

Hey, friend. Welcome back to Called to Both, the podcast for women building both a business and a life they love. Today's episode is going to be about something that I have seen popping up this year like crazy, and that is pivots. So many of my friends, fellow business owners, and people I follow online have gone through total pivots this year as business owners.

New offers, new audiences. Some have walked away from their business completely and started something brand new. It truly feels like it has been the year of the pivot. And if you've been watching all of that happen, maybe you've started to question and ask yourself if it's time for you to pivot, too. Like, is it my turn?

Should I potentially be adjusting things? And I have been there myself more than once in my 13 years of entrepreneurship, and it can be an unsettling feeling. It's exciting, but it's also kind of unsettling to look at the business that you've built and consider either burning it all down or making major changes.

I was talking to a business friend of mine recently about this, and she said something that really stood out to me. She said, "It is not always a pivot as much as it is a realignment." And she's so right. Like, pivoting can sound very drastic, but sometimes what the business actually needs is not an overhaul, it is a meaningful shift in the right categories.

It could be better alignment with the season that you're in with your kids, better alignment to best suit a chapter of your life that you're walking into. Maybe it's a positioning issue or an offer that needs to be tweaked and not a full-fledged pivot. That's what we're talking about here today. I wanna dive into this question of how do you know if it's time to pivot?

When is it time to just push through, or is it potentially time to realign? I'm gonna walk you through the five questions. This is a method that I've come up with that I've used to help myself make my own pivoting decisions in my business, and I use the same method when I work with my clients privately or even I have friends come to me and say, "Here's what's on my heart."

And I have found this to be very helpful, very grounding. So grab a notebook or open up the notes app on your phone because I want you to be answering these questions as we go, if that's possible for you and you're not driving, because I think by the end of this, you will literally have answers written down about your business and be one step further in this process of knowing what is next for you and if a pivot is on your horizon.

You're listening to Called to Both, the podcast for ambitious women chasing both business dreams and little ones. I'm your host, Joy Michelle. I'm a wedding photographer turned business coach and founder of PhotoBoss. I have helped thousands of photographers and creatives grow their businesses. Here on the show, I teach about topics like visibility marketing, mindset, productivity, and going after your dream life.

So if you're a photographer or an entrepreneur, there is something here for you. This is not another business and marketing podcast telling you to do more, but rather how you can build your business and your income in less time and with greater ease. Join me here each week for bite-sized and actionable episodes that will encourage you on your Call to Both journey.

Before we get into the questions, I do wanna make a small note here. Two tips for you for getting the absolute most from this exercise. The first is to just be completely honest in the answers as you're writing this down. You do not need to think five steps ahead into the how of how you're going to do this.

You simply need to be honest as to the questions that I'm about to ask you. So if your first thought is suddenly getting censored by your brain, like, "Ugh, that's never gonna happen. How am I actually gonna do that?" That will keep you from actually s- being honest about the current situation happening. So being as honest as you can for ambitious women is actually kind of hard because you can sometimes start to censor your true thoughts and desires out of fear or uncertainty, and that will add to the confusion.

So we're gonna commit to being completely honest as we do this exercise. The second thing is, this is such an important thing to do in your business because when we start to feel restless and uncertain and we think maybe a pivot should happen, it's very natural to start changing things in our business before we've done this kind of work.

We're like, "Let's get a new brand. Let's get a new website. Let's try a new offer. Maybe I need to get on a new social media platform." And that feels very productive. It feels like we're making progress towards the next era of our business. But there will be times when only one or two pieces of your business are actually not working and need to be addressed.

The rest of it could be working beautifully. And the last thing I want you to do is tear down the whole thing and throw it away, and then essentially start over, losing momentum, when really that's kind of the opposite of what we're going

for here. We want to build something that's meaningful, that is aligned, and that has as much momentum as possible.

So sometimes we don't need to throw it all out, and we don't wanna start over if that's not needed. So as you come to the end of this, you have three possible results. The first is maybe you need to make a total pivot. Great. The second one is it's actually not a pivot that's needed. You need greater support or something else, but nothing in the business needs to change, right?

S- how, how are we doing this? That's a result too, and it's a realignment that needs to happen. Not a pivot, but some smaller changes. Those are really your three outcomes. And I simply want you to be able to identify what that next move should be from here. Okay? So let's dive in. So we're gonna be following the who, what, when, where, why questioning framework.

So I've got five different points. The first question is the who. Is it who you're working with that feels like it needs to change? Think about the clients that you've served over the last year. I think it can be really helpful even to pull up your CRM or however you're tracking your clients and your leads, and just glance at the names of the people that you've worked with.

And as you start to skim over them, I mean, I want you to just imagine, do you feel excited? Do... Is the thought of, like, their name even popping up in your inbox going to make you feel eager to open the email, or is there, like, a tiny bit of, like, a sinking feeling in your stomach? And what can happen, what's totally normal, is that when you started your business, you were serving a certain type of client, and you were so happy to do so.

Back then, it made sense. Like, it was aligned, it was perfect. But somewhere along the way, the business grew, your skills grew, maybe your prices grew or need to grow, and the clients that you used to be fired up to serve are just no longer doing it anymore, whether it is because it's not a match price-wise, it could be for other reasons.

But this is where I want you to ask yourself, "Do I still love the people I serve?" Another way to ask this is, has my ideal client changed or have I outgrown the ones that I have right now? And then lastly, am I attracting people who can't really pay what I want to be charging or where I wanna be price-wise?

And I think as service providers especially, this piece of your business, this piece of the equation, the who, cannot be overstated how important this is. We work with our clients personally, even though it's in a professional context. A lot

of times we're working with our clients to create art and do meaningful work with them for months or years or every single year.

A lot of times they come back and they want more of your services every single year. And so the who, getting that right is a really big deal. And I'm glad that we're starting here because if that piece feels off, of course the rest of the business is gonna feel off too. Okay, so this leads us into question number two, the element of the what.

Now, the what is, what are we doing in our businesses as service providers? Sometimes you're actually fine with the people that you're working with, but the work itself is starting to feel really draining. It's off in some capacity, and this really encompasses your offer as a service provider. This is the thing you actually deliver.

Are you still enjoying the actual work that you do? Or have you started to dread it a little bit? Like if you were honest, do you dread your work? And one great way to know if your work is still lighting you up is if you get the Sunday scaries to... Like right before, it doesn't have to be a Sunday obviously, because a lot of us as creative service providers are working in strange hours.

But if right before you have a shoot or a big client assignment, you're dreading it, that is a huge indicator that things are out of alignment and that the work that we once loved is not doing it for us anymore. Now, I really wanna be careful here. That doesn't mean you need to change everything and literally just jump ship and find a new career.

Sometimes we think that we don't like the work anymore, when really we're not enjoying how we packaged our own offer. We've got too many deliverables. We're working way too many hours. The pricing is low, so we don't even feel well compensated. There's too much back and forth with the clients, and this offer that maybe made sense a couple years ago is simply not a fit for the way that you want to work and operate now or just how your family looks today I know that sometimes adding a child to your family can really show and kind of highlight some of the areas of the, of your business where it didn't really matter that your clients emailed you, or called you, or texted you at all hours of the day, or expected a lot of immediate, uh, response, or just, you know, were taking so much time.

Like, you had the time to give, and so you may not have even noticed it until your time became infinitely more stretched and valuable. And now you're,

you're at this point where how you're operating in this business, how you're creating your services and delivering on those services is no longer a fit.

So before you decide what has to go, you want to first ask yourself a few questions in the what category. The first is, do I still wanna do this work? Is there other work that's calling to me that I need to write down? Or does this offer just need to be repackaged, repriced, or simplified, or really all three of those things?

I mean, that c- that's an option, too. This came up in one of my recent rounds of Rise, my group coaching program. Um, there was a wedding and portrait photographer in the group who was just killing it, like, making such great money, really a tremendous success, has been in business for, like, 10 years, and she just came to the call and was so real on this call and talked about how she's feeling so incredibly burnt out.

She loves her clients. She really did. She loves the work. But she was saying, "I'm getting calls at all hours. I'm getting texts. I cannot keep track of this stuff. People are messaging me on Facebook. I don't really know how to implement these policies to change the way that I'm working." It's not the work that needs to change.

It's not the who that needs to change. It was more that she needed to implement and repackage up how her actual work was going to be delivered, what were the parameters, what were the boundaries and the standards going to look like. This was huge because, I mean, you can see from both sides of this, if you don't love the work anymore, yes, that alone, that can be a huge problem.

And also, if you love the work, but you're not doing it in a way that's reflective of your current season as a mom or any of the other aspects of your life, all the other roles that you have in your life, that will also lead to eventual burnout and feeling like you need to pivot. Next up, we have when. Is it when you're working that's no longer working for you in your business?

And as working moms, this is a big one. This is a big one for me, this is a big one for a lot of my clients, and I do see this a lot where women have built incredible businesses and maybe, like, they built it before they became a mom, and they felt differently about when they were working, like working evenings or weekends or whatever, and now they feel completely differently.

Now their season has changed. They either have kids in sports, or maybe they're homeschooling or caring for an aging parent, or just want to be in a season

where they have a lot more time flexibility. If you're in a season where the business feels like it's working, but the schedule and the when of it all feels like it's not, I want you to ask yourself these questions.

The first question is really simple: What hours do I actually want to work? I would write out a dream schedule. Like, put aside the realities of it. What does a dream schedule look like for you? What would need to change in my business to fit inside of those hours? And then lastly, do my work hours and my offers fit the life I want on my calendar?

I don't know. That's kind of a confusing way of putting it. But essentially, when you look at your calendar right now, how much of it feels like the life you actually want versus the reality of how, of how it actually plays out? The most meaningful pivot that you make in your business could actually come down to the when of your business, and this is essentially the premise of my business now and this podcast at this point.

After becoming a mom, my desires around the when category shifted tremendously. A Saturday wedding meant a whole day where I'm away from my family, and then a whole day of recovery because I would always get that, like, wedding hangover. It would hit me so hard, and I just wouldn't want to, like, do fun things and go to the apple orchard and go to a museum and soak up the weekend.

So I started to ask, "What would it look like to make money in the hours that I chose instead of weekends only?" That was such a powerful question. It was scary to answer, but it truly opened the doors of Called to Both and the next era of my business because I identified it became the when. The when was a problem, and I needed to change when I was working. The other thing that needed to change for me is stemming from question four, the where.

When we think about your business, is it where you're showing up that is feeling totally out of alignment? Now, there's a couple different ways that you can look at this for your own business. I think the obvious one is, like, physically where you're working. But I think we also should look at where you're showing up when you're creating and, like, what platforms you're using to get visibility because that's very much a where as well that can be very draining and just make you wanna, like, burn it all to the ground.

So if you've been pouring energy into a platform, for example, that's just not working, like video or podcasting or writing, and you've been pouring in time and it's just not returning, the market may have shifted. There could be some

reasons behind this. But the where you're doing your work when you're marketing might just be completely off.

And then when we're th- speaking in a physical context, I have worked with creatives who absolutely love the work that they do. They just know that they no longer want to travel, for example. They just can't be away multiple back-to-back weekend days anymore. They have no more desire for that. Other than that, the business still is functioning.

So sometimes things will shift and change, and your where you want to work can be significantly impacted during those seasons. So a good question to ask yourself is, you know, when you picture yourself working, do you like the location? Like, are you happy with where your work is taking place? When you're posting, does that platform, you know, bring life, or does it drain you?

Now, if either of these sections of the where in your business reveals something for you, chances are you have a where problem And that leads us to our fifth and final category, which is your why category. And I think this one is truly the deepest. I think they can all be deep, but this is a particularly important one, so I saved it for last.

So first, is your why still driving you? The reason why you started this business, does it still light you up? Or has it changed? Maybe, like, it changed. You don't even know what it is now, but you just know the reason you started is not... It's not doing it anymore. It's okay if it's changed. I think it's very much expected after a few years in business serving clients, like, your why at the beginning might have just been, "I wanna pay some bills.

I wanna prove that I can do this. I don't wanna get a day job working for someone else." And now you might have a completely different why. It really needs to be revisited regularly for this reason. Your why now could be, uh, financial impact for your children's futures. It could be even impact on your industry, uplifting and helping other women who were once in your position.

Like, as you grow in your business, that why can and absolutely should change to evolve with you. So because your why really anchors your business and reflects in everything that you do and build, I mean everything from your offers to your pricing to the hours of your business, it's so essential to revisit this.

Honestly, I think it should be revisited yearly at the very minimum. So answering the question, "Why am I still doing this? Why do I still love this business?" is going to be very insightful. Now, since we're talking about why, I

think we could also think about why, why do we wanna pivot? Um, because I think if you're thinking, like, you're this far into a pivoting episode, you're probably thinking about pivoting.

So my question for you is, why do you wanna pivot? Are you running towards something? Or are you running away from something? Now, you'll know you're running away from something if it's sort of coming from this feeling of burnout, comparison, a really hard season where maybe some client relationships went wrong, and in which case, I do want to caution you and tell you that you need to sit with this and figure out what went wrong, where you're at in your burnout, what's going on with that comparison, so that you don't carry that into the new business.

Not to say don't pivot, but more s- to say, like, let's start afresh and make sure that you're truly growing from this and not running from this. Now, if you're running towards something That feels like a vision of what your life could become, a calling that you cannot stop thinking about, an excitement that just sparks you.

It gives you motivation. You find yourself thinking about the pivot and the new business and the new offer and what's to come in a way that just feels exciting. And it doesn't mean that you're not still nervous, but there is an excitement and a vision behind it, and less of a burnout comparison feel That's when I think a pivot might actually be the answer.

Sometimes it's like the thing you can't get out of your head. So let's tie it all together. Go back through your answers. Look at your who, your what, your when, your where, and your why. Now, you're gonna have some answers for each of these, and probably there's a couple of categories where you had a lot more thoughts.

You had to pause the show, you had to write some stuff down, and I want you to count how many of these categories feel out of alignment. If it's one or two categories, then it's very likely that you need a realignment instead of, like, a total pivot, just really depending on those answers that you wrote down.

So adjust those specific pieces. I think that's your marching orders. Everything else in the business is very likely working towards the way you wanna go, and if you were to grab those two things that aren't working and get to work on those, those are your action items. If it feels like four or five of them got some pretty extensive notes, that is when a true pivot is, like, on the table, and that's a great result too.

Just make sure that you're running towards something and not away from something else. For me, I have pivoted so many times. Sometimes I will say I've pivoted without even fully realizing I was doing it. There was a moment as a service provider where after a few years of photographing weddings and portraits, I decided I did not want to only make money when I was booking another client, photographing another client, editing photos, and just honestly, it felt like my time, the time for dollars exchange.

And whether it was happening on a certain day of the week, I determined, like, even if I were to pivot my whole business to not working on weekends per se, like, or for example, that I just felt limited by that, and that is really what made me explore affiliate marketing and what eventually led to me making over six figures in affiliate revenue from just affiliate marketing without becoming an influencer.

And I teach this exact method for doing this as a service provider specifically inside of my program, Affiliate Boss. And it really came from that feeling of, like, knowing that I wanted more, knowing that I didn't wanna trade the time for money. Another example of this was when I started my YouTube channel.

I don't-- I did not fully realize that I was starting a whole new business. Essentially, even though I was sharing photography, I was sharing what I was doing as a service provider, it was, oh, like another business. It was photographers that I was serving, so it was, you know, a different audience, a different offer, a different marketing plan, and I would need those different skills. So you might be at a point in your business where you've almost, like, inadvertently started a new brand or started another business, and now you're almost, like, working backwards to, like, make it all make sense brand-wise because you pivoted without even realizing it.

Been there, done that, and let me tell you, it's really good on the other side. I wanna, like, just pause for a minute, and this isn't even in my notes, but pivoting is so powerful. It's... It feels scary at first, but let me tell you, on the other side of the pivot, when you know something is calling to you and you aren't...

You, you are not sure how this is gonna work out, it feels like you're starting over, I can tell you, it is really good on the other side of the pivot. When you look at this framework and you're like, "I wanna work different hours. I wanna make money in new ways. I wanna serve a totally different clientele," you can do that.

You actually can. Just like you started your business from nothing, you can pivot to something completely new, and you can succeed and profit on the other side of it, and I think I'm proof of that. So yes, this has been the year of the pivot, and maybe it's time for you to pivot, too, or just get clear on, like, what's out of alignment.

As you do this, as you make these choices and move into the next and most exciting era of your business, I do wanna invite you to work together one-to-one on support and strategy in your business in this. I'm taking on private clients, and I would love to chat with you about what is next, whether it is a pivot, diversifying your revenue, or just getting clarity on what is next and putting your business in a position where you are perceived as the authority and you're attracting the right clients consistently.

Send me a DM on Instagram and let's chat. And if this resonated with you in any way, please let me know. You can leave a review. You can DM me on Instagram, whatever feels good for you. Um, but I love hearing from my listeners, and it just honestly makes my day every time when you guys drop me a message to let me know that you listened.

So thank you so much, and I will see you in the next episode. Bye for now. 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