements. Like I know several people who they're speaking businesses just tanked because they didn't go virtual.

Or if they did people wanted to pay them less. I mean, it was like all this crazy stuff. And I had well-prepared myself, you know, that I didn't really want to do speaking and really what this has given me as kind of a dry run for. I'm not sure I ever want to speak again. I mean, like. Maybe, but like going and traveling and doing all the travel I was doing in 2019.

No, like I just don't want to do that anymore. And I've talked about that for a long time that like, it's just not my favorite thing. Um, so that's been kind of an interesting thing for me to think about longer term is just, are there things that are being set up right now for a bigger pivot that we'll continue posts this COVID period?

Whenever it decides to, to end. Um, okay. So you had also talked Sarah we've. We both talked briefly about the ethics of selling during this period. Um, and I think we've both had concerns about feeling like we were taking advantage of the situation. Um, and yet like what we are doing has value for people.

And I talked a lot with, um, the business mastermind that I run soul hustle. I've talked a lot with those folks about. Value exchange and how oftentimes what we receive as business owners is money. But what we're giving out for that value exchange is a lot of different things and we are able to provide value and do that kind of value exchange.

Um, tell me about what this was like for you, especially as you were realizing like, Oh, there's a definite need for this. And I know you Sarah well enough to know that you probably under priced this. Yeah, you're nodding your, you underpriced this service initially, and then maybe you, you repriced it as you went along, like talk about that whole process.

And how were you thinking about that? Yeah, I will say that, um, that has, that has been something that has weighed heavily on me. Um, you know, as we said at the beginning of the podcast, like it's really weird to be in a pandemic and to feel like you're thriving in a lot of ways. And so one of the things with kind of.

Being in this values based business space, um, and, and trying to be really conscious about my values and how they are expressed in the business that I do and the business that I operate. Um, One of those values was making sure that I'm providing services that are helpful for people and that, um, give access in ways that, uh, you know, other companies or other larger, especially video production houses.

Can't do, um, because they have their staff to, you know, pay for and equipment and all of those kinds of things, the way that sort of traditional video production works is very different than the business that I run, which is, um, you know, much, much smaller. And also, um, as you pointed out Katie for this particular area, very, very niche.

Um, so yes, I started off the, this sort of service, um, You know, providing a few different, different kinds of services. So I had sort of the virtual ensemble production, which is those virtual acquires or virtual bands, those virtual orchestra, you know, that kind of, uh, production, which, you know, everybody at the beginning was a little like, okay, we know this takes a lot of time, but we don't really know how much time.

And so it would, that was a process learning, I would say for anybody doing that work. Um, and so if there are those listening who are diving into that know that it is a lot of time that goes into those things. And that increases exponentially as you add numbers of singers and instrumentalists and et cetera.

So like putting together something with eight people is obviously much, much easier than putting something together with 200. So, um, you know, I think in some ways it was figuring out how do I price this so that the smaller ensembles aren't being sort of, and, you know, in a different way, Uh, because of the way I sat at my fee structure.

So I was really thoughtful in the beginning about, you know, thinking about how do I set this up so that it's, it's really based on the size of the ensemble. It's based on sort of the what's, what am I comfortable giving away in some ways. So, yeah. You know, I know that I have a very good ear. I know that I can blend things really nicely.

I know I have very good video editing skills. So like what, what portions of that am I, am I kind of bringing to the table and offering freely as a, as a part of this, um, a part of this package and what am I actually charging for? Right. So thinking through some of those, uh, those things, um, and yes, I learned pretty quickly that like, yep, this does take longer, even though I am very, very good at this.

It does take a lot of time. And so, um, as the pandemic has gone on, and as frankly as demand has increased, I've had to. Price I've had to adjust my pricing, um, because I know that like, I can't continue to stay in this sort of low end, but it was really important to me and still is very important to me to, um, price this in a way that acknowledges that we're in the middle of a pandemic and acknowledges that a lot of organizations are really, really strapped right now.

And so I try to work with, with clients as much as possible to figure out that sweet spot of like, what am I willing to do, um, at certain jobs for, and are there. For portions that I can either walk you through or teach you how to do on your own, that would minimize the cost on my end and those sorts of things.

So it's, it's been a lot of like conversations and kind of talking through, talking through those things. Um, And I, you know, I also want to acknowledge, I have exceptional privilege. Um, you know, I, I, my husband is gainfully employed, you know, we are doing okay in the middle of this, this time. And so I, I also felt like it's not appropriate for me to, to go out and gouge people and take advantage when I need that right now.

Right. Like, so there was just a lot of internal kind of worrying about all about all of that, but also knowing that I deserve to get paid for the work I do. It's just. It's super hard pricing in the middle of this time. Um, and so, you know, you have to be guided, I think, by your, by your values and you have to be guided.

Bye. What do you need right now? You know, if what you need is money to put things, to put food on the table, then like, yes, you should definitely charge. What you would typically charge for things, you know, if you feel like part of your, your businesses calling or your own personal calling is to figure out how you can, um, distribute wealth a little differently and how you can support, um, those who are struggling right now, or whether that's on an organizational or an industry level, like then you lean into that.

Like, you've got to make those decisions for yourself and it's not easy. I will say so. Yeah, that's been my, my pricing journey. And thinking about the ethics of this, Katie, I'm really curious, you know, as you mentioned, you, you know, you developed this whole new, this whole new program and, you know, pricing that at an institutional level and thinking about the stress of institutions right now, and also of all your individual coaching clients, how did you navigate these questions of ethics?

Yeah, this is a, I agree with you, Sarah, that it's hard. Like there's a lot of, um, factors. And I would say I had a couple of really good conversations with current clients that helped me to figure out pricing for blend by design. Um, it is priced individually, like at less than a third of what social by design is priced.

And that was very intentional. Um, if you are an individual trying to purchase this, I really wanted to make it reasonable for you. It also has like over a hundred videos. It also has. It's kind of like, you know, all the things. I mean, it's, it's a, it's a robust product. And so I was really. I'm aware of kind of what you were saying about there's value there.

You know, so I priced it at one 27, you know, for, for individuals, but then there are these packages that if you're buying it in bulk, you can buy it up to a $30,000 package for an unlimited audience. If you have 3000 faculty and you buy it at $30,000, it's actually. Really low. I mean, it drops the price like significantly.

I think that, um, I had a client and who came from a campus with 3000 faculty members and she said, what's your unlimited price? And I was like, okay, I need to think about this. Like, I need to think about if I'm offering unlimited, I need to think about. What does that do for my bottom line and all of that.

And, um, then I have, and another client who said a lot of institutions are receiving care's funding and they do have funding for things like this that are directly related to pandemic response. And I was like, you're right. Like that, that is true. And I think that there is, this is the thing that I've really had to be kind of, it's a attention and I've had to be kind of bouncing, announcing it.

There is money right now. People, there are certain people who are making money like the Amazon folks of the world and the Facebook folks of the world. I mean, like money is flowing during this time, not to everyone, which is the problem. And there are definite kind of issues, but it doesn't mean that everybody one doesn't have any money.

Right. And I think that this has been something I've really tried to be aware of. With like my private clients as well. There's a lot of people in academia that still have their jobs have not been furloughed, have not taken any kind of cut. And they're just having this discretionary income because they're not taking vacations.

They're not spending money. Like they normally would. I mean, it's just, so there's this like weird. Pockets of things to kind of take into consideration during this time. And I think about even my own situation, you know, I, you know, knock on wood have not been furloughed yet. I have not had to take any kind of cut.

Um, but. I was also a little concerned during this period of like, I just started this job. I have no idea what the stability is going to be. So I was definitely thinking King, whatever we make this year, like we have not spent a penny of it. We're just like socking it away. We had money set aside to do like some landscaping in our yard, which we're doing, but like, This is a nest egg.

I mean, it's like, we are not touching this because we don't know what's going to happen with my job in the next year or so. I am our primary breadwinner. My partner does not work outside our home. So it's just, you know, like there were a lot of factors that I really had to take into account from a personal perspective of just.

So creating our own financial stability, especially in the beginning of this year where it was very unclear, like what was happening and yeah. And then also trying to acknowledge like this really wide range of what is going on with other people. So, um, I will say that the, the amount of my clients who are paying for my services through institutional funds has gone up, and that is true of coaching coach training.

Um, some of the group coaching actually, so falls into that and blend by design. I mean, a lot of this is institutionally being purchased and that feels less difficult for me. Yeah. Like when it's an institution and they're, and I'm providing value to like their entire faculty. That's you know, that to me feels better than like what, you're, what you're calling like gouging individuals.

Like, I don't want to do that. Um, but I will say I've also had several people comment that like, they think my coaching pricing for one-on-one is too low. So I'll probably be raising the pricing for that in 2021, which feels again a little weird, but it's like, You know, we run businesses and if businesses are not making revenue, then what are you doing?

Like that's, you have to kind of have a mindset around that. So I'm like, like you said, really checking in with myself, checking in with my values, but also very much acknowledging the realities of higher ed is unstable right now. And because I work in higher ed as my full time job. I mean, I do have to think about that.

And so that's been very much on our minds this year for my partner and I, as we've, we've been thinking about the business and how to kind of strategically build it out. And I'm not planning on leaving my job anytime soon, but I don't know that something else could, that could happen. It's out of my control.

That would mean that job is no longer available to me. So. Um, yeah, I mean, it's, it's complicated. Yeah, bad. It is very complicated. It's hard to be a person normally, and it's really hard to be a person in a pandemic and then you have business owner on top and it just, yeah. Well, and I, I mean, I would also just say for anyone listening to this, who's like, Worried about like selfishness or, you know, what other kinds of things, I mean, I think that this is very much at all, all of our minds of just trying to make sure you know, that we're doing this in a way that is not harmful to other people.

And at the same time, Part of why I have this business is so that I can have stability. I mean, like that is a big reason why we have developed it and grown it and we continue to grow it. And I think that's okay. I mean, I feel like that's something that is part of my values, right. Writing for myself and for my partner and making sure that we are ready for whatever is coming, you know, in the future.

And so, um, Yeah, but it's, it's complicated. And so this kind of gets me into the next, uh, question, everything that we want to talk about, Sarah, which is this idea of kind of our emotional capacity during this time and the things that we're thinking about related to change evolution. Self care, like how we're kind of just like links.

And I guess the other thing that I'd like to layer in here, which we haven't really talked about explicitly is during this whole period of time, we have the pandemic, but we also have black lives matter. We have these massive protests that are happening. You were directly affected by this, in your city.

And what we talked about this, I mean, how are we also dealing with some of these ethical issues as business owners? Because it's. It's very much impacting kind of how we interact with clients and things like that. So, um, talk a little bit about, I guess at that broad category, we're calling it kind of emotional capacity, but I feel like there's a lot, that's packed into that.

Oh yeah. Oh yeah. So many layers, so many layers. Um, yeah. Oh, where to even begin there. Yeah. Um, so those listeners who don't know, I live in the twin cities area of Minneapolis st. Paul area. And, um, so when George Floyd was murdered in, uh, late may things here were, I mean, I've never, I've never seen the city like this.

Um, you know, there were several nights in a row where I watched my city burn on TV. I mean, it was, it was really hard. Um, it was also. Gut wrenching to see another, another, another. And we continue to see this another black person who, you know, should be alive today. Uh, not because of systemic racism and you know, all of these larger, you know, big, giant institutional issues that we just continued to refuse to really dig in and deal with.

And I. Personally as a white woman feel very, very convicted about this. You know, I have been a part of the system for, for too long. And, um, you know, I am doing learning now that I should have done so many years ago. Uh, and so it's, that has been a whole, um, Job in and of itself in some ways, and it's work that needs to be done and it's work.

That's hard and it's emotion emotionally laborious, but it's also essential. I, you know, the more I read and the more I expose myself to these ideas, the more convinced I am like we're doomed. If we can't figure out how to not. You know, not kill people based on the color of their skin. Right. Minimally, minimally.

So I could go off on a whole tangent about all of that and how, um, my perspectives on, on those issues have, have shifted significantly. Um, and you know, it's, it is just a very, a very difficult time for all of us as we grapple with a lot of these issues. And, um, You know, I, I think in terms of how that intersects with my business, I've been doing a lot of thinking and soul searching about, okay, how do I, as a white privileged business owner, leverage that power in the circles that I work in, um, to make sure that these conversations continue to happen and make sure that the decisions that my clients, that I'm working with, um, You know, make sure that those are on the side of anti-racist racism rather than racism.

Uh, you know, how do I kind of move and leverage the spaces that I'm in, um, toward that, that racial justice and those aren't easy courses. Um, and I think sometimes it can be, yeah, so big and overwhelming that you just don't even know where to start, but, um, You know, for me, it's been an active practice, you know, Katie, you talk about your, your yoga, yogurt, yoga teacher certification things.

And, and some of that, and I, I think that that idea of practice that, that yoga brings to us, um, is, is really true for some of this work too, that it is a practice and you're going to screw up on the way towards a progress, but you've gotta be willing to kind of. To kind of step in and, and, um, take on those things.

Right? So I've, I have found in my business like smaller ways to do that. And it is a thing is heavy on my heart and is something that I am grappling with on sort of a larger business. Um, model kind of perspective. And, um, I went to early on in, in all of these conversations, they went to a, um, a town hall for small businesses, um, led by a great group of, um, black.

And actually it's a very diverse group. There were, there were people of color and, and white people and, uh, you know, kind of all walks of life on this panel talking about how do you build a business? And he is anti-racist and they had some really great action steps. And so I'm kind of. Slowly more slowly than I would like to be, but I am slowly, we're working through some of those things to think about how do I infuse this into my business better because I do feel called to do that.

And so. Um, for me, that has been a lot of emotional labor of the doing work on the business. You know, we talk about that a lot, Katie on the podcast is like you're doing the work of the business and then sometimes yeah, we need to work on the business. And right now I feel like the work on my business is really in that area of, of, um, antiracism and racial justice and those sorts of things.

So I am late to the party, but, uh, I am also, you know, Asking clients and listeners and people, you know, in, in public spaces to keep holding, holding us accountable, because that is that right. Is essential for progress. Um, and you know, I need that, that pressure too. So yeah, I would say emotionally, that has been a very.

Significant part of the last, you know, six months. Um, and, and also just in case, or like being a person who is, you know, contemplating, how do I move my fertility journey forward, like in the middle of a pandemic? Like that's not nothing either. So, you know, these are, these are all big, heavy issues, you know, I, I would say.

I would say, I know a lot of parents are dealing with obviously all of the stress of sending kids to school or not sending kids to school and figuring out how to work when you have your kids at home. And just, there's just so much in the world right now that it can get really, really heavy. And so in terms of self care, There are a couple of action steps that I have taken to make sure that, uh, completely imploded.

Uh, so, you know, one of those, one of the kinds of silver linings in, in a way has been, uh, having my husband at home as well. We've been able to take our dogs for walks in the middle of the day, which has just been lovely. Like it's been great to be able to kind of check out for a little bit in the middle of the day, go for a walk kind of process things with one another.

Where typically we wouldn't see each other for a solid eight to 10 hours a day, depending on the day. Um, so that has been really lovely, you know, figuring out ways to fit in workouts in ways that make sense for myself. That has also been great. So, you know, I think there, there have been ways that, um, the pandemic has actually increased flexibility for those kinds of things for, especially for those who are working from home, uh, as a new thing.

Um, you know, yeah. And so I think getting creative around. How do you build your life now that you don't have to go a job between eight and five every day? Um, or, you know, maybe don't have a spouse who has to do that or, or whatever, like that flexibility is freeing and also complicating for many reasons.

But those have been a couple of, of the kind of main things that I've been focusing on is, is, you know, checking in, um, especially with my spouse, but also with, with friends, um, you know, in this time of distance, It's also really important to check in with your people. And so, um, those things, and then making sure I'm getting that, that ever important workout in because who, if I don't, I feel it, daddy, I know you were liking me that way.

Yeah, no, that's very true. And I will, I will freely admit that I fell off my yoga wagon in August and I, I really did feel it. Um, and so I'm back and it's feeling really good. I am really glad you brought up this concept of practice because I, and I'll link to this and the show notes. I recorded a podcast episode about the difference that I see between what I call projects and practices and the social media conversation or the not social media.

The social justice conversation for me has really been around this concept of practice. Like I had treated that as a project and really, I think it is a life practice and. There's a lot of education to do. It's very similar to kind of what you're describing. Sarah. I've been doing that as well. And also I feel like I've been in some really interesting spaces where I've had to lead very explicit conversations around social justice.

So with my team at work with the slow hustle participants, as we're thinking about how they're applying business practices, values led business practices to their own. Thinks that they're growing. And then also in my coach training, I mean, we had a really powerful conversation to kind of kick off what became a series of conversations about social justice and how it relates to, uh, coaching.

So. That was interesting to kind of find myself in this space where I wasn't just participating in conversations, but leading them and definitely not always feeling like I was the person who should be doing that. Um, and it was like, I guess I was kind of the person who should be doing it. I mean, it was just kinda like, okay, okay.

Let's, let's kind of feel this out. Um, it took me back to my grad school days, which was my women and gender studies, uh, disciplinary work. And definitely pulled out, you know, texts, theories, things that I knew, you know, from that time. Um, but this is definitely a, it's a challenging space to navigate because, because as someone who, you know, as a white woman, it's like, there's things I can do.

And there's things that are just not my place to do. And. We need to create space and room for other people. Um, so that just kind of thinking about strategies for how to do that has been an important part of these last several months. For me, I'm similar to you. I have really been focusing on. Various self care strategies that tend to like work for a little while and then they stop.

And so then I have to like find other things and I think that's part of pandemic life. Cause like you have to keep kind of experimenting with what works. And, um, yoga has definitely been a big part of that. And like reading has been a big part. Like I have just like. Embraced introversion. I mean, it's like I'm doing all the introverted things.

And luckily for me, my partner is also an introvert. So we are very comfortable like being home, watching, you know, movies and TV together, reading, you know, sleeping more, you know, like there's, there's just a lot of things. And the other piece I would say, um, that I was actually talking about with a couple of my clients the other day is I've just kind of decided that like, yeah, I'm not willing to do anything physically difficult.

Hmm like that, that to me right now does not feel good. So like, I, I running practice and then it like, like immediately, I mean, it was like pandemic hit and it was like, so not doing that anymore. I mean, it was like, my body just said, no, like we are not doing anything that does not feel easy and good. So yoga has been like, obviously stepping into that space in a big way because, um, I feel like I'm using so much of my willpower to just function.

You know, on a day to day basis that it's like anything extra is not really in the cards right now. And I'm, I'm accepting of that. I'm just kind of observing it and letting it be, not, not kind of like trying to push myself beyond a capacity, um, that physically is not feeling good. So. So that's been a big part of my self care is like giving myself that permission to just like, not push it.

Um, and for a long time, I think people who've listened to this show for a while. Know. I mean, I'm a hustler, you know, like I, there are definitely times when I will push push push, and this has not been one of those times, this, this whole season. Um, I've been really, like I said earlier, like powering down and just being really.

Aware and conscious of what that looks like. So yeah, the self care pieces it's important. And I think the other piece that's tied to that, and I'll kind of shift us into this next, um, topic is really supporting our clients through this as well. And as somebody who coaches, people who are also we're all in the pandemic together, It's kind of, I mean, in a lot of ways, it's very triggering because people talk about the pandemic.

And like typically when people are talking about difficult things in coaching situations, you can't identify with what they're talking about. And so you have this level of like removed objectivity and you can kind of. Facilitate a conversation with them that brings them to clarity around that. And it's really hard actually to do that around some of this pandemic stuff, because you're, you're feeling it.

And as soon as they talk about it, you're like, Oh my God, I know exactly this problem. And I haven't figured it out yet. How am I supposed to help you figure it out? I mean, it's like, so that has been really kind of an interesting space to think about and navigate is how do you provide. Support, you know, and not everything is pandemic related in terms of explicit topics that my clients bring, but there's definitely been a lot of it.

So. I'm curious, Sarah, if you have ways that you're supporting your clients through stress, you know, helping them to be resilient during this period, you had talked about kind of giving them that vision of like the future. And they're going to come out on the other side, you know, what does that look like for you and how you're serving your clients?

Yeah, I think for me, the, there are a couple of things. The first is just extending grace, right? Like acknowledging that. Well, you know, from day to day, we're all doing some version of not great. This is not an ideal time for anybody. And so just, just sort of extending that, that patience and that grace as much as, as much as possible.

You know, I think for, especially for choral organizations right now, there was, there was a period early on where there was a lot of grief, like deep grief about losing this thing that so many people identify with and identify as choral musicians. Um, and this fear that not only is this pandemic taking this away from us for now, but because we don't know when we can come back and we don't know what the other side of this looks like, like.

There's a fear that it's going to be just gone first for a lot of, a lot of people. And I find this a lot with smaller organizations, especially that, you know, they don't have big budgets. They don't have a way to kind of float through this time. They have, they rely on, you know, ticket revenue and other kinds of things.

And so there's a lot of fear that's brought into these conversations and a lot of uncertainty about like, But how do I make this work in a virtual space? I've never worked in a virtual space before I just learned how zoom works. Like, you know, there's, there's all of this layer of trying to, you know, drinking through the fire hose of trying to figure out how to be in a virtual space.

And so a lot of, um, my strategy there is, uh, you know, not only providing some kind of base level kind of comfort to the, like, it's going to be okay, we're going to get through this. You know, I'm here with you through this, but also, um, Providing some sort of some creative ideas about how to use it. Um, some of the more invigorating conversations I've had with clients have been when, when they come to me and they're like, okay, but here's kind of what we want to do, but does that work?

I don't know. And then I get to kind of ideate for awhile and throw different ideas against the wall. And by the end of those conversations, most of the time my clients leave feeling like. Okay. There's possibility here, right? There's opportunity here that I didn't see before, but you've kind of like showed me some different ideas.

And like, though I'm probably not going to take half of these ideas. I have an idea now of how that might, you know, how that might look in our own organization or our own business. And so I think for me, it's been a combination of holding space for whatever is right now and, and for that grief and that fear and that anxiety about.

About what the world looks like right now and also saying it's, you know, it's not only is it going to be okay down the road, but also saying it can be okay in the meantime and, and can actually build you towards better things when we are able to kind of gather again, um, this, this kind of moving to virtual spaces, I think was always gonna happen in a lot of, um, A lot of fields, choral music included in that I think the pandemic for a better, I would say probably in general, mostly worse, but has, has really, um, highlighted.

Yeah. A lot of areas where movement was going to happen or change was going to happen anyway. And it just has exacerbated that in so many ways. And I think choral music is, is an example of that. Um, where they've needed to move into virtual spaces and that's kind of in slowly. Yeah. Yeah. I guess we'll get there eventually and now it's necessary.

And so people are learning very quickly and adapting very quickly. And I think we'll take that adaptation back into the concert halls and back into. Business as usual when that, uh, is a thing we can return to. And so the more I can kind of help people see through that, through that kind of murky tunnel, um, the better, and that's, that's where I'm, you know, getting a lot of my joy to, in, in that sort of healthily, helping and being useful, um, providing those ideas and that sort of thing.

So, um, Katie I'm super I'm super curious. Can you talk a little bit more about like, As a coach, how do you navigate that? That feeling of like, Oh, they're talking about something I know deeply in my soul right now, because I am also experiencing it. Um, and how do you, how do you kind of figure out how to guide somebody through that when you're also kind of in the woods?

Yeah. I mean, there's, there's kind of two sides to that coin. I mean, on the one hand I'm like, wow, I'm not, I'm not prepared to help you. And on the other side, it's like I'm uniquely or to help you. Cause I know exactly what you're feeling. And so I, it's easier for me to kind of walk in your shoes, you know, because I have a sense of what this is.

And a lot of my clients are high-performing academic women, mid career to senior career. And the challenge I think for them is they are not used to low productivity, basically like repeated crashes, um, this, and they're kind of asking like, am I ever gonna get back to normal? Like, there's this like, fear that like, they can't return to pre COVID levels of productivity.

And, and when you're a high kind of performing person, there's a lot of your identity that's wrapped up in that your ability to have discipline your ability. So all of that, I'm like, A hundred percent understand. I mean, because this is, and, and early on, I just like in a way that I probably never had it my entire life, I gave myself so much permission to just like expand the boundaries of what I thought was appropriate of like, you know, levels of work to do lists all of that.

And I just kinda throw it all out the window and it was like, yeah, this is a, this is a situation. And I do think that one of my superpowers is like, I can kind of process something relatively quickly, understand what's happening and react to it. So if there were people who were kind of going through these like levels of grief, it's like, I got to acceptance very quickly where I was like, okay, we're working from home.

And this creates all these kinds of new things to think about. And like, I mean, I was just like processing a lot of that really quickly. So I think that it doesn't mean I'm like. On the other side, but I do think it allows me to kind of say you will get to a place where you are accepting this a little bit more and the more forgiveness you can give to yourself right now.

The easier, this is going to go. And it's kind of like riding the waves of anxiety too. It's like, you just have to let it crash over you a little bit and just be in that moment. So I've talked with a lot of my clients about just this concept of sitting in discomfort, sitting in impatience. And these were topics that came up pre COVID as well.

A lot of people who are in transition, it just feels uncomfortable. I mean, it just doesn't feel, you don't feel settled. You don't feel like you're yourself. I mean, like there's just a lot of, um, challenges that come along with that. So I've been able to really lean back into a lot of that. Um, but I mean, I will admit, there are times when I feel like I am not bringing them my best self, um, as a coach, I mean, it's, and it's not something that I feel like is entirely in my control.

Um, I'm dealing with my own kind of mental and emotional health issues during this period. And I'm trying to do the best I can, you know, to be. Um, healthy and to kind of take care of myself, you know, during this period. And, and actually that's taking a lot of my time, it's taking more time than I've ever had to give it in the past.

Um, and that's okay. I mean, I, so that part, okay. Acceptance for myself, I think is allowing me to offer permission to my clients. Um, and I'm, I'm trying to share about that, you know, through my podcast or my blog through social media so that people are seeing like, This, you know, I am someone who in the past has been very openly high-performing and, and really productive, you know, in ways that people were like, how are you doing this?

Like, and I was like, I don't know, it just happens. And it's just like, it's part of my identity. It's part of who I am. And I have not been that during this period, I mean, in pockets, but definitely not consistently, but I'm also learning a lot of really cool things through that process. So. That openness, I think is a big part of it.

And coaching is always about curiosity and non-judgment yeah. Then I'm really just like bringing that as much as I can to say, like, we need to keep these, these feelings of curiosity and non-judgement about what we're experiencing right now. And, and just giving ourselves permission to like, Have that, I mean, like last weekend I had a day where I was like, I can't really function today.

Like I'm, I'm going to read on the couch all day long and I'm not really going to talk to anyone, just go to like, like really turn inward and allow this to kind of crash over me. And then the next day I was a lot better, you know? So it's like, we are all having these like crazy ups and downs. I think the challenge for some people.

And I would put myself into those categories. I'm just not used to experience it, not at the level that I am right now. And so I've had to be really, um, Attentive to my own, uh, care to make sure that I can still show up for clients. Yeah. It's, it's interesting. You say, you kind of mentioned at the beginning that people are he's high, high, productive achievers high.

I know nothing about that raises hand, um, who, you know, are now kind of confronted with this period where you just, you don't feel like yourself because you're not as productive as you're used to being in. You're not getting things done and you're not. Checking things off your list and you just feel awful.

And you said that I was like, Oh yeah, that was me for the last several years of my life. So I know, I know this feeling and it's terrible. I mean, it is the worst feeling because you, you sort of almost lose a little bit of your identity and you feel like, am I ever going to come back to. This level that I was at before, that I, that I valued.

And, and then you start questioning, like, why did I value that over my own sort of wellness? It raises all these questions. It's so hard. And I, so I hear that. I hear it. I hear it so much. And I have been there and. It is hard and there's not a whole lot. Anybody can say to make it better other than like, keep putting one foot in front of the other and you know, you will get through, it's not going to be fun.

It's not going to feel amazing, but you raise a great point, Katie. Like, you're going to learn a lot in the way in the process too. And you're going to learn a lot that will help you. The next time around because I'm back. Sorry. Yeah, it comes back. It's causing, I think for a lot of people, I mean, what I'm seeing in my coaching, and I think it's just happening more broadly is a real reexamination of people's values.

Yeah. Everybody's coming back to kind of rock bottom of like, what do I actually care about? What do I prioritize? What do I believe? You know, what are, what are my systems of beliefs around this situation? And. That's a good thing. I, you know, I think that there's some real positives there in terms of helping people to make like pretty big life decisions about like, Oh, this is not what I want to be spending my time on.

Or people are making relationship changes. Like there's all kinds of things that are happening during this period. And I think that that is. You know, I I've thought about even kind of politically, I mean, Sarah, you, and I think pretty similarly, and I think we have some hopes for what this fall will bring in terms of the election.

Um, but I have had moments where I've like, thought. I am grateful that we've gone through this period politically, because it has helped people to understand what they care about and same with the social justice stuff. I mean, it's like, it has raised to the surface things that people needed to be thinking about and questioning and, and, you know, exploring.

And that's good. It doesn't make it easy. It doesn't make it feel good all the time, but it doesn't mean that at the base of it, it's not like a very powerful, important thing for people to do. So that's the part that like, it feels like a huge privilege to be able to like witness that with people, walk alongside them, help them, you know, hold the space for them to do that.

Cause that's really a lot of the hard work that's happening right now in coaching. Is that. People are just reckoning. Like there's just a lot of reckoning with, I thought this was the direction for me and now it's very clear. It's not. And what do I do? And we're in the middle of a pandemic. And what does that mean?

And so, yeah, it's, it's a lot of big, heavy questions and I'm a fan of those. I actually think they're important. So yeah. Important I'll be at not easy ever, ever easy, but yeah. So Sarah, we had a final topic. Yeah. I feel like it's kind of making me laugh, just even think about it, which is planning for the future.

Yeah. So, um, but this was kind of, well, we thought if we were going to record like a full season, we're like, Oh, we should end on planning for the future. Cause maybe by the time we record it, we're actually going to know what the future is going to hold. But let me kind of start by saying, you know, kind of repeat what I said in the beginning, which is.

You know, we're definitely not ending make your way, but we do want to acknowledge that this has just not been something we've been able to fit in this year, like there, between our businesses and everything else that's been going on. And, and actually we're really sad about that. Like, that's, that's been hard to not have as consistent of conversations.

We know there's an audience, this waiting to have more content on this show. Um, and I don't anticipate, you know, thinking about the future that we're going to be able to record before the end of the calendar year, given everything that's going on, especially with your fully booked calendar, Sarah. Um, so I just want to put that out there and, and, you know, say, you know, I'm, I'm sorry.

And like, It is what it is. And there's not really anything we could have done. I am so appreciative of the audience that we have. And, um, I am kind of like genuinely missing being able to put out this content. So, but when you think about the future, Sarah, what does that hold for you? I mean, even if it's like next week as we, maybe that's, as far as you can look, but what are you thinking?

I mean, can you think into 2021, I mean like, are you even in that head space? I, I am thinking into 2021, very cautiously, uh, and mostly sort of from this base assumption that this pandemic is not going away. Anytime soon, uh, in, in, and that it will be a constant state of flux and, you know, differences in levels of shutdown and behaviors and, you know, mass squaring and all of those kinds of things.

Like it's just all going to be very, very influx for a long time. Um, and so for me, the planning for the future is, again, all about flexibility, flexibility, and adaptability. Um, And continuing to try to be helpful in the ways that I can, um, for the, the clients that I have and, and those who will, you know, find me between when this airs the future, whatever the future is.

Um, so, you know, I think from a business perspective, I'm really focused on. You know, getting through the fall. Um, there's a lot, I have a lot of exciting things. Yeah. That I'm very excited about doing and being a part of. Um, but there is just a lot of work between now and the holiday season. Uh, so I'm producing several different virtual events.

And helping run some online conferences and, you know, just a variety of work, which is great and very life giving to me, but it's all a lot. And so I'm really focused on by going to the holiday to the holiday season. Um, And I actually had the thought the other day, Katie you'll probably, you'll probably laugh at this.

I had the thought the other day because anxiety brain sometimes does this, uh, where it's like, well, but after the holiday season, you don't have anything lined up. So you just kind of like fall off the cliff. There's just nothing there. And I was like, wow. Okay. That's totally unhelpful thinking like things I don't have to plan for it.

Six months from now. Okay. Yeah. So anyway, I just have to like, remember to roll with the waves and the punches and all of that. Um, so for me, planning is, is frankly in the spot that I always kind of love it and leave it, which is like three to maybe six months is about all I got in the, in the tank. And then we'll reevaluate from there.

Cause that's how I roll. I mean, I couldn't really, I could identify with this, like post, December. Cause I feel like this happens every year. It's such a short, um, construction. I mean, it's, it's like time is a, is a social construction, but this idea of like, Oh my revenue for the tax year hit this number.

And now I'm like starting from zero and it's like this freakout moment of like, how will I ever get to what I ended the last year on? And every year we've grown. And so it's like, it just. Keeps up in EMT of like we have to do. Um, so yeah, I do have that moment of like, Oh my God, we're back to zero. And I have to like, you know, have this, uh, hustle to bring in the revenue.

Um, so I have a couple of things that I feel relatively. I mean, I'm so hesitant to be like, these things feel stable to me. Like it's like knock on wood. Um, I have always been planning since like, Almost a year ago to a credit, my coach training in spring of 2021. And that has to do with the timing of when I've run out like a full cycle of the courses.

And I have a graduating class and the documentation I need to kind of, um, apply for this thing to happen. And so that's something that I'm kind of looking forward to because I do feel like that allows me to. Have a little bit more legitimacy with the coach training and to market it in a slightly different way.

I get on an official list of coach trainings that are accredited. Like there's just certain things along those lines that I think will be helpful. I will also say that this is this, the other piece of it feels very, um, Kind of less stable to me, which is my partner. And I literally last night just had a conversation of, do we need to add another round of coach training during the calendar year?

Because right now I onboard people in January and June and that's been filling and I have a wait list for this January. And just trying to time the offerings for this, because it's basically a curriculum of like multiple courses. And I need to make sure that whenever you come in, you have the next course that you need, like, and that it's being offered appropriately.

Um, But I also want to keep the cohorts appropriately sized. And so I feel this pressure, which, you know, I don't know how. Logical it is or whatever, but like, there are not coach trainings for higher ed other than this one. And so if you don't, I don't want anyone to be like, not able to get in, I guess is like my, my concern.

And if you want to do this and you know that the timing is right for you, I don't want to be like, well, it's full wait, six months. Like I. That just doesn't feel good to me. So I'm been trying to kind of think about that. And as the person who runs all the trainings right now, like that's just raising some questions for me about what 2021 could bring, if we decide to go in that direction and just my time and what basically needs to be.

Cut so that I can have time to do that. And, and that may mean like shuffling some things around. Yeah. But of course I also building new things and I mean, you wouldn't be used if you weren't, if I wasn't. So I mean, that's the challenge and that's the conversation. My partner and I are having is like, if I build something around project management, which I really want to do in 2021, then how does that fit in with all this other stuff?

And, and I had thought about doing something around project management that would be kind of. Facilitated live synchronously, and I'm just not sure I can. Um, I think I might have to be more of a, um, asynchronous, you know, kind of course engagement. And then maybe there's like a community within my prolific online community where you can kind of join people and talk about project management or something.

And, and that's kind of sad to me because I would really like to be facilitating some of this stuff. And it's like, I just literally do not have the time. Um, But I know that this is a need and I have clients who have specifically said, I don't know how to do project management. So I think that, um, Yeah, those are the couple of things that I feel like are kind of on my horizon.

Um, and then the other piece I would say too, cause I think people are kind of curious about this whole yoga teacher training thing. Like I don't anticipate teaching yoga consistently. I mean, like that's not really why I did that training. I really wanted to kind of formalize my own education around yoga and.

It's really served me well in that capacity, but I could potentially see doing some yoga infused into my coaching in different ways. And so that's something I've been thinking about during this period, and I have no idea what that will look like in 2021 much further out. I do see the potential of doing some like in-person retreats, where I could bring coaching, bring yoga, bring some other kinds of things to that environment.

Um, but that's like way down the line. And especially with COVID. You know, it's like, it's so questionable when it will be safe to come together in these, these physical spaces together. And so it's like, I don't even need to think about that right now. I can't even like plan because it's so unknown. It's like even worth like looking at retreat spaces.

I mean, it's like, who knows what the situation is with that? Um, so I think that, that's another thing that's kind of in the back of my mind as well. Yeah. As I think about business growth and. But I like you, Sarah. It's like. I don't want to like nail too many things down because it makes it harder to be nimble and responsive.

And I definitely feel the need to continue. Like some of the things I've already been doing, um, that I know are working well, but then there's like, you have to have margin. Like you have to create the margin for whatever you need to pivot towards next. And so that's something that's really on my mind.

Yeah. Yeah. I think that's one of my biggest concerns about the fall is because I'm going to be at capacity. Like there's not much space for, you know, for adjusting or for planning or for, you know, taking on anything that isn't already on my calendar. And so I, I tried for a long time to be really conscious about like, let's carve out.

Like this tiny amount of space and we'll see, we'll see if I'm able to hold that. But, uh, you know, a full calendar is not just a full client calendar. It is also a full, like, thinking about business and thinking about what do I want this to look like after December? And you know, how do I want all of this anti-racism and, and racial justice work to fit into my business.

Right? Like that is part of the work too. And so, yeah, it's, it's hard to. To be in that space right now where you're just like, how is this all gonna, I don't know. Don't know, but you know, a data time, I guess. That's I keep coming back to that date and time. Yeah. I think that, that's what we all keep coming back to.

I mean, that's literally, even though time has no meaning it's been a fun part of this whole period. What day? What month? What year? I don't know. Who knows? Yeah. Yeah. Things are passing. I mean, it has been so interesting cause I think about. How, like January of this year felt so long to me because I was not working and I was moving and there were all these things.

And then it was like once February hit. Yeah. It's just been up alert. Like, I don't know if you've had any month this year. That's been like, not just speeding. Speeding, speeding by. And summer was literally like the snap of the fingers. I mean, and it was over. Um, and now we're in. Well, you know, shifting into the fall and I think the fall is going to be the same.

I just think it's going to continue to speed by. So in some ways it's like 20, 20 has been the weirdest year for so many of us. And I also feel like it's just speeding by and in the most odd way in part, because of all this weirdness, and it's probably a coping strategy that we're like filtering out all these things that make it feel like it's going so much faster, but yeah.

Yeah. Very strange. It's a thing it's very strange, but that is 2020. Very strange. Yeah. It's pretty much one of, one of the many themes for the year. Oh, well, it's, I mean, I wish we could just go on and on, but we can't, but this is our, this is our update or dear listeners. And again, we're so sorry, both for ourselves and for you that we can't keep recording for the rest of the foreseeable future.

Yeah, this is, this is, and I will tell you too, um, For our listeners that we've come up with like three differences in ideas out. We knew what episodes would be about. And then we like shifted it to something else. And then we shifted it again. We've been really trying actually to do this and stuff just keeps coming up.

I mean, it's like between, I mean, it's just all the things that you can consider. Like we would. Put a recording date on the calendar and then we'd have to move it. I mean, it was just, we we've really tried to do it and it hasn't been possible. So we're kind of calling it for the year and just saying, you know, let's just give ourselves that permission to, to step away from this for a little bit.

Um, but I think in 2021, this is something I'm really hopeful that we can get back to and, and really be. Providing more content because I just enjoy it so much. And it's helpful. I think for my business to be able to talk through some of these things on a consistent basis. So here's to 2021 and getting back to more seasons of make your way.

I agree wholeheartedly with, with everything you said and listeners in the meantime, if you know, if you have questions or want to pick our brains, you can always reach out to us on social media or email or. You know, any of the other ways that we digitally communicate these days. So, you know, always happy to hear from, and, um, we, you know, wish all of the best for you and all of your loved ones in this time.

Cause it is very hard for, uh, for so many and, um, were just wishing you all well. And, um, you know, rejuvenative thoughts and healthy thoughts and all of that. Cause. Yup. Here we are. We are, that was the most articulate send off I've ever done. Katie, you know, it's genuine. I mean, we really are wishing the best for everyone.

I will link to everything we talked about in the show notes. Um, if there's anything that people want to follow up on and I, we would love to hear from you, if there's ideas you have for seasons, you know, if you're like, Oh, please talk about this or please, you know, please pick this topic. Um, let us know, because we, we do like to draw from things that we know listeners want to hear about.

Um, and thank you for sticking around. I mean, we know that we've been kind of absent this year, um, on this platform and, um, not for lack of trying, but still, still have to. Um, and it's just fun, fun to be back behind the microphone. And, um, I hope we can do more of it in 2021. So until then Sarah worthy. So good to talk to you.

So good to talk to you too, Katie. And, uh, we should have an off, off recording. A calendar date sometime between now and 2021, or I'm going to be rolling. Happy about it. Yeah. Same here. Same here. All right, I'll talk with you again soon. Bye bye. Thanks for listening to this episode of make your way show notes and a transcript for this episode can be found at dr.

Katie linder.com backslash M Y w. If you found this episode helpful, please consider rating or reviewing the show in Apple podcasts. Thanks for listening.