

# Called to Both Episode 9 Transcript

So the question of the day is, can you build a successful business as an introvert? That's a question I've gotten from students and clients over the past few years. And I think it's a good one. So today I want to share with you how I've grown a business as an introvert, how I think you can use being an introvert to your advantage in business, and how to not let being an introvert get in the way of your success. Are you ready? Let's dive in.

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.

Okay, my introverts lean in close this episode is for you. Every time I mentioned that I'm an introvert on my social media. Or maybe it's a YouTube video, wherever I without fail will get a few DMS or emails or just responses from you all fellow introverts who are relieved to hear that you are not the only creative or service based business owner or photographer who thrives without the limelight shining on them, and who would rather fade into the background at most social events. So how in the world did I end up photographing weddings, working with new clients frequently? As an introvert? Well, let's just say this is a muscle that I have worked on. And when I started out in photography, in 2013, when I was really just launching my business, this wasn't something that came very naturally to me, and directing large groups of people and attending networking events or bridal shows wasn't my forte.

So I think this is an interesting topic. And I think it is going to be relatable to anybody who is trying to build a business but feels like they're at times in contradiction with their own personality type. I distinctly remember a family shoot very early in my career where I forgot one of the family members names, and I got super quiet and awkward and gave little to no direction for the whole shoot because I was so focused on my camera settings. And I remember leaving that shoot thinking, I don't know if I can do this, like I don't know, if I can learn how to take pictures and direct people and manage the social aspect of business at the same time as growing a business. So if you've ever felt this way, in any capacity, you are not alone. I think this is a very natural struggle, I guess I should say that to come up against in any career, especially careers in which you are service based creative, or you work with people frequently.

So the first thing I think to look out for as an introvert is to make sure that you let the title or the label of introvert inform you rather than restrict you. So don't let that introvert extrovert title be the reason you do or don't do something I have heard from creatives who truly believed they would be more successful, but their personality type is getting in the way of that. And that's what I personally feel like it's becoming more of a mental block or even potentially an excuse, rather than a real reason that you haven't achieved growth in your business. So remember, there's kind of a sliding scale between introvert and extrovert. And I think most of us would not fall all the way to one side, we were kind of somewhere in the middle, we might lean a little more introverted.

But I think that sliding scale changes and might slide depending on who we're with, or how we're feeling, or what else we have going on in our schedules. So reminding yourself that this is less of a label, and more of a title to help you know yourself and to make decisions that are going to fit into your personality, I think is really, really key. So I want to talk about networking. I want to talk about sales calls and marketing and creating content as an introvert. And what I have found is really important for me in terms of networking, specifically or content creation, and showing up with the best energy was that I had to have a little bit of buffer time, before or after, or sometimes both to charge my own battery so that my energy could be at 100% at the event.

And while I was thinking about this episode while I was trying to unpack this question of okay, how did I grow this business as an introvert, how am I authentically introverted but also able to do extroverted things? This is something that came to mind and it made me wonder if sometimes people are not as introverted as they think, but rather, they have a hard time managing their own energy levels and protecting their calendars. And this in turn, leaves them feeling very drained. And that's on top of being introverted by nature. But it's such a layered thing, right. So for me personally, making sure that I buffered out my schedule in a way that would make it so that I could be extroverted in those moments was really, really helpful. Another couple of things that I did in terms of networking was number one, I would tell myself, we can just try it once. So before deciding whether or not I was going to have a good time at a networking event, or whether I was going to be able to thrive at a bridal show and meeting lots of people, I would just tell myself, hey, let's just try it once, and then see how it goes. The next thing that I would do is see if I could make substitutions.

So I would kind of make it into a game, like when you substitute out something that doesn't fit a recipe that you are making, maybe you're missing an ingredient, or you have a food allergy, and you just want to make a few changes to make that recipe work for you. So sometimes I would look at a situation like a networking event. And I would see if I could just make some simple changes that would help me to thrive in that situation. A great example of this is consultations, sales calls or the meetings before I would be booked by a client, particularly wedding clients. Now I would get kind of nervous. And I think when I identified the part of it that made me most nervous was that I felt like I was in a job interview, and that they were staring at me and I had to run this meeting. And that would make me nervous and not exactly know how to guide that, that whole exchange and make sure that we really highlight the things that needed to be highlighted and lead beautifully to the sale. Right? Once I figured out that, bringing albums and things for them to look at to showcase the value to showcase the deliverable of what I would actually be giving them once I figured out that that actually took the attention away from me and got me out of my own head. And really facilitated a beautiful conversation that made sales a lot easier. I felt so much better. So and this is this is actually a great model for a lot of sales. And I'm reading a book right now called traction. And in the book traction, they were talking about how good salespeople do not talk about something that they could easily show. So if you can show something in your business, if you can demonstrate something in your business, and you can send a video or have an album or tangible good in front of you.

This is better sales anyway. And it just works out that US introverts don't really want to be the center of attention at all times anyway. So we tend to do really great at serving over selling, because we're really we're trying to push the value of the product or the service or the offering over saying hey, look how awesome I am. So when I started leaning into this in my own sales consultations, when I started thinking, how can I best fit them for a collection? How can I best get to know the couple so that I know

how to serve them better, the sales part actually started going a lot easier. And so one thing that I think is really cool is that I think introverts are often highly perceptive.

And this can really work to your advantage. This can really work because you are going to be able to sense what someone is wanting or needing from you in a moment and hopefully be able to give it to them more gracefully as well. Because I think introverts we have a lot more inner dialogue happening in our heads and we need a little bit more time to like process things in our heads. And when we spend time alone, we're kind of recharged, right? I think that's generally the definition between introvert and extrovert. It's not that we don't like people.

It's not that we don't have things to say it's that generally being around people, especially large groups of people, or having all the attention placed on us doesn't exactly bring us energy doesn't mean that we don't do those things from time to time. We just need to recharge after. So I think it's important to note here that I started shifting my mindset in sales and marketing my business in networking specifically away from thinking of it as okay I have to go be extroverted now I have to perform I have to connect with these people and come up with great questions and be someone I'm not but rather I turned the mindset of it a little bit more in thought, let me showcase Let me serve let me lean into the things that I'm uniquely good at instead of trying to just you know turn up the dial on the extrovert nature within me or to put something on that doesn't feel authentic and just try to emulate someone else's extroverted nature.

And I think it's, it can be hard because we do see other people running businesses a lot of times similar to our own, who do seem to be extroverted, who do seem to be finding their stride, they know how to make content in a way that feels really like people are engaging with it. And you're, you might think, Oh, if I could just be a little bit more extroverted, probably I would be more successful like them. And I will tell you, that's absolutely not true. Your nature and your, your vibe, like your level of energy and, and voice in this space is still so valid and so needed, because there are so many people that are going to resonate with the way you explain it. And I remember people telling me this, and I kind of just didn't really believe it until I experienced it in my own business. But it is absolutely true.

So I mentioned briefly talking about your unique gifts, the things that you bring to the table that you can actually showcase instead of feeling like you need to put on this extroverted nature or keep up with the extroverts, if you will. And I think a really cool way to figure out what you might bring that's really unique and special for you, that you might not be aware of, is to look at your past client reviews or testimonials. Sometimes clients are going to be able to point out aspects of working with you that you hadn't really thought through or thought about showcasing and highlighting in your business before. So if you can highlight or write down any words or phrases that repeat across your reviews, this can be a really cool way to maybe draw out some elements of you that are actually reasons people are going to want to work with you. Besides, you know, being an extrovert.

Another way to dig into this is to just ask your followers or your friends, what you are great at or what they think of you to come to you for help with. This is a really cool way to get some insight about you what you do exceptionally well, that you may not have really thought to focus on in your business, but is tremendous value that you do offer to your clients. And that are going to be reasons why people want to work with you.

So I mentioned my rule about trying something at least once I talked about how you can make substitutions to make things sometimes fit your nature better to make yourself feel more comfortable, maybe utilizing physical goods in your meetings, maybe bringing a friend for your networking. But I also want to talk about another thing that I've done in my mindset, I guess, around being introverted in my business. And that is, I have tried to always flip the script in my head against the discomfort of whatever it is that I'm doing. So take, for example, a stylized shoot, I planned dozens of stylized shoots when I was building my business when I just wanted to get that portfolio and really work with vendors and get published. And that very easily in my mind could have been put into this category of dread, I could have said, Oh my gosh, there's going to be a lot of people there. And everybody's going to be expecting me to get all these pictures.

And I have to talk to all of them and kind of schmooze. And it's just it's going to be a really draining event. And as soon as my mind would kind of start in that spiral, I shouldn't call it, I would immediately replace that thought and say, okay, yeah, but we might end up getting published and think about all the amazing work you're gonna get. And what if you end up really connecting with the planner, or the makeup artist, that could be really cool, maybe they'll work with you again. And it's almost like I took whatever could have become a huge hindrance, and thought about the outcome and what I wanted more. And this kind of kept happening for me in my career was the same way with starting a YouTube channel, where I kept thinking, Oh, but I don't really know how to do this. I don't really want to listen to my voice. I, you know, all these things that would like pop up. But then when I started focusing on what could it do for me, what could it bring to me?

What how could I help with a YouTube channel? And I started really focusing on that. It's almost like the rest of it faded away. And it was like I was able to give myself space to start something or feel discomfort and do it anyway. And this is such an interesting practice and will open up your world in all sorts of ways. When you really look at the potential outcome and the potential awesomeness of something and compare it to this discomfort. Right? And I remember thinking about this and actually identifying it at one point with YouTube and said, like I actually wrote down once. I really Believe in what this can give me more than I'm going to focus on the discomfort of not knowing how to edit video or not really wanting to be on video, but rather focusing on what it how it brought me closer to my ultimate goal. So, I know this is like kind of like a meta weird, like backwards way of thinking about something. But I think what you what you focus on grows.

So if you're going to focus on what that networking event could do for you, for your career, instead of, oh, my gosh, how am I going to start these new conversations? What if I don't know what to say what if I say something stupid, you will probably be a lot more likely to have peace and a little less of that anxious feeling. Because you're thinking about good things, you're thinking about the possibilities versus the limitations. So one thing I noticed about myself, and I'm pretty sure this is true of all people is that I don't like being bad at stuff. I did not like getting on camera for the first dozen times and just freezing up and not knowing what to say and feeling stiff, and then feeling like, oh, gosh, I didn't say what I wanted to say. I think it's the same when you start taking pictures for the first time. And you know, in your mind what you want that picture to look like. But it's just not coming out the way that you're, you're envisioning, right. And it's really frustrating. And because I like to challenge you all here on this podcast, I want to challenge you with the idea that just because something is hard and awkward and you're not good at it doesn't necessarily mean that you shouldn't do it.

Or that you're introverted, and thus just can't do video just can't do networking, just will constantly struggle with sales. I would push up against that. And I would say, is that true? Or is it potentially true? That you're just not good at it? Because you're new at it? And I think that's actually, that's holding ourselves to a completely different standard. And it is a difficult question, but it's actually going to liberate you a lot more. Because if you believe instead that introversion is not going to hold you back, you're really just going to have to do difficult things and get better at those difficult things. And it's really not about being introverted or extroverted, you know, 80% of the time, it's just about doing stuff for the first time and not being super great at it. And that that is a totally fixable issue.

I think that is freeing, but it's also holding yourself accountable for doing the things that you don't really want to be doing and that you're actually kind of sucking at it first, right. And I think this is so true right now, for this podcast. It's like creating this content, it brings up a lot of resistance for me, because it's new, it's like I have to plug in a microphone, and I have to pull up a new software on my computer that I've never worked with. And I have to think about this, because it's a new format. It's new, and it's different, and properly categorizing that in my mind as this is difficult, because it's new. It's so important for me, because if I said this is difficult, because you're introverted joy, that that's almost like a burden. That's like, that's never gonna change, right? Because I'm, I'm an introvert, that's who I am. So if I wear that, almost like this, like heavy, you know, like, it's like an outfit, and I have a coat on. And it's like my introvert coat. And it's kind of like this burden.

I think it's going to make me think about everything very differently than if I were to say, No, I am who I am. I'm not super great at this, because it's new. And it might take me a little longer to think through his script, because it's new. And I only know this because after what, four or five years on YouTube, it feels different for me now. And it doesn't feel different. Because I'm a different person, I'm the same person, I still have a totally introverted nature, it feels different for me now, because I have more experience in it. And that confidence that camera confidence actually comes with experience, not with extraversion. And so that's just doing that has given me this, this 20,000 foot view on other types of content and other types of, you know, speaking in public or social interaction or anything that we could do in our business. And I start to look at it as, oh, maybe this isn't whether or not I can do something based on my personality type, but rather, I just need to get the experience to do that. And actually, for me, I feel like that's, that's quite freeing to see it that way.

And I hope that that it is for you as well that if you identify as an introvert that you see that there's more to do with just putting in the hours putting in the work, getting the experience around whatever it is You want to get better at and less to do with your personality type who this has been good. Before I wrap up here today, I want to remind you, we have a call to both Facebook community and I want to invite you to join it. It is a beautiful and intimate group of moms who are super ambitious and going after both of these things in their life with intention. And it's a great opportunity to hang out and make conversations with other people who are also enjoying this podcast.

So I will link that down below. And speaking of enjoying this podcast, if you've made it all the way to the end of this introvert episode, and you've learned something or it got your wheels turning in a new way, would you pause and leave me a review wherever it is that you're listening? I would so appreciate it. It really helps me get the word out about the podcast. And I appreciate and read every single review. So thank you.

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