

EPISODE 29

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:00:04.1] 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]

[0:00:35.0] CS: Hi everybody this is Christina, I'm back with Reina. Hey Reina.

[0:00:38.5] RP: Hello there.

[0:00:39.6] CS: This is the Creative Empire Podcast. Today, we have a really special episode, we're celebrating the life of Emily Potts. Emily was such an encourager in our community and today we're just talking about how she encouraged us. If you have somebody in your tribe that is an encourager, how you guys can support each other.

Reina, this has been a really difficult week as we record this. We just got news that Emily passed away quite suddenly last week and I knew her from afar, you knew her quite personally, you hadn't met yet but you guys talked every day. She was very young, very vivacious, very encouraging and has kids of her own, husband, all of that. Just totally unexpected. At the same time, I know I was traveling last week when I got the news and you were about to launch a huge product.

You were about to do a webinar with Emily, I mean, a lot of stuff was happening and so you actually decided to go forward with that launch. A lot of people probably maybe would have, and I know you considered this but like, what was the deciding factor when you decided to move forward with that launch versus to maybe take some time off and deal with that grief and the healing process?

[0:01:56.5] RP: Yeah, so first of all, you're absolutely right that Emily, we're taking this time to celebrate Emily because she was such an encourager and I think her legacy lives on when people talk about how kind she really was. I'm going to try not to break down as I record this. I think, people who knew her and knew of her knew that she was a shining light in people's lives. Whether you knew her through her Periscopes or just the way that she would do collaborations with folks.

I knew her through a couple of collaborations we'd done and we'd never met in person but we had recently started chatting and Skyping and texting kind of on a more regular basis and I would have considered her my friend as of late and yeah, so it was a sudden surprise when I found out that she had passed and it was really sad to — it's kind of hard to describe, right?

Because the online world is such a weird place that you might have never met somebody but you care so deeply about them, and you become friends with people and you might not know their family as well as you might know your best friend's family or whatever but you still have that very personal connection and I think, if you're lucky enough to have people like this in your life that it's kind of a strange relationship.

So yeah, let me step back and say that I'm super grateful to have known Emily and to have had her as a cheerleader in my corner for all of the things that I had done recently and for her, the fact that I'm one of her last nine posts before she past on Instagram. It just kind of messes me up because she was just that encourager, one of the many people in my corner who had pompoms raised for me anytime I had things that were happening.

Yeah, so I was in the process of doing kind of in the launch pattern for this new project that I'm working on and on Wednesday when I heard about her passing, it was kind of a crazy big day because my husband had just turned 30, so it was a big birthday. Like it was his birthday that day. I was in this launch pattern, getting ready to do this big thing and I was like, "I don't think I could do this."

I was just really hit by grief in a pretty sudden and big way and was just like, "I don't think I can do this guys, I don't know if I can launch the thing and be really there for my clients," and it took

me a couple of days before I could look back on my text with Emily and the last thing she said to me was, “This work is important, your work matters,” and I had to pull myself together and say okay, I’m going to do this because this work does matter. No matter how many people come in to the program, no matter what the impact is, ultimately I know that I have done my part. It’s the encouragement that I really needed and yeah, we have launched the product and people are joining and I’m super excited and it reminds me that people need encouragers in their corner.

So that’s the long story of why we decided to record this, to celebrate people like Emily, like the people that are in your corner who are cheering you on day in and day out. I’m sitting, looking at her website scrolling and it says, “Without sacrificing what matters most and create a small business that you love.” These are all things that were part of Emily and what are the — Christina, who are the people in your corner who are cheering you on and what impact has that had on you and your business?

[0:05:37.0] CS: Yeah, that’s a great question. You for one, you’re such an encourager of literal and figurative but yeah, I think there’s just so many people. I could name names but ultimately, it’s not just the people that I choose to surround myself with as “biz besties” or friends or whatever. It’s the emails that I get that are like, when I send out my newsletter and I get an email back and it’s like, “I really needed to hear this,” or, “This was spot on for what I’m doing right now. Thank you so much for this information.”

Because to be quite honest, for my side, sometimes I send it out and they look at the open rates and I’m like, “Nobody’s reading this, why am I doing this? This is stupid, nobody’s engaging, whatever.” The truth of the matter is, I’m a big believer in the philosophy of the parable where all the, and excuse me if I’m messing this up but all the starfish are on the beach, right?

You throw one back into the ocean and somebody comes up and they ask you, “Why are you doing that? You can’t save all the starfish,” but for that one star fish that you threw back into the ocean, it made a difference in that starfish’s life and so, just as an analogy to my audience, whenever I send out that newsletter, maybe it doesn’t reach anybody but at the same time, if it does reach that one person and it changes their business, maybe that’s the encouragement they need or whatever. Or maybe that’s the information that they needed to setup their LLC and

then the butter fly effect years later, they have that in place and then they don't lose their home or something like that.

So if I could have that little tiny effect on somebody that leads to bigger results later. Then I've done my job I feel like. I've provided a good benefit to the people that have trusted me with our email address and the first names and things like that. So I think those are the most encouraging people are the strangers because my friends, I love them and I'm not taking them for granted but they're already in my corner, we already have a relationship.

But it means a lot to me when I can go that one step forward and connect with people that I don't know anything about them and they really don't know much about me. But we have this common dream of creating a better world, a more creative world. So I think those are the biggest encouragers I have in my life.

[0:07:49.7] RP: Yeah, I totally agree. Oh go ahead, sorry.

[0:07:52.4] CS: Yeah, the great thing is that you can do that now. Some of the best business relationships I've ever had are people that reach out to me when my blog was not being read at all. They just randomly found me and they commented and we struck up a conversation and even if you don't have a blog, even if you don't have anything, those are some of the best partnerships or friendships that you can strike up today.

[0:08:15.5] RP: I totally agree. I think where we sit right now, we have a podcast, and so we have a little bit of an audience where people will give us feedback and it's really interesting to see how invested I feel in the people who are investing their time into listening to us and listening to the things that we have to say and I love emailing people back and actually writing a human response rather than an auto responder kind of a thing and saying like, "You really touched my life by just emailing me this and thank you so much for taking the time," and I think they're kind of surprised, people tend to be surprised and they're like, "Oh you actually read this and responded to me?"

But those emails that you send to people who you feel are "influencers", not that I'm saying that I am, but just people who you feel like kind of untouchable to you. If you spend time being a

human to them, they will appreciate that even if they don't respond. I don't know, just being in people's corner without needing anything in return has been game changing for my business.

[0:09:22.4] CS: Yeah, that's the key right there is that you don't expect anything in return. I've never once reached out to people and been like, "This would be really great if I got this out of it." I reached out to people because I feel like they either have a platform where my message could be heard and I feel like I have an important message, otherwise I wouldn't reach out to them or it's just something that I feel like would be very life sustaining and fulfilling to me to connect with our audience.

So yeah, I think that's the key, when I reach out and I do guest post and videos for HoneyBook or something like that, I'm not expecting anything in return and quite honestly, often times, some of the place pay me, some of them don't. I'm okay with that and they're taking my intellectual property, they're taking my copy, they're taking my video, whatever, and they're disseminating it to their audience, and sometimes I'm getting little or nothing in return in financial terms but it means a lot to me because it's reaching a different demographic or a different audience than I could possible reach on my own at this point in my business.

So I don't expect anything in return which is why I don't make them, some of this people I don't make them sign contracts or whatever because sometimes it's just more important to get your message out there and it's just more important to help encourage other people and share the love and Instagram is one of the best platforms to do this because how easy is it to scroll through and click on hash tags and just find a hashtag that you like and go through it and encourage 10 people.

That takes, what? 10, 15 minutes to do. The Rising Tide Society has done a great job at this because they encourage you, it's not a rule but they highly encourage you that if you're going to use the hashtags like #TuesdaysTogether, #risingtidesociety #communityovercompetition, that you go out and you comment on 10 other people or however many pan on their feet using those hashtags and connect with people and get to know people.

It's funny because those are just such trivial things but it makes such a big difference in their life and you'd never know who you're going to end up connecting to. There are new people entering

the creative world every single day. You never want to take those connections for granted, it doesn't matter if they have 70 followers and their work is kind of whatever to you right now. Somebody out there that's just starting out, I mean we were all there. We were all at that point where we followed like the bigger influencers on Instagram and learn from them and whatever and had this bad Instagram feeds with these "bad" pictures, bad in quotes and saying.

You have to do that, you have to put out the bad product, the bad work, the bad whatever, the bad website before you get to the point where you have the good product or you have the great product. You just have to build on that kind of stuff. So just reaching out and finding people that you can encourage, it's like giving a gift, right? How good do you feel giving people gifts? Probably better than giving yourself a gift.

[0:12:18.5] RP: Yeah, what would you recommend people do in order to be encouraging to their, like people who are at the same level as them?

[0:12:27.9] CS: Yeah, I think that's an excellent opportunity for a collaboration. The weirder and more different your businesses are, the better the collaboration, in my opinion. Like two photographers teaming up, okay, that's okay but you're probably not reaching a new audience. So it's probably more beneficial to you to reach out to somebody that has nothing to do with the industry that you're in.

So if you're a photographer and you team up with a coach, maybe you create a course about how to create a client workflow or something and you get the input from both sides of the two different industries and two different kinds of clients and you can create a really great workflow course.

So I think finding people that are "on your level" but also different from you can be really helpful in terms of if you're looking for encouragement and support and just a really undivided sense of attention because there's absolutely zero competition there. It's just complete encouragement and sustainability.

[0:13:26.6] RP: Yeah, I think for me too, I like to make a note of something that's important that's happening. This is something that Emily did for me all the time. When this launch was

happening a couple of weeks before, she was like, “How can I support you?” And I told her about this launch and she said, “Okay, do you want me to send this out to my newsletter?” And I said, “That would be amazing.”

I dropped the ball and I forgot to tell my team to send this information to Emily so she followed up with me saying, “Hey, did you send me this information?” I was like, “No, sorry.” Then my — I sent it to my team to ask them and then they were traveling so they didn’t get a chance to do it. So Emily followed up with me again. That was so gracious of her to do that in the first place and then to follow up with me on a thing that she was doing for me.

So make a note of something that’s important to your friend and follow up with them and see if you can cheer them on. Maybe they’re doing a webinar or they’re maybe doing their first periscope and how can you cheer them on, encourage them and say, “Hey, I’m thinking about you, I think you’re going to do great.” Just send them positive high vibes.

[0:14:28.9] CS: I love that. I’d even take — for someone like me, I have every intention of doing stuff like that but then if it’s not my calendar, if it’s not in my schedule, it doesn’t happen. So I actually have my assistant send me a list of birthdays and anniversaries of this list of people that I just constantly add to. She sends that to me at the beginning of every month for the next month and a half. So I just schedule out things that I’m going to send to those people or whatever. Because I’ll just forget.

It’s really easy, like every time I have something, someone Reina mentioned her husband’s birthday so that gets added to the list for next year. Stuff like that, people just mention it in passing or even my assistant has gone through their Facebook pages, maybe this is like super creepy, sorry guys. But my assistant has gone through Facebook pages and looked at who has kids, when are the kid’s birthdays, when are anniversaries?

Because we’re all friends on Facebook, she has access to this and it’s public information more or less. They’re posting about it, they have like a hundred people telling them happy birthdays. Yeah, she’s just gone through and she’s created this great list for me to reach out and to say, “Hello or happy anniversary or happy work anniversary, congratulations on the launch of your

product,” whatever it is. Those little touches, they don’t take that much time and especially when you have someone like that helping you out to remind you when they’re happening and stuff.

But I mean you can start doing that now, even if you don’t have an assistant. Just start a Google doc. The key is to keep everything in one place and just constantly go back and reference that. So that’s what I would encourage our audience to do right now because that’s something that doesn’t cost much time or much money and it’s just something that you can add to later and it becomes an asset.

[0:16:14.6] RP: Yeah, another way that you can encourage somebody is to think about how you can up level somebody else with the platform that you have. One way that I love when people do it is when they’ll tag me in their post and say something really encouraging in like an Instagram post. Heather Crabtree has done a really great job of this with various women.

So she’ll post something, a product or a service and she’ll tag them. She has a big audience and so it makes a big impact in a small solopreneur business when you get an influencer to do something like that. But you don’t have to have the Heather Crabtrees of the world do that for you. You can do that for somebody else even if you have a couple of hundred people on who are following you. It doesn’t matter, if your mentality is to — you really just want to help somebody else reach your audience because you really believe in them and you really want to encourage them.

[0:17:06.6] CS: Yeah, and you’re going to see the return tenfold. I did this by accident in my first blog when I was attempting to be a private yoga teacher/health blogger or whatever. I just didn’t know what to write about one day. So I just did a roundup of like the 10 blogs that I really like to read and why I like to read them.

I gave them a shout out and they all got a ping back, I didn’t even reach out to them or anything and I noticed my blog traffic just shooting up and up and up and up. These people were reaching out and shouting out to me on social media and I was getting all this traffic and I wouldn’t say it was a viral post but it was certainly one of the most highly read posts on the website and for someone that normally got 20 page views a day to get like 500 page views is wow.

[0:17:49.9] RP: That's huge.

[0:17:51.1] CS: I had no idea. Because I didn't have a topic and I liked their blogs. Since then even, we've become friends. I've become friends with some of them and that's been really cool too because again it was all accidental, it was just purely me being like, "I really like this, I'm just going to tell other people about it so maybe they'll find it too."

[0:18:10.0] RP: Yeah, that's such great advice. How about if you were trying to encourage an influencer, what would your tips be there?

[0:18:19.2] CS: Yeah, I think that's interesting because everybody's human and Bonnie Bakhtiari has the probably has the funniest story about when I first met her. I would have been less star struck meeting Oprah or something. I mean I was just a huge fan of Bonnie's. Just a babbling idiot for about five minutes, it was pretty funny. But originally I just supported Bonnie with my 70 followers or whatever I had on Instagram and said, "Look at this great Instagram with authenticity course. I'm so glad to be joining it."

So I think one way you do that is you let them be your mentor, whether you actually buy their products or their services or coaching or whatever, or not. You just keep telling other people about it, being their cheerleader and their champion and I mean if you post about them five times, they're going to see it. Regardless of how many thousands of followers or likes or whatever they have.

That doesn't go unnoticed and it certainly doesn't go unheard. So I think just being their champion. I mean, for this podcast even, we've had so many people that are our champions and that's something that we won't forget, that's something that I constantly go back to in reference like I just hired a girl out of our Facebook group. So it's like those are — and now I can be her champion hopefully and support her and encourage her to build through her own business as she helps me build mine as well.

I think those are the things that you can do to do that. Again, part of it is also figuring out where the influencers are that you want to be. Going to those conferences or those masterminds,

putting yourself in front of them in a place where you can actually get to know them as a human being. Because there's only so much that the online world can provide you. How has that worked for you? Because you've gone to quite a few conferences and you've met a quite a few people in real life that were influencers that you followed for a while. So what was that like for you Reina?

[0:20:15.8] RP: I think that it's just remembering that they're human and even when you do get star struck that you have to remember that you have to know something about them rather than just their Instagram feed. Something that was valuable content that they created or how they have changed your business or whatever that is. Sometimes people will message me and say stuff about how they adore the things that I'm doing. But when I refer back to something that I've written, they don't know anything about it.

It's not like you have to memorize everything that I've written but it's like, "Do you actually care or are you just saying that because I have a bigger following than you?" So it's about being — don't be disingenuous, don't do it just for people being able to recognize you in where you are or trying to get a leg up just because you saw a post or whatever. Be genuine and be authentic in what you liked about them, what value they've added to your life.

[0:21:18.6] CS: Yeah, I would agree and I think it's really easy to see through anything that is not genuine or even goes so far as being disingenuous. It's really easy for us at least to see, I mean you don't get to a level in your business where you're whatever. Whatever you want to call it like a boss lady, a thriving entrepreneur. You just don't get to that level without being able to have some sort of emotional intelligence to sort out who is actually supporting you and who is just, they have no idea who you are and they're just sending you a form email.

You know who is sending what and actually, Natalie McNeil. Yes, thank you. Natalie McNeil has the best video and I probably referenced it before but it's about pitching, how to send a great pitch to someone. Because you know, we all want to have great guest post and we all want to get featured in bigger and better places because that's fun and it's a good thing for our business.

But again, when you're pitching these things, it's super easy to tell who is just like sending you a form email, doesn't give two flying flips about your business or how, what you do or anything versus somebody that read your blog for the last three months and they know that you like whatever, hedgehogs, like Shalyn or something. They know those little details about you and they incorporate that into a letter and it just shows that...

[0:22:39.5] RP: They're invested.

[0:22:40.5] CS: Exactly, that's the right word, invested. Have you ever had a situation where somebody approached you and they were just really pitchy, and how do you handle that?

[0:22:52.5] RP: Yeah, I think we've had this happen a couple of times in even the podcast since it's launched that people who we have never really come into contact with who want to be front and center all of a sudden because we now have a platform. For me, it's always about the relationship. If I don't like you as a human or I don't know you as a human, it's hard for me to really get invested in you.

Like you and I are both learners and we're always going to find information and stuff like that. So it's easy for me to try to consume more information, learn what people are doing and try to be invested that way. But I don't know, I can tell when people are trying to the platform rather than get to know me.

[0:23:40.9] CS: Yeah, I think it's okay to not like somebody. At least I feel like there's this idea that's perpetuated in the creative community that's like you have to be happy like everybody. It's okay if you don't feel happy all the time, I mean there's periods of your life where you're not going to be happy or someone's going to do something and they really step on your toes and it's not cool. It's a fact of life and it's really okay not to like everybody.

I believe that but I also believe that it's also okay to give them the benefit of the doubt at least a few times and that it's also okay to, even if you don't like them because there's certainly people like that for me, that I still treat them with the utmost kindness that I can or just don't say anything if that's the best solution to that scenario because you know what, it's not worth it to perpetuate a negative attitude that you feel negative inside.

That's for you to deal with and for you to figure out and for you to forge forward and find those other people that fulfill you and support you rather than dwell on the ones that create this source of angst, or whatever you want to call it, in you.

[0:24:48.3] RP: Yeah, totally, I agree with that. I think it's easier to be kind to people than to continue to be grumpy and mean or at least for me.

[0:24:59.1] CS: It's also the mature thing to do. I mean nobody likes, if you ever worked in the corporate world, there's always people that they're insecure and they want more attention or they want something from you, they want some kind of recognition and it's really easy to see through that. The mature thing to do on a situation like that or in our small business world where we see people doing this, they're kind of being their own champions, maybe they're doing it because they're insecure, maybe they're doing it because they're scared or whatever.

It's to really recognize what is underlying that and then be kind to them and not try to tell them that they're bad or do the immature thing and address them if that's the immature thing. So yeah, I don't know, what do you think about being — like what do you think is the difference between a mature business owner and someone who may be is just like very fearful starting out and secure? How do you see those two people addressing situations differently?

[0:25:56.6] RP: Yeah, I think there's tons of people who fall in to both categories, right? We've talked a little bit in different episodes about abundance versus scarcity and if you feel like relationships are important in your business, in growing your business then you'll naturally be led towards that. You don't have to love every single person you work with or come in contact with but I think you do on a human level have to care about their wellbeing.

I don't know, I keep coming back to this thing that I said last week, what does that matter, with like big love, because it could all go away and do things that really matter that fulfill you. If you're complaining a lot, find what that trigger is and try to move away from it. Do things that will fill you up rather than have you keep complaining. Encourage people to do the same for themselves because if they're struggling with finding that thing that's important, maybe they're just feeling a little bit stuck right now. But maybe you could be the encourager to shift their focus a little bit. No

matter whether you're mature in your business or just starting out, I think you have the capacity to do that for any person that you really come in contact with.

[0:27:16.0] CS: Yeah, definitely, I think it's funny I'm on Emily's about page and I love this because you hit on something first of all Reina, you don't know what's going on in someone's life. I mean they may share a little bit on Instagram, they might tell you that they're going through a divorce or they're going through this or that. But you really don't know what that's like for them. You don't know how deeply it affects them or what else is going on in their life, maybe they got in a car accident that day too and they didn't talk about that.

Maybe their water got turned off because they forgot to pay the bill. Whatever it is, you have no idea what's going on in that person's life even if you think you do. Just like any relationship that you've ever been in, think of any kind of partner, spouse, girlfriend, boyfriend, whatever you want to call it that you've had. Really he said, she said if you guys break up but you don't know, the people outside of your relationship might judge you or whatever and just think about how that felt for you because they actually, the people on the outside had no idea what was actually going on in that relationship.

So the same thing applies to business relationships or even your relationship with people on Instagram or that. I just love it, I'm on Emily's website right now and I wanted to mention this because on her about page it says, "My biggest goal in building the site is to make you rich, but," and I love this, "But not just in the money sense of the word. While I definitely do want to help you grow the most profitable business possible, I also want you to be rich in life. I want you to have time to enjoy your family, do things for yourself and maybe even get some sleep," and she makes a joke, "Except for those of you with newborns, I'll just have to pray you make it through the first few months."

I just think that's so rich because — and again, I didn't know her as well as you did Reina but she clearly had a really positive, well-rounded outlook as to what happens in this business sense of the world where you don't know what's going on in someone's life. Maybe they do have a newborn and that hasn't slept in six months. Maybe that's why they're cranky, or whatever and so, I love that she always gave people the benefit of the doubt and supported them regardless.

[0:29:18.1] RP: She was literally the kindest person I knew that I never met and.

[0:29:24.1] CS: The hardest part — I know, I'm sorry. The hardest part is that she was just getting started, she really was just getting ramped up.

[0:29:32.4] RP: Yeah.

[0:29:33.0] CS: I mean she had been a photographer but the coaching business and her, you know, I don't even want to call it coaching. It was really an encouragement business that she had. Lots and lots of really great free information on her blog and things like that, to just encourage everybody. To make that accessible so that it didn't matter where you were on your business, you still had access to that support and encouragement. It's really sad, there's definitely a little bit of a light loss in this world with her gone and I just hope that her family, who was so blessed to have her in their lives, that they're doing okay.

[0:30:07.6] RP: It's like a huge hole, right? If I think that it's a huge hole that she's gone, I can't imagine what her family's feeling right now.

[0:30:18.5] CS: We have no idea and again it's like you just don't know what somebody's going through or what it's like for them. So just giving people that grace and that courage and encouragement. You never know when you might be just a little bit of light that they need in their life that day.

[0:30:37.1] RP: Yeah, another thing too is like if you flip that on it's head and if you think about what people are going to be seeing when you pass, what do you want them to be saying? And I was laughing with my friend Tanya Dalton who knew Emily pretty darn well and when she told me the news, I was bawling and laughing because we were celebrating Emily and the things that we were saying were things like, "She was the kindest person."

I hope that Emily's listening to us saying, "That's how I want to be remembered." So how do you want to be remembered? What is the thing that you want to be known for whether it's in your business or in your life or with your kids or your family, whoever, what is it that you're leaving in

the world and how are you leaving people more encouraged? That's how I'd like to build my creative empire.

[0:31:24.7] CS: That's beautiful. Thank you guys. I know this is a heavier episode but, you know, one of the important things about running a business is that you're fully aware of everything that goes on in a business and it's fun to have the confetti and the sprinkles and all that stuff but at the same time, this is real life. So thank you guys. Thank you Reina for sharing a little bit more about Emily.

[0:31:49.5] RP: Yeah.

[0:31:50.0] CS: Thank you Emily.

[0:31:52.4] RP: For touching all of our lives in ways big and small.

[0:31:57.1] CS: So get out there, let us know how you guys are encouraging people and yeah, just tag us. We want to see how you encourage people on Instagram, everything. We would love to help you as much as we can as well. We can't do that unless we know who you are and what you're doing. So don't be shy.

[0:32:13.4] RP: Yeah, even if somebody else encourages you or is cheering you on, just give them a shout out and let us know because we would love to call them out. So thanks so much for tuning in and we'll talk to you next time.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[00:32:28] 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 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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[END]