

EPISODE — KATELYN JAMES

[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]

[00:00:35.4] CS: Hello, welcome back to the Creative Empire Podcast. I am Christina Scalera joined by Reina Pomeroy and today's guest is Katelyn James. Katelyn is here today to talk about how micro changes can result in macro effects that grow your business and build it into your creative empire. So we're so excited to just have a little chat with her today.

She is a busy, busy lady and she's got some amazing things that's she's offering to the world right now. So we're excited that she could just take a few moments out of her day to talk with us and to you listeners. So thank you so much Katelyn.

[00:01:06.5] KJ: Oh you're so welcome. It's an honor to be here, and I've been looking forward to this because anytime I got to do a podcast while I'm still wearing my yoga pants is the best.

[00:01:19.4] CS: Yes, we're huge fans of yoga pants. Yes, we love it and your yoga pants are getting a little fuller these days. You have a little one on the way, that's so exciting.

[00:01:29.5] KJ: I know, yes. Tomorrow will be 22 weeks, so it's crazy. We're over half way there. It really seems surreal, every time I pass by a mirror I'm like, "Oh no, this is definitely happening." So yeah. But it's a cool season of life because it is really teaching us a lot about how we could slow down a little bit and make time for things that matter more. So anyway, yeah it's just a wild transition.

[00:01:55.2] CS: Yeah.

[00:01:56.0] RP: Well we are super grateful to have you and I know when I got to meet you at Creative at Heart in July, we were talking about the same topic and we're excited to just jump right in and encourage our audience to start creating those micro changes so they can start seeing some macro results. What would you say is I guess the first step in starting to create some of these changes?

[00:02:20.6] KJ: Well I think the first thing is to recognize in your business, a lot of times when things are not going well, business owners freak out and they think that, for example, I have seen so many and obviously I work with a lot of photographers because I am a photographer. But I've seen so many photographers they are booking and so they immediately rebrand even though they've just rebranded two years ago, and they immediately think that that is the problem. They need to spend \$5,000 and just rebrand and that's going to fix. When in the grand scheme of things, the reality is that there could be small little changes.

For me, we weren't booking. We had six months were we just had no one, no one was booking and I had never in eight years of being in business I had never had that happen and I realized that I had raised my prices and I had not raised the level of personality and personal connection to my clients in any of our pricing material that we sent out. So basically I was saying, "Hey, I cost a lot more," but never explaining who I was in more detail. So I was changing prices and not changing anything else and I made one little tweak and all of a sudden I realized that that was the missing link. People needed to understand more of who I was, they were ready to invest.

So when I think in the grand scheme of business owners that need the message that micro changes produce macro results, they're the ones that are jumping off the deep end because people aren't booking and they want to do these drastic measures that cost them tons of money when really it could be a lot smaller on a more micro level and I think that's encouraging. You know? I think it's encouraging that it doesn't have to be this big overhaul. You just need to look at your business, look at all the different dimensions of value that you have in your business and figure out where the disconnect is.

[00:04:07.7] RP: That's so beautiful. When did you notice that this could be a thing rather than having to do a complete overhaul and spend \$5,000 on a rebrand to saying, "Okay, I'm seeing that this one thing isn't working, how can I fix it so that it's more efficient or it works better?"

[00:04:24.7] KJ: Right. Well I think the reason I really paid attention to some of these aspects, some of these different things that were happening in my business is because I was actually experiencing them. It wasn't just that I was coaching people. I was experiencing for myself like, "Okay, I'm the one now that needs help figuring why I am not booking," and I think in all areas of my business, I tried to approach things with a different perspective and that doesn't always happen.

But I know what the rest of the industry does because we are in tuned with the rest of the industry. We coach people, we do workshops, we have friends who are steps ahead of us. I feel like we are in a happy middle ground where we know what people ahead of us are doing, know what people behind us are doing. So I know that when people don't book, they initially think, "Oh my gosh it's because my prices are too high. Oh my gosh I need to rebrand."

So I wanted to approach it in a different way and think about, "Okay, maybe it's not really about all the things that most people forget about. Maybe there's other things that I could do to make a huge difference. Maybe there are connections that I can make in the tiniest ways that are going to produce word of mouth marketing that no one else has tried and part of that is because I have just rebranded myself. So I spent not \$5,000 but over \$8,000 rebranding. Like complete overhaul with the best designer I think in the industry.

She's amazing and we just put this huge investment into rebranding and yet we had a slower booking season. I'm like, "What is going on?" So I didn't have the money or the option of just throwing money in different areas trying to make it work. So for me, that's when it started. I was like, "Okay, I am now in the position where I have to figure out what's not working," and from that, I discovered that a lot of people don't think of business struggles this way. They think of it as "it's all or nothing" instead of "let's take it bit by bit". So yeah, that was a long winded response to that question.

[00:06:23.5] CS: No, that's a sign of a real mature business owner to take a hard, maybe scary look because you are not booking, you don't have the income coming in rather than just going for the low hanging fruit and just saying, "Oh I'll just quickly I'll pivot, I'll readjust," and as small business owners we have that luxury. But often times it will come back and bite us where we think that we are spending good money but really we're just throwing good money after bad.

So I feel like that's very mature of you to do. I know it wasn't always that way and so one of the things that really stands out about you and I use this as an example probably in every talk I've ever given, but is the level of client experience that you've brought to the industry. So you and Mary Marantz are always my examples and you especially with the client magazines and just the whole new level of the KJ Bride that you've brought to the industry that really is unprecedented. I've never seen anything like that before and even in other different industries that I've worked in.

So how did those big changes come about? For example, the KJ Bride, how did that even start?

[00:07:35.1] KJ: Right, that is such a good question and I love talking about it because everything about what my clients look like and who they are as woman and men, we have gotten a little bit of constructive criticism that we don't do enough of our KJ grooms. They don't really have a hashtag and they get really offended. But that says something. These grooms care about being recognized that they're KJ groom. What groom cares about being hashtagged to a tribe?

As we have grown, we shoot a lot more destination weddings and it's been harder to create that community because they're not all Richmond Brides that graduated from Virginia Tech or other local colleges that can all connect and meet up. So the way it started was I realized, I mean it really started with my marketing strategy. I didn't have the money to market the way the rest of the world was marketing. I couldn't do ads in magazines because those were \$1,400 and I didn't have that.

I couldn't put ads on Facebook because that wasn't really a thing back then. So I just started marketing me. I started marketing my personality and I started blogging about our life and about our business and then I got married. People just followed along on this journey and I started

realizing that I was forming a tribe of my own. These people felt like they weren't just getting a gallery of images, they are getting an experience and I realized, "Okay if I can take that experience and build upon it there's got to be some marketing genius behind it."

And then I read the book *Tribes* by Seth Godin and I'm like, "Oh I'm not really onto something. He's been onto something for 10 years and I just realized he wrote a book about it," and literally *Tribes* by Seth Godin that explains everything that happened in our business. We connected people to a leader, to one another and to a shared idea. Obviously, I'm the leader. Obviously, the brides connect to each other but the third one, I realized our brides were connecting to the idea that they loved being our cheerleaders.

So when I would go and speak at a big conference, like when I first went to Creative Live two years ago, I got emails from brides saying, "We're so proud of you." Our brides feel like because they were KJ Brides, when we succeed, they succeed. So they are a part of our story. They want to be a part of our life. We are moving hopefully in two months to a space where we can have cookouts and anniversary sessions in the fields behind our house for all of our KJ couples who want to come and hang out because that's where our heart is.

I think that you could call it marketing strategies or you could just call it living into the calling you've been given, because I think that we're supposed to love people and when you love people well, your business thrives because of it, and so it's all really full circle. It started with my marketing and it has turned into like "Oh my gosh, I was created to serve people like this." So anyway, another long winded response for one question.

[00:10:36.3] RP: No, I think it's so beautiful and it says so much about you as a person that we talk about people buy from people not from brands and while you are the brand, the person that you are just pours into what the brand ends up being and so people want a part of that experience to be part of your life and that's why even the grooms want to be KJ Grooms, right? And it's a beautiful thing.

[00:10:59.7] KJ: Yes, now I'll admit, it's not all of them. I can name a handful of grooms that will be like, "Oh that is the furthest thing that I want." But yes, I really think that people love to feel like they belong. They love to feel that they have a place and so what we did is we basically

created a place for them to belong within our business and that has turned out to be one of the greatest marketing ideas that we have ever had.

But really, I don't view it as a marketing idea. I view it as I have certain people that come into our business and I know that they're there for a reason and sometimes I know that reason until after we do their wedding. Sometimes I know before they even book, but I think ultimately deciding that my business has to be more than just making money. It has to be more than just taking pictures and delivering a gallery.

It's got to change people's lives because I have spent my whole life just paying my bills and I don't leave any type of legacy and so yeah, I am very thankful that other people see just the impact of what you can do with the business because it's really empowering to think about, "Gosh, I can be more than just a photographer. I can change these young women's lives." So yeah, thank you for that. That's very sweet.

[00:12:13.9] RP: I also love the fact that you talk about legacy because a lot of people would probably just look at their businesses and say, "It is a money making venture, right? And the business is the bottom line," and all of that stuff and I do believe in running a heart centered business which means that I put people first and that fulfills me and that fills my cup but I am wondering, how have you made it — what's my questions here?

It's really around you have created this empire of people investing in people, I guess is what I am trying to say and learning what they want from you and being able to serve in that way and what is your legacy? What would you hope to have at the end of the day?

[00:12:56.3] KJ: Yeah, that's a great question. Michael and I love listening to Michael Hyatt's podcast and he has a great one from 2012. I mean it is old, but it talks about life goals, it talks about breaking down like what you want people to remember you by, what do you want your legacy to look like in every area? So your peers in the industry, your siblings, your spouse, everybody what do you want them to say about you at the end of your life?

It's very hard to think about that, but when we listen to that podcast and we listen to it multiple times, I want Michael to know that he was always first and I know that I fail at that a lot. I fail at

making him a priority and that is something that I am always trying to work on. My legacy in my client's life, I want people to remember me and think, "We booked a photographer but we got so much more. We love the light that Katelyn and Michael brought into our wedding day and our life just from knowing them." You know?

And I want peers in the industry to know that, yes we sell products and yes, we have high prices and we have high wedding prices, but we do things with excellence and we do things because we love people. We just had this conversation the other day about our legacy on the side of, you know, you can look at the legacy financially and you can look at a legacy from a perspective of what people remember you by as a person and financially, I had this huge like, "I don't want people to remember me as the person who has high end courses."

And Michael had to remind me, "Katelyn, you put your whole summer, everything that you did this summer was to make sure that you're serving people the best way possible and that's what they remember you for. They don't remember you for the price tag of a course. They remember you for the way you impacted your life," and so that has been my hope recently in our business that I can focus on how can I serve people well, but also not be a business owner that feels bad for succeeding?

That is a whole other topic, and I don't want to get into that too much. But I do think that what you said about how do you run a heartwarming business and something that is really embedded into who you are in serving people, so often it's hard to do that and feel like you can't be profitable at the same time and so in the grand scheme of things, I think of legacy and I think about it in the perspective of "I want to be a great business woman".

Because if I am not a good business woman and I am not smart with the way I manage my business financially, no one is going to look at me with credibility and think, "I want to learn from her." So on the other side of things, I don't want people to know anything about that side of my life. I want them to know this is what she stands for, this is why she loves people well and she has a faith based background and foundation to everything she does.

So anyway, there's so much in that but I really think that that's something a lot of creative business owners need to realize is that it is okay to succeed when your heart is in the right place. So anyway that's it.

[00:16:09.3] RP: I'm super passionate about that. I really appreciate you saying that out loud because a lot of people are scared to say, "I care about people. I want to love on people, but I also want to make money," right?

[00:16:19.8] KJ: Girl, I was scared to say it just then. I realized, "Oh shoot I shouldn't have said that." But I really...

[00:16:25.4] RP: No, I still firmly believe that. We can't be business owners and we can't make an impact if we can't make money, right?

[00:16:31.1] KJ: Yeah and I always tell people, "The Bible says love of money is what's wrong. Money is not wrong." Because Michael and I have the freedom right now in this season and it may not be like this forever but we get to bless people in need all the time and that's because we run our business with profit, with integrity, and we don't make decisions that aren't smart for us financially and there's nothing wrong with that. But the world says that there is and so, yeah I was scared to say it too but I'm glad you agree with me.

[00:17:04.4] RP: I think people need to hear that a lot of women have money mindset issues because we've been taught that having money is boastful and having more money than our necessary means I guess is wrong and in order to have a really sustainable impactful business, I believe that you need to have a double bottom line of impacting people, loving people well, and to be able to have a sustainable impactful business.

[00:17:32.5] KJ: I also, to piggyback off of that, I feel like when you serve people well and you give freely, that's the meeting in the middle. You can make sure that you're profitable but at the same time, if you want to remember where your heart should be you need to freely be able to give at the same time. So for us, we blogged for eight years just trying to help people and we still do that. We still get our blog posts up every week and so I think that's a really good way of balancing.

When you stop giving freely because you care, that's when you have to start analyzing, "Okay, am I only about profit? Am I only trying to gain and make sales? Or am I really trying to help the industry but run a successful business? What is the priority there?" So yeah, I think a lot of people struggle with it, but not a lot of people talk about it because it's awkward and no one wants to and I don't want to either but I think it needs to be said.

[00:18:30.4] CS: Yeah, I couldn't agree more with you. Just being of course a creator myself and then I actually ran into this problem where I got an email from someone and basically she's in one of my courses and she said, "I have to wait four days to pay you because I had to pay my most important bills first," and I was like, "Oh my gosh, do I just excuse her and give her the course for free?" But then I actually talked to Alyssa Thiel of Parris Chic Boutique and she had some really wise advice.

And she was like, "If you do that, you're not serving yourself, you're not serving the other people who have paid to be in there and this is something valuable. So why wouldn't you charge for it? They're not getting nothing, they are getting something really valuable, and she put herself in that situation. You can't be responsible for everybody," and so I think as women, it's hard not to be a martyr and just be like, "I'll come in and save you. I'll help you." You know? It's just so difficult.

But again, as a sign of a mature business owner is just knowing when to draw the line because if I say, "I'll excuse you from the rest of the course and enjoy it for free," then I am not serving myself well, then I can't make the donations that I've promised to the certain places that I've promised them to. So it's really encouraging to hear you talk about this, kind of a taboo topic.

[00:19:53.2] KJ: Yeah, it really is and I was not planning on bringing it up. But I think that it's really important because as I think about the audience that you serve, there are so many people that I think because like my value and the service that I provide is something that has grown out of my own gifting's and so often we don't think that our gifting's that so many people should pay for and also, there are a lot of people who are selling digital education.

Or they are selling knowledge or courses and it is so easy for us to think, “Well I can do this. I can discount here, I can discount there. I don’t have to charge or people are going to get mad.” We don’t place a value on what we’re providing simply because it is digital and because it’s based off of our gifting’s and that is hard and I think that if I was running a retail shop, sometimes I wish that I had started that way. Sometimes I wish that I had a little boutique.

I worked in a boutique when I was in high school and I remember thinking like, “I can’t give this,” — I used to paint dishes, it’s really weird but I used to think, “I can’t give this dish away for 50%. It took me two hours to make it,” and it was because it was a physical product. So when we content creators spend hours and hours and months, we’ve spent three months on a course, we don’t look at that and say, “I’ve got to be reimbursed for months of work” We think about it as, “Oh no, people are just paying for workbooks and videos,” and we don’t put any value on our knowledge.

So it is hard, but my good friend Nancy Rae is an amazing photographer, has a huge team and I just have so much respect for her and I love when she says, “I want to be a profitable business and I want to make great money because I want to change the world with my money, and there’s nothing wrong with that.” So anyway, I just think that is encouraging for creative business owners because we don’t need to hide behind the fact that we want to be successful. We just have to do it with the right heart and we have to pay attention to, like you said, being respectful to ourselves in the process.

[00:21:57.2] RP: I love that, and another thing that money creates too is freedom and whatever that means for people and for me, it means that I can hire a team that takes things off of my plate. What does that kind of freedom mean for you in your business?

[00:22:12.5] KJ: That is a great question because we actually, we haven’t announced this anywhere and I don’t know if we will publicly on our blog. But we hired my mom, which literally I went to a conference last fall and everyone’s like, “What would you want to see your business happen? What would be the big goal be?” And I think people were expecting me to say, “Oh I want to write a book.” Or, “Oh I want to do this.” But literally, I stood in front everyone and I cried and I said, “I just want to hire my mom.” And because she was in a job where she wasn’t being paid well and she was miserable.

So Michael and I have reduced our salaries significantly for this next year, which is a little scary being that we are building a house and having a baby but we've reduced our salaries and we've hired my mom and we have given my mom her dream life to be a grand mom. So she gets to work with us, she gets to take care of her aging dying parents in a nursing home that need her and she's not bound by a nine to five job. I, my business, created that life for her and I am not going to talk about it too much because I'll cry because that is true freedom.

[00:23:22.7] RP: Oh my gosh.

[00:23:24.3] KJ: My freedom in my business is that I just gave my mom freedom in her 50's and again, the beautiful thing about what we get to do, if we can keep our minds set right, is that we can help people with our education and we can charge the prices that we needed to charge in order to have the freedom that we want. I have to make a certain amount to pay for health insurance for my mom and my dad and now, we hired my sister full-time. So literally, that's a lot of pressure to have three different families on a health insurance plan.

So when people say, "Katelyn, I don't know if I can afford this or I can afford that," and that's why we have great free education. That's why we serve in different ways and different capacities. So yeah, that's what freedom looks like for me, it's hiring mama and having a nanny that can help take care of this baby one day.

[BREAK]

[00:24:15.7] CS: Do you a business that serves other businesses? We would love to feature you as a sponsor on our podcast. Each week, our episodes reach thousands of listeners and they are hungry and eager for the solutions that you would provide. If you would be interested in advertising with the Creative Empire Podcast, we would love to have you. All you have to do is jump on over to creativeempire.co and learn more about becoming a sponsor and getting your services and your products in the hands of our thousands of listeners. We're so excited about what we can do for you.

[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[00:24:52.4] CS: That's incredible to me because not only have you created freedom in your life, you've created freedom in your sister, your mom, your great grandparents. And anybody out there that hires any kind of team member, you're creating freedom in your life but in all of their lives too. You are giving them the ability to empower their business and work and stay in their lane and they do the work for you. But you are putting a job on their plate as well.

So I just think that's great and if it meant three less course sales, if you had said, "You know I'll just give this away because I feel like they deserve it," maybe you wouldn't be in that position if you did that every single launch.

[00:25:28.4] KJ: Yeah, that's encouraging and I always talk about this in pricing is I think that when we are sticklers with prices and we stick to our guns, we know what we're worth, we know what our value is, the more that I commit to that, the more I get to be free with blessing people. So our wedding prices are extremely high right now. That's because we're starting a family, we don't want to work as much so they're extremely high.

But I am, 95% of the time, I'm a stickler so that 5% of the time when that special couple with this really special story comes along, I get to shoot their wedding for next to nothing and no one knows who that couple is. No one knows that we do that, except that I shared them on a podcast. But I do think that that's another form of freedom. When you are a great business person and you stick your prices and you know what you're worth, then you get the freedom to do things for people that changes their lives and they are blown away by it. So there's got to be a balance there.

[00:26:27.4] RP: You're sharing all your secrets with us.

[00:26:30.6] KJ: I know! Maybe it's pregnancy brain, I'm just spewing it all out. I don't know? But I don't mind at all. I think it's encouraging to people because these are things that we struggling with right now in our business. Just learning how to grow a business, how to have a team and also realizing that the more team members we have, the more organized and professional we have to be with the way that we run our business.

It's easy to sit back in my apartment with my laptop and think, "What am I doing? This isn't a real business I don't go into an office every day. I am sitting here in my yoga pants." But really no, it's a legit business making real profit and I am hiring employees and that requires a lot of responsibility and a lot of integrity and we're just trying to do the best we can on this crazy roller coaster ride that we have entered into so.

[00:27:20.2] RP: That's so true and it's super encouraging to hear somebody who is as far along on this journey as you are and to hear that we still don't know what we're doing and it's still scary and there's always decisions to be made that aren't exactly clear when we make them.

[00:27:35.7] KJ: Exactly and I don't think that is ever going to change because.

[00:27:41.2] RP: Oh shoot.

[00:27:41.2] KJ: I know, yeah, "That's so encouraging Katelyn." But I have noticed Michael the other day, I said, "Just when I felt like we had hit a really great point with hiring a full-time assistant, we hired another one and now I'm a team leader to four and not just three," and so I'm learning all over again, "Okay what does this new employee need?"

We just had a conversation this morning like my mom doesn't work the same way that I work. So how do we manage personalities to make sure that we are organizing our team in a great way? I don't know if I'll ever master any of this and every time I feel like I get close, it's all new stuff. I think that's a sign that you're growing. I think it's also a sign that we need a lot of patience with ourselves so...

[00:28:32.9] CS: Yeah and a sign that it's always progress over perfection. I know that a lot of people that I talk to, they're just waiting until the perfect thing happens until they get their office just right or until everything is set up the right way or they have just the right about page and they're just waiting until everything is just so and then they feel like in their mind and I've been there, they feel like in their minds once that happens, once they have the perfect brand, once everything is right, everything is going to fall into place it's going to be hunky dory amazingness from now until forever.

And it's nice to see you peel back that curtain and say, "No, actually I'm in the middle of a move," it's going to be really great and your house is gorgeous. If you guys haven't checked out our Instagram and seen the videos, you should. But in the meantime, it's a lot of work and it's not perfect and even when you move in, there's going to be poopy diapers every two hours and nothing stays the same. It's always changing and just to watch you keep up with it and even move ahead is really, really encouraging.

If somebody is just starting out, maybe they don't have team members yet, maybe they're looking to meet their clients where they're at or maybe they even don't have clients yet and they're looking to make some micro changes. Maybe they're like you and right now, they're at the place where you were where you didn't have a budget for marketing and you needed to get clients, you didn't understand why you weren't booking people. What are some of the things that they could possibly think about and change in their lives to become a more person centered business rather than, "Oh my God, I can't pay my water bill this month," or, "Oh my god, I can't do this or that or the other thing, help me"?

[00:30:17.9] KJ: Right. Well, I would say for any new business owner is to figure out how your passion is aligning with your purpose. So some people would say, you mentioned Mary Moran, she's a dear friend and she always talks about the lie. Simon Sinek did a great TED Talk about this years and years ago and I loved that concept, why do you do what you do? What is the reasoning behind what you're doing? And when we talk about it, we love to talk about you have a passion and you have a gifting and you're creating a business around that. But how does that correlate to your purpose in life?

I think when we hit a gold mine when we realize that we were put in this earth to serve people well and to love people well. How can I actually do that in our business? And when I realized that I can serve people well and love people, then all of a sudden the client experience started to change and the way that we've viewed our brides changed. They weren't just girls who were engaged. They were women that I had a specific role in their life for a year and then many years. I'm still friends with a lot of my brides which is amazing.

So yeah, figure out how your passion plays a role in your purpose in life and that's something that whenever I get overwhelmed with money, with bookings, with trying to pay the bills and our bills now look very different than they did when I first started, you know? I didn't know that you have to have higher liability policies the more you grow your business. When I first started it was like, "Oh I just need to protect this one lens that I have," you know? So everything is transitioning and I just keep having to remind myself like, "I don't do this for the money. I do this because this is what I'm called to do with my life," and that reduces so much pressure on me.

So Michael would laugh if he heard that because he would be like, "Oh it does?" Because I have been living in a state of panic in working this transition now in our life. But yeah. The other thing I would say to new business owners who are overwhelmed and who are just trying to keep their head above water is to really focus in on what your strengths are. When I first started in my business, I thought I needed to do everything under the sun because I could not because I should and I tried to do everything just to get people in the door and they were paying.

And I am so glad that someone sat me down after my first year in business and said, "I don't think you should be a family photographer or a newborn photographer because you dread going to those shoots. Instead, why don't you focus on what your gifting's are. Katelyn you work really great under pressure. You love doing things that are a little bit editorial than a family shoot. Weddings are your baby. Focus on weddings and become an expert at that," and so I got rid of all the excess in my business and I really near bended just on what I am good at and I'm very thankful.

You know this is so funny when I go on podcasts with people two years ago, I thought that I was going to have a podcast, and now I laugh because that is not my strength, obviously. I just ramble on and on and I am so glad. Michael has told me over and over again, "Katelyn stay. Stay where you were planted originally and keep growing from there. Don't try to do things that aren't your gifting's just because other people are doing them. That's not your thing." So if I learned that even just six months earlier in my business, I think I would have grown so much faster.

So those are two little pieces of advice wrapped in with a lot of other stories, but yeah I just love what you guys are doing because I think that there's such a need for encouragement like this in the world of small business owners. So I just think it's awesome.

[00:33:57.3] CS: Yeah, well we definitely appreciate guests like you coming on because like we said before we started recording, not everybody can afford to go to a conference or they're not ready to go make that three day commitment away from their full-time job and so that was the hope behind the content here. But yeah, just speaking of Michael, we need to give him a big shout out. We need to get him on the show because he's such a great guy.

[00:34:18.8] KJ: Yeah, he is.

[00:34:20.6] CS: Yeah, your little baby is going to be very lucky to have two amazing parents. But, you know for sure, he seems like he has been a great sounding board and so has he always been a sounding board for you and for the business? Or was he at one time was he working full-time and then maybe got more involved? What did that look like for you guys when you had I guess gone on your own and out of college?

[00:34:46.4] KJ: Yeah, that's a great question. I graduated college, did this full-time. He was a full-time youth pastor for three years, a little over three years and he started shooting with me during that time because I needed the help and he wasn't that at it. It wasn't his passion but he wasn't bad at it and Michael is really great with people. People naturally gravitate towards him that is just the personality he has. So he just added so much value when he was with me on a wedding day. The coordinators loved him, the venue loved him, everyone. Mothers of the bride, if they weren't sure about me they surely loved him.

So he started shooting with me and then we realized, "Oh my gosh, we never see each other." He left his job at our church and worked with me full-time and that was, honesty moment, I'd run a business for five years on my own. I created this whole baby of a business so to have him join in and just have opinions about it was rather hard, and so the last four years, we have basically been learning what the roles are and it is such a gift to let other people speak into your business and to let your guard down and just let go of your pride and the more that I let go of my pride, the more I grow.

I mean, we have a life coach right now and basically she has been so instrumental in allowing Michael and I to grow in different ways and I've realized since meeting with her that Michael's ideas and Michael's thoughts about our business are more clear headed than mine. Because I've got this huge perceptions of things because it's my baby, you know? The business is mine. So now that I realize no, it is ours together and Michael adds so much value and not everyone can have a husband and wife team dynamic.

But I do recommend it when you start your business, especially having someone who is wise, who is trustworthy, who is not skewed by jealousy or competition, having someone like that in your life that can speak into your life and give you advise, there is no value that you can place on that. Our good friends, Matt and Carissa Kennedy actually have an advisory board for their business. It's just wiser, older people in their life that they have to answer to. Everything they do in their business, they have to go to the advisory board twice a year and talk to them. So I just think it's awesome and if you can find that in your business, it will be life changing.

[00:37:20.3] CS: That's a whole other level.

[00:37:22.7] RP: Yeah, that's a cool idea.

[00:37:24.1] KJ: It is.

[00:37:25.2] CS: Yeah like a board, a shareholders board or something. That's scary but I like that idea.

[00:37:29.8] KJ: It's too fancy for us but I do think it is really something to really hold you accountable. So yeah, I don't know if we'll ever have a board.

[00:37:39.6] CS: I know, you're just supporting like all of your team members really well, I mean that's not nothing.

[00:37:46.6] KJ: No, it isn't. Oh gosh we're trying over here. We do not have it all figured out but the few things that we're going well in our business, we are so grateful for and we're just

trying to figure out how to do the best way we can and to serve people the best way we can and obviously, I think what you guys are doing, you're serving people in such an amazing way. I wish stuff like this is around when I first started. Podcast were not a thing as they are today in 2008 when I was a newbie so.

[00:38:17.3] CS: Yeah, that's definitely true. I mean it's only possible because people are willing to come on our show and we're always amazed at the wise guidance and advice that people are willing to share and really to peek inside their business. Because, let's be honest, you don't have to be here today talking with us. So we're very grateful and it's really such an honor because it's been fun to watch from afar and now to finally have a conversation with you is just really wonderful.

[00:38:47.0] KJ: Oh well it's fun for me too. I just love it.

[00:38:50.7] CS: Yeah, so we're not done, yet but I am just curious, I mean I am a service based business and I'll just say this guys, I'm an attorney. I'm a service based business, I am not a photographer. I have no desire to be a professional photographer, but I buy your products all the time and I watch your webinars and I love everything that you're doing and I sign up for it because it's not just for photographers even if maybe the editing courses. But the other things that you put out are really applicable to anybody that has a service based business. Whether you're a coach or a wedding planner.

Where can people find some of these stuff either on your blog where it's free or if they want to go just take that extra step and get that guidance from you, where can they find that kind of stuff?

[00:39:39.3] KJ: That's a great question. So if you go to katelynjameseducation.com, you basically have links and access to anything educational that we offer. So whether that's workshops or coaching that will come back in 2017 or the courses. We also have a whole section that's just free downloads. So we encourage photographers who are newer that they cannot invest, that at least download the free stuff and download all of it at once, you know?

So you have everything, you can have all of it at once and then if that is helpful, we have \$12.99 mini-guides that have a lot of information jammed packed into these PDF's. They're like little miniature eBooks and that's a great way to ease yourself into education without feeling like, "Oh my gosh if I want to get education I have to spend \$150 bucks or higher." That's not true.

But I am just honored that you, I have never had an attorney buy anything from our store so I just love you for that. You're probably saying, "Oh Katelyn," and this is why I'll probably never create a contracts package because people like you would be like, "Katelyn we need to talk about some things."

[00:40:50.3] CS: No, I mean really, your client experience is something that I have heard from people in the industry. I have heard it from people who worked with you and so it's really something phenomenal that I aspire to have in my own business especially in a profession where I feel like the client is often underserved and just looked at as a dollar sign rather than a person.

[00:41:13.8] KJ: Oh I think that if you can change that dynamic in your world, seriously, you will be so set apart that is incredible. I have never heard of someone who desires that for their industry being in the world of law and that's what I love because people always ask. They're like, "Katelyn, how do you get inspired? What inspires you?" I love learning from other industries and I think that's what you're doing so well. You are looking at other people's industries and being like, "Okay, how can I take this back to mine and make a huge impact?" Oh that's exciting.

[00:41:46.3] RP: Yeah, Christina is so good at taking a look at other industries and applying it to hers because lawyers are not doing a sexy job of marketing.

[00:41:57.5] CS: That's so funny, you guys are sweet.

[00:41:59.5] KJ: I totally agree. I think that's just amazing.

[00:42:02.3] CS: But you know, I feel like if anybody in any service based industry, even coaches out there, I feel like we have a lot to learn from photographers. I mean you but photographers in general. You and Michael have really knocked it out of the park as far as

marketing goes and it's encouraging to hear you talk today about how that was something that was affordable for you to do. Especially in a world that tells you, "You have to have webinars, you have to buy the expensive webinar jam software, you have to do Facebook ads." And just to stand out from the noise without doing that is really something that we can all figure out how to do in our business I think.

[00:42:39.0] KJ: Right, yeah. I definitely think there are always ways around what the norm is and we have done some of those things and we have changed with the industry. Everything education has changed, the way that you get the word out has changed, but the bottom line of caring for people and starting with that as your foundation, that never changes. The only thing that changes is how you do it but the idea and the heart behind never changes and so, I am just so excited for you. I think that is awesome.

[00:43:10.7] RP: Katelyn we could talk to you for seven hours straight. Yeah, I feel like we could just keep going and going.

[00:43:15.7] KJ: I know, I could too. I told you, that's why I never created a podcast to do this hours long.

[00:43:22.4] RP: Well, what is one piece of advice, you have given us so many tidbits but one piece of advice that people can take away to start creating their creative empire today?

[00:43:32.0] KJ: Oh gosh, that's so hard because I want to give you six. I would say one piece of advice would be to continue to create and to continue to grow with the end vision in mind. I went to conference, I am not speaking of that conference, the Making Things Happen Conference. I love it, and the most memorable thing that I've ever experienced, I've been to three so far, was when Lara Casey said, "I want you to close your eyes and I want you to envision yourself as a 80 year old woman and what you want your life to look like."

And I went through that whole process and I won't talk about it because I always cry and then she said, "What are you doing in your life, in your business right now that's going to create that vision for you?" And a lot of things in my life didn't line up with getting me to that point and that

was huge. So I think when you create and when you grow a business with the end result and the end legacy in mind, it completely allows you to stay focused on what matters.

So there is a lot of noise out there. There is a lot that will distract us, so that's something that I have to remind myself of daily and I think that's a huge piece of advice that it's not from me. It's from Lara, she's amazing. But I've transfer that over to anyone I have an opportunity to so.

[00:44:57.9] CS: Thank you so much Katelyn.

[00:44:59.2] RP: That's beautiful, yeah.

[00:45:00.9] KJ: You're so welcome. This has been so much fun.

[00:45:04.5] RP: Thank you so much for being here, for encouraging our audience and I hope you have a wonderful rest of your day and for our listeners, go create your creative empire.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[00:45:16] 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.

If you enjoyed this week's show, it would mean so much to Reina and Christina if you could take two minutes to go to iTunes and leave a review. It's a little thing that makes a big difference for the show.

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