

**EPISODE 99**

[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]

**[0:00:35.6] RP:** Welcome back for another episode of the Creative Empire Podcast, it's Reina and Christina here. Today, we have Lisa Funk. She is the hand lettering artist and the creative founder behind Hand Lettered Design. Lisa and I actually connected online and I actually thought she was one of the two people who were in charge and we just got to chatting.

She's one of the most encouraging people that I have had the opportunity to connect with online. I think it was through Instagram that we've been connected and Lisa, we're so excited to have you and hear more of your story.

**[0:01:07.6] LF:** Thank you, I'm so excited to be here.

**[0:01:10.0] RP:** Tell us a little bit about how you got into this? You have in the neighborhood of 70,000 followers on Instagram or something like that? You just do beautiful things online now but tell us how you got into this?

**[0:01:22.8] LF:** My story feels a little different than I feel like for a lot of people. I never ever wanted a business. I, growing up, was not that kid selling pencils out of their backpack, I was not the one who just dreamt of being an entrepreneur or working at all. My dream was to grow up and be a stay at home mom, honestly. That's what I really wanted and I had a great career before I started having kids. I worked nonprofit actually at a free medical clinic doing child development programs.

But then, I just stayed home with my babies, I had three babies in four years, which sounds a little crazy and it is a little crazy but awesome and I loved it. So for me, when I started kind of falling into this whole business, I was reluctant and it was just a different experience. What happened was that I've always loved handwriting, I've always loved hand lettering.

My whole life I was like begging my mom to address the Christmas cards when I was 10 years old. Then what happened was, I have some crafty friends who did boutiques and they would sell and ask me to do the chalk boards or their signage. It was super fun for me to do, just a little project like that for them and they always said, "You know, you're really good, you should sell your own stuff," and they would tell me that every year, if they did like a pop up shop at Christmas time.

I was just like, "No, that doesn't sound like fun, I'm not that serious about it." It also didn't seem logistically, I could even really make any money doing it. Like who can make money just lettering? Well, come to find out that you can. But at the time, I had no idea and so for a few years, they would encourage me to do that and finally, one year, I was like, "You know what? I'm going to do it." I had a lot of really tough things going on in my life and it felt like just a nice little creative escape.

So I started with one holiday boutique and decided to do it like two weeks ahead of time and just made a bunch of prints, did chalk art and sold out at that boutique and I couldn't believe it. That was just really fun and kind of a surprised and decided to start posting on Instagram, kind of what I was working on and ended up getting asked to do some more holiday boutiques and then everything kept going from there and then I would start getting asked to do custom work and as time went on, then I got more following on Instagram and then I started getting asked to do workshops in person and then people started asking for workshops online.

All of a sudden, I found myself with a business that I didn't know I really wanted and I have questioned if I really wanted to do it but it's actually been super organic and really fun along the way and I've learned so much. I knew nothing about business, like zero. So I've just learned a ton and it's been amazing for me as like therapy and an outlet and also a great way to connect with other people.

**[0:04:22.3] RP:** I love that. That's like such a testament to the fact that you can have incredible organic growth and you have been the person to give what your audience wants and is asking for.

**[0:04:35.4] LF:** Yeah, I definitely — it's been so interesting because you think you might know what you want to do or what you like and then you realized that your audience is asking for something else or you realize that you don't really like doing that. For example, after I did these boutiques where I made prints and different things, I personally loved the process. Like the process became therapy for me, it really was just this super meaningful experience and then I thought, "Oh well I'll just keep making more prints and maybe I'll sell them online."

Turned out I hated shipping, I hated like the management of an online shop. So I wouldn't even tell anybody on Instagram that I had an online shop because I knew then I'd have to ship stuff once that happened and I just didn't want to do that. I didn't think like, "Oh well I should get a fulfillment center," and at that point I was like, "No, I'm not really going to tell anyone that I do this, I'll just keep doing local boutiques."

Until I just started noticing, "Wait, nobody is... I mean, people were asking like, "Can this buy as a sign?" But everyone was asking, "What pen are you using?" That's just kind of my big joke with my husband, he always says, "So what pen are you using?" Because that's what everyone was asking. So I just noticed, "Okay, wait, hold on, people aren't saying like can I buy this, they want to make it themselves." I wasn't sure what I was going to enjoy. I've always loved sharing and the kind of sharing what I'm learning and the things that other people.

So for me, it was like, "Oh, I would love to teach a workshop on this," and just a little side note, I'm like a huge believer, I know you guys are too, in writing down your goals and I remember one day, I had listened to a podcast — I love podcasts! — and someone was saying, "Dream up a really big goal and write it down." I wrote down, "Oh my gosh, one day I would just die to teach a lettering class." That just seemed so far off in the future and such a huge dream. Literally...

**[0:06:37.6] RP:** When did you write this down?

**[0:06:40.2] LF:** In May of two years ago. That was May 2015 and the very next day, somebody contacted me and asked me to teach a chalk art workshop. The very next day, okay? So I'm all about manifesting but that's really happened and I noticed like, "Oh my gosh, this is so fun," and I just kind of kept doing that and following what people were asking for.

That doesn't mean I've done everything that my audiences asked me to do, but I found that like, "Wow, there is a huge desire for this and I'm having a ton of fun sharing it. So let's go this direction," and in that way it has been super organic.

So I've really enjoyed that and then it just kept going and because the following on Instagram kept growing, people kept saying, "I wish I lived there, I wish we could have this online, please do something online," and then it just was like, "Okay." So it just kind of kept going from there.

**[0:07:36.5] CS:** Yeah, when did you publish your first online training or digital download or workbook?

**[0:07:41.9] LF:** In May of 2015 was when I taught my first little baby workshop to like a group of 10 women, probably. That fall is when I kind of really got going with regular workshops at different shops and things like that. Then it wasn't until a year for my first in person work shop that we launched our chalk art 101 course.

People had been asking for a while; it took a while to get that going and I would have this thoughts of — there are so many side things I could say, but my biggest fear in my business is that the interest is so huge that I'm going to lose momentum with people. I just had to let that go because it was like, it's going to be months before it works out but the truth was that people waited. They weren't going to somebody else to find it. They wanted, for some reason, to learn it for me.

It ended up totally working out so we've launched our first chalk art course in May of 2016 and then in October, just this past October launched a lettering bundle with like a full calligraphy course and a brush calligraphy course and they've been amazing. It's just been amazing to watch just kind of following the lead of my audience and at the same time, infusing my passion and my core of making it meaningful.

Because for me, lettering became seriously like a therapy for me. It became something that made me pay more attention in my life to words and meaningful words and how powerful they were and it was almost like a meditation as I would write them and rewrite them. As I would share like my thoughts and my epiphanies about this different quotes or song lyrics or something my kids said on Instagram, people resonated so much with the meaning behind it, the inspiration, the life lessons behind it that I just wanted to help them learn how they could kind of experience this kind of mindful lettering for themselves. Yeah, it just kind of evolved.

**[0:09:45.5] CS:** “Mindful lettering”, that’s like a new — that could be a whole new thing in the world, I feel like.

**[0:09:52.5] LF:** It’s a new genre. I know. It’s been fun to just kind of follow my own heart with it and not just look out there and see what everyone else is doing, but really like figure out why is it that I love this so much and how can I share this with other people and help them to have that same experience themselves.

**[0:10:15.8] RP:** There’s something about you that I can’t really pinpoint exactly, but as I’m listening to you talk about this and maybe it’s just the fact that you were reluctant business owner but there isn’t like this underlying desperation, not that like all of us like an undying desperation necessarily but there’s like a really nice ease about the way that you do business.

Also, yes you’re going to listen to what your audience is asking for but you’re not tied to them in like a binding kind of way, you’re just asking yourself, “Would I enjoy doing this? If not then can I do something else that’s going to fulfil this and also give them what they want and also fulfill what is most important for you in your family?”

**[0:10:58.8] LF:** Exactly. No, I totally — I mean, I think about how things would have been different if I just sat down with a blank piece of paper and said, “Okay, how can I make money or how can I start — what kind of business can I start to make money?” If I had done that, I never in a hundred years would have picked hand lettering. I just — maybe now that I know more about it, I would know that you can actually make a very good living at it. At the time, I would have laughed at you. Like, no way.

But it was fun because it's like when you start a business this way, kind of by accident, I always say you know, it's just a happy accident. Your initial interest isn't in the money, you're doing this because you love it and it happens to be something that people want and that can be a service for them. For me actually, because I've been so reluctant about the business side of it, it's always been like, "If this isn't fun anymore, I'm not doing it."

So it had to be fun and rewarding and happy for me to keep doing it. Yeah, you're right, I did. I always try to make sure. If I felt like it wasn't fun anymore, how can I pivot and make sure that this is more meaningful for me?

**[0:12:02.9] CS:** It's so funny, we've been doing a lot of interviews today, all in a row and there's this theme of pivoting and accidental business that keeps coming up and you've done a fantastic job capitalizing on the opportunities that I would like to think that you've created, albeit, very organically for yourself. If someone who is just getting started, it can be really intimidating to hear, "Okay, you started this way back in the day and it was all kind of accidental and it really worked out well."

But for somebody that's getting started with hand lettering or calligraphy today, or photography or any kind of — one of those highly desirable creative professions that so many of our listeners would like to take full time, what advice or encouragement do you have? Because it can feel really saturated, especially right now with Instagram. I feel like Instagram's brought a whole new level to the hand lettering and calligraphy game, right?

You can find somebody that does hand lettering in your town in a style that you like whereas like, I remember two years ago, I was looking for hand lettering and I couldn't find anything that was like anything near your style. I took like days and days of searching. Nowadays, that's like so easy to find and so, with the market changing like that, should someone maybe consider still going into those even though so many people have taken it up as a career?

If they do decide to go forward with that, what are some things that they might do? Should they go to one of your workshops? Should they buy your book? Should they take a business class instead? What are some things that you might do if you were starting over again today?

**[0:13:38.7] LF:** Sure. Those are all really good questions. I have a few things that I've done myself that I think have been major game changers for me because even when I — I mean, at the time I started, I had no idea that there were lettering accounts on Instagram and I was just started to be blown away, there weren't as many at the time but still enough and at the beginning I thought the smart thing was just to follow all of them and I did learn a lot from people, so it's not like it's all bad to follow other lettering accounts.

But one of the best things I did was to go through and stop following almost all of them and so my advice would be to, once you feel confident, you take a few courses, you feel like you feel confident in your ability to know the basics and understand the techniques and then make it your own. I think it's really hard to make it your own when you're always looking at other people's work. Even when you don't realize it, that's going to influence you and it's okay to be influenced by a lot of different people and different things.

But I think what changed for me was when I said, you know what? I totally seen like, "Oh, they're doing wedding announcements, maybe I should be doing wedding announcements? They do like signs for restaurants, maybe I should be doing that? Or making stamps for people, maybe I should be doing that?" It was like, "No, I can't do all of those things," and I don't necessarily even want to do them all, but because I was seeing them all I thought I should be doing it.

One of my big pieces of advice is to try to find your inspiration from places outside of lettering and that's not a lesson unique to me but that truly helped especially to not feel like — to me it doesn't feel like it's just saturated as it is because I'm not looking at it all day long. So that's one thing that really is super helpful for me and I think that another thing that I would focus on is your unique contribution.

So even though you do lettering or you do photography or you do whatever you're doing and a million other people do it, those people don't have your same life experiences, they don't have the same trials that you've had or the same challenges, they don't have the same personality that you do, it's truly the whole package that makes you who you are.

I would never claim to be the best hand lettering artist in the world. I love it, I think I've learned a lot, I have found — I've taught at this point close to 3,000 people online and in person combined. So I feel like I've a lot of good little tricks and tips to help people but for me, the whole package — when I'm sharing a service with someone, it's the whole package. It's not just how to put your pen to paper. It's how to really take this beautiful craft and make it so that it's making more meaning in your life.

You know, soon before — let's see, in 2013, my younger brother passed away in a car accident, a year later I had a baby, I had a life threatening blood clot and like clots in both lungs, DVT in my leg, so I should have died. I mean, then I've suffered from depression for 20 years and I've had all these different trials that lettering helped me with so much and for me to be able to share that with people and open up my heart and be vulnerable, that has been the combination of making me different from everyone else.

I'm not competing with anybody else when I'm just being myself and I am sharing my heart and so my advice to others is to truly focus on your own experiences and how you can serve people. I think when you're comparing to, "I'm not as good as them and I'm never going to have as many followers." None of that matters, all of that matters is how can I make sure my heart with this people and be a blessing to them?

**[0:17:34.5] RP:** Thank you so much for sharing that. I think you have such a unique story but I think you bring up a good point that we all have our own stories and figuring out what that unique thing is for each of us, it's not about, I mean, it is in terms of this, it is like the unique value proposition. But for you, it's like, what is that story that gets to the why of why you're doing things?

For you, it's about sharing your gift and to be able to show other people that yes, they can also focus on what's most important to them. To be able to create memories around the experiences.

[SPONSOR BREAK]

**[0:18:15.1] CS:** Have you guys seen my new website over at [christinascalera.com](http://christinascalera.com)? It's kind of hard to believe but it's a template. You guys could get the same exact one by going to the



palmshop.co and grabbing one of the amazing sites that Davey and Krista have dreamed up for you. They're all optimized for maximum conversions to make it that much easier to turn strangers into clients.

If you use the promo code "CREATIVEEMPIRE" you'll get access to a secret set of resources and podcast that Reina and I have created just for you purchasers. You'll also get a \$100 to spend at my store and a 20 minute one on one consulting call valued at over \$150. If you want an amazing new site that all of your peers are raving about, set it up in the next hour by going to the palmshop.co and using code "CREATIVEEMPIRE" to check out and claim over \$450 worth of bonuses.

[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

**[0:19:10.7] LF:** Totally.

**[0:19:13.9] CS:** One thing that, you know Lisa, one thing you said that kind of hit for me was when you were talking about the saturation of the market and it's true, if you're using your unique story. Even if you're not, there's so many people out there that have never even heard of hand lettering.

I apply for trademarks for people and I mean, just the conversations that I've had with the people at the United States government office, the United States Patent Trademark Office, they're hilarious when I try to explain to them what hand lettering is right?

**[0:19:45.0] LF:** Totally.

**[0:19:45.9] CS:** So many people out there that have never even heard of it or don't understand what calligraphy is or when they hear calligraphy, they think about it like old Edwardian style. So I would say like I know we talked a little bit about the saturation but I would say that if you're feeling like you're in a saturated place like go to — and Reina's talked about this a lot but find that blue ocean and find where if people never heard of calligraphy before, approach them about your services or products or whatever it might be.

Then, you know, as you're saying Lisa, be friends with them through your unique story that connects you with them. And then you can live out that gift of whatever your craft is providing for you. Lisa, it sounds like you're hand lettering really, I mean, you said the word "mindful hand lettering" before but it really does sound like it helped you through a really difficult and really challenging period of your life.

You know, with that happening and just getting through that, I mean, has that affected the way that you do business? Have you said no to more things, have you pivoted since then, or have you kind of done the same thing?

**[0:20:47.6] LF:** I have totally pivoted and it's been so good for me. I did start learning more about business but I didn't — I feel like, because I started with no knowledge of how I "should be" doing business, I feel like even once I did learn those tools that it felt really authentic because I had already been using this really real authentic voice with my, I like to call them my friends online.

I really think that a year ago in March, I went to, it was a stationary academy at the time, now the Creative Founders conference with Jennifer Faught. I called her before I went and said, "I'm not sure if I should come because I'm not sure that I even want to have a business." I said, "Should I still come? Is this a waste?" She said, "No, you are coming for clarity and you're going to leave us clarity whether you want to do it or not."

It was so amazing for me, it really did help me pivot in my business and the time I was doing all the things, I really was. I was doing random wedding signage and doing logos and doing stuff for people for their homes, custom quotes and I don't regret doing those things. That's another piece of advice for people who are starting out. As a reluctant business owners who kind of fell into this, I feel like I didn't come up with a plan before I started. I just started. The ball was rolling and I was chasing it.

As crazy as it was, I tried so many things and I was able to say, "Yeah, I don't love that or yeah, that doesn't make sense for me to be doing." Just to hear someone say to you, "Oh, custom work doesn't necessarily make sense for some people," that makes their heart sing and that's a dream for them and I think it's awesome so I definitely don't regret doing all those things but

once I figured out what my vision was, which was really inspiring people and helping them focus on what matters, then I realized that it was so much easier to say “no” and to just move on and say, “No, I feel super confident about what I want to do.”

I started having these dreams where it was going to be like mindful lettering or now I’m calling it “wholehearted lettering” where you do this lettering practice but it’s really inspiring and I would never have had the time to create that product if I had been saying “yes” to all the things still. That was helpful for me to have a goal of where my core was, where my passion was because it made it so much easier to say, “I am not the right person for that, because I have this other thing,” and I was able to point them to other people.

I have some students that have come through our workshops that that’s just the perfect fit for them right now, I can kind of pass work off to them and it’s a win/win for everybody and everyone who has ever used them have been super happy. But yeah, it definitely helps me pivot in my business and I remember being at Stationary Academy and thinking, “I’m making this online lettering course,” the first one was for chalk art and I thought, “Should I still do this because I know that my core is really about meaning and inspiring,” and I was like, “Yes, I can absolutely still do this. Just the way that I’m doing it is different.”

So when I would even send out emails about why, it’s all about my why and I would just share about the quotes that I would change out on my chalk board and how they made my family life meaningful and were helpful for my kids and as we went through the course I could share “this is why I do this” and really the reason behind it and what I was hoping that they might get out of it. It wasn’t that I couldn’t keep teaching, because I did love teaching, it was just the approach and the way in which I did it was just more focused and felt more fulfilling for me.

**[0:24:54.0] RP:** Yeah, I think that whenever we can do things in business that feel right and are fulfilling for us, that’s the sweet spot and like turning down the things that don’t feel right or like in your case, giving it to past clients or past students, I think that’s probably really fulfilling for you so that you can concentrate on the things that really fill you up, right?

**[0:25:16.6] LF:** Totally.

**[0:25:17.4] RP:** Can we talk a little bit about past client or student success stories? I always love hearing stuff about just people who have come through programs and have done really cool things. Have you heard any cool success stories?

**[0:25:32.4] LF:** Absolutely. The fun thing is that they don't always tell me right away and later they'll say, you know, they've got this business and they're doing all this custom work and it's because I took your class, I have another student who just — she just is like so sweet and I'm like trying not to get emotional but she just came to our classes and she ended up taking every single class that we offered. She has over 1,000 followers and sharing her heart and her [inaudible] happened to pass away.

All about my experience with that and with grief and she just, you know, would tell me like, "You really did change my life, this has become such a healing experience for me," and just so many stories like that where they've started businesses but even more so, it's been a blessing to their life and that it's given them meaning and brought more happiness and that just — that's it. That is my pay day right there.

**[0:26:33.0] RP:** Goosebumps all up and down my legs. Yeah, I think that that's the core of what you're talking about, right? You're giving — it's not about the hand lettering even though that's the tool that you're using. You're blessing people and you're giving them an experience that they might not have been able to have otherwise.

**[0:26:52.5] LF:** Totally, I always say, the hand lettering is the vehicle. I do feel like I have this bigger mission of helping people and, you know, I think that as business owners, it's just really easy to get caught in these bench marks you want to hit or what you want to be doing and you forget that so much of this experience for your customers and clients is how you're making them feel.

That's one of my biggest take away would be just focus on how you can make them feel and one of my biggest goals in my classes, when they're in person or whether online or any interactions, is just to help people feel loved and seen and appreciated and that's just one of my things. So I think people underestimate how powerful that can be.

**[0:27:48.0] RP:** I feel that from you. I think that every time we've interacted online, it's been from this place of just love and being seen and understood and I think that's the core of what we want as humans, right? To belong and like feel like we're accepted and understood by others. Thank you for doing that and being such a positive force in the world. You know, something that might seem silly coming out of my mouth but I really would love for you to hear this is that, I noticed that you had a huge Instagram account and I was thinking to myself, "Why does she care about me?"

You have like 80,000 people who are following you and you're messaging me with such encouraging things and like, for the podcast and for me personally, just reaching out and saying, "Hey, I think you're doing a great job," or just sharing some of our content. I think people can be stingy with the way that they use their social platforms and I think you do such a beautiful job of encouraging. Just wanted to say.

**[0:28:40.3] LF:** Well, thank you. It's interesting because when I very first started the Instagram account, my main goal was that I just wanted to spread light and at the time, there was no real thought of that this would become a business and definitely not as big of a business as it has become. It's funny because when I say "reluctant business owner", I still have a hard time saying I have a business and it's like, it's definitely a business.

But, it's such a big part of my heart and I did, that was my goal was just to spread light and spread goodness and I will say, you know, for a long time, I was just posting on Instagram every day because it was fun for me and it was a great outlet and it was a great way to connect with really positive, encouraging people and so I was posting for a very, very long time before I ever had a real product.

Besides in person classes, which were awesome. But for a majority of the people who are following along on Instagram, they were following along with me for a year and a half before I had anything to sell to them or share with them. So it gave me a really long time to be really just positive and helpful and inspiring or encouraging before I even knew how else I could help them.

It was hard for me at first to sell. I remember feeling like, “Oh I don’t know if I can do this,” and I was actually at a conference here, Bash. It’s a conference for party planners and I actually met Heather Crabtree for the first time, she had spoken and I was just talking to her after and telling her that I was just having a hard time with the whole selling thing and she was just so encouraging and she was like, “Are your people asking for this?”

I’m like, “Yeah, they ask me every single day,” you know? She just really helped me change that mindset into, “No, this is a blessing to them. This is what they want,” and then that’s just how I felt ever since is I’m not shy about sharing when we have courses coming out or when we came out with a Creative Lettering Journal because it was just like, “No, this is a blessing, this is what they’re asking for. I’m not going to be embarrassed, I’m not going to feel silly about it, I knew they wanted it, they had all asked for it for a very long time.” So it made it easier.

**[0:30:59.9] RP:** I love that. Yeah, that’s such a good switch from “this is scary to sell” to “this is what they’ve been asking for” and they’ll go gladly hand over the money to have the product or the course.

**[0:31:12.2] LF:** Yeah, and I think it’s so tempting to want to wait until it’s done. It’s just, that’s human nature for some reason, people want to wait for a big surprise. It’s like, “No, I can’t tell you what I got you for your birthday. I can’t give you hence what I got you, I’m just going to give it to you and just cross my fingers that you’re going to love it,” and it’s like no. I’ve just learned, it’s so much more fun for me to include all my friends in the process and to allow them to be part of it.

I mean, I start a posting about the Creative Lettering Journal five months or more before it came out and just sharing sketches and asking for help in the newsletter and I had so many good responses and feedback that I included and it was just so fun. By the time it came out, everyone felt like it was — like they had a piece in it, they were waiting. When there were million glitches and the website crashed and like we had to totally scrounge and figure everything out.

Everyone was so patient and so supportive because I was just really open about it and everyone knows that I’m not techy, this isn’t my — I was never meant to do this. Not that I wasn’t meant for it, but I didn’t meant to do it. Then it’s like such a different experience and I

ended up feeling so loved out of it because they were all cheering me on the whole time. So, that was cool.

**[0:32:35.7] CS:** Yeah, I think that's the advantage of having that audience and it's really fun to lean into that. Even here with the podcast, we're so much more likely, when we need contractors in our own individual businesses or for the podcast to look to that Creative Rmpire Facebook group, that's the first place I go because it tells you that person's not just there for a good time or for a payment or whatever.

They're actually really invested in whatever it is that you're creating. I think it's fantastic that you had that platform built up before you had something to offer them and they were so excited to help you as things were happening, it made you more human to them and maybe it even inspired other people to go out there and put their stuff out there before they were technically "ready", before it was perfect, before whatever they had that perfect website. They say you're kind of falling apart at a critical time and it sounds like it all worked out.

**[0:33:32.2] LF:** It all works out when people are really patient and supportive.

**[0:33:36.7] CS:** Yeah, for sure. I think that's a testament to what you've built with your audience right? We kind of cultivate the audience that we want to have. There's a lot of people out there that say, "If you want to sell to your audience, do it early and often. Don't just surprise them or something for sale after you've been giving them all this free content."

For you and for Reina and other entrepreneurs out there, I think it's the same thing with like kindness and support and encouragement. That's something that Reina's been really good at layering on from the beginning of her sales funnel or not sales funnel, but just like welcome sequence or nurture sequence, whatever you want to call it.

It sounds like you're doing this really well Lisa too with your workbooks and your courses and things like that. You know, if somebody who does want to build in a — like if they want to build up that business that is really encouraging for other people that that tends to lead to a lot of collaborations and just a lot of partnerships and community, what are some tips that you might have that they might be able to implement today even if they're just getting started?

**[0:34:37.7] LF:** I am very — I definitely am an extrovert, I connect with people, that's my thing. Somebody asked me, they're like, "I feel like I have taken all these different steps that I just don't have that kind of connections and things," and I just cannot recommend highly enough just getting out there and making connections. Whether it's connecting with people on Instagram or going to conferences. I'm just such a huge believer in doing that, especially in person when you can.

But just also just to be real, vulnerable, and to embrace those imperfections. I think that people feel so much more comfortable to connect with you, to share their story, to be open when you're open with them. It's hard to do sometimes and I don't think you need to you know, tell everyone your life story all the time but when you're doing it in a way that you're hoping will be a blessing to them, I think that it just can be a super meaningful way to connect with your audience as well as with other business owners and just not being afraid to ask.

I have had some pretty amazing experiences with brands where, you know, I might just like message them and say, "Hey, I love your products, I use them, we should collaborate or if you ever need someone for something, let me know," kind of thing and you'd be really surprised at who responds and says, "Hey, you know what? We actually would love to work with you or do this or that," and I just think it's embracing that imperfection and just allowing yourself to just be open and not being afraid to just reach out and connect with people.

**[0:36:20.6] CS:** Yeah, we were so lucky and we forget that but you know, in 2017, the internet is so vastly different than what it was even 10 years ago and I mean, 10 years ago, we didn't have Instagram, we didn't have this opportunity to connect with other people or see where the next conference was, or I don't even think Etsy existed at the time. We couldn't have even bought this beautiful hem lettering workbook.

It can feel like the community maybe is there for somebody else and not you unless you start to put yourself out there. This is awesome advice Lisa and, you know, looking to the future and it sounds like you've had a lot of adversity in your past, you pivoted, you've learned, you've changed, you may be a little less reluctant of a business owner, I'm not sure, I'm not totally convinced.



You know, looking ahead and seeing what your future creative empire looks like, would you be willing to tell us a little bit about that and how you're looking to expand your horizon in the future?

**[0:37:19.0] LF:** I think, like we talked about earlier, the lettering is such an amazing way right now for me to kind of inspire and share with people and so for the foreseeable future, I just feel like I'll continue to do that, we're going to be coming out with our next lettering course in May actually when the podcast comes out, it's going to be on layout and flourishing, which is what we actually got requested for the most, that's going to be our next one.

It's going to be all about, it's going to include a lot of the kind of mindful lettering in with it. I think I'm just looking forward to continuing to create products that just combine this love for lettering and intentional living.

**[0:38:04.1] CS:** Thank you. Where can people find you?

**[0:38:06.5] LF:** They can find me, I mostly hang out on Instagram, @HandletteredDesign and then also handlettereddesign.com.

**[0:38:16.6] CS:** Awesome, thank you so much Lisa, it's been a joy having you here and for everybody out there listening, we hope that you have an encouraged and inspired to continue to build your own creative empire.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

**[00:38:29.0] 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.

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.

[END]