



## Success With Soul: Episode 1 - My Soulful Journey - From Burned Out Corporate Copywriter to Six-Figure Blogger and Business Owner

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All right, y'all. It is the first official episode of the success of the soul podcast. I'm your host Kate Kordsmeier, and today I'm going to be doing something a little bit different. So I actually brought on my friend Susie Swope, you may recognize her from Girl Gone green. She has an incredible green beauty and just clean living clean eating blog called Girl Gone green. So Susie and I met a couple of years ago, and we just immediately hit it off. I think we're both just such doers and high achievers, were in a similar blogging space, both having these kind of holistic wellness blogs. And I asked Suzy, if she would be willing to come on today and interview me. I felt like it was important for you guys to get to know who I am a little bit more and rather than bore you with just like reading you my bio, I thought it'd be fun to do it more in a conversational interview style. So Susie is here today we're flipping the script. And I'm so excited to share this episode with you. Of course, you're going to get to know me a little bit better, but you're also going to get to know Suzy and I'm so happy that I get to share her light with you guys. She's just such a beautiful source of love in my life, and I hope she will be the same for you. So let's do it.

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You're listening to the success with soul podcast with Kate Kordsmeier, ex journalist turned CEO of a multi six figure blog and online business. But it wasn't that long ago that Kate was a struggling entrepreneur who lacked confidence, clarity, and let's be honest money. But all those failures, experiments and lessons learned helped Kate create a thriving business that impacts Thousands and brings freedom, flexibility and fulfillment to her life. If you're ready to do the same and make something happen with holistic, soulful, step by step strategies from Kate and other experts, you're in the right

place. here's your host, writer, educator, Mom, recovering perfectionist, bookworm and sushi connoisseur Kate Kordsmeier!

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Suzy. Hello being here. I'm so excited to be here. We're flipping the script a little bit. So Susie is going to actually interview me for this episode, which is really different. I'm so used to being the question asker, but I'm excited.

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Yeah. And I actually had you on my podcast, like a year or so ago. And that was really fun. So that was fun.

Is your podcast still going? It is not. Yeah. People can listen to that for Yeah,

Well, I have, I think over 150 episodes, so there's a lot to learn. Dig into if you guys want to

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Yeah, it was the golden hour podcast and then I had a podcast before that that was just my brother who's a naturopathic doctor and myself and we covered so many health topics so yeah, there's a lot there's a lot of meat like dig into.

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Speaker 1

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Yes. Well so just to give people a little more background Susie and I met at a wellness bloggers conference a couple years ago and just really connected we are both type three enneagram raised by type one dads which we found out yesterday when we were just chatting during one of our group calls and I feel like we just have so much in common and you're definitely like my go to for especially green beauty advice, but just all things wellness. And so I'm excited to let people get to know you on this episode too.

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Speaker 3

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Yeah, I feel like Kate is kind of put it back on k but K is definitely like my Kinda like almost mentor, I would say in like the blogging space, and I learned so much from you, I took her course. And it really helped me a ton. And I'm just excited to have you guys get to know her better too, because she is like a wealth of knowledge. And I feel like your journey to get here has been so unique, but like, it makes

sense when you put the pieces together. So I'm like, excited to share that. So thank you. Yeah, so what kind of like made you get started with like, success with soul, like, what does it mean to you and why did you want to start it? Yeah. So success was soul.

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Speaker 1

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Just the general concept of that, to me is like, working from this place of alignment and flow and where it's like very heart centered. I don't really know how to run a business and like just a cold, masculine way. I just feel like I put my heart and soul into everything that I do. And you know, maybe it's just semantics. But I think that we have this idea, especially as hustle is such like a buzzword these days, where it's just like we have to work harder than anyone else at the expense of like our joy and family and health in order to get ahead, and I just don't believe that at all. And of course, I struggle with it because it's easy to get caught up in the hustle and there's always a million to do. But I try to just really work from this place of rest and alignment and abundance. And I think that's what success was soul means to me. And I feel like it's something that there's obviously a lot of people who are talking about working this way these days. But I think the message can be even further upon and I want to help get that out there and help people create a business that they can run from their home or they're their own boss and they have this freedom and flexibility. And, you know, we're recording this like mid quarantine for Cova 19. And it seems like now more than ever having a flexible business like this is more important and seems like a very good way to go. So with the podcast, I really felt like I've been a writer, I was a journalist before I started the blog. And then I have the blog route and rebel and I've just been writing and writing and writing for like, my whole life. And I love it. But I'm kind of like I'm ready for a new format and a new challenge and it can be very isolating to so podcasts at least I get to tell people share their stories and you can just dive so much deeper. So I'm really excited for this format.

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Speaker 3

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Yeah, I love the name because I think it's so true now like we are living in an age where people want to kind of have that like creative outlet or like that purpose with their work and they don't want to just like go to work. And like clock in and clock out, but it's like they want that, you know, like connection to what they're doing and like that, like I'm making a difference or, you know, it's like you're using your giftings to like help others and it's just so much more than it used to be like even talking with my parents, like you just got a job kind of in like, yeah, and nowadays, it's kind of like, you can really make your job whatever you want it to be. And it sounds really cliché, but it's not it's like reality and where we're at right now. So,

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yeah, Matt and I my husband, we were watching this hilarious movie called plus one the other night. Maya Estrin. I think that's how you say her last name. She is this hilarious actress that we've been following since Did you ever watch 1015? No. Oh my gosh. If you went to middle school in the 90s like this, you will die laughing at everything. So anyway, we're watching this movie and one of the characters fathers says What is it with you millennials and having to love your jobs? And Matt and I were just laughing because it's like, What is it with you boomers and like just being okay with being miserable?

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Speaker 3

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Right? It's so interesting, because I've had so many people in my family, like, older generation, they're like, I don't want to hear another person Tell me like, well, I really want to find my purpose, or I really want to, like, do something I love. And I'm like, but why not? Like, why be on this earth and like, hate what you're doing? You know? Like, why not be so passionate about it and make a difference at the same time? Like, it's right. Like you can have both things and also get paid, you know, right, exactly.

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Speaker 1

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And I think there's probably some aspect of like, this entitlement that they think that the younger generations have, and I mean, there is some of that but I think like then you look at things like rates of depression and obesity and just mental health disorders and stuff and I mean, it's still happening in the younger generation, but I feel like what I'm trying to do at least is like, let's get out of that. Let's find happiness and what we do and it is possible to do both to make money and not sell your soul and actually work from a place where your soul is like really fulfilled.

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Speaker 3

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Yeah. When it's it's like you might as well if you're going to spend so much of your life you know working right they say the average American spends as much time working. You might as well enjoy it. I mean, what a life

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yeah, I could never I mean, I'm you know, I'm like such a hard worker. I'm very driven and I love to work but I could not last in corporate America. I mean, I lasted literally four months before I was like, I will blow my brains out of my mind this cubicle for the rest of my life.

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Speaker 3

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Totally. And I think that's the beauty of like, there's so many different kinds of people to I mean, you we know we were talking about Instagram yesterday, but just how like, everyone's Built for something different, it doesn't mean that one thing is gonna work or whatever, you know, but like, maybe corporate america works great for someone else. But yeah,

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my husband loves it. He's in. Yeah, he loves going to an office every day. I mean, there's, you know, some bureaucracy stuff that can get kind of annoying, but I feel like, generally speaking, he enjoys it. And I'm always trying to get him to like, either come work with me or just do his own thing. And he's like, I don't know. I'm happy. I'm happy at like one of the companies in the world like, all right, like whatever floats your boat. Yeah, but to your point, it's just like, do what makes you happy if that's what makes him happy then great. That's that's the soul for him. And exactly. Perfect.

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Yeah, yeah. Okay, well, I want to like rewind 10 years, like, where was k? What were you doing and how does it look different from like, where you're at today with your family and your life and all that?

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Yeah. Isn't it crazy? How much can change in Just 10 years. So it's 2020. Now, I graduated college in 2010. So I was still in school at like, exactly 10 years ago today. But I had started my freelance writing

business as a student. So I actually was writing for national magazines as like a 21 year old. I had this amazing. I don't say that to brag, I say it mostly to show like it is possible to do whatever you want to do. I think people come up with excuses of like, could have been really easy to say, I'm a student, nobody would hire me or I don't have enough clips or I don't you know, whatever. I don't have this or that, right. And I don't know where this it's not really confidence, but I just am sort of fearless in business where I just go like, well, what's the worst that could happen? Just try it. And yeah, maybe they'll say no. And then oh, well, so I had this amazing teacher who at the time he was teaching one class at the University of Georgia journalism school. His full time job was as an editor at Paste Magazine, which was like a it was a big music magazine. I think now it's just online, so rip, but he really taught me about freelancing and how to pitch editors and like that this was a possibility. And so he gave us like extra credit if we pitched a magazine, and then it didn't even matter if they took our work or not, it was just like, just do the pitch. So I did so I started my first article that I was paid to write I got paid 1500 dollars to write this article for All You Magazine in 2009. So it was like, I feel like I've just always been a worker, and I've always wanted like, I knew what I wanted, and I just kind of went for it, I guess. And so I did that. And then I was planning fully to be a full time freelance writer when I graduated. And then of course, like all my friends started getting real jobs and health insurance and all that stuff. And I was like, Yeah, I should probably do that. And so Matt and I were actually dating at the time. So we've been together since 2008. And he got a job in Dallas. And I was like, well, we wanted to move out of Atlanta and try something new. Dallas wasn't really on the list, or like New York, but okay. So we went out to look at apartments and stuff and I got a job, or I got an interview with Neiman Marcus corporate as a copywriter. And I thought, Oh my gosh, this is going to be my absolute dream job. I'm going to be like writing about fashion. This is incredible. And so I took the job. We moved like it all happened really quick. We moved and like I said, I lasted four months. But like, I cannot live this life. You know, we worked in a warehouse. That was this one story. Warehouse there was no windows and no overhead light, you had to have your own lamp on your desk to have light. And it was just this soul sucking job of like I had to write 180 product descriptions a day for what we were like we were launching the Neiman Marcus online website. And so we were, I just had my head down. But the thing is, I was gonna say I had my head down all day just writing like v neck line button front, you know, mindless mind numbing stuff. But I could finish it in like two hours. And then I was just sitting there twiddling my thumbs for the rest of the day. And I tried to get them to let me work from home and they wouldn't and I tried to like I tried all these things in like the few short months that I was there and nothing worked. So eventually I quit. And you know, this was right after the recession. So everybody I knew was like you're quitting a job. That's stable, and to do what to be freelance, like, isn't that just code for unemployed and so it was really hard and but I just knew that that's what I needed to do. And so I quit. And I started freelance writing. And in less than six months, I had doubled my income from what I was making at Neiman Marcus. And then pretty soon all the friends and family members that had told me I was in that job for quitting. We're like, I'm so glad you didn't listen to us. This really way better. So I spent the next like, eight years freelance writing. I was a food and travel writer for magazines and newspapers. And so I got to go all over the world and eating the best food. I was going to Istanbul and Bordeaux and Australia and Alaska and like, I had this incredible life. It was I was so lucky and we ended up moving Washington DC and we lived there for a few years. And then Matt got a job in Atlanta. And that's where I'm from and all our friends and family were here. So we were like, okay, I really wasn't ready to leave DC yet, but it was too good of an opportunity to pass up and I could work from anywhere. So it's like, okay, let's move. So we came back

to Atlanta, that was in 2013, which is crazy. And like that was seven years ago. That's nuts. So we came back and then things kind of started unraveling I my health started taking this big toll. I think honestly, now in retrospect, a lot of it was because of the stress I was under because my career was starting to unravel. And I wasn't that happy doing it anymore, and it's just ready for a change, but I didn't know what to do. And so I started having all these health issues. And to make this very long story slightly shorter than I've already made it. I decided to start a blog and that's what Route and rebel was born at the end of 2015. And the blog was all about holistic health and how I had found a lot of healing by taking this really mind body soul approach to my health. And so a lot of it in the beginning was changing my diet and focusing on nutrition and that kind of thing. But then the more that time evolved, not that I think nutrition is not important, because obviously it is. But I realized that holistic means the whole picture and not just the physical like diet and exercise that we think about. So stress management and detoxing the stuff in your home and in your products and just everything in your environment and really taking care of yourself and so that was route and rebel, his route and rebel now. So then that turned into a six figure business and people started asking me how are you doing this? How are you making money with this and so I started doing Income reports and kind of doing one on one coaching and helping people. And then I decided I should really launch a course. So then I launched the six figure blogger Academy last year. And now that's kind of puts us at present day where I'm still running the wellness website. And then I'm running this horse. This is, I mean, it is a course. But I feel like it's more like a membership sometimes because I'm in there every every week right now and then every month, at least doing live coaching and in the Facebook groups and stuff. So I just really love engaging with people that way and helping people start their own blogs and their own businesses. And yeah, here we are just very winded answer.

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Speaker 3

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No, I love it because it really shows how I think anyone who's listening like just a good reminder that sometimes like you have that intuition inside you, right. And that knowing that like this doesn't feel right, this isn't right. Even though like you said with ubiquity Neiman Marcus that was everyone was thinking What are you doing? Like that's not a brave decision right now like that's a stupid decision or whatever, really like was what you felt like in your soul that you should do. And then the same thing with like you said, you know, your career was kind of unraveling with, you know, being a freelancer and then you decided to start rebel like, I just feel like, sometimes I think people think their path is going to be like loose linear path that's like, so perfect. And I'm like, it's so nice. And

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it's just a good reminder that like, all your experiences add up, right? Like, if you would have never taken that corporate job, you wouldn't have known that you didn't like corporate, right? And you would have Gods like, what if I always think that like taking that job was the best thing that ever happened to me because it really showed me what I don't want, right and then propelled me to really go after what I do. Whereas I think if I had just started out freelancing, when things got tough, I probably would have found another job. To do or something and I think I had to really hate it. Like if I had found a job that was just like, Okay, I think I would have coasted for a long time and just been like, Well, you know, it's not great, but who loves their job,

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Speaker 3

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right? Yeah, no. And I think it's important just to know, and like a good reminder for all of us that like, we have those things in our heart like, okay, maybe we feel like this isn't right. But like, We're too afraid to step out, you know, but it's like, Don't ever be afraid. Because the thing is, is when you step out, those are the times when you're learning and you're growing and like, growth is so essential, like they say like that quote, like if you are feeling comfortable, and you're probably doing it wrong, or something. And it's like to like if you're not feeling like uncomfortable or like even it's like that good uncomfortable, where you know, it's right, but it's, it might be stretching, yeah, and like just knowing that sometimes you have to take that step and branch out even though it feels like whoa, this is going against everything everyone's telling me but like, I know in my heart, this is what feels right. But Those are the moments where you grow so much and you learn and you're like a better person and you find what you're truly passionate about. I feel like

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Speaker 1

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Yeah, for sure. It's like so worth it. so worth it. And I mean, I still have to remind myself even that exactly what you said, like life and success especially is not linear. There's ebbs and flows. And, you know, life is so cyclical, and it's constantly changing. And just when you think you've got it all figured out, totally, something happens and, and I forgot to mention it, even in that massive brain dump that in all that time, I also got married and had a baby and then got pregnant again. And so just my personal life changed so much. And that affects to my career. Like when I got married and bought a house. Part of why I felt like my career was unraveling was because I didn't want to travel internationally several times a month. It's exhausting. And it was great for a certain season of my life, but then I got to be 30 and was like, I'm so tired.

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Speaker 3

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I got one that's like such a good reminder too, because different seasons of your life are going to require different things of you as a person, like in your personal life and like that's something you want to kind of match up or like a least complement with your professional life. Because if they don't, that's going to be, it's just not going to bode well. Like, that was why I started blogging, too. I had had a baby, and it was just so much more it made more sense to like, I want to work from home, but be with my baby. And like, I don't know, and I think like we talked about earlier, you can have both now. Right? You know, it's like reminding people of that.

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Yeah, for sure. Yeah, kids obviously changes everything. And, and then even like, after I had Jackson, my first I was really excited to come back to work in some ways. But then when I came back, there was this period where I was just like, I don't care about this as much as I used to, like it just doesn't feel as important and eventually that kind of faded and I go reenergized and reconnected to my work again, but it took a little while.

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Speaker 3

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Yeah, I think you have to find your new normal, like as a mom that as a wife as a business professional, like there's just so many new roles kind of that you're like adapting to Yeah, definitely. This episode

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is brought to you by my workshop, how to finally start a blog. The hardest part is just getting started. So I'm going to teach you step by step how to build your blog the right way from day one, because let's be honest, it's time to finally start taking your dream seriously. Most people never start a blog because they get overwhelmed and intimidated by what to do first and exactly how to build a solid foundation. But what if you had someone who's done it before and could help you break this blogging thing down piece by piece in a way that you can actually understand? No confusing tech lingo so you can get your blog up and running in a matter of days. Or even hours. By the end of this game changing two hour workshop, you'll have found the confidence to just do the dang thing. You'll have narrowed down your niche

claimed your space online including domain name, web hosting, blogging platform, etc. We're going to help you design your blog and get all the right plugins installed. I'm sharing everything you need to finally start taking action on your blog, you'll get the two hour workshop recording a downloadable PDF workbook, lifetime access a QA vault and our quickstart guide. All you've got to do is give me two hours and I'll give you everything you need to start a profitable blog from day one. Even if you have no clue what you want to blog about, even if you started a blog, but got lost figuring out all the tech even if the thought of becoming a blogger is totally overwhelming and reeks of imposter syndrome. Even if you're worried. Blogging is too saturated. There's so much competition and just No room for you. And especially if you struggle with self doubt, uncertainty and feel like there is no way you could be successful with this whole blogging thing, or ever actually make money. Remember, everyone starts somewhere, you just need to start. Don't wait until you're confident to show up, show up until you're confident only action will bring clarity. So instead of fighting for your limitations, let's embrace where you are and commit to yourself right now that you're no longer going to do things the hard way, or do nothing at all. You won't need to after you take this training, change actually starts with just one small commitment. And all you have to commit to right now is step number one. Join me in my workshop to get all my top tips and get started blogging hacks for a one time investment of just \$197. Your new blog will start earning back that investment and so much more In no time, I'm going to show you how I had to [KateKordsmeier.com/workshop](https://KateKordsmeier.com/workshop) to join me today. That's [KateKordsmeier.com/workshop](https://KateKordsmeier.com/workshop) I'll see you on the inside.

Okay, well tell me what was your journey from freelancing to like starting your blog route rebel?

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Yeah. So I always had this really negative stigma about bloggers because I was this professional journalist. And it was like, I don't know, I was definitely up on a high horse, I guess. And I think I had a few bad apple examples of bloggers that weren't doing it with integrity. And it turned me off to it. But I did follow some bloggers in my own life. And one of them was pinch of Yum, which is food blog, which I'm sure most people have heard of. I feel like they're one of the biggest food blogs in the country now. But they did income reports. And I remember just reading them sometimes and being like, wait a minute, they're making \$30,000 a month from their food blog. And they're like the most sincere genuine people I know, on the internet. So it was a really eye opening experience. So I kind of one weekend went down the rabbit hole and read like every income report they've ever done. I joined their food blogger Pro, it's like an online school for food bloggers, I joined that and decided like, Okay, I think I'm, I'm gonna cross over to the dark side and try this blogging thing. And really, from like, day one, it was just like, why haven't I been doing this the whole time. This is so much better. And I mean, I did give up a lot of great perks that I had from being a food and travel writer, but I feel like what I got in return was so much better. And I really felt like I was making more of a difference like I started Feeling like what I was writing about in my freelance career was kind of fluffy. You know, it was like, five places to eat pancakes this weekend. And like the best cocktails around the world, and it was fun, and there's value in that. So I

don't mean to diminish anybody who's doing that or enjoys reading that stuff, because I still like to read that stuff. But I just wasn't feeling that like sense of pride in my work as much anymore. And then when I started writing about health and wellness, and I started getting emails from people that are like, this has changed my life, or I followed this tip and I used to have chronic migraines. And now I don't and it's all because of this article you shared. And I don't know I just started feeling like oh my gosh, I'm like really helping people. This is so meaningful. So the more I worked on the blog, the more I wanted to make the blog, my full time thing and I was still freelancing part time. I mean, I still needed income. In the first year of blogging wasn't exactly lucrative. So it was a transition for sure. And I definitely struggled. When I finally did decide to go full time with the blog, it was January 2017. So just over a year of blogging part time, and I was like, I'm not going to take any more freelance work, I'm just going to focus on the blog. And that was such a hard year, especially the first few months because I still wasn't really making any money. And I realized how much I wrapped my self worth in my income. So there was a lot of therapy that had to happen to like try to unwind some of those beliefs that I told myself of what makes me valuable.

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Speaker 3

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Yeah. No, and I feel like most of our worth is it's either like wrapped up in what we do or our achievements or like, yeah, it equates to like okay, what are you bringing home like, what's the dollar amount?

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Speaker 3

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Yeah, yeah. Then we know Yeah, what does like a typical day look like as a blogger? I think this is such a good question too, especially for like those listening who maybe haven't started a blog would have thought about starting a blog, or they're not even sure what a day should look like. And maybe they're like a beginning blogger.

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Yeah. So I want you to answer this question too. So we can kind of compare two bloggers. So I'll answer it for when I was just doing route and rebel full time, because now that I have this other business, it's, it's a little different. But the way that I found worked best for me was that I like routine, but I also really

like variety. And I can't just do the same exact things at the same exact times every single day. I mean, once I had kids, that was physically impossible, but before I had kids, and you could kind of control it like that if you wanted to. I didn't like that. I feel like I work much better from a place of like listening to my body. What does it need today? What do I feel like? Doing what would feel really good. And then sometimes that can be a struggle because it's like, well, I need to get this done, but I don't feel like doing it. So there's that battle. But what I found is that I tried to batch my days. So I would say Tuesdays and Thursdays are my writing days and like I sit down, whenever I sit down in the morning, and I write until noon, and if I got one blog post done in that time, great if I got 10 done in that time, even better, but like, it wasn't like I write until one post is done. It was just this is my writing hours. Monday's were kind of like my catch up days I would catch up on emails, I would plan out my week and do a lot of that kind of admin type stuff. And then I did photo shoots every other Wednesday. So my photographer Heidi would come over and we would shoot like five to 10 recipes at a time so that was really helpful. And then I tried to sometimes just have Friday's just be like free days. They were either like my little days where I would read or I would take a course or something. And, and then of course, you know, like in between all that I was trying to fit in like exercise and getting outside and making time to nourish my body with healthy food and that kind of stuff. But generally it was like every day was kind of different. I do batch stuff, and I still try to do it that way. But it was like, routine where you kind of knew what to expect. But there was wiggle room to also do what your body was telling you. It needed.

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Speaker 3

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Yeah, I love that you're like really in tune with what's going on inside?

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How about you?

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Speaker 3

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Yeah, I think for me, I mean, it's just really important, I think as a blogger for most people to know that like you are your own boss, right. So like, I mean, you have to really get things done. And I think that's a good thing to know, though about yourself too. Because if you feel like you need a boss, maybe this isn't for you. And my sister actually thought she wanted to start a blog and then after she took the enneagram she's like, I just realized this isn't for me. This isn't my type of work. She doesn't aren't that I like supporting me? She's a five. Okay, and don't

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Speaker 3

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that she just really likes to be more behind the scenes and like really helping support someone else. She doesn't want to be like the ringleader or like in the spotlight kind of person. And I felt like that was a really big epiphany moment for her. But I also thought in general like, Wow, that's so enlightening, because she almost feels better now about life, like, in a way, not that the enneagram was like, Okay, this is who you are. And you have to be that way. I don't think you should ever be put in a box. I think at the same time. It's a good parameter for like, what,

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Speaker 1

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how to know yourself. Yeah. Yeah, I think that's so important. Because it's not like being a blogger is the best job in the world for everybody. Right? Yeah. And so I'm sure there are other ways that she can find freedom and flexibility and fulfillment without being her own boss. And now she knows that about I mean, I think that's really beautiful that she was able to take that information. realize this is really true for me, and then, you know, act accordingly.

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Speaker 3

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Yes. Yeah. So mine is similar like where I'm like really big about planning, like I'm a planner to a tee. So like planning out my month and then planning out my weeks. I usually take Sunday and like, really plan those out. And then I plan out my days, like the night before, again, just making sure like, okay, these are my goals this week, like what I need to get done. And then like, how am I going to achieve that, like, what am I going to do to make that happen, and then I usually work in like, four hour chunks every day. I'm like, just hardcore for four hours. I love trying to get done. Like, I'm not the type of person that can like sit down at a desk for like eight hours. That's why I love blogging because I don't have to. And so I think that flexibility has been really good for me because I like know, my strength is like, if I can just really hit it hard for four hours, then it's gonna be like, I get a break. Like I mentally tell myself that whereas if I'm having to be in here for eight hours, I feel like I'd be way less productive because mentally I'm just spent So

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Speaker 1

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there's like the law of diminishing returns. That happens, I feel like and y'all just so you know, Suzy also runs a six figure blog and has three children. And you know, as a busy mom and wife and business owner and the fact that I think it's so important to just note that, yeah, you work not only four hours a day necessarily, but that you can get these like chunks in where you're working, you're not having to sit at a desk for eight hours or work the typical 40 or 60 hour, weeks, and you still have a really successful business. And it's just proof that it's like, it's not always about how much or how hard you work, but how smart how efficient and productive you are, and how well you're able to prioritize the right things. Because especially with blogging, it's like there's always a million things that you could be doing, but which ones are going to actually move the needle.

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Speaker 3

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Yeah. I'm a big fan too of like, if you want something done, you need to like write it down or schedule it in otherwise, it's just not going to happen. And you know, especially as your own boss, I think it's important to do that. And I will say too, though, like blogging, I put a ton of time in in the beginning, like, don't get me wrong, like, I put so much time, especially before I had more kids and all of that. I think sometimes people are like, Wow, it just looks so awesome. And so easily. It's like, we're gonna be wrong. I love what I do. But like, it's really hard work. And it wasn't really a lot of work, you know, in the beginning, and I think once you get to a point, I'm sure you can say this, too, like, it's not that you're coasting, but it's, it's like a little bit easier to not grind as hard. Like, you know, you're not hustling as I want to call it or whatever. So you find your

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Speaker 1

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rhythm a little bit, you get into a groove. And yeah, I mean, I think in the beginning, some of why we all have to work so much harder is because we have no idea what we're doing, right? And so you're just figuring stuff out and there's so much trial and error and just throwing stuff at the wall and seeing what sticks? And yes, yeah. And then after a few years, you're like, Okay, this is what sticks, I'm gonna throw the rest out and just focus on things and you kind of have a more steady following. And it's more motivating, of course, I mean, we were having this conversation yesterday about traffic and pageviews, and followers and those numbers, and how important they really are. But for what it's worth, there is something to be said for the fact that at least having a fan base makes it more enjoyable. You feel like you're actually talking to somebody and not you know, in the beginning, I was like, Is anybody reading this? And

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Speaker 3

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I'm like, writing this to my mom. What's going on? I know for sure. It's so true. Okay, well, let's talk money because everyone loves to talk about money.

For everyone,

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Speaker 3

37:51

yeah. Like when I, you know, I'm an open book, and I feel like you are to where it's just like, yeah, let's share this. It doesn't happen. To be this like taboo thing? Oh, for sure. Yeah, I'm all about it. Like, when do you feel like was the turning point when you felt like, Okay, this could be a full time business and I can really make money from this. So

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Speaker 1

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again, this sort of fearless mentality that is just kind of innate in me, I think when I read that pinch of yum makes that kind of money. And then it made me you know, look into other bloggers and read some other income reports. My mentality was like, well, they could do it, I could do it. And so I started it from a very good place of like, it's going to take a while but I'm gonna get there it is possible to do this. But of course, that was easy in practice, and in the very beginning, like couple months in, you're still feeling like no, I can do it. It's just gonna take a little bit of time, and then like a year and a half, and you're like, Hmm, this is taking a little bit longer than I thought it was going to or, again, I just wrapped up so much of my self worth and I was kind of used to being nice breadwinner because Matt's always had a great job. But I made more for a lot of our relationship. And so it was really difficult for me to be like, I'm not really contributing that much. So I would say around a year and a half mark, though, I had my first I have to look at the exact numbers, but I want to say I had my first like, \$10,000 month. And that was when I was like, Well, I mean, each milestone was kind of like, Okay, my first month I made \$10. But that was just my very first month. If I could make 10 next month, I could make 20. And like if we just keep kind of going at that pace. So once I crossed the thousand dollar mark, it was like, Okay, this could happen, this could really work. But then I kind of stayed in that like one to 5000 for a while. And depending on everyone's situation, that's going to be different. You might be completely satisfied at that level. I personally have never satisfied me those like, even if that's all I needed, I would have still been like, I want more. Yeah. But yeah, I think around the year and a half Mark when I got that first like five figure month was when I really thought I could do this. And then once we started kind of on a rolling basis,

making over six figures that was that was definitely like, Oh, this is a full time job now, like, I don't have to be embarrassed to tell people I'm a blogger anymore. I can proudly say, I run a six figure blog. And obviously, that's not how I would actually say it to people. But in my mind, it was like, I felt that that pride coming back.

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Speaker 3

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Yeah. Which I think people are just startled. And they still don't even know like when I tell them my blog, they're like, Oh, awesome, is like a hobby for you.

I'm like, No, I mean it as your

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Speaker 1

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kids. I think when you tell people you're a blogger, they're like, Oh, she's a stay at home mom.

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Speaker 3

41:00

Yeah, for sure which I am in ways you know, like, anytime my kids need me I'm here like even if the babysitter's here, I'm here, but the thing is, is, it's like that's the beauty of it. That's why I love it so much is like, I can be with my kids in the drop of a hat and like, or I can just be like, you know what, I don't want to work today.

Like if I really, really didn't want to, usually I want to.

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Speaker 3

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But yeah, okay, so you earned \$150,000 in your third year of blogging, like, tell me about that. How did it happen? Like, what I mean, what was that? Like? I feel like most people hear that number and they're like, there's no way or like you said, You earn \$10 your first month and then people might be like, okay, maybe you're earning like 40,000 a year from blogging or whatever. You know what I mean? Like, thousand sounds a little bit more like, oh, what's going on? How are you doing this?

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Speaker 1

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Yeah. So the three main ways that route and rebel makes money Through display advertising, sponsored content and affiliate marketing. And in my second year, we made 75,000. And we had a huge focus on sponsored content. And I think what really made the difference between the 75 to 150 is shifting that and still working with brands, but putting much more of an emphasis on affiliate marketing, which was so much more scalable and passive. So once we did that, and I really honed my affiliate strategy, our income just started soaring. And it was really great, especially because that was in 2018. And that was the year that I had Jackson. So I was pregnant from January to September. So work was not always as consistent and productive as I would have liked it to be. But I got into a good place and we got really ahead on content. And then I had Jackson in September, and then I took off The rest of the year and I literally did not work and we made \$60,000 while I was on maternity leave, especially that moment was like, wow, this career is something I never even dreamed it would be. Because even as a freelance journalist, people would always say like, Oh, it's so great because when you have kids you can keep doing it, which I always was like, I don't think you understand what my job entails. Right? But I couldn't have taken leave and gotten paid because if you didn't turn in assignments, you did not make money It was a very time for dollars career and blogging is not that and it does take time up front but then we just earned while I was off, and I did have a part time assistant at that time so she was handling some like, you know, inbox stuff and some a couple content, things that would come up but I mean, it was still it was such an eye opening thing of like, I'm so glad I did this. And now I feel like more energized than ever to like, keep this going. Because if I can make \$60,000 while essentially not working at all, like what could I do when I come back and it helped me prioritize like what's important and moving more away again from brand work has always kind of seemed to always come back to that is like, that's a time for dollars trade. And we still do some of it when it makes sense. But our focus is much more on affiliate marketing now. And I think that makes all the difference.

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Speaker 3

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I love that you pivoted and like from that you saw so much fruit like it's, it's just so true business like I always hear that phrase like you have to pivot right or you have to know like, it's okay to pivot and like you're not. It's just like the linear analogy we talked about, like it's not always linear, right or why whether it's your life path or your career path or whatever, and you need to pivot sometimes. And you can pivot

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Speaker 1

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even in ways that like affects your readers a bit more like I used to be all about the anti inflammatory diet and that food is medicine and food is the number one thing you can do for your body. And my opinion after my experience over the last few years is that food matters. But it's not the only thing that matters. And so we've really shifted and like, redone a lot of our content around nutrition and dieting and stuff. And we follow much more of an intuitive eating approach right now. And that feels much more in alignment to me and like, I kind of debated well, should I do this? What if people are like, what a flip flopper, you know, you used to say this. And now you're saying this, but ultimately, I had to just say, Well, I'm allowed to change my mind like my experience changes like,

new person.

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Speaker 1

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Yeah, I think I was really scared to do it. And then once I did, and we only got positive feedback from people is like, yeah, again, follow what your heart is telling you and pivot in that way. And that's the beauty of online businesses. It's actually Pretty easy to pivot.

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Speaker 3

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Yeah. Speaking of pivoting, you pivoted last year and you created the six figure blog Academy. Like, why did you create it? And kind of, you know, what was the purpose in that? Or like what made you want to create the course.

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Speaker 1

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So I think again, I have always wanted to teach, I actually had contacted when we first moved to Atlanta, I contacted my alma mater, UGA, and was like, could I teach a freelancing class or something like something in journalism, I'd love I really want to teach and they required that you had a master's degree, which I don't and so I was like, Well, I'm not going to do that for this. So I think I've always had this kind of like desire to teach though and to help others learn a skill and I mean, I always feel like once I figure something out, I feel like I have this need to share it with the world. So when I figured out my health issues, I created route and rebels just like I have to tell people what I've learned. This is so powerful, and then kind of the same thing happened with Creating a six figure blog and people wanting

and even if they didn't know that they wanted it yet like then once I started talking about people like whoa, Okay, wait back it up. Let me hear more about this. But I just kept getting the same questions over and over and over again. Right. And so I had heard from a lot of my mentors in the online business industry that digital courses were the way to go. And there was so much benefit into creating one and so I thought, Okay, well, I'm up for a new challenge. I'm kind of, I think sometimes it's not to say that I'm like, oh, I've mastered this. There's nowhere to go from here. But once I get into a flow with one thing, I'm like, I like having a challenge and a new project and learning something new. So I think I kind of felt like I had gotten into a good flow with route and rebel and I was ready for the next thing. And this felt like what I was most passionate about and what people wanted to know the most about. So I started the course which was A ton of work. And then we launched it in July. And then we did a couple more launches. So we did, I did a beta test than I did the July launch. That was like a very soft launch just to my list, no ads, no real marketing strategy or anything. And then we did a couple more launches, made tweaks every time like learned a ton each time. And then in January 2020, we had our first six figure launch, which was definitely one of those moments that we've been talking about where it's just like, I made \$100,000 in two weeks.

48:35

What Mind blown

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Speaker 1

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but again, it was like I saw other people doing it and so I just told myself I know it's possible to do this so if they could do it, I could figure it out and it was not a linear path. We lost money on our second lunch. I got into this like real dark place of I should just quit everything and be a stay at home. Mom, I'm way too stressed with this. Money is so tight right now. And I'm so glad I didn't listen to that voice and just was like, you just got to keep going. There's always gonna be challenges, but you just got to keep going.

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Speaker 3

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Yeah, no, it's so so true. Who is like success being made for and what kind of results are what can people expect from taking the course?

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Speaker 1

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Yeah. So we really say that it's kind of made for two different types of people. And one is somebody who's been blogging maybe for a while, could be a couple months, maybe even a couple years, and they just aren't getting any traction. They have, you know, very little traffic, they're not making any money. They feel like they're doing all the things but nothing seems to be working. So that's kind of our one avatar for the course. And then the second and we've gotten a lot more of people like this lately are people that are like, I've heard about blogging. I think I want to start a blog. This sounds like it could be a really good fit for me in my life and my needs and whatever, but I have no idea where to start. I don't even know like how to buy a domain name. So the course can work for either of those types. And we really take people from day zero of, I don't even have a website, all the way through to, I'm making six figures from my blog. Now I'm ready to hire a team and build out this company, and everything in between there. So we teach everything from how to get started, and all of the like tech and setup that's required. And then we'll talk about things like how to drive traffic and SEO and creating an email list. And then we cover those three monetization strategies of ads affiliates and sponsors. Yeah, it's a very comprehensive program, which is why it took so much time to create but it has gotten people amazing results already, which is so cool to see that they will say, Oh my gosh, I didn't know how to word this pitch to a special Sir, and I've been sitting on it for months. And then I used your template, and I just secured my first thousand dollar assignment or something. And so like little wins like that. And then also people who were even people that were like successful with blogging, like our mutual friend, Lisa, and she had a successful blog. And I'm not trying to take credit for any of her success. But I know that she's told me that after taking the course, she was able to, like bring it just to that next level, and she hears for the first time, so things like that. I mean, it's so cool to see.

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Speaker 3

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Yeah, well, I think even for me after taking it, like I learned so much about affiliate marketing from you, like I would say, that was my biggest takeaway, probably, that and just like even even collaborations, like I've done way more collaborations within the last six months than I ever have, because I realized the power of like, backlinks and all that and just really, you know, having your website be out there in more than just one place, you know, your domain. But I think to like With affiliate marketing, it's like I thought I knew like how to work it, and I was working it, but it's like, he took me to that next level and like, and made me realize things that I wasn't doing. And I always think to like, just for people listening, it's so important to get in here other people's successes and how they're doing things. Because the thing is, one way might be working for you. But if you can, like triple your income, think someone else said why not? Right? Like, I always just think I'm always open to like, what other people are doing or how they're working things because I'm like, Okay, this might be working great for me. But if I can earn more, or if I can be more impactful or something, then why not, you know, implement that and I just think you had a different way of doing it than I did. Even my emails that I'm sending out now. Like, that's really because of you as well like my saver Sunday that I started and like different things, but I've seen such an increase in sales, because I've actually, you know, sharing like with people, I think Sometimes we're afraid to share when it's like people actually want to know, I've gotten so many emails telling me, I love her savor

Sunday emails. I'm like, This is so weird. Like, why didn't I do this before? I just didn't realize, but wanted to almost like an inside look into what I was doing what I was, you know, loving. And I would never have known that if I didn't take your course like I don't know. It's just, it is so true. Invest in yourself, because like you said, we're listening to Amy Porterfield last night together, but it's like if you don't invest in yourself, like she said, Who is going to write? Yeah, and I had a beautiful takeaway from that. Because I think sometimes people are like, Oh, I can't invest. It's like, well, if you can't then who like right, you know, enough to believe in and to invest in this.

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Speaker 1

53:46

And that's one of my biggest struggles is getting people to realize the power of investing in themselves and treating their blog like a business and I think making those investments is part of how you do that. Yeah, getting people to realize that investing in yourself is part of treating it like a business. And you know, I had this one student that it was like painful to me It hurt my heart because she wanted to get a refund and she said, I already know everything and it wasn't that I thought no you don't or that I thought my course was the only way or something like we're so like, none of us know everything and if you have that mentality where you think there's nothing more to learn or you've got it all figured out, I feel like you're gonna cap you're right so I love hearing you say that, like you had a successful blog and things were working but then you've learned a new way of doing something it boosted your income and, and hopefully, you know, like, my goal with the course isn't just to get people to make money which would be great, but it's also to just bring more like ease into their life with it because, like I said, the first year and a half of my blog was so hard and it was so much trial and error. And I always tell people like I created it. So you don't have to go through that. Now I know, this is what works. This is how you can do that. Follow this proven system. And you won't have to have all of that like heartache that I write. Well, isn't that the beauty of taking a course is like you can text your results so much quicker. Well, instead of having to go through all of that, that someone else went through, it's like, Here, let me show you let me lead you. That. Yeah, beauty of it. I know. And personally, that's what I do. Like anytime I want to learn something I wanted to learn how do I make a digital course? How do I market it? So I bought a course on courses. And we're like, that's what I always do when I want to learn something and even if it's not career related, you know, I want to learn more about clean living. So I'll buy a course on it or a book or something like that's just I guess, maybe the way that I learned but it's, I feel like it's so much more effective because you're I think you do get way better results more quickly than you would have if you just tried to do everything on your own. Exactly. Yeah. This episode is brought to you by Bluehost. If you want to start a blog or online business, what's the first thing you need a website, duh. I promise it's easier than you think. To get started, you simply need a name and a host. My favorite hosting service for beginners is Bluehost because it's the best cheapest and easiest option to get started. And when I say cheap, I mean it. You can get started for just \$2 and 95 cents per month when you use our special link [KateKordsmeier .com/Bluehost](https://KateKordsmeier.com/Bluehost). Not only that, but Bluehost gives you both your domain name and a security certificate for free and provides outstanding 24 seven customer support. To top it all off they

have a one click Install for WordPress which could not be any easier. Plus Bluehost has A 30 day money back guarantee just in case ready to get started head to K Cortes Meyer comm forward slash Bluehost.

57:11

Okay, so where do you see route and revel in like five years, 10 years,

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Speaker 1

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like snapshot. So one thing we've been talking a lot about lately, and I say we have a couple employees now. And so we have team meetings every week and really fun. I love having a team. But one thing we've been talking about is kind of removing me from Rutan rebel a little bit, it would obviously still be like my site, and I'm kind of the face, so to speak, but I'd like to turn it into more of like an aggregate wellness site, not necessarily as far as like a mind body green, but I'd love to bring on other contributors and have other voices in the wellness space. Sometimes I get this feeling like I've kind of said my piece I mean, there's always more to say and always more to learn, but sometimes I not running out of ideas, but I just feel like I've said what I wanted to say. And now I want other people to come and say their things. So we're definitely looking for more guest contributions and we have now this whole system in place for people so if you want to submit a guest post we'll put the link in the show notes and you can apply there love that. Yeah, but I think just kind of making it into a bigger a bigger site with more voices is where I'm hoping it's gonna go. I love that

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Speaker 3

58:34

yeah, that's it's true too. I think sometimes it's like you get to that place where I think you're almost like you're transitioning to having you know another form of business like you have you know, root level but you also have like, cake chords my or whatever, is mine. But I think it's, it's beautiful to see how you can still be in your original passion but yet, like, kind of expanded in a way because you're like a hair. Let's Let's share everyone Do instead of just me or whatever. Yeah, cool.

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Speaker 1

59:03

Yeah. And I love that community aspect of it. Yeah. really appealing to me as well, is getting different perspectives. And you know, I'm certainly not the foremost expert in health. And there's things that I'm

like, I don't really know anything about that. I should bring somebody on who does talk about that. So yeah, I'm excited for that

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Speaker 3

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fun. Okay. Well, we have questions that you ask every guest on your podcast. Yeah. So we're gonna turn the table in Eskew today. So what's your favorite way to make time for self care while running your own business?

I think probably hot yoga.

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Speaker 1

59:40

Yeah, which I can't do right now because I'm pregnant. But when I'm not pregnant, it is definitely I really like getting a good sweat when I work out but I don't love like super high intensity. Like I'm not a crossfitter type person. So doing a hot yoga class has done amazing things for just my mental Help and then I feel like actually physically to like, I never feel stronger and like more fit than when I'm like really in a good routine with my hot yoga. So I love that and then just like taking walks outside, I wish I made more time for it because every time I do I'm like, That felt so good.

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Speaker 3

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Yeah, walks outside are so good especially like after dinner like right before when it gets nicer out, you know? And it's like yeah, the day lol are so nice. Okay, what is one tool or strategy? I'm super excited for this question, by the way, like the Eisenhower matrix or cycle sinking that you use to help with time management.

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Speaker 1

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Yeah, so I was gonna say the Eisenhower matrix is by far like one of the most powerful tools I've started using

Okay, I'm totally looking. Do it.

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Speaker 1

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Yes. Okay. So I know that our listeners can't see that but I'm holding mine up on the screen here. So I like made this little checklist and it's four quadrants and you have important and urgent important and not Urgent, not important and urgent and not important and not urgent. Every Monday morning, I sit down, I plan out my week. And I have like, I have kind of things and all over the place. So I have like my iCal where I have just everything gets dumped there. And then I have like a paper planner that I like to just write down my weekend. We've got Asana that we use for our team, where all of our tasks are living. And then so I kind of look at all those things and then I put them into the appropriate quadrants. And it makes it so much easier to just be like okay, these are what important and urgent is what has to get done no matter what. And all the other things mostly can either get automated delegated or eliminated or just like you know, they're just little things that if I have time for I can look into swim lessons for Jackson. That's one of the things that's on my list, right? Now. So I love the Eisenhower matrix. And I feel like I've got my whole team using it now. I think it's really improved their time management and productivity. And yeah, it's been hugely helpful.

I love that. I'll have to look into it.

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Speaker 1

1:02:13

Yes. Well, and if you're an FBA member, we have these mindful planning printables that I created and the Eisenhower matrix, like the one that I created is in there, so you could download it from there. Oh, awesome.

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Speaker 3

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Okay. What's the most powerful business mindset entrepreneurial book that you've read that you like, always go back to?

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Speaker 1

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So I'm such a bookworm. And I feel like this question is hard for me because I'm always reading something really good. But the one the one that I've read most recently that I feel like has made the biggest impact is traction. And then I think it's probably most powerful for people who are starting to hire even if it's just a part time VA, I think you could still get a lot out of it. Even if it's just you But I read it as I was really starting to grow the team and trying to figure out like, how do I grow this team? And how do I create the kind of culture that I want to have? And how do I manage my employees? And how do we create goals and plan our year and prioritize and so traction has definitely been something we've had hours and hours worth of team meetings going over everything in there. And we've totally changed the way that we communicate. And yeah, I think it's probably been the most like, influential book that I've read. Awesome.

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Speaker 3

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Okay, so last question, what is like your mindset or mantra that you kind of go back to or like a quote, maybe when times get tough?

You think I would have prepared for this since I asked everybody.

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Speaker 1

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I think the one and it's not necessarily like there's probably a more eloquent way to say it, but the one that I told myself a lot over the last year is kind of Like, just keep going, because I did have that that dark time in the fall we had, we were hit really hard with a big Google algorithm update that affected a lot of natural health sites. We lost a lot of traffic and a lot of money and then we lost money on this launch. And so after that, I went to Amy Porterfield entrepreneur experience, and in particular hearing Amy and Rachel Hollis, who was one of the speakers there. They talked about dark times in their businesses, and they were recent to like some of the most successful women that I like, just admire so much for standing up on the stage in front of 1000 people saying, sometimes I want to quit to sometimes it's just really freakin hard. And I just want to give up and it feels way easier to do that. But I didn't and I just kept going. And so that's what I've been telling myself a lot lately, too. It's just like you just keep moving forward. And eventually Yeah, we'll catch up.

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Speaker 3

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Yeah. It's so good. And it's so true. I mean, if it's one thing you can do is just keep putting one foot in front of the other.

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Speaker 1

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Yeah. And just like one step at a time, like you don't always have to know how you're going to get there just one day at a time. I love the How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time because it helps because it can feel really overwhelming. Sometimes you're just like, I don't know how to dig myself out of this or I don't know how to get started or whatever. So yeah, just keep going.

I love it. Thank you so much for loving. Oh,

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Speaker 1

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my gosh, it was so fun. I'm so glad. I hope that was helpful. And you got to know me a little bit more. I know this podcast is new. So wanted to kind of share a little bit more about my story. And I'm so glad that my good friend Susie could help us out. So Susie, you have to tell everybody to where can people find you and follow you.

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Speaker 3

1:05:54

Yeah, you can find me so at Grogan green on Instagram, that's g u RL gone green and then Girl going green.com is my website I have a Facebook group girl buying green babes. There's like over 2000 of us just like talking all things natural all the time.

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Speaker 1

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That's awesome. I didn't know about your Facebook group. Yeah, we It's so fun in there and tell them about your course and your membership too.

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Speaker 3

1:06:16

Yeah. So if you guys struggle with perioral dermatitis, I have a course all about how to heal yourself how I healed myself with perioral dermatitis. It's been almost four years and then my membership is called girl primary membership. And it basically takes you from maybe you don't know that much about natural living, whether it's clean eating or clean beauty or just detoxing your home and I walk you through it month by month in like easy formats, bundles downloads. We have a Facebook group there too, that's private that you can ask me any question anytime. says you feel stuck or you're not sure maybe you know what to do. I'm there for you. So yeah, it's fun. It's awesome.

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Speaker 1

1:06:57

Yeah. Susie, like I said, is my wife wellness guru and she's a former aesthetician I say former I don't know if you still Yeah,

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Speaker 3

1:07:05

I don't do it anymore. Yeah, I used to do hair and like throughout college I like did hair and all that before and then yeah, weird. Oh my I got my degree in like PR advertising marketing, which I'm kind of doing now. Like, also doing beauty It's weird. Like it all goes together right?

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Speaker 1

1:07:23

Yeah, no, that's perfect. I always kind of wish that I had even just minor or gotten the certificate or something and think something like nutrition or? Yeah, where I feel like I mean I do think experience is the best teacher and if you've been through something personally you'll learn so much more than anything you could read from a book or in a classroom but it is nice to have that and being an aesthetician it's kind of like you got both because you have that experience and you have the actual credentials to back it up. So definitely follow Susie on Instagram. She has amazing green beauty tips and advice and tutorials and all kinds of Other things too, and her three adorable kids are so, so freakin cute. I love

What? Oh, thank you. All right. See you next week. Bye.

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Speaker 1

1:08:19

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