

On Your Terms Episode 99:
Let's Get Personal Behind the Scenes of Running a 7-Figure
Business, Grief + Mindset Work

Sam Vander Wielen: Hey there and welcome back to On Your Terms. I'm your host, Sam Vander Wielen. I'm an attorney turned entrepreneur who helps online coaches and service providers legally protect and grow their online businesses using my DIY fill in the blank legal templates like contracts and website policies and my Ultimate Bundle program.

So I hope that you're okay with this, but I actually had planned for an episode all about today whether or not you could get sued for putting out free content. But when I sat down to record this episode, I was just really feeling a catch up.

So I talked to you about a lot of personal stuff in this episode and just really got into it, to be honest. So I shared all about some really big mindset shifts that have been helping me lately, a couple of little like mantras and things I've been telling myself that I've seen a really big improvement on. I talked about my journey with fitness, what's going on here at my house, some trips I've got coming up, a little tip and trick that I'm doing on Instagram that I hope will be helpful to you and how I'm doing on grief.

So with that, I hope that you enjoy this episode. Hopefully it's cool with you that I decided to switch things up, but I so appreciate you listening. Once you do, send me a DM on Instagram at @SamVanderWielen and let me know if you liked this episode. And if you also think that a friend would benefit from this or enjoy my podcast in general, do me a favor and go ahead and forward them this episode real quick. You can just text them a link. It's super helpful.

You also won't want to miss Thursday's episode because it's our

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100th episode of On Your Terms, which I cannot believe. It's going to come out on Thursday. And I'm going to share all my best podcast tips and tricks, but I'm also going to share the details about a tech savvy giveaway. I'm giving away my favorite podcast tech tools to one lucky listener. So go ahead and listen to our episode on Thursday as well. Thank you so much for being here. I hope you enjoy.

So I hope you don't mind, but I just kind of wanted to do a little bit of like a catchup episode grab bag. I've had a lot of different things that have been on my mind from like a marketing perspective, business perspective, life stuff that I was just like, you know what, it would just be fun to chat. So if you don't mind, let's take a little break from most legal stuff. I have one little legal tip I'm going to give you in here. But today, we're going to talk about some of the kind of like mindset and I would say motivation techniques I've been using lately that I found really helpful for business, stuff I have going on here at the house with our renovation, some really exciting things I have coming up in the business, and some changes I've made on social media that I wanted to share with you. All kinds of stuff.

So the first thing I thought that we should chat about was this idea that keeps coming up with a lot of my friends, and it's actually come up in my mindset sessions with Jen Diaz, my mindset coach. And so we were talking about how when I have really, really, really big wins in the business, whether it's a huge promo or big sales month or I secure like kind of a more like media type thing that I'm like, oh, I can't believe we got that, or I can't believe I got invited to speak there, I am very excited.

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However, I also always think like, you know. Let me give you an example. We just had a promo that was way bigger, like multi, multi, multi six figures, way, way, way, way bigger than I ever thought I could do a promo. Didn't intend to make it that big. It wasn't even part of the goal or the plan. Like we always make good, better and best goals for our promos and this was like way higher than our best. I call it the Harvard of our goals because we always have like a little bit of a reach goal, you know.

So I didn't plan for it and it's just left me in a little bit of shock of just being like, wow, I can't believe we did that, right. But I also think, like, whenever that happens, instead of being like, wow, that far exceeded what my goal was. So like, that's just my new goal. Or like, I'm going to go back to my best goal anyway because this might have been a fluke or like all the different mindset things that we can put ourselves through and this kind of stuff happens.

Instead, I think, wow, if that was able to happen, if I didn't plan for this incredible promo or this result that I didn't think or getting invited to speak at this conference, what else is possible? Like what else is possible that I'm not thinking of? And I really use these opportunities to kind of open my mind and my heart to these ideas of maybe there's more possible than I think, and I'm going to remain open to that and set my sights high and also just kind of set my sights open. I kind of like to keep my goals and my, I don't know, my like, whatever I'm reaching for kind of flexible because it's like maybe I don't even know what's possible. Maybe I'm even like, what I would set as my best goal is not what I really could do best, you know, And I try to remain open to that idea.

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It's a really careful balance between contentment and really like remaining, I think, open to continuing to evolve as a business. It's something I'm constantly thinking about because I'm like, I'm super grateful. On the one hand, I don't take that for granted and I don't want to be one of those people who's like every day being like, okay, great, I got that sale. But now what else, what else, what else? Like constantly striving for more. I think it's just more like sitting in the wonder and the amazement of that, of being like, wow, that's incredible that we did that. And what else could that mean that's possible. It doesn't always have to be sales, by the way. Sales aren't everything.

And I just thought I would pass on along or open up that conversation with you because I've been bringing this up to a lot of friends. And what I was saying to some of my friends who are starting to have some wins and like one of my close friends, she just turned on her Evergreen funnel and she texted me that she had her first Evergreen funnel sale, and it was a funnel that her and I had talked about a lot. And like I was giving a lot of feedback and tips and I guess it's a benefit to being able to text me. And so we were talking about it, and she was like, oh my gosh, I got this sale. I'm so excited. And I was like, you should totally relish in that first sale and celebrate the heck out of it, right? It's such a huge accomplishment.

And I think it's so cool to start telling yourself every single day or every time something like this happens, I'm just getting started. This is only the beginning. I just think that that's like -- it feels to me like a little sprinkle of momentum that I give myself every day. And like I said, this has to be tempered

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with some contentment and appreciation and gratitude for what is happening and what is going well. But when things go well, it's not like, oh, this one thing happened and that was good and now it will all be over, right?

I used to think like every time I had a high sales month, or I did something, it would be like that was great, but that's probably the end of it. Like it's all going to stop now. And it really opened me up to more success and just happier, more positive thoughts when I started being like, that's incredible and that is only the beginning. I'm just getting started. Like, watch me now, right? And I love having that attitude now and really sitting with the gratitude and being like, I am so grateful to the hundreds of people who bought the Bundle in the last week. And I cannot believe and cannot wait for what else is to come, because I know that this is just the beginning. I'm just getting started, whatever that means, right?

So I think when good things happen, I've started to think this guy -- I heard this quote tonight at the gym, and I'm sorry that I don't know who, I looked it up. It was not attributed to anyone in particular. But I saw this quote at the gym that said, the sky isn't the limit. It's just the view. I was like, oh, I love that. Especially as somebody who's like nerdly obsessed with space but doesn't understand anything about it. I was thinking that it is true. When we look at the sky, that is not even close to being the limit of like what -- it's not the ceiling of what's possible, what's really out there. It's just what we can see.

And so you might only be able to see what's right in front of you now. You might see the one client who just signed up or the

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one, your first Evergreen course purchase or something like this, but that's just the view. You're just getting started, right? So I want you to start thinking of this as to like, what else, what does it mean about what else is possible? What else is out there? Right. Incredible. Yeah.

So if you don't mind, I'll switch gears for a second to talk to you about some personal stuff. So if you've been listening for a while, you've probably heard me mentioned several times. And if you follow me on Instagram, you've seen me share about how we were building an extension at our house on the first floor for my dad, who sadly passed away last summer. And my dad had cancer and he wasn't in good health, so he needed something that was more on one floor. And obviously, I knew my dad wouldn't be around forever, but while he was here, I wanted him to have a space that he could come to here and stay for extended periods of time, and he would have his own space and it would be all really safe and on one level and all that kind of stuff. And I could have him here with me.

And so unfortunately he passed away, but we were already too deep into it. I had already paid for it. I had already ordered all of the shingles and the windows and everything when he passed. And if anybody is dealing with home renovations or construction right now, you know things are super duper delayed. So we ordered, for example, we ordered the windows before my dad passed away and we still haven't even gotten them. So hopefully by the time you actually listen to this episode, the windows will be in my hands or on the side of the building.

So we've been building that for several, several months. It's going to be really, really cool because it goes off the back of

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our house, kind of extends off of the dining room. It's going to be like a glass vestibule. I don't know why they use the term vestibule. It sounds very weird and sterile. It sounds like we're building a hospital, but it's kind of like a mudroom, I guess. Like landing room, mudroom, I don't know, because it's going to have glass doors on both sides. Can be a lot of glass, tiled floor, and it's going to lead into a deck area. And then on the other side, out to the side of our house. And then that will pass through to a hallway which will have a full bathroom.

And then what was originally planned to be a laundry and cabinetry area, but now that my dad's not going to be there, we're putting more of like a coffee bar, butler's pantry cabinetry area. And then that hallway will end in a large bedroom, big room that has like a fireplace and a closet. And the majority of the room is glass. It's a lot, a lot of windows. And the entire back of the room that leads out to our beautiful, beautiful backyard is all glass.

So it's going to be really, really cool. I'm really excited for it to be done. I hope by the time you listen to this, there's been a little more progress. It feels like watching paint dry, but they're doing such a beautiful job so far and I'll keep sharing about it as things are moving along on Instagram, but that's been really fun. As a business owner, though, it's been really interesting because like for having this kind of business, I don't personally mind working with noise or people talking like I can work just fine at like a coffee shop or something. But it is hard because there are a lot of disruptions and there are a lot of demands on me and my time and Ryan's time because there are a lot of decisions that have to be made and things keep going wrong and things get delayed. So that's been a

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lot.

I did hire my friend Shila. I'll give a shout out to her in the show notes below. She owns a design company called SG23 Design. She's located outside of Philly in New Jersey, but she actually works with people virtually now. I'm up on the north shore of Long Island in New York. And she's been just incredible because she's been helping us to pick. Like there are just so many things to pick in terms of like finishes and all of the materials and all the things we have to order and then designing the fireplace and designing the cabinetry. It's been a lot and it's all a super huge privilege. Like this is all good problem to have, but I'm really, really grateful for her help. And highly recommend hiring somebody like that if you're doing a project of this size and like, you know, I feel like we're doing this once and I don't want to mess it up. So it's t's been really, really helpful. So shout out to Shila. Thank you, Shila, for helping us.

So yeah, as a business owner, it's been a lot to kind of manage the disruptions. And in a good way, I think it's pushed me to be really flexible in terms of my recording schedule, my writing schedule. So basically what I'm doing, at least as of right now, is that whenever we have quiet time between trades, when the plumber is here and then he finishes up what he's doing, it's usually a couple of days between when the electrician comes or whatever. I'll be like, okay, I tell Lindsey on my team, my operations director, who's also the manager of my life/schedule, so I tell her like, hey, I got to record. I have a couple quiet days, right?

I've also had to, over the last couple of months, knock out some

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episodes on the weekend, which I don't normally work very much on the weekend. If I do, it's more kind of like creative work, visionary work, but I'm more than happy to just get things done whenever it needs to. I just want to also have a break so that I can be more present during the week. And so I have, since constructions started, I have done things like to record quietly on a Sunday because nobody is ever here on a Sunday. They are here at 7:00 AM on a Saturday though, which is really fun. So that's been interesting.

I've also had to get used to the fact that our house is completely open and has a lot of glass on it already and windows and stuff. And so I have to remember that when I come downstairs and be in more appropriate clothing and PJs and that kind of stuff. So I've been trying to keep all of that in mind. I've also been going to the gym consistently since November, which has been really, really helpful for many different reasons. I mean, for one, I feel really strong right now. I feel really strong. I can definitely feel my body changing and its composition changing and my posture is better and I have more energy. And yeah, just I personally love working out. So it's not it's not really an issue for me in terms of being motivated to go there.

But for so many years, before my dad passed away, I was taking care of my dad and running this business at the same time. And I really kind of let my own health slide for a long time. And then after he passed away last summer, I didn't want to do anything. I didn't have the energy. Looking back the first couple of months, several months, I feel like I slept a lot. I remember sleeping a lot and was like very depressed, obviously, and very sad and all this kind of stuff.

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And in November around my birthday, I kind of felt this initial spark of like, I want to go to a gym. And I don't want to just, I personally don't like wandering around a gym and working out by myself. Controversial statement alert. I know. Some people really, really like that and they like doing their own thing. I just find myself, like, wandering around. I don't know what to do, even if I follow a program and I just really like the accountability. So I found this really cool place near me that offers their gym model, which is actually very cool, is based on how many times per month you want to work out with someone privately.

And so I started with a trainer twice a week, the first or second week of November, and I've gone to the trainer twice a week every week since then. Consistently, I've never missed, never even canceled a session. And then on top of it, the gym that I'm going to has like these really, really cool classes. There's one class called Strong that I really like. And it's kind of like hit workouts, a lot of body weight stuff, but a lot of like there's TRX ropes and like medicine balls and free weights and stuff too. And I really, really like it. So I go to that one to two times on top of everything else.

Other days I walk, I stretch, I do mobility stuff. I have a bum shoulder still from last summer when I started playing tennis like a crazy person. After my dad died, I partially tore it. I don't know if I've told anyone this. I partially tore my rotator cuff in my labrum and it's still kind of messed up. But actually, working out has been the first thing -- I went to PT but working out has actually been the first real signs of improvement that I've seen since last summer. So it's really

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helped me with that.

I also wanted to mention this working out thing because, well, for one, I've seen an improvement in like mental health since doing this, and especially with dealing with grief. I get really emotional when I work out too, so sometimes it actually makes me cry but that's a good thing. But also, because as a business owner, I sometimes will find myself at the gym, like if there's a class I really love that like goes a little later into the morning than I would like, I'll be like, oh, I shouldn't be doing this. I should be working, I should be knocking out all the things on my to do list.

And I think one of the greatest things I've learned as a business owner, especially one who's gone through an immense amount of personal struggles since starting the business, is that that kind of stuff is just like being at that gym, being in the class if I like it, if I really get like joy out of that and that helps me, that that is just as valuable as something I could post on Instagram or just as valuable, something I would write or record this podcast. Because when I sit down to do this, I'm in a much better place. I have better ideas. I'm definitely more inspired and I think I'm more inspiring.

And so I just don't want it to like, I don't want you to discount. Maybe for you it's not going to the gym. It could be going to an art class or walking with a friend or doing whatever, but that you feel guilty about like, oh, I shouldn't be doing this. I should be working. Like this very old school clear definition of what it means to be working all the time. And if I'm not doing that, then I'm lazy or I'm not productive. And if I see any issues in my business, it's because of that,

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right? It's really easy to go to that place.

And so I just wanted to share this because I feel like ever since I started this fitness journey and have committed to a lot of time during my week and during my workday to taking care of my body and my mental health and my mindset that I think actually things have gotten better in the business. And I've always seen that in the past when I've taken some time to really focus on or develop something within myself, I come back to the business a better person. So I just wanted to remind you about that.

Speaking of mental health and all that kind of stuff, I thought I would share a grief update because from time to time since my dad passed, I've talked about it here and there. But, you know, I don't know how much I have to say about this just because I feel like probably around the time that I did start this his fitness and strength journey back in November, I was still crying pretty much every day. Not all day, but something would come up and, you know, or sometimes I would have a day where I cried a lot during that day. And I feel like it was still pretty regular at that point.

But recently I felt like I've had strings of days where I've looked back and been like, oh, I don't think I've cried. And I don't mean to say that because it's like a badge of honor or like a good thing if you don't cry. It just kind of showed me that I maybe wasn't having as many of those moments throughout the day that were as tough. It also sometimes makes me think like, am I still dealing with it? Am I processing it? Am I ignoring it? Am I stuffing it down?

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I'm the president of Overthinkers International. So I'm always thinking about this stuff, but I'm just sharing my kind of honest thoughts. I'm not a grief specialist. I don't know. I go to therapy for this every single week and I'm doing the best I can. But I just wanted to share with you, like in real time, that's kind of what comes up for me. I feel like the only things that really helped me. I was thinking about this actually at the gym this morning. I was thinking like I was looking for a podcast to listen to while I was walking and I don't really listen to business podcast because I already have a terrible affliction where I think about business 24/7 so I try to listen to other stuff.

And I was thinking about how a lot of people have recommended all these like grief podcasts and grief resources and grief books and all these things. And I haven't wanted to read or to listen to them yet, and I feel badly about that. I'm like, shouldn't I be listening to all these grief podcasts because it's going to get me through, it's going to help me. I feel like there's a grief podcast going on in my head 24/7 so like, I just don't feel like I want to absorb more of that right now. And there's nothing wrong with people who do want to absorb more than that. I'm just not feeling it.

And I guess I just wanted to share that because I was like, if maybe someone else feels a little guilty about like not wanting to absorb more content around the amount of grief that they're feeling, maybe you share that too. I don't know. Or maybe you finally get immense amount of support and that's fantastic. Like, that's why they exist, right? That's why support groups exist, that's why these books exist. I just don't feel like it right now.

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It's not like I don't feel like I need it. I just like don't want it right now. And I'm giving myself the permission and the space and grace to do that. And I go to therapy, and I find that super helpful. I vent to friends. I was trying to think of like, what does feel good to me right now? Like therapy, venting, doing things that I would have done with my dad. I go to restaurants. My dad loved diners and I love diners too. Who am I kidding? But I'll go to a diner, then I'm like, oh, my dad would have loved this diner. And that's where I go, right?

And every once in a very, very great while, I go to Olive Garden to honor him, because he loved Olive Garden. And I bring his hat and I go and have lunch, like where he would have wanted to go. I'm just going to be honest with you. Sometimes I talk to him as if he's here. I find that helpful. It always kills me. I always break down crying, but I sometimes just get this really overwhelming urge to be like, I just want to talk to you. I just want to talk to you and just pretend for a minute that you're still here, you know? And I don't know, it makes me feel good. So what's the difference?

I feel like with grief, I've just learned that I don't have many F's left to give. Honestly, I think that's personally how this kind of grief has felt and having kind of a traumatic experience at the end, having a lot of other trauma in my life, having another parent who I'm anticipatorily grieving right now, I am just like I am out of F's. And so I'm kind of going from a grief perspective with what works for me right now. And so if me sharing this with you gives you permission to give less F's and go with what feels good to you, then it's a win. And I'm glad that I shared. So I hope that that's helpful.

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I also wanted to share that I think when you listen to this episode, yeah, I'm about to leave for Mexico. I'm going to a business retreat that I'm really excited about and there are like a number of people going on this retreat that I know online already. So I get to meet in real life, which I'm really, really excited about. So you'll see me sharing a lot about that on Instagram in the next couple of days. I'm just hoping to get some sun and relax, and I hope that the weather is beautiful. Either way, who cares? It will be in Mexico, so that's really cool.

And then I wanted to share like a, I don't know, it's kind of an updated thought or tip on Instagram stories in case this is helpful for you. So one of the things -- I don't know if you have the feature because I didn't have it for a while, but now I have it. If you have the feature of the 60-second stories, one of the things I've really liked doing lately is taking little snippets of my day throughout the day, a few seconds worth of a video clip of anything you're doing, making coffee, working at your computer, taking the dog for a walk, playing with your kids, whatever it is.

And then at the end of the day, or even sometimes just the next day, not everything has to be in real time. It's okay. The next day, I will use the app Inhot. And so I use the free version of InShot. I'll make sure we link to it below, but I use the app Inhot and I stitch those clips together. It's super easy to do. Sometimes I have to shorten them a little bit or speed them up or whatever, but I do that. I put them into InShot and then I create them almost as like a little vlog of my day. And I use that to either show behind the scenes content on Instagram

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stories.

So instead of sharing a million different times throughout the day, I give this shorter clip. Also, it's a really good thing for you to stitch together and use as the background of a reel, and then you could put, text like do text overlay or do like a tip or something like that. And I also think you could use it for stories to set up a kind of like a call to action for some content that you're sharing or something that you're promoting.

So I just wanted to give that as like a little tip of something I've been doing. It seems like people really like that. You'll have to let me know if you see my stories and you like seeing that. I always like seeing little snippets behind people's days. Like I like knowing what people are up to and how they, I don't know, how they structure their day, what their hobbies are, a little sneak peek into their life. I think it's my nosiness factor, which I've told you about before. So let me know if that's still helpful.

I did get a question. Speaking of Instagram, I got a legal question. It's the only legal thing I'm going to say, but I got a question in the day about free content of saying can I -- do I have to be worried about what free content I have? I'm not currently selling anything. I'm just like, what if I have content on my website or content on Instagram or TikTok, is that a problem to you?

I just want to quickly say that yes, you do from a legal standpoint, have to "worry" about what you say and do online. I think there's a little bit of a myth that you only have to worry about the stuff that you get paid for, to do with clients or the

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courses that you sell or something like that, but we're still held accountable for even free content. So somebody could see something that you put online and then say like, oh, so and so told me to try this and I had this negative effect, this impact, and now I'm suing you for it.

So we do have to legally protect ourselves, even with things that we're not selling, which is why I sell legal templates for your website or mini disclaimers for your content and all of this kind of stuff, because it's not just client contracts that we need. So that's that.

Well, that was my little catch up. I was just thinking it would be fun to kind of share what's been going on, what's been on my mind and my heart. I really appreciate you listening. I hope that you like the podcast, all 99 episodes of it. And on Thursday, I'm going to have not only my 100th episode, but it's going to be a special episode dedicated to sharing with you all about podcasting. So podcast tips, like my tech tools, what I use, how I've worked on increasing downloads, like majorly have skyrocketed downloads in the last several months, how I've worked on integrating my content and reusing and repurposing. So I'm going to kind of spill my podcast guts to you on Thursday in the 100th episode.

And to celebrate the fact that it is our 100th episode, I'm also going to be giving one lucky listener a tech package of my favorite podcast tech tools, so you won't want to miss Thursday's episode. Thank you so much for listening. Please send me a DM on Instagram at Sam Vander Wheelan and let me know if you've listened and if you liked this episode, what it brought up for you. I love hearing from you. And if you think a friend

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would like this episode too, just go ahead and forward it to them real quick. It means a lot to me and it helps to spread the word. So with that, I'll see you on Thursday for my 100th episode. I can't believe it. See you then.

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