

TRANSCRIPT

On Your Terms



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Episode #: 160

Are You Really Willing to Go For It?

Sam Vander Wielen:

Hey friends, and welcome back to On Your Terms. I'm your host, Sam Vander Wielen. And today we're talking all about how you have to do the work to be great at something. And maybe - I don't know - we don't all have to follow our passions but, also, I think sometimes we think we really want something, when if we really sat with ourselves, we realize that we don't or we're not willing to do the work to become it.

So, I feel like social media has made it feel like or look like it's really easy to do whatever you want. We all sell this idea of you can do anything. Like, "You can start a business from anywhere. All you need is a laptop and an internet connection," or whatever. And on the one hand, it's true that it's a lot easier and that there are easier ways to start a business than there used to be.

Because, now, yes, if you are privileged enough to have a phone - first of all, I like to check the idea that everybody has a phone, let alone everyone has a smartphone or internet access - if you have a phone that also has really good camera quality - that what these things cost like, I don't know, over \$1,000, I think, for this phone, it's ridiculous - if you have that and have all the other things and then have a lot of other things that society deems to be, I don't know, bingeable and viral and all of these kinds of things, then, yes, technically speaking, we can make a video or make a business out of posting a bunch of videos, even videos that are seemingly about nothing. So, yeah, it's true, on the one hand, it is a lot easier to get started.

Even from a business perspective, it's so much easier like if I wanted to start a bakery, I need to find space, then lease that space, have enough money to lease that space, outfit that space, get all the insurance, hire employees because you can't do that kind of thing alone, have all the inventory, all the licensing, all the stuff. It's a lot. And it takes a

long time, months, years to get that off the ground while you're not making money.

So, the cool thing about an online business is, sure, we don't have a lot of operating expenses, not nearly as much. Like when I started, I had very, very little operating expenses. Now, my expenses are really high. The expenses go up with the more money the business makes, if that's what you want to do. That's my choice. But it can be so much more doable to start this kind of business because we don't have to do all those things. You don't have to get space. You don't have to have a lease. You don't even have to have an office. You can do this from your couch. And so, that is definitely true.

On the other hand, though, it's also made it look like it's super easy because of being like, "You don't need an office, you don't need this, you don't need that." It's gone a little too far, on the one hand, where people are like, "You also don't need to be qualified." People aren't saying that straight up, but they're just being like, "You don't even have to go to four years of getting this kind of schooling. Just do this. Just talk about this." So, we've made it a little too easy in that respect, but we've also made the success part, I think, look a little easy.

And I'm not saying everyone's doing this on purpose. There are some people, obviously, who it's part of their business model to market to you how easy their lives are and, therefore, you should buy their thing. But for the most part, other people are just kind of sharing the day to day of what's going on in their life or their business. And sometimes we put our own story on that. We just put our own thing of like, "Oh, look how easy it is for them. Look how she can just be out doing whatever she wants and running this business. They don't have to do this thing that I have to do. So, therefore, they're just living it easy." It makes it easy to even put our own, like, spin and lens on it.

But what I have found in my experience is that it's easy to want the result of something, the end result. You can look at the Chapter 12 and say, "I really want the ending of that story," but what we probably don't know, for one, we don't know if that's the true story, the real story when it comes

to social media. But even in general, even if you're looking at somebody and being like, "I want to be a food blogger because they just have the life. They literally get to just make recipes all day long. That's their job. And it seems so fun and so easy."

And I can simultaneously want to be the food blogger because I see the end result of being a successful food blogger where now they have fantastic video production, and they've gotten really good with their food skills and cooking skills, and plating, and food styling, and how they present their content. And then, I see a million comments on it and I'm like, "I would just love to post a picture of the thing that I cooked and have all these people just loving it and wanting to make my food."

It's easy to want a result of something but not be willing to do the work to get there or to have the patience and the tenacity, frankly, to go through the stuff that they've gone through probably to get there.

So, let me give you a little funny example of something that happened to me a couple of weeks ago. In case you don't know, the U.S. Open is one of the Grand Slams for tennis. And there are several throughout the year, the Australian Open in January kicks things off. And then, the one in New York is the U.S. Open, it starts the last several days of August, goes into the beginning of September, and that's kind of the end of the Grand Slam season for tennis. So, every single year it's in New York. It's a really big deal. It's like a who's who of New York celebrities. Unlike a lot of the other opens, it's a really wild crowd, really loud and energetic. And all the other ones like Wimbledon, you have to be super quiet and the players wear all white, and it's very much more stuffy.

So, any who, goes to the U.S. Open this year, and I decided to go to two different days. So, we went to one of the first days, which is really cool, because when you go to the U.S. Open on the first and second round, you just get to walk around the grounds of the facility, of the Billie Jean King facility and there are courts everywhere. It's like as far as the eye can see, there are courts and you'll just walk by a court and somebody really famous in the tennis world is playing and you also get to see people who are up and coming. I also got to see a lot of people who were unranked

who were beating people who were really highly ranked in the world. So, it was really cool.

And this one matchup that Ryan wanted to see was completely packed. You couldn't even get into the stadium anymore or to the bleachers to watch this game. And so, we walked to the court that was right next to it because we had the bright idea that when you would climb the bleachers of the stadium that was right next to it, if you stood all the way at the top of the bleachers, you could actually see down and into the game that we were trying to get into that was completely full.

So, we get up there and, as I always say, I'm not afraid of heights. I'm just afraid of the difference between where I'm at and the proximity of the ground. And Ryan's always like, "Yeah. That's called a fear of heights." So, I'm just like, "No, no. I'm not afraid." It's just that because we've, like, gone all over the world and hiked and climbed and been all over these things and I do it. I just don't love it. I don't love looking down and seeing how far it is.

So, I was very nervously standing at the top of these bleachers overlooking the stadium everybody wanted to get into and this group of guys comes up behind me. And I only noticed this because I was feeling so nervous that I don't like when more and more people kind of approach you and it felt like they were closing in or pushing me against the railing and I didn't want to be there. And so, this is why I remember and I was paying attention. And so, this group of guys, just for the pure sake of description, call them Wall Street bros. There are a lot of Wall Street bros at the U.S. Open. And so, this group of Wall Street bros kind of walks up behind me.

So, it turns out actually that the guy who was on the court - I didn't know it at the time - that we were all trying to see was Medvedev, who ended up playing in the finals, the men's finals against Djokovic. So, he's an incredible player, and I'm pretty sure he's number three in the world or he was at the time of the Open.

And so, these guys were all talking about him and how good he was and whatever. And this one guy says, "Well, yeah, if we were all 25 and

flexible, then we would have been there too." And I just couldn't help but bust out laughing. By the way, this guy was dead serious. Like, he was not joking. He was not joking. And I just started giggling, just being like, "Are you serious? You can't really think that, right?" So, yeah, he really thought that if he was 25, that the difference between him and Medvedev, who's the one of the greatest players in the world and who ended up making it to the finals, was that Medvedev is 25 and flexible by his own description.

So, I just thought this was so funny because I was like, wow, what an incredibly convenient way to look at it. And when I look at them, I think like I'd love to be Serena. I'd love to be out there kicking ass, just winning all these tennis matches, being so famous for tennis. I think to be famous for being incredible at your sport, to be so skilled, and to be the best at your level of what you do is so cool. The opportunities that they get, the travel, all of the different sponsorships, the people they get to meet - I don't know - even the lifestyle. I'm like, "Oh. I would love to wake up in the morning and train. That's my job, is to work out and eat well." And, obviously, she has the resources now to be supported. And I'm just like, "What an incredible life."

I also know that if I really knew what it was like, that I would absolutely not do it. I wouldn't do it. And not to mention there's a whole bunch of, I feel, sub-factors here that we're not talking about that are like opportunity and privilege and pure talent, raw talent and skill. Some people are just naturally very gifted at this. Other people have to work at it. Other people have to uncover this natural gift.

Obviously, there's a lot to be said for privilege and opportunity, especially in a sport like tennis. It's very expensive. It doesn't tend to be available to everyone. There aren't tennis courts everywhere, you know, that kind of stuff. So, there are a lot of those things too.

But I also think like if I could be a fly on the wall for all the times when Serena, for example, was young and had to wake up super early, and not hang out with her friends, and be sore and have injuries, and be getting really probably tough feedback, and having hard losses, and doubting

herself and questioning, and having so much pressure on her from a young age, and thinking about working out at that age and wanting to get better, and then just the sheer amount of repetition and dedication and practice and sacrifices and having to bet on herself, I'm like, actually, it's not that I couldn't do it. I didn't and I don't think I would.

And that's the difference, I can want the result. I can want to be like, yeah, it would be so fun to drop in to be Serena for one day, that would be so cool. But the truth is I couldn't and wouldn't do the stuff that it would require to get there.

The example I used earlier about a food blogger is not a funny example for me because that really was something that I wanted to do. I did want to be a food blogger, even a chef. I even thought about I wanted to go to culinary school, but then use those skills to do more content creation. But when push came to shove, and I started a food blog and I started going down that path, I was like, "I don't want to do this." It was exhausting. I didn't like it. I didn't want to photograph everything that I was eating.

I wanted to cook a recipe. I didn't want to document it. I didn't want to test it over and over and over again to make sure it was actually good for people. I didn't want to explain every single step. Just showing a picture of my end thing was fun for me. I wasn't willing to do the things necessary that would be required to become a food blogger or successful food blogger. I wouldn't want to work my way up the ranks. I wouldn't want to deal with having to see all these other people having much more success at it. I wouldn't want to post for years and years and years for things to flop, until one day people finally started picking up on it.

When I think about that stuff, I'm just like, "No. That doesn't seem worth the work." So, I can sit here and say, yeah, I want to be a famous food blogger. That would be my dream job. But the truth is, I wouldn't be willing to do what it would take to become that. And I think that to be something, to do something, to build a business, you can't just want the end result of it, like to be a player in the U.S. Open, for example. It comes with the whole package, the practices, the repetition, the sacrifice, the injuries, the repetition again, the coaching, the feedback, the

criticism, the self-doubt, having to overcome the self-doubt, the obstacles, waiting your turn, falling from grace, getting back up again.

I think it's really interesting to think about that when it comes to your business is like, Are you building something because you're really wanting the outcome, you hope for this end thing, but are you willing to do the work between now and then that it really takes to get there? Or are you willing to make sacrifices?

Like, you can want to build a great coaching business, but as long as you're not looking at Amy Porterfield and saying, "I'm here to build that business, that's the only thing I want to do," well, are you willing to do all the things that Amy has probably done in her life for, I think, over a decade that she's been in business, all the things that she's probably had to do, all the things she's still doing, all the sacrifices that she made, all the hard work, all the times when nobody cared about what she was doing or saying or writing? Or do you just want to be the end result of somebody like Amy? I think that's a really, really important question.

I think if you really want it, you have to want the whole thing, not just the outcome, because then it's not something worth chasing. Like for me, with the food blogger stuff, I realized that cooking is a passion for me. That doesn't have to be my career. That doesn't have to be the thing that I share with the world. And I do love food and I love cooking so much and that's why my instinct was this is what I want to dedicate my life to. But I was getting my wires crossed that my life had to be dedicated to a passion or work had to be dedicated to my passion or vice versa.

And I realized more that I could create a business that I really like. I really, really enjoy what I do and I'm fortunate that I like the parts of what I do. I love podcasting. I love writing. I love helping people solve problems, making things simpler. So, I love the nuts and bolts of what I do. And having built such a great business has allowed me to chase down my passions for food separately and aside from my business.

As soon as I can, hopefully very, very soon - I've talked about this before - I was supposed to go to culinary school in Ireland at Ballymaloe, which

is the cookery of all cookery schools to go to. It's on a working farm and you live in a cottage. It's the best experience ever. I was supposed to go during COVID. I was booked and paid and everything. Obviously, it got cancelled several times over. And I have not gotten around to rescheduling because of my parents. And so, I am rescheduling that. This business has allowed me to be able to do things like that. But that doesn't have to be my job.

And I think we can have a lot of dreams that are just kind of fun dreams, too. By the way, I think still in my mind, I'm always like, "Oh, it'd be so fun to be a food blogger and just be doing all these things, recipe testing, and hearing from people that they tried my food and they loved it. That'd be so cool."

I'd love to also be a pro-surfer. I have a whole dream scenario in my mind where I'm a pro-surfer who just hangs out at the beach and it's sponsored by Roxy and Billabong. That's funny, I'm wearing a Billabong shirt, I just realized. But it's not sponsored. I wish. But you hang out at the beach all day.

I also always dreamt about being a magazine editor. Well, I feel like back in the day, if you're my age, being in magazines just seemed so cool, so Devil Wears Prada-ish, you know. I think because my mom, being a doctor, I always thought being a doctor would be incredible. Another thing, by the way, that I would love to just snap my fingers and be a doctor.

But my mom went to med school when I was a kid, so I saw what that was like. And, no, not for me. I can't do it. Like, no sleeping. She didn't sleep. Thank God my mom didn't care about eating. Food to her was a nuisance. It was something that had to be done. And I very much do not agree with that sentiment. So, she would just be working rounds for, like, 18 hours. I think they've since changed some of these rules. But, oh man, her life was so difficult to go through med school and then afterwards to start up her own practice. It was a lot. And the responsibility, the liability, it's very stressful.

I'd even love to be an actor. Being an actor would be so fun. I went to drama camp for, like, ten years when I was a kid. I love acting for fun. It'd be so fun.

It's fun to dream and have little alternative lives. But when it comes to building your business, choosing your career, designing your path, I think it has to be something that you're passionate about enough that you're willing to do the hard stuff along the way.

So, with that, I hope that this gave you a little nugget of something to think about today. Shoutout to the guys at the U.S. Open who made me think about this. And just think about how it's really easy to see somebody in there on their highest mountain and think, "Oh, I just want to be up there," but you're really not willing to climb it with them and put in the work that would be required.

So, I hope this gave you a little something to chew on today. Let me know what you thought about this episode, and text it to a friend, text a link to this episode to a friend real quick if you liked it and you think they would too. Thanks so much for listening and I'll see you in a few days.

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