

**EPISODE 15**

[INTRODUCTION]

**[00:00:01.1] ANNOUNCER:** Welcome to the Creative Empire Podcast. Each week, Reina Pomeroy, the life and biz success coach and Christina Scalera, the attorney for creatives are taking you up close and personal with successful influencers in the creative community and tackling your biggest business hurdles. Their mission is to help you, creative entrepreneurs, think beyond your daily biz so you can make the brave decisions that build your Creative Empire.

[INTERVIEW]

**[00:00:35.5] CS:** Hello, hello, hello guys. This is Christina. I am here with the Creative Empire Podcast and of course, my lovely co-host Reina Pomeroy and so today, we're so privileged to talk to Kat Schmoyer and if you guys don't know who Kat is, you should. She is the brains and the beauty behind Dear Sweetheart Events, the Creative at Heart Conference and her course On the Road to Full-time, which is why we're so excited to talk to her.

Because we heard a little rumor that it's coming back up for enrolment and so tell us a little bit more about how you jumped from — because some people haven't been unfortunately to your conference yet and they maybe haven't heard your story. So just to give us an introduction to yourself, why don't you tell us how you went from being a full-time employee to a full-time entrepreneur?

**[00:01:22.8] KS:** Absolutely. Well thank you guys so much for having me. I'm really excited to just get to talk to you guys a little bit more. So when I launched my business, I didn't have the privilege of being able to immediately quit my full-time job. I wasn't financially able to do that and a lot of people are in that same situation. So you're trying to balance that full-time job where you're working 40 hours a week for someone else and maybe you're doing something you love and maybe you're doing something you don't love.

In my case, I didn't love it and then I wanted to build my wedding planning business. So I started building up my clientele on the side, working weddings on the weekends while I was working my

day job. I was an administrative assistant, so I did have the privilege of doing my lunch break or things like that I could work on my business because I did have a desk job. So that was in a sense convenient versus being a nurse or a teacher or someone who's a little bit more on the go or on their feet a lot and doesn't have that privilege. But I decided I wanted to continue to grow that business.

A couple of months into the business my husband and I sat down and I said, "This is what I want to do full-time. I want to leave my full-time job, I want that to be our plan," and so 17 months later, I was able to leave my full-time job. During that time frame, I had built up my wedding business, built up floral design within my wedding planning clients and I also started Creative at Heart. So kind of a lot happening in that time frame but I was doing both and so I understand the balance behind it all and things like that, I'm definitely a crazy time but I wouldn't trade it for anything.

**[00:02:50.1] RP:** You are just one of those people that has a lot going on and you're like ready to go at it full force. I just love that about you and I think a lot of creatives struggle with that. It's like, "Am I supposed to do this one thing or do this other thing?" But not derail, I just wanted to note that because you have the courage to do all of those things.

**[00:03:08.2] KS:** Thank you. I know, it can definitely be overwhelming. We talk a lot about dreaming big and just start industry does because that's our mindset. We are dreamers. Yes, we are also doers but we dream and we want to do those things and so it can definitely be a struggle to figure out, "Well which one should I go for or am I even good enough to do it?"

But I think it's finding that community of women just like this and being able to sit down whether it's virtually, listening to a podcast, over coffee, like whatever it is and just get that encouragement from other people.

**[00:03:38.8] RP:** Yeah, who are your encouragers as you were making that big transition?

**[00:03:43.2] KS:** I launched my business a few months after I got married and so I actually reached out to the vendors that we had hired for our wedding because I grew really close with

them in the wedding planning process. Katelyn James Photography was our wedding photographer. Her and her husband Michael have since become incredible friends of Matt and I.

I've done coaching with her. She actually speaks at the conference. She was a huge supporter and has been from the very beginning just helping me feel like, "Okay, you know what? I can do this. I can keep moving forward," and then through connecting with her and starting to connect with others on Instagram, I was able to connect with some really incredible vendors and entrepreneurs in just with in my state and reach out to them.

Abby Grace Photography is someone who I really look up to. She's so encouraging just with simple text messages every now and then. I always tell her they come at just the right time. I need them whenever she sends them. Just making those Instagram relationships real life relationships, which I think sometimes we forget about. We think it can just be through the screen but if we just reach out a little bit further, those relationships can really push us forward.

**[00:04:50.6] RP:** I love that, yeah. I think having those encourages can be really a game changer.

**[00:04:56.4] CS:** Yeah, I mean they're not only the people that you can bounce ideas off of but they also your de facto mentors and things like that and so I know that you linked out with quite a few people, especially — it looks like they're making things happen, is that where did you find other than your wedding team, where did you find that you were finding a lot of support and encourage to go full-time and to leave your desk job and your day job?

**[00:05:22.2] KS:** Absolutely, I love that question. So whenever I do one on one's and people ask me about education, it sounds funny because I am now educating through the conference but I always say, "You need to attend a conference," and it doesn't have to be creative. So that is not a push for creatives. I would love for you to, but it doesn't have to be creative.

There are so many incredible experiences out there and that fit different people and fit different seasons of your personal life or your business life and things like that. I attended Making Things Happen six months into my business and it was a game changer not only because of the

content that was shared, which I mean Lara Casey is just incredible and in a way that she pours into those attendees.

So it wasn't even because of that, it was because of the relationships that I built at the conference. I got to know Laura from Paper and Honey, Bonnie from B is for Bonnie Design. We became like best friends that weekend and are still very close. We text all the time, we hang out in person when we can even though we're all in three separate states, Texas, Michigan and Virginia. So we're all over the place, but that conference brought us together and the fact that we were in similar seasons of our business and then could really grow together and life one another up.

So I definitely think that it can always be scary to invest especially when you're on the road to full-time, especially when you are struggling with how do I invest in my business when I need to pinch my pennies because I want to go full-time and I want to stake everything I can financially? But it's worth the risk when you're going with the right mindset and you're going to the right place.

Again, not just because of the content but because of the relationships that you're going to form and they're the ones that are going to get you through when I think, "Hey, I need to quit. I've had a rough week, I had a rough month or whatever it is, my business is failing," we go there. We get crazy about it and we go there and they're the people that are going to pick you up and encourage you to keep going.

**[00:07:09.6] RP:** That's so awesome and I think that's the same mentality that Christina and I both have about conferences is that you invest in education, obviously. But what you don't really expect as a newbie to these creative conferences, that's what I didn't expect. The late night chats, staying up until 2 AM when I should be sleeping, you know what I mean?

The forming of the relationships after the formal program has closed and the learning that happens there, the accountability that happens there, the passion that you realize that you have for one another and just for your own businesses. That has been life changing for me.

**[00:07:50.4] KS:** I totally agree, yeah.

**[00:07:51.9] CS:** And you felt called to integrate conferences as a way to make a living as an entrepreneur and that was something that is really unique because a lot of people have a fear of public speaking much less putting on an entire conference where it's multiple days and you have to coordinate speakers and obviously, you're a wedding planner so you knew how to do that. But where was the jump there from wedding planning to huge, multi-day, amazing speaker, big conference? How did you called to do that and why?

**[00:08:27.3] KS:** Yeah, so when I started I felt like I had to learn a lot by just Googling things, by just trial and error, figuring it out on my own and yes, I was able to make connections with certain business woman and I could reach out to them about certain things but there was a lot that was trial and error.

A lot that I was figuring out and wondering like, "Are other people questioning this? Are other people struggling? Am I the only one that doesn't understand how to do this?" Everything from the little things to the big things or are my packages prices appropriately all the way down to what's my day to day work flow? Just everything, I had no idea because I have never been a business owner before.

So for me, I got to a point. I had been in business for almost a year and I just felt like I hit this low point where I was just complaining about that a lot. I was just complaining about the fact that I couldn't find a lot of community in terms of helping one another, really just wanting to sit down and share those experiences.

I decided, "You know what? Let's just see if we can do something, see if we can make this into like a conference format." I didn't initially think like, "It's going to be a conference!" I just kind of started piecing together these ideas of, "Well what if we brought in speakers? What if we shared this content in a really open and honest way, no questions off limits with this trust?" Because that can be hard too.

Because we think like, "Well this is my secret. I've been working really hard for this. This is my business," and I wanted it to come about it from a mindset of, "If I can help her from making the

mistakes that I made, I want to help her, because then both of our businesses are going to flourish if we're both rising that tide together."

Just like what Rising Tide's Society has been doing now and so I reached out to Natalie and Krista, I reached out to Katelyn, Bonnie and a group of others and we started the first conference so that was crazy and it still kind of blows my mind that they trusted me enough to take that chance and get it started and that the attendees trusted in making that initial investment but it's been a really, really incredible journey.

**[00:10:28.0] CS:** Yeah and that was even before the Rising Tide Society was a thing that you had your first conference.

**[00:10:33.4] KS:** Yeah, it was a couple of months before they launched Rising Tide because I remember working with Natalie and Krista and having those late night chats and things which is awesome. It's awesome to again just kind of continue to see that flourish and for a creative to have more of that in person connection and something a little bit smaller with 50 to 80 attendees.

So yes big but not like hundreds, not a mega conference. So for us to have that atmosphere and then for them to have this online community that then you can go to a conference and then continue with that community through their online community and those online webinars and things like that, which is wonderful.

**[00:11:09.9] CS:** Yeah, the thing that I adore about what you're saying is the importance of community and importance of lifting up those people and for me my word of the year is "abundance" and rather than going from a scarcity mindset of, "Oh these are my trade secrets, I can't share any of that with you," to, "Here's what I have to offer. Here's what I know and have fallen flat on my face and I'm okay to share that with you."

I think that takes a lot of courage and that's a different brand of leadership that I am seeing now starting up. Can you speak to that a little bit more?

**[00:11:47.3] KS:** Yeah, I think that our industry is shifting a little bit more and valuing community more than we ever have in the past and I love that. It's obviously hopefully bettering everyone involved because we are valuing each other and we are valuing the content that we each have to share. We're valuing life experiences.

I love that your word of the year is "abundance" because I hope that that's what our community is starting to do, is to look at things in abundance and not just say, "Well this is mine, you can't have it." So I think that it is building up a different brand of leaders and I'm hoping that that means that in the next three years, in the next five years, we're going to see this continue to shift and then continue to grow more and more and more so that new people starting out have a support system.

Most businesses fail in the first three years of being an entrepreneur and I don't want to see that happen, you know what I mean? I feel like for us because most of our businesses are not store front, at least the entrepreneurs that I am associating myself with, because I don't have a store front. I work from my house. So that means I can work from the couch, I can work in my pajamas or I work in my home office or things like that.

But I don't have employees coming in and going out. I am not in contact with people all the time. So having that virtual community, being able to build that up, being able to build up leaders that are speaking into that is really, really vital for the growth of the industry. It is changing the industry for the better.

**[00:13:15.0] CS:** Yeah, I would agree. Can you talk a little bit more about how your course can possibly help some of these up and comers, how they can basically use your course to go from a full-time employee to a full-time entrepreneur and what they might learn in it that will help them be the next generation of this creative society that you are really helping to build in a big way?

**[00:13:39.4] KS:** Absolutely. I am so excited for my course. I launched the course last fall and it was incredible to be able to chat with other business women who were on that journey to full-time. I think that, just like anything, it is nice to know that you're not alone and that was something that I struggled a lot with when I was on the road to full-time because I felt like the women who were mentoring me and were pouring into me weren't on that same journey.

So while it was so helpful to either hear from the opposite side like “Oh you’re out of that full-time journey. You are making your dream a reality,” that was really helpful but also there were times where I wanted someone who was in the thick of it with me, who understood exactly what I was going through and then who I could get that text message from or have that phone call with.

So that’s part of the heart of it is bringing those people together, giving them that umbrella that they can hang out under that says, “Hey, we’re all on this journey to full-time. I don’t care what your full-time job is, I don’t care how long you’ve been in business.” So I had women who had been building their businesses for 10 years, maybe they never wanted to leave their full-time job. They loved both and just juggled through that.

Or maybe they just weren’t able to push it past that point that they needed to take it full-time and so that’s what the course is all about. It’s just really equipping you with the tools that you need to make it full-time. I’m not going to tell you that you have to be a full-time small business owner because that’s not what everyone’s desire is. That’s not going to work for everyone. I have a really great friend who loves her full-time job and actually closed out her small business because she decided, “You know what? I love my full-time job,” and there’s a lot of beauty in that too.

So I don’t want to say you have to be a full-time entrepreneur to make it in the industry. That’s not what I’m saying at all but if it is a desire that you have just like what I had, then that’s what this course is going to do. So I am talking about how does your business up for success, how to grow your business when you don’t have time. Time is your enemy because you are working 40 hours a week for something else not for your business.

So we talk about that, we talk about punching fear in the face and how to really create those business goals that are going to push your business to the next level when you are afraid. Talking about how you can feel overworked, you can feel overwhelmed, you can feel defeated and how to battle that balance of when you have 10 hours a week for your business instead of 40 hours a week for your business and things like that.



There's also a Facebook group so again with bringing everyone together because that's a huge part of it. I didn't realize the power of community virtually until I did the course. I'm going to be honest with you, I thought, "Okay, well we're not going to all hang out in person because we're all over the country and it's an online course. So maybe they're not going to love the Facebook group as much."

But the Facebook group from the September course to this day is so incredibly active and it's nice because they know, "Hey, these are other women who are also working full-time. I can ask these questions and they're going to be really honest with me because they know exactly what I'm going through," and so that's a big part of the heart behind it too.

**[00:16:35.3] RP:** Love that, is there typical stages of going from full-time employment to full-time entrepreneurship? Are there kind of general places that people find themselves?

**[00:16:49.7] KS:** I think so. I think that a lot of it probably depends on each person's, whether it's their own financial interest and the things that they're working for. For me, I was working 40 hours a week for 15 months while I was growing the business and in the last two months, I dropped down to part time. So I was 20 hours a week when I was phasing out of the company that I worked for.

So those were the stages that I thought about like, "Okay, this is what it looks like to be completely full-time, this is what it looks like to be part time with something and now, I'm officially a full-time small business owner." There's also going to be stages depending on what business you have if you are in the wedding industry and you're working the wedding seasons, then those aspects of your business are going to be a little bit different than when it's not actively wedding season. So I think it depends on the person and the stages that they're going through.

**[00:17:40.8] RP:** Yeah, Christina what was your transition like?

**[00:17:44.7] CS:** I abruptly quit. Yeah, I abruptly quit and decided that I just was going to do something else and I actually wasn't even sure what that thing was and I thought it was going to

be teaching private yoga. I found a mentor who is actually coming on the show, her name is Kelly Newsome. Kelly Newsome-Georges now.

But anyway, she was a former lawyer that was really burnt out and became a private yoga teacher in DC and so I let her be my mentor and guide me through that process and it turns out that I just really like the business and legal side of things. I just wasn't really a fan of the client that I had at the time which was an in house client.

So no big deal, just wasted two years of your life, figuring out graphic design and websites and wondering how you're going to make money and on the side, I am still doing legal work and basically Kat knows this, I was at Allume last fall with her actually and that was where we first met. Anyway, she basically was there and I don't know if she knows this or not. We had a fireside chat and everybody was going around, everybody was being really vulnerable and it was more or less in that moment.

I don't want to say that there's one epiphany because this is something that had been happening, there had been signs that I should be doing legal stuff for entrepreneurs like offering legal services and creating info products and things like that for a while but yeah, I think that fire side chat that we had Kat was really, no pun intended, but it was like the fire under my butt to get going and like, "This could be a real thing. Yes, there's other people out there doing what I'm doing but they're not me."

I think you were the one who said that actually Kat and so all of that combined helped me to just be like, "Whatever. I'm just going to get a website up," and I mean you guys have heard on the podcast now on my dilemma with that because I didn't do branding first. But long story short that was my transition from full-time to doing what I am now, which is way better. I love what I'm doing now and I love talking to everybody on podcasts now too.

**[00:19:47.6] RP:** I love that people have these lightbulb moments.

**[00:19:50.2] CS:** Yeah.

**[00:19:50.3] KS:** I know and I think there's a lot of beauty in that. I am obviously a planner and that I'm very OCD. I'm very type A, I want to have a five year plan and I want it to be in a binder with everything color coded and it's like beautiful and I know exactly what's going to happen, but we're entrepreneurs and things are going to — like if you had told me when I started DSC that I was going to launch a conference a year later, I would have laughed at you.

I would have thought that you were crazy. That was not in my plan. It wasn't in my five year plan, it wasn't in my on the road to full-time plan but it happened and so there's also a lot of beauty in that of just saying like, "You know what? I think I'm going to leave my job because I want to teach yoga. I think that's what I want to do. Wait, actually this is what I'm called to do."

And there's freedom in that however scary that can be because it's "off the plan". There's a lot of freedom in that and I think that that's what's really, really cool about being a small business owner. Especially right now when there is so much community out there and there is so much support for us to find other women who are going through similar things.

[BREAK]

**[00:20:53.3] ANNOUNCER:** Are you enjoying the show? It would mean so much to Reina and Christina if you take two minutes and head to our iTunes and leave a review. It doesn't take much time but it helps them bring you more value packed content.

Back to the convo ladies.

[BACK TO INTERVIEW]

**[00:21:08.3] RP:** I love that you said that these things kind of come out organically and I love that you really trusted your intuition to guide you to those things and I think just having that instinct, hearing the signs, seeing the signs from other people like, "Oh this is something that other people might need," and you followed that and have found success in it. I think it's cool.

**[00:21:31.1] CS:** Yeah, how do you figure out what it is that your audience does need? How do you figure out how to speak to them?

**[00:21:37.2] KS:** That's a great question. For the first conference, it was selfish. I won't lie, it was, "What did I need? What did I need in my business?" Our niche is in the first three years of business ownership. Now we do have attendees that have been in business for longer than that and they're coming back as a refresh or maybe some of the things that we're teaching, they never really got a good grasp on those first few years, so now they are coming back to those building box.

But we really are focusing on business owners in their first three years because that was where my heart was and so for me it was, "Well what do I need? What was I missing? Why did feel like I couldn't find? Or maybe I read a blog post on it but I want someone to really teach me. I want to sit there in this intensive atmosphere." Because let's face it, with blogs now and webinars and things like that you can find pretty much everything out there in the internet. In some way, shape or form, you're going to be able to find but there's always going to be something different about in person.

There's a different connection and you're going to connect with different speakers based on your own personality and your own life choices. So that's where also wanting to bring in, "Okay what did I need when I was in my first year of business? What are the industries that I want to relate to? What are the speakers in those industries that I want to bring in?" Because Creative at Heart is all creative.

So we're not just focusing on photographers or on planners or on stationary. We're focusing on everyone, which is a really broad niche to have but it was where I felt like where I was being called and then kind of just trying to funnel it down from there of, "Are people excited about this content?" We do a survey after every conference that way attendees can tell us which ones to do like they can rate not only the speakers themselves but they rate the content that was shared.

And so we know what was helpful and then we ask them what did you want to hear more of or what did you want to hear that we didn't cover? And so that's been really helpful too to then bring in new ideas to the table based on what our alumni had said worked for them, what didn't work for them and things like that.

**[00:23:34.3] CS:** Yeah.

**[00:23:34.5] RP:** I love that you're pre-validating a lot of the concepts that you're wanting to try in the future and just asking the people.

**[00:23:41.3] KS:** Thank you.

**[00:23:42.8] CS:** Yeah, I think one thing that we said on as creatives is we get so excited and rocked up in an idea that we forget, you need a minimum viable product to see if someone is going to buy it otherwise you are just wasting a lot of time and money. So before you launch the big conference and you invested in the facilities or the speakers or things like that, did you have a minimum viable conference or anything like that?

**[00:24:07.5] KS:** We didn't. It was a risk the first conference. I remember sitting down with Matt after that, we were looking at the numbers, looking at everything and I said, "Okay, well we're going to see if this is going to be a thing. Can we do this?" And again, just really blessed that we were able to get that first one off of the ground.

I think a lot of it had to do with our speakers. I think that's a huge draw to attend conferences and people weren't coming because of the Creative at Heart brand since the brand didn't exist. It was a brand with nothing to back it up. They were coming because of the faces that they saw who were going to be there and speaking.

So that was really beneficial that we were able to get industry leaders in who were excited about it from the very, very beginning and now, I like to think that it's a mixture of both. I like to think that people have heard great things about Creative so they're excited to be a part of the Creative family but there are new speakers coming in because we want to bring in fresh faces.

We want people to hear from someone that maybe they would never heard of before or learned from before because they're in a different industry but they can still impact them in such an incredible way. So yeah, I just took a huge gamble but I think that's what's starting a business is all about, right? Like you abruptly quit. You're just like, "Hey, I just want to start. I know I want to

do this and I want to see what's going to happen," and that's the dreamer-doer mindset coming into play.

**[00:25:23.1] RP:** Yeah.

**[00:25:23.3] CS:** Totally, definitely. So I've always wanted to ask you this, where did the Creative at Heart name come from, because it's so brilliant but so simple?

**[00:25:32.6] KS:** Initially when I was brain storming for Creative at Heart, it wasn't going to be as big as it was at all. My idea was something that was all creative based but in my living room, maybe like 10 people, bring in a guest speaker or two, nothing crazy and I was going to call it "The DSC Workshop for Creatives at Heart" and I had a Skype session with Natalie. Natalie Frank of Rising Tide and she said, "Kat, you need to go bigger with this." Natalie is like, "go big or go home" is Natalie's like middle name. I don't know that girl, I love her.

**[00:26:03.8] RP:** Go big or go home.

**[00:26:05.2] KS:** I really agree and so she really pushed me to just keep going with it and I decided, "Well then, I don't want it to be all about me because I wanted to pull more people into the picture," and so I just decided to make that tagline the head and take DSC out of it completely and just with the behind of scenes of it.

**[00:26:25.1] RP:** That's brilliant.

**[00:26:26.5] CS:** Yeah, I love it because it also speaks to a fear that I hear a lot of people have, which is that they're not creative and so it's really nice that they can have a little special place in their heart that they're creative and at least they're not sharing that with the world just yet but it gives them the permission to at least have that place within themselves.

**[00:26:43.9] KS:** Absolutely.

**[00:26:45.0] RP:** That was my journey for sure. I mean I'm a coach and like how could I be creative? But I think that there's that little part of us and I think every person is creative in their

own right whether or not they express it is a different issue entirely, right? Or if they make a living off of it is a different issue entirely.

So I was going to ask you a question about how do you talk to your partner about your amazing, wild, crazy ideas and say, “Can we try this?” Because it’s going to affect your personal life and sometimes our partners are really willing to go there with us just yet. Or as quickly as we are wanting to go there.

**[00:27:25.3] KS:** Absolutely. Yeah I feel like whenever I’m like, “We need to talk,” Matt’s like, “What now?” Because I told him I wanted to start our business on our flight to our honeymoon. So I just laid it out right away. No, I think that’s a great question. I think it can be really hard. It took us a while to find a nice balance of communicating all of those things because the fact of the matter is, he’s not an entrepreneur and he’s not in the industry.

So he’s not seeing the same things as I’m seeing. He doesn’t feel that, the healthy version of competitiveness, you know what I mean? To like push yourself further and further. He doesn’t feel that in terms of my business because my business is my business and it definitely took us some time to figure out what works in our marriage and what works for us and how can I bring up these ideas and bring them up in a way that is not saying, “I’m telling you I’m going to do this” but “Hey, can we talk about this? I’d really love to pursue this if we think that this is something I should do.”

One thing that really helped was him coming in and seeing me in action in a sense. So it’s something I recommend to other small business owners. Bringing your spouse and your partner in some way, shape or form whether maybe they assist you for a wedding if weddings is what your industry requires. Maybe they help you with some sort of backend of some project. Just so they can see a little bit of what you’re doing and why you’re doing what you’re doing. I can’t tell you how many times I had to explain to Matt what a styled shoot was.

**[00:28:50.4] CS:** “What is that?” Yep.

**[00:28:52.1] KS:** I know, it was helpful for him to — we did went out to my parent’s house so he was there helping me unload things and just seeing like, “Oh this is what you’re talking about.”

He's attended Creative before. He's actually been to almost all of them and that's helpful for him to see that and be around these other business owners and understand, "Oh this is the mindset she's getting. This is why she's saying the things that she's saying. This is what this means for her."

We also decided last year, one of my own personal goals for my business is every year I want to attend a conference, like attend one. Not a creative one where I'm in charge but one that I attend and I am getting fuelled and then do some sort of one on one, a coaching session, a mentor session, something.

So I have that personal, that one on one connection with someone and then I have that conference or workshop environment with a group of attendees and last year we decided to do a couple's coaching sessions with Katelyn and Michael and we are not a husband and wife team. We, as of right now, we have no plans for him to leave his full-time job and us to do this business together, but it was so helpful.

It was a huge game changer for our relationship for him to sit there and hear some of the things that she was talking about for him to talk to a spouse, for him to talk to another male about what it was like to have a female who is in that dominating, you know, we're a boss lady. We have that independent streak and for him to talk about that and how they communicate about these things in their marriage.

So that was a huge game changer for us and I'm really, really happy we did it. We got a lot of people saying, "Oh when are you guys going to go full-time together?" And we're like, "No, that's not why we did it." We didn't do it to go full-time. We did it just to bring him into the business a little bit more and that way when I go home and tell him crazy ideas, he know. Like, "Oh well Katelyn said that, that's not just Kat being crazy. That's like what this business is and what this industry is.

**[00:30:38.3] RP:** To be able to get that support from him is probably really helpful because I feel the same way. It's like a silo of my own little island and my marriage, I have this crazy ideas, my office is bright and pink and husband he's part Marine and part corporate guy and he's like, "What the heck are you talking about?"



So he comes to me with these crazy corporate ideas of what the bottom line should look like and this is what it is and I'm like, "That's not actually how I run my business," and it's hard to help myself shift into his mindset and for him to shift into my mindset.

**[00:31:15.0] KS:** Absolutely. Oh it's a totally different mindset. I remember at the November conference, Shay Cochrane talked about finding your niche and that is something that Matt and I had talked with him about. Just in my, you know you work from home by yourself, so then when he gets home you just want to word vomit all the thoughts that you have.

You're like, "Wait, I think I want to do this and this and this," and I had told him that I was really struggling with my packages and I really thought that I just wanted to offer one. I wanted to hone in this is what I love about wedding planning, this is what I want to do, I want to find those people and he couldn't wrap his head around, "Well why don't you want to please everyone? Why don't you want anyone to be your client because we want to make money, right? Bottom line, like we are a business owner."

So he heard her talk and that was really great for us. We then had a really awesome conversation of him hearing like, "Oh I get it. I get what she's saying now. These are the points that she's making for the benefits of finding your niche," and those sorts of things. That was something that I had tried to explain and wasn't explaining it properly and so it was helpful for us to be in that environment together.

**[00:32:14.9] CS:** That's so cool. I don't think my husband would attend Creative with me.

**[00:32:20.7] RP:** That would be kind of a...

**[00:32:22.5] CS:** A gift, yeah.

**[00:32:25.4] RP:** Can you talk a little bit about the format of Creative? I think your conference is different than how other people do it and I think that there is just a little bit of a magic piece in how you do panel and just the format of what you guys do.

**[00:32:38.5] KS:** Absolutely. I can talk about Creative all day, I love it. So most of our conferences are two days. We did just have our first three-day event. As of right now, we're planning to have one three-day even every year and then focus on either one or two two-day events. My biggest goal with creative is to keep it as affordable as possible because of the market that we are trying to reach and two-day events are obviously a little bit more feasible for everyone involved than the three-day event.

For our typical two day event, everyone hears every speaker. That was another thing that I was really passionate about. I think it could be really great, I've been to conferences where you pick and choose and again, you figure out what fits best for you and I love that but with Creative, I felt like if we allow people to pick and choose, the photographers would all go to the photographer taught ones, the planners would all go to the planner taught ones, everyone would break off and that wasn't what I wanted.

I wanted everyone in one big pool and not broken off into those little niches just yet. So everyone here is every speaker and then in the afternoons of both days, we have panel groups and we send out a questionnaire about a month before the conference and just ask some questions about your business. We want to know how long have you been in business, why you are attending Creative, what questions you have, what do you want to get out of the experience, what are you excited about, what are you nervous about?

Just to kind of get a better idea of the audience that we're reaching and then it's my favorite thing to do. I always plan a big day around it where I then read all of the questionnaires and I'm Facebook stalking everyone and making sure that I am putting faces with names and things like that and then we break everyone up into panel groups and so the panel groups start by your industry and this is where things do get a little bit more specific.

So you've been with everyone all day, you're making friends of all these wide variety of industries but then you have this hour and a half of each afternoon where you're just with photographers to just with planner, you're just with coaches, things like that and so I start with that. I start by breaking everyone up by that and then we go even further. So of the photographers then I say, "Well who's a mom?" Because all those moms are going to have

really similar struggles. So who's a mom? Who's in their first year? Who hasn't started yet? Then I try to break it down even further.

We try to keep panel with less than 10 attendees in each panel group so that it really is intimate time together. There is usually three panel leaders, sometimes two but there's usually three panel leaders. So it's kind of this weird mix of panel and small group because it's not panel in terms of this they're up on the stage and you're in there asking them questions. It's you're sitting in a circle on a floor in a conference room and you're chatting.

Yes, they're the panel leaders in terms of they are those industry leaders there to help facilitate that discussion, but it's hopefully very much discussion based and not them talking at you. There's not power points or worksheets or anything like that. So topics are really open. A lot of panel groups will maybe discuss some of the content they've heard already and questions that they want to dig into even further.

Sometimes they come with their own questions and they have specific things for their industry that they want to talk about in those groups and so they have that hour and a half, so three hours throughout the course of the conference with those specific panel groups and then Sunday night, the first night of the conference, everyone is on their own for dinner which is nice because some people, you need to decompress in your hotel room by yourself after all this content you've learned.

Some people go out in big groups of 15 to 20 people and grab a bite to eat and then they all come back and we do what's called the late night treat, which is the pyjama party and photo booth and confetti and all sorts of crazy things.

**[00:36:05.7] CS:** There was like glitter all over the hotel last time.

**[00:36:07.9] KS:** Glitter everywhere yeah, and I found that sometimes I've been to conferences and you wonder, "Well where's everyone hanging out right now?" And you're trying to find your group and you're writing on the Facebook group about, "Well we're in room 300," or whatever and we thought well why don't we just open up that conference room and said, "Hey, we're all going to be here from nine to 11. You can come, you don't have to but if you want, throw in your

pyjamas because we all want to be comfortable after that long day. So throw in your PJ's, come down and just relax.”

And so it's really a fun time. It's selfishly my favorite part because we're done working and the day is over and we don't have any speakers going on at that time. So I just get to sit there and talk to everyone too and I love that. So that's when I get to know the attendees a little bit more one on one and it's a lot of fun.

**[00:36:52.8] RP:** I agree with all of that. What I loved about the panels is how it felt like homeroom but without the bullying. It's just like a circle of gals and maybe some guys, I don't know and just sitting down and pouring your heart out a little bit and asking the stuff that matters.

**[00:37:10.9] KS:** Right, absolutely. I love the homeroom analogy. I have to tell the team that.

**[00:37:17.1] RP:** You would come back, you know, it's like somewhere you come back to and have like a free space for reflection, I don't know if that's how you built it but yeah, that's kind of what it feels like.

**[00:37:25.9] CS:** Yeah, I know and it was really safe as an introvert. It was really safe because you could have these conversations because you kind of knew that they are going to wrap up at some point and then you'd have to go that group session and so maybe this is different for most people because I know you're very extroverted but it was nice because there was an end in sight.

So it wasn't like it was going to drag on forever. I didn't have to carry on the conversation for a long time, I knew that I was going to go back and we are all going to learn as a community and as a group and then get a little breather and then go back and talk to these amazing, amazing people. It's crazy, your panellists read like a like of people that I would rather meet than Oprah.

So it's a really great experience for the people that are looking to try out coaching or who haven't had any kind of mentoring experience and they just want to see what's out there and what opportunities are available in that sphere but yeah, I think even though your conferences

on the bigger side because of those reasons I would say that it's a great one if you are introverted because you do get those breaks. So we have talked about a lot today Kat, is there anything else you wanted to just mention before we wrap up?

**[00:38:33.8] KS:** No, this has been so much fun. I really appreciate you guys having me on and getting to hang out with you all a little bit today.

**[00:38:39.5] CS:** Oh my gosh.

**[00:38:40.5] RP:** Absolutely and when this airs, I'm super excited because when this airs I'm going to be with you at Creative at Denver.

**[00:38:46.2] KS:** Yay, it's going to be so fun.

**[00:38:48.3] RP:** Yeah, so it will be a great time and I am pumped to be there.

**[00:38:53.1] CS:** Yeah.

**[00:38:53.5] KS:** I'm so happy.

**[00:38:54.8] CS:** So tell us where people can find you Kat, if they're not familiar with you already?

**[00:38:59.0] KS:** So my website is [dearsweetheartevents.com](http://dearsweetheartevents.com) or you can go to [creativeatheartconference.com](http://creativeatheartconference.com) if you're interested in finding out more about the conference. We do have one more this year. After the July one, we have one in November. So registration will open in August and the November conference is Memphis.

So we're very excited about that, and my Instagram is @dearsweetheartevents. I just got Snapchat so, I'm trying really hard to understand filters and all of the Snapchat things and Creative is also on Instagram @creativeatheartconference.

**[00:39:30.4] CS:** Amazing.

**[00:39:30.8] RP:** Awesome, well thank you so much for being on with us and I know that I learned a lot today and I think that the audience has a ton to gain from this.

**[00:39:39.9] KS:** Thank you so much.

**[00:39:41.5] CS:** Thank you Kat. We'll talk soon. Bye.

**[00:39:43.5] KS:** Bye.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

**[00:39:47.5] ANNOUNCER:** Are you ready to build your own empire? For more information, show notes, downloads and tips on how to do it, head to [www.creativeempire.co](http://www.creativeempire.co) where you can find out more about this week's episode and the two lovely ladies behind it all, encouraging you to build your own creative empire.

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