

Called To Both 27 Transcript

Joy Michelle

If you are just feeling pulled in 1 million directions with the ever growing number of options when it comes to social media platforms that you can market your business on, then you need to listen to today's episode. Our guest for today is Mary Shelton. Mary is a photographer, a designer and Margarita lover, mom and Enneagram two, she was born and raised in Chicago and now calls Michigan home but still loves some Lu mo noddys Pizza, living near the lake and the Chicago Bears. Mary is sharing her personal experience and take on approaching social media in an authentic way, and why she relies more on client experience and connection over the ever changing metrics of Instagram. You'll get some tips and grow strategies for when you need clients like yesterday, and what to do to get them. She answers a lot of my questions around marketing to millennials versus Gen Z. And so much more. This episode is packed, it is refreshing and honest, and I just know you're gonna love it.

Joy Michelle

Before we get into today's episode, I want to take a second and thank today's sponsor, which is my favorite tool for content creation called Descript. Descript is the tool that I use to share smaller cut down pieces of this podcast and to repurpose my YouTube videos and create onscreen captions inside of reels. Descript makes video editing and audio editing so easy. It feels just like you're editing inside of a Word doc, you can remove filler words like ums and us with just a single click and even make corrections to something that you said or misspoke using the overdub tool. If you create content in your business of any kind, I highly recommend that you take a look at this tool. It is seriously packed with features. It's very user friendly. And as someone who does not have a background in video editing, I found this really simple and easy to use and learn. I'll have a link in the show notes for you guys. And you can give it a try for free and get started.

Joy Michelle

Hello, and welcome to the call to both podcast. I'm your host Joy Michelle, and you're in the right place. If you're ready to grow your business, while also being the intentional and present mom you want to be this show will leave you feeling inspired, equipped with tangible tips and encouraged to go after your own version of being called to both. Let's dive in.

Joy Michelle

Hi, Mary, welcome to the show. I am super excited about this episode today because we are going to be diving into some juicy stuff that I have not had a chance to really unpack here on the podcast yet topics like how your follower count does not mean money, and how to actually get word of mouth client referrals through your client experience. So super excited about this.

Mary Shelton

I am so excited to I can't wait. And I'm just excited to talk to you in general.

Joy Michelle

Yeah, well, okay. So we go back a couple years, of course, through photography through the accelerator program, and you were just like one of my faves to work with. You have amazing style.

You're super fun. And I know you're gonna bring like real truth when we talk about these topics here. So when we were talking about this in the DMS, I was like yes, Mary, come on. Tell me what you think. Yeah, yeah. So you work with lots of clients, both millennials, Gen Z. And I want to hear more about like your background and marketing. We're gonna get into all of that. So first, let's just start with like you your business? What led you to start your business? And how did you end up here today?

Mary Shelton

Oh, my gosh, well, first, thank you so much for having me. I'm super excited to chat with you. I definitely mixed Missy from our boxer days. So I'm like really excited to just chat. But I started my business after I had my son and was just starting to photograph him and just our family and getting super interested in that. And then from there, it just grew like you know, you have like friends and friends and family who's asking you to take their family pictures, asking you to take senior pictures for their kids. And it ended up being something that I fell in love with so deeply so quickly. And has just grown from there.

Joy Michelle

Yeah, I love that. And I I actually particularly love that you started your business after becoming a mom because for me, my business started before having my kids and so I kind of want to hear like how was that for you like being a mom having the side passion and being more than a mom beat feeling called to be more than just a mom and I I want to hear about that a little bit.

Mary Shelton

Yeah, nice. So I stayed at home with my son until he was like about eight months old. And then I started getting this itch to like, do something else and after just shooting him in our family for those first eight months. It was really really nice being a mom first and then finding my calling second because I could set my boundaries from the start versus having to go through the situation of like all that mom guilt like now I have to set boundaries for my families. Like how do I figure this out after being someone who can just Like focus on that. And so now it's awesome because I can set my boundaries and just grow from there, versus having to do the reverse. So it's definitely helped in my business so that I can do multiple things outside of my business like personally in my community and grow from there.

Joy Michelle

Yeah, I love that I, I coming from having a business and then thinking like, Where the heck is motherhood gonna fit into this? I feel like sometimes that can be like a block. And then I think also it can be a block for the mom that wants to start a business. And it's like, well, where would this even fit. So I love that this just perfectly illustrates, like, you can do this, whether you already have kids, or you're eventually going to have kids like you can make this work and that there's pros and cons to both. And I love how you talked about having your boundaries set up from the start, which is huge. Especially for like being on your phone, being with your son and social media, which I feel like really leads us into like the topic for today. And I feel like it's really, really easy to feel like pulled in a million directions online to feel like you have to get caught up in like every platform, grow, grow, grow numbers, numbers, numbers. And yeah, it I think it's really easy to forget, like, that's not exactly a metric for success, and that does not pay the bills. And I know you say your followers count does not pay the bills. And so I want to hear more about that. Like what are your thoughts on this and what what should we be focusing on instead?

Mary Shelton

So I'm definitely someone who fell for the trap for the numbers. You know, like I was like, how many likes can I get? What is my engagement look like? Oh my gosh, Instagrams dead get on Tik Tok from there now there's be real, there's like a million different social media outlets just keep happening every single day. And I truly just got overwhelmed and burned out because that I found that I was like working for the algorithm. And I was working for Instagram and for Tik Tok. And I wasn't working for my clients anymore. Like at that point, my clients are the ones who are suffering because I'm focused, when I'm when you're taking photos, you're focused on Instagram crop, like for a minute, like I had my camera taped on top and bottom, on the screen on the back, so I could see what Instagram crop looked like. And you just fall for this. I know, it was like I was deep into it. And at that point, I was just like, I was still getting clients like things were consistently happening. But I was like, this is not sustainable. And something new is going to come along, that's going to stress me out even more. So like how can I put a pause on this and be more intentional and be more myself and serve my clients the best way I possibly can versus me freaking out because I didn't get the engagement on a post that I wanted to.

Joy Michelle

Yeah, and like talking about like the extremes that we go to for these platforms and how then in a shoot or when you're working with a client when you're building the product, when you're thinking about your marketing, you're first and foremost not thinking about your business, you're first and foremost thinking about a platform you don't own. And that should be such a red flag that should be like, Hey, you're building your house on land you don't own And so bringing it back to like your brand first is so foundational and I feel like your gut was so right and now it's like it all connects now into this like marketing plan that actually is sustainable and doesn't make you feel so burnt out. So like when you were like okay, hold on backup. This is extreme. I don't like this and it's not even serving my clients. How did you decide what was going to take the place and who was actually going to start getting that intention and attention instead of Instagram.

Mary Shelton

So the first thing that I went to was really just like myself and my ethos at the same like from the job and just realize like why am I doing this? What is it that I will I want to capture not that will necessarily do well in the app and it went back to the original reason why I started my business and it was from shooting my side and having those photos that mean something while also maintaining the aesthetic that I like because let it also be known like I love an aesthetic as much as it's like the lovey dovey stuff and aesthetic to me it's like that's definitely is king but finding a way to merge that into this very heirloom as like stands the test of time situation but still having it be a little bit edgy and fashionable too. So I was just like okay, if I start there and let me just like not post so I went on a one month hiatus where I just like deleted the app. Is that necessarily good for business? Probably not. But it worked for me and just creating and so then it got to a point where I had all this that I created and I got super overwhelmed with like little what is my first post back. And then I was like, Yeah, this is a problem. And then I took a pause again, I was like, this is a problem. I'm going back to where I was before. And so yeah, the first place in all of it was just like thinking about, like, what is my ethos? What is important to me, and the things that were important to me is creating heirlooms, that we're still vibey still trendy, and serve the aesthetic that I like, and then serving my clients so that they were happy with everything that they got. And then I was able to move to the next steps in marketing.

Joy Michelle

Yeah, yeah. So like, during this time, this hiatus where Instagram was just like a drag, and you're like, nevermind, we're just gonna ignore that for a second. What was happening as far as referrals,

marketing, other things that were happening in your business? Like, did everything go away? Or did you find that like, maybe you don't need Instagram as much as you thought you did?

Mary Shelton

I definitely don't think I needed Instagram as much as I thought I did. Most of my referrals were for client referrals. And a lot of my business is client referral, don't get me wrong, there's still stuff that comes from social. But yeah, the clients that I like I love and I continue to love working with, they're being referred by other clients, or they shot me saw me shoot a wedding. And they were a guest at the wedding or they were a bridesmaid or one senior got their pictures. And then they referred me to another senior, or they posted something on Instagram and tagged me without me having to post something initially. And that still came back to me, I started really focusing on Pinterest marketing, because that was a completely different flip from there. And I started working small plug to second fiddle, and, and they were running all of my Pinterest marketing for me on the back end. So I still had free time on my end, as well as posting on blogs a little bit more, just to boost with the SEO to my website. So I kind of like went back to the basis, pre Instagram where everybody was just like SEO is King Pinterest marketing was everything. And that's helped me out a ton too.

Joy Michelle

Yeah, I mean that everything you're listing is very search engine based too. And like networking, and like old school, like client experience loving these people really well. surprising and delighting like going above and beyond. Because that's never going to go out of style. How Yeah, how do you think like client experience and like the stuff we're doing face to face plays a role in marketing versus like, posting beautiful vibey stuff to Instagram?

Mary Shelton

Yeah, and what people don't realize is like, if you don't turn the notifications off on your phone for Instagram, your notifications on your phone, just like explode. Like I don't know if anybody else's phone looks like mine during the day where I have like red dots everywhere for all the things that need to be responded to. So it's like, I get notifications for Instagram, and then you get notification through text messages. And then there's phone calls. And it's like, at one point, you just get overwhelmed with all the notifications. You're just like, am I even responding to everything? Am I missing a text message? Am I missing a phone call missing an email, because it's just too much. So to honestly just like, it's way too much, it's so overwhelming. And then you know, you're looking at your phone at like 1130 at night, you still have notifications that you need to respond to. But when it comes to client interaction, most of my most of my clients do have my cell phone number. And I tell them, like as much as you want to email me. I'm very open to them texting me and calling me. I do communicate with them that I do have like office hours for certain things. So if you don't get a response from me right away, like, if it's urgent, you'll get it right away. But if not, then you'll probably get it within the next office hour. But just making sure that you have open communication with your clients. The best way I can explain through weddings is me and my couples, we have like a straight line of communication in like me understanding like the aesthetic, they're going for their wedding, they go wedding dress shopping, I'm like, text me the picture. As soon as you get it, I want to be just as involved in the process, like, have one of your girlfriends like video the dress and send it to me so I can respond or be my friend on Snapchat, we can snap back and forth all those information too. It's more so like getting to know them in a way that's beyond just being their vendor, but being their friend, you know, and it makes them feel special. It makes me feel special that they even want to communicate with me that way. And I'm not just another vendor, and it causes

me to be even more invested in their wedding. And I'm invested in their family at that point. And the product is always just a million times better.

Joy Michelle

Yeah, I mean, I feel like what you're describing is a personal brand. It's the difference between getting an awesome experience from like a boutique, you know, clothing company versus like shopping with the designer. And I think that like what we can do as a solopreneur as a small business is give a more personalized variants, then you can't do this with big companies that that's like a unique advantage. And so instead of seeing it as like, I'm just me, I only work this many hours. I'm like thinking of it in like a small way, it sounds like you're seeing this as like, I can actually, like, come alongside of you and be excited about your wedding because like, I'm excited about your weapon. And that's gonna stand out like that. They're gonna love that, like, everybody wants to do business at some with someone that wants to do business with them. Like, I know that, like, I've hired people that are they the best at that thing? No, I just love them. They're great at what they do. But I love them. And I know that they're going to make this a great experience. And that's, I mean, like, yeah, client experience, I think is like, so easily overlooked. In the in the world of marketing, like people will say, Okay, well, I need clients, like, let's talk about marketing. And I think they want me to say like, Alright, here's the secret blog posts, like, here's the secret keyword phrase, here's the tag or the hashtag. And like, some of it is like, the not scalable, not searchable client experience. Right? Like, and it's not the sexiest thing, but like, it is because it Well,

Mary Shelton

yeah. And honestly, like, if you think about it from a vendor, like think about it from a vendor perspective anyway, to, you're really stoked to shoot a wedding when you know all the details, you know, and it also prepares you so that you, you know, what you're shooting, you have a better understanding and things like that, like, a simple thing is asking to go on a vendor tour with your couple, like, that's a whole other experience you have with them. And I go on a vendor tour with my couple, like when or like a venue tour, and we're going and we're looking at all the different places. And then And then afterwards, we go out for food, or we go out for a drink, or we go out for coffee together, we get to know each other a little bit more like that's offering that boutique client experience in that too, especially when it's a venue you haven't shot at yet. Honestly, like, or even as a vendor, it's really, really easy way to educate your couple, you know, like, you say, you really want the opportunity, like a big trend right now is champagne tower photos or whatever. It is so simple to just have a constant open stream of DMS on Instagram or text messages with your client and just be like, Yo, this is so you. And yeah, I think you guys would be so stoked to do something like this. And then just be like, Yo, I didn't even think about that I didn't know that existed. But that's part of the client experience is like opening up them to different ideas. And it's a win win situation from everybody, they get something that they didn't even know they wanted, but you get the photos of what you wanted to. So just an open stream of communication. Sometimes communication is all it is.

Joy Michelle

Yeah. Okay, so my next question was going to be like, what is client experience? How should we be thinking about this in our business? And it's I feel like you're you're kind of already saying like, thinking in unique ways, small ways, like to open more communication, where you can educate is a part of your the client experience, is there anything else that we should be thinking about when it comes to client experience, and just making sure that it is as excellent as it can be, so that it does lead to those word of mouth referrals?

Mary Shelton

So if I had to, like run through what my personal commute like client experience is, I think it starts with that first initial inquiry, like scheduled like offering to schedule either a zoom call or out for coffee, depending on where that person is located. Like sometimes my clients are in Chicago, and if they're in Chicago, it's a little bit difficult to get to them to schedule that. But just having starting off with a zoom call, there's a lot of vendors who don't start off with Zoom calls or phone calls. And that just corresponding through email, it just seems very cold and dry. So definitely there or anything from things that you offer, like with vendor referrals, or you have certain programs with certain factors like referral program with different makeup artists are different florists. So it's also just like having vendor recommendations and maybe having some type of situation where you're working with another vendor for those referrals, especially people just starting out, that's very helpful, open lines of communication through from beginning to after, you know, like after those deliverables happen. And that end before reviews come in. Just constant communication is something that will definitely make you exceptional because as a client, you want to know that people are still thinking about you when you're not there. You know, it's like okay, my wedding stopped yet another year. But like my weddings, not until next year, but my vendors talking to me right now and she's talking me to me, two months from now and with In situations like HoneyBook, where you can automate everything and work with people that basically help schedule that for you. So it's like two months from an event, this email goes out or another three months from there, another email goes out, there really is an excuse for constant communication not to happen.

Joy Michelle

Yeah, I love that. And I think that's such a good point of like, just leveraging systems, leveraging a pre written template that you can customize in your voice in your brand, it still brings value, not everything needs to be like hand typed out every single client from scratch, like we can be smart about this, and still make them feel seen make them feel like I haven't forgotten about you. And like, you know, if you're listening to this, and you're not a photographer, it's like this can be applied to really any, any kind of deliverable from the time that they book you or buy the thing till the time that they get that final deliverable. There's a span of time. And I think that especially right after that first booking is made, like when that payment goes through, whether I have bought the big thing, or I'm buying a service or product, that is the window just after the purchase, I think where you can have that like dip of like buyer's remorse, because it's a little underwhelming, it's like you've made this big payment, but you don't have the thing, you don't have the website, you don't have the new brand, you don't have the copy on your website, or like the, the photography, like experience or the photos in your hand yet. So you're sitting there in this, like in between. And I think as business owners, it's really important for us to be tuned into this, that gap of okay, as soon as they make that payment, like you got to keep the hype high, like you got to like send the intake questionnaire, and the welcome guide and say, like, I am super excited. I know, this isn't for a really long time, but I'm invested as much as you are. And like, here's what we can do. So like, I know, I used to be like, alright, what like, what can we talk about as far as like planning the location or the makeup or given the referrals, like you talked about having these connections and like sending your friends that are vendors, the business, it's like, you're you're hitting so many birds with one stone of like, those vendor relationships, but also serving the client really well, just making them feel like you're a resource beyond the thing that they originally came to you for. They came to you because they wanted exceptional heirloom images. But now they're getting like design aesthetic and like, ideas for the champagne tower and you saying like, Hey, this is actually like, my favorite makeup artists, like this person is actually going to get you looking super good on time, which is

important. And I think like that's where like their little hidden values come in, where they're like, oh my gosh, you're even better than I thought. And I think that's where like, then people are talking.

Mary Shelton

Yeah, and even just in that situation was my biggest red flag like for myself, like, let it be known. I also want everybody to understand that like, I'm not on my high horse, when going through the process. And after dealing with that full Instagram burnout. This was my red flag, my red flag was my communication with my clients. And I was just like, okay, she hasn't heard from me in this long, or I wasn't getting on this or I wasn't responding to this. And then when I realized if I just correct that right now. That's where all of my referral base would come from. So I can honestly say, as somebody who has dealt with that burnout, and saw these red flags in my communication, that was my first job to fix it. Correct. So that going forward, I'm just going to uplevel my experience every single time.

Joy Michelle

Yeah, I think that's like, that's a great audit, to just say like, okay, when was the last time everyone has heard from me, like who is on my client roster right now? And when was last time they heard from me? And maybe is there some some gap that I could fill? And that's like, that's so super helpful. And I think very tangible takeaway. Is there something that you have learned the hard way about client experience? And really, I don't know if you've had a point where like, you work with clients, and it doesn't lead to referrals? And now it's a it's a great referral source for you? Was there ever a gap where you felt like, Okay, I need to change some things. Beyond, you know, what you just mentioned with like, hey, it's been a minute since they heard from me,

Mary Shelton

um, I would say, just went, when I was going through the full audit and figuring out like, where my holes were, I think a big piece was just having a lack of education for my clients was a place where definitely I didn't gain referrals from. And I learned that especially by looking between like my wedding side of my business, and then the senior side of my business, while as the senior side of my business, it's like a constant education system. And I realized through like my Gen Z clients that my millennial clients definitely wanted to be educated more or they wanted a little bit more hand holding or even just be told no, that's not going to work, like just ahead of time so that they have a better understanding and they Example being like, my Gen Z clients who are all taking senior pictures and stuff like I have a whole like color palette situation. So I have them send me their outfits ahead of time I look at those those outfits, I think about their skin tones, I'd be like, hey, like, I know that this like shirt is a shirt you love. But like that skin tone on your shirt like this is like, this is what it'll end up looking at in the end. And I just don't think that you're going to be like, super happy with that. And then being like, Oh, thanks. That's what's up, like, Thanks for telling me that that's not going to work out versus an example, you have a wedding client. And they really want photos that look like this for they're getting ready photos, and you don't explain to them, like lighting situation, lighting conditions, or an aesthetic for an actual like room that they're staying in. And you're like, dude, those aesthetics don't match. And but when you build a relationship with them enough, like communication wise, and you're just like, I know you love this aesthetic. But this room is not going to match that aesthetic, we can find a way to do it, but it's not going to be the exact thing. They're like, Oh, thanks. That's what's up. But that only works if you have like a deeper relationship with them where they feel comfortable with you communicating them that way. But one thing that I've seen with clients is that they definitely want to be educated and they want to be helped. Because planning a wedding is a very excessive situation. There's a lot of things to be thinking

about. But sometimes people just aren't thinking about those things. And they just want a little bit of help.

Joy Michelle

Yeah, what's fascinating about this is that you are working with millennials, Gen Z, but you're saying that like they they want the same things? Is this? Do you find that this is true, kind of in terms of the experience that you're giving, that they want to be educated? Like? Are there any differences in your marketing when you're talking to Gen Z versus millennial?

Mary Shelton

I used to and that was a big thing that I saw in my website and blog post is I tried to be like super uber ly, like, professional with like my millennial and older clients. And I realized like, first of all, that's like, not me in general. And just like the way that I talk. So I realized that when I used more of like the marketing sense that I'm using for my Gen Z clients, for my millennial clients, I actually got more referrals and more initial inquiries in general, just because they all want the same thing. They want to be educated, they want to be loved, they want to be focused on and taken care of. And they want to like have a good time. And if you give everybody that experience instead of like, okay, I have to talk to these people this way. And these people this way, like no, just be the same across the board, and you're gonna get way more out of it.

Joy Michelle

Yeah, I love that. It sounds like sometimes we're overthinking it. And back to you, like you come back to your brand, your voice your why. And stop thinking about all the filters of all the platforms. And you're like, Does it fit? Does it fit in a real does it fit in and it's like, no, just come back to you. And you're probably hit closer to the center of that target? Because it's in alignment with you and you're actually helping and serving and educating. This is super thought provoking. I love this. So like, Do you have a favorite hack or tip or anything that you could share with our listeners for up leveling your client experience?

Mary Shelton

Become a client and go through your own client process. So as soon as I thought I was done with my full client process, like I became my client, so I had all of my automations and set myself up. And I went through an initial inquiry, I went through all of my inquiry form. So go through my SR inquiry form, my like all my honey book inquiry forms, as well as my shortening, show inquiry form. And I took myself through the whole inquiry process from beginning to add all the way through deliverables and after. And, wow, in that moment, you really can see where the holes are in your client process or where there's a lull. And I did that I've done this like two or three times, probably in the like the last couple of weeks just to make sure that everything was followed following as smooth as possible. And then just thinking about myself, if I was the one getting very What else would I want? Or what else would I need in order to make myself feel comfortable with my vendor. Or if I was going through senior pictures, like what other information I would want from my vendor. And that would be my number one hack is pretend to be one of your own clients don't just like click a checkbox and like go through your back end, like be a client and see what your clients are seeing and experience what your clients are experiencing.

Joy Michelle

Yeah, that's so good. That's so so good, because it makes sense to us on a different way when we've built it. It's like you can't you don't see it the same way.

Mary Shelton

You just go into autopilot like it's not Yeah, you're not seeing the

Joy Michelle

Mel come into your personal inbox, you know, with everything else and see the subject line that you chose that made sense at the time. And now you're thinking, Well, hold on, let's back up. It just gives you perspective. I love that it's such a good hack. Okay, so when bookings are low, when it's just feeling like a lull in business, do you have like a favorite or go to way to boost bookings? Like, if somebody's like, Okay, we're going to the fall, I would love to get some family sessions on the books, or I'd love to book like five new design clients. What can I do to just kind of like inject new life into my marketing? Or what what do you do?

Mary Shelton

I would say the first thing is going to like free downloads, while adding to your newsletter is probably the number one thing I've gotten. So an example being like, for weddings, I made a 2022 wedding trend, like wedding trend lists, and it was a free downloadable, but you'd have to sign up for my newsletter in order to get the downloadable. And once your newsletter is like boosted. Like, it's really, really nice to reach out to referrals for clients through your newsletter, or do mini sessions through a newsletter or things like that. It's just like having some type of communication with everybody outside of social from there. Not to say it's annoying as social is you still have to do it. But also having that downloadable in like just a story with a link in again, boosting your newsletter that way, I found that like, my newsletter is kind of the way that if I need an increase of bookings, that's where I kind of start.

Joy Michelle

Yeah, I love that because you own that list. Like regardless of what's happening online, regardless of what's happening with if your stories are coming up for people or not. Because I know people get stressed about story views dipping and things like that. It's like, those are people who have raised their hand and said, like, I want to hear from you. So for your email provider or you on flow desk. I'm gonna upload husk Nice, nice. Okay, we're gonna link that down below. So

Mary Shelton

love flow desk. It's so simple, easy and stupid.

Joy Michelle

Yeah, yeah. And it works though. Like you're saying, like, if, if today you said I need to go book 10 mini sessions, the first thing you do is craft an awesome email.

Mary Shelton

And for example, like I'll have my my winter mini sessions that are coming up soon. And I'll release it to my newsletter first. So I'll basically post like, Hey, I'm doing mini sessions, but it's going to the email list first. So I always feel is the email list before I feed social,

Joy Michelle

which gives people another added reason to not only subscribe, but to stay subscribed, because they know there's an actual reason and a benefit to them being on that list. I think this is such good marketing advice you guys. Like if you don't have an email list, go down to the description, click on flow

desk, get started play around with it, it's easier than you think. And it's huge. It's huge for repeat clients. Like if you have the same clients every fall, if you have, you know, you want to be someone's lifelong legacy photographer, this is so smart and so good.

Mary Shelton

If you don't have an email list, go ahead and do that. But also, if you like, for example, for anybody who's like a brand designer, or anything of those sorts, like being on Pinterest is just as important. I got my website fully done. And I also know how much I spent on my fully done website. But finding my person off of Pinterest based on like just aesthetic reasons there too. So for like brand designers, I don't think there's enough brand designers on Pinterest. But people think about it, people figure out what their aesthetic is on Pinterest before they even get on social. So the first thing that somebody does is does when they're like, I need to rebrand my website, I'm going on Pinterest and creating a full mood board on Pinterest. If someone's getting married, they're going on Pinterest and creating a full mood board on Pinterest. If you're not on either of those outlets, you're definitely missing out there as much as Pinterest is a social media outlet. It's more of like an aesthetic outlet like posting more doesn't help on Pinterest. It's posting intentionally on Pinterest is definitely what's more helpful. The last thing I would say is as when you're if you're somebody who's struggling with social media right now, based on the way that the Instagram algorithm has changed with like reels and stuff, the more authentic you are, the better it is mentally for you. And the more you're going to get more intentional stuff with clients. And the main reason why I say that social media doesn't build clients like I've had some very viral tic TOCs happen. So over 400k Like views on the tic toc or over 83k likes on a tic toc that has never directly correlated with bookings I've never had like a tick tock or something go viral. And then all of a sudden look at my inbox and a ton of bookings come in. So the feedback happens, but I'm not I'm not all of a sudden going to tick tock and be like, Oh, I got 400k views on this tick tock. Let me check my email. No, that doesn't happen. Like that's not the thing that happens a thing, like so it's like nice to have those like beefy metrics because your serotonin levels will push that you get super excited. But in no way am I getting money off of my 400k views on Tik Tok?

Joy Michelle

Yeah, no, I'm so glad you said that. Because I've had a couple of viral reels. And it I got, I have been on YouTube for five years. And if I had those level of like those that amount of views on YouTube, it would have directly led to subscribers and probably people moving through my funnel and like, it's totally different there. It's like, the way I describe it as like, they're cheap. The views are real, real cheap, because I'm real hot. Get it? But you know, it's short content. Like it's, it's five seconds long. So like, that is not the same as like, okay, these 45 people read this blog post are invested in you are listening to you like it's, they're not all the same. And I think that sometimes we have to remember that like, a comment on, you know, a real is not the same thing as like a DM, there's different currency. And we just have different like the cheapness. Mm hmm. And so just don't let like our brains will tell us it was the same amount of flags the same amount of notifications for a like a view, a DM, like an inquiry, it all looks the same on our phone. And we have to like back up and remind ourselves that like a million views on like, a funny dog real might not actually mean anything compared to like to full on interested people in your DM saying, hey, like, this is a question I have about what you do. Can you walk me through what this looks like? It weirdly, that's not as exciting, but it should be exciting for your bank account. It should be so we have to like rewire our brains and our expectations a little bit around that. I think 100% Yeah. Okay. Any final tips or insights, or just imparting wisdom on all things, you know, social media, marketing, and making sure that like, we're keeping everything in perspective, and that we're able to stay in this for the long haul.

Mary Shelton

If you haven't read the artists way, do it. It's a amazing book that definitely helps you figure out those things that was a big piece for me. And any creative should read it or somebody who wants to be creative should read it, and go through the full process of it. It's amazing. And then just, when you think about your work, think about what you would want and you think about how you would want to be treated and focus more in that aspect than necessarily the metrics of social media and the way things look.

Joy Michelle

Mm hmm. So good. So good. All right. So I want to move into some rapid fire questions here. Just questions that I like to ask. Yes. Okay. She's ready. She's ready. All right. First question. What does called to both mean to you

Mary Shelton

call to both is, it means to be for example, like I am called to be a mom first and also an entrepreneur and how does that balance happen? I'm called to both and how can I give as much as I can to both of those things? So cultivate it.

Joy Michelle

Love it. Love it. What is one thing that has surprised you about becoming a mom?

Mary Shelton

Is how much you can love something and get so irritated about something at the same time? Like how can something be? It's both like, I love you so much, but you are a sociopath at the same time, like how does that happen? But I still love

Joy Michelle

it relatable. It's so real. It's so relatable.

Mary Shelton

You drive me crazy, but I love you. It's weird. Yes,

Joy Michelle

yes. i It's so weird and so good. I love it. Okay, what is one tool or tip that you can share that has helped you thrive in your business in your motherhood or both?

Mary Shelton

One thing in business in motherhood is remind yourself and give yourself grace because your kids are watching you grow up as they're growing up at the same time. You're not going to have it all figured out. And that's okay because you're growing up at the same time they are so give yourself grace. And it's the same thing in your business. Give yourself grace, you're growing up at the same like you're watching yourself grow up. Like you just need to take it Deep breath, there is growing pains with everything. Yeah,

Joy Michelle

I always feel especially bad for my firstborn because, like, I didn't I didn't know I'm still I'm still figuring out but I I know a little more for my second that there's so much grace that I need to extend for that because we're growing like we're you're doing this time and then and then. Yeah,

Mary Shelton

yeah, like you're you're you, you as a person you while you're watching your parents still grow up. So it's like your kids are watching you grow up. So give yourself grace. We're all growing up at the same time.

Joy Michelle

Yeah, I we I think that's such a cool way of putting it because we think of like growing up as an event that happens until you turn 18 And then you're done. And know, the way that you're painting. This is very, like, lifelong journey, which is so true. Like we're still

Mary Shelton

growing. Yeah. We're still growing.

Joy Michelle

I love it. I love it. What is the last book that you read or podcast that you listen to?

Mary Shelton

Oh, book, it's definitely a Colleen Hoover. I think it ends with us was the last of my installment for the summer and that definitely got me if I feel so I've been on a Colleen Hoover kick. I'm there with everybody else right now. Definitely everybody else on social

Joy Michelle

would you recommend that book?

Mary Shelton

I would recommend any Colleen Hoover book if you're just prepared to be like just emotionally distraught to be honest with you. Like it's it's a great like way to just like escape reality for a second. So if you're ready to be emotionally distraught, be really upset with Colleen Hoover are very happy with her. But like her books are insane. You can finish them in like two days. Like there was one day I was like up at like 130 in the morning. I was like, I don't have time for this. Like why am I still sitting here reading this book right now. So if you

Joy Michelle

need Yeah, I'll put it down.

Mary Shelton

I couldn't. I couldn't. It was insane. Like Verity had been all in my feet. I literally can't. So no, a Colleen Hoover book. Definitely. Definitely a go to. But I'm also like, for podcasts. I'm a big health podcast listener. So I'm, I'm up north now with my 14 team volleyball team right now. Yeah, I sign up to watch 14 Teenagers for three days. But I think I was I was listening to the Huberman cut podcast on the way up.

Joy Michelle

Okay, nice. Okay. And the last question is, what is something that you are excited about and that you're looking forward to?

Mary Shelton

I am. There's a lot that is happening in the next year that I'm looking forward to a lot I workwise. I have a lot of weddings that still are happening this year that I'm pumped about and are kind of like avant garde, ask so I'm like really excited to like hit those hard. But I'm honestly just really excited about living this next year with this new outlook and getting to the end of the year and then being able to kind of look back on it and find tweak things and grow. So I'm really just excited. Experiencing this next year enjoying it, not letting myself get so bogged down by work and looking back at all that

Joy Michelle

yeah, I love that. I love that. Mary this has been amazing. In closing, where can listeners follow you find out more about you and just explore all of your like website and socials and things like that.

Mary Shelton

Yeah, Pinterest, follow me at Mary Shelton media on Pinterest. I love posting on there just like new trends, new aesthetics as well as work I blog quite often so happening on my website at www.MarySheltonmedia.com And if you want to see not only work and fun stuff, I'm a little bit more unfiltered and unplugged on Tik Tok. Because it takes two seconds to post something and it's I get a little bit more entertaining on there. So if you need a good laugh, come on over because that's where that's that and then following me at either Mary Shelton media or Mary Shelton media seniors on Instagram.

Joy Michelle

Love it. Ah, this has been so good. Thank you so much for your time and your wisdom and just the words of encouragement that you spoke over you know everybody listening here that might just be a little exhausted with social media. I think there's so much that you've offered today and I just appreciate it.

Mary Shelton

No, I appreciate you so much. Honestly the reason why my business is even here to begin with is just from our early days at boxer so if you guys haven't done an accelerator with her like hop on ASAP

Joy Michelle

I didn't even pay her to say that guys, i She just nope on her own.

Mary Shelton

Yeah, that boxers like those boxer conversations are awesome and it's but it's honestly awesome. It's like very unplugged and real like I'm someone who's done a lot of mentor sessions. And it's just like, No, this isn't what's going to work. This is what's going to work. It's very matter of fact, and I think that's something that a lot of people are looking for.

Joy Michelle

Yeah, I like I don't I need to do a better job in my own marketing of explaining, like, the Voxer part is this, like, magic that I don't know how to explain it, you are no longer. It's like you're not alone in your business anymore. Because you can just have a thought and have somebody that gets it. That's a step

ahead. Be like, here's my thought on that thought instead of like, you'd be stuck in that cycle alone. It's wild.

Mary Shelton

with absolutely no judgment. You know, like, that's the thing. It's like, the no judgement aspect. It was just like, hey, like, this is happening right now, I have no idea how I'm supposed to go about this, like, what's the best way to go about this? And, you know, complete no judgment sense. And especially like I did that early on. So it was in that same realm of like creating boundaries. So it was like a little bit more early on in my business too. So just being able to grow from a solid foundation was very helpful.

Joy Michelle

I love that well, like totally unplanned accelerator coaching testimonial. So I will, I will definitely have a link for that below. And this was like, it was so fun to connect with you again, Mary. And I know that I'm going to have to have you back on and hear like, like you said, a year from today to look back and see like what you've accomplished. And this has just been so great. Thank you.

Mary Shelton

Yes, thank you so much.

Joy Michelle

Thank you so much for listening to the show. If you enjoyed this episode, please help me get the word out about the call to both podcast by taking a screenshot of this episode right now and sharing it on your social media. I would also appreciate it if you would subscribe and leave me a five star review. Thanks again and I'll see you in the next episode.