

# TRANSCRIPT

## On Your Terms



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Episode #: 173

Things that Keep Me Grounded Offline

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Sam Vander Wielen:

Hey, and welcome back to On Your Terms. I'm your host, Sam Vander Wielen. I'm so glad that you're here. And this is going to be a cozy little episode, so I hope you are ready to get cozy. Getting cozy is my favorite thing in the whole wide world.

This week is one of my favorite weeks because it's Thanksgiving here in the U. S., and so I actually take this whole week off. For me and the team, we take it super chill that's why I don't do Black Friday sales, all that kind of stuff. I look forward to this all year. So, tomorrow I'm actually headed to Vermont again, and I shared in a previous episode quickly that it's our first year without both of my parents so we rented this house in Vermont that's like - just wait until you see the property. As I shared in the previous episode, the house itself is beautiful, it's like a renovated farmhouse. But the property, I just can't believe it. And I can't wait to share it with you tomorrow on Instagram when we get there. So, if you're not already following me on Instagram, I'm @samvanderwielen over in those parts

So, we'll be in Vermont. I'm really excited to be able to go to my favorite co-op. A lot of the places in Vermont, like they have obviously some normal grocery stores, but they have all these co-ops that are local - I don't know how you call it, like member funded grocery stores. So, the one that I really like is in the Middlebury Co-op, and so you pay \$20 a year to become a member and then you get dividends if they're profitable. So, you get, I think, on average, like, 2 to 3 percent back if they're profitable. They've been profitable I think every year, if not most years. And then, you also get member deals when you go shopping there and all that. But it's super cute and they have lots of local stuff, but even better, they have so much stuff in bulk there.

I feel like when I was little, we used to go to the grocery store and there were a lot more bulk stuff. But it's really cool because if you're somebody like me who, you know, I put all my stuff in jars and mason jars and glass jars and all of that kind of stuff, I've always loved it when I'm in Vermont, I see so many people going to the store with their basket filled with empty jars and I'm just like, "Oh, this is so cool." So, if you're a grocery store nerd like myself, I could literally just go in grocery store tours of the United States and I'd be happy as a clam. And I would just share with you real time updates about grocery stores across the country, that would make me very happy.

My sister and I often joke about how many different YouTube channels we could have because we always say we could have one about that, we could have one that reviews hoagies across the United States, which you might not call a hoagie, you might call it a hero - I think that's what they call it here in New York - or a sub, I don't know what else, grinder, I think some people call it grinder. But I'm from Philly so we call it hoagie. So, I could do hoagie reviews, that would be easy for me. And then, I would have a grocery store channel. I think that's what we would do. My sister used to like to review bathrooms across the United States, like bathrooms of hotels or restaurants, and she would come back and report as to this is what was really nice about the bathroom and all that kind of stuff. So, yeah, we're a very multi-talented family, obviously.

I can't wait to get to Vermont. I can't wait to squeeze my little nuggets, my little nephews. I'm just dying to see them and to get time with them to hang out and just spend quality time. In the summer, we went to the beach and so we got time to play on the beach and we went in the ocean. I can still hear them laughing in my head. I just want to squeeze them. So, I'm very excited to hang out with them. And they're really hoping for snow, but, I don't know, we'll see, we'll see.

So, I wanted to chat with you today about things that keep me kind of grounded that aren't business related that I think accidentally end up helping me in business. But these are not things that I seek out because they're going to help me in business. I want to make that very clear, these are things I would do regardless. It's just the reason I wanted to chat

with you about this today is because I find it really funny that we spent a lot of time talking about email marketing strategy, and social media strategy, and trends and tips and funnels, and all kinds of ways to get more clients. And in reality, what I've actually noticed in my business over so many years is that the stuff that I do that no one sees or the stuff that I do that is not any of those things I just listed, the non-business related things, I think, are the things that end up helping me the most. And maybe that's because they make me more centered, more grounded.

I think it's helpful to take time away from what we all do and take time away from consuming a lot of content about whatever it is that you do, like you might be consuming a lot of content either directly about your subject area, you might be watching a lot of stuff related to health and wellness or a lot of stuff related to fitness or education or money or whatever it is that you do, or you might be consuming a lot of content that's about business stuff because you own your own business. I think either way, consuming a lot of that kind of content, it's kind of being on this hamster wheel and your main focus is almost to keep the hamster wheel running. But what we really need to do sometimes is step off of it, let ourselves recover a little bit, and then get back on to be in better shape.

It's kind of like when you run - I hate running, but I'll use this as an example. I feel like sometimes when I run every once in a while, I just push myself to run or do a little Peloton running workout kind of situation at the gym, if I want to just get some aerobic exercise or something, I'll run in the treadmill. And then, the next time I come back to the gym, if it's a week, two weeks later, I notice that I'm better. I can go longer. I can go faster. Even my workouts the next day after I run, for example, are better because I feel like my lungs open up and I just have better stamina.

So, that's kind of the way that I think about all of this stuff, which is like we're already on a hamster wheel enough. Your job is on your computer. It's on social media. It's face-to-face with clients. You're writing. You're doing videos. Maybe you're doing something like this, like audio. It's a lot of output. It's a lot of output. It's a lot of outward facing stuff.

I had an episode – which I’ll link to in the show notes – about being an introvert and extrovert in this kind of business where, sure, maybe you want to run your own business and you know that that’s going to take some extrovertedness, but what about when you want to go inwards, then what do we do? How do we balance that out? Because unless you are 100 percent purely an extrovert who can be in that mode all the time, then we need to figure out how are we balancing that and how do you still run your business. Because what we can’t have is you going hot, cold, hot, cold, hot, cold, like being super extroverted on social media and then you’re so burnt out that you’re like, “I’m taking a month off.”

What I want to help you do is be more sustainable and go for the long haul. And I think that part of what helps with going with a long haul are these things I’m going to be talking about today. It’s the things that are the non-business related things that end up making you a better business person in the long run and I think give you tons of creative ideas. I think a lot of the things I’m going to share with you today, I have ten of my own things that, really, I think keep me grounded, that help make me a better business person, that have nothing to do with business, and that I don’t do because of business. I think that I come up with my best business ideas and just am a better content creator because I do these things, and I really, really prioritize it.

So, are you ready to get into my ten things? I am. Okay. So, I was just thinking the other day, on the podcast, I want to take a deep breath together. And just this is a busy season. There’s a lot going on. You might be really stressed right now. You might be feeling like you should be running a Black Friday sale but you’re not. Or you might be getting to the end of the year and feeling like your business isn’t quite where it is and where you thought it would be. And you’re disappointed or you’re frustrated and you feel like things should be going better.

Just take a breath. It is hard to run a business and it’s a lot. You’re managing a lot. And so, I get it. That’s also why I think that you have to do these things that are non-business related sometimes and I feel like some of the messages that I get from people sometimes, I was just reading one from someone this morning in my DMs thanking me for sharing all of this

kind of more personal stuff and the non-business related stuff because she it feels to her like I'm giving her permission to do non-business related things. Because I think it's really easy to start thinking if your business isn't where it is, then you have to be doing more. It's like the answer is always more in online business, it feels like. And I hope that I'm here today to tell you that maybe the definition of more is more for yourself or things that you might not be thinking of.

Okay. So, now that we've taken our breath, let's get into it. Number one - well, this is not in any specific order, by the way - one of the things that I do that keeps me really grounded and I think is a really nice antidote to what we do in online business and being a content creator is that I do things that are outside of myself. That feels really, really silly to say.

And I feel like a lot of the criticism that I hear from people who aren't in our line of work, even from people who are within our line of work, but I hear a lot of judgments, snap judgments - I guess we'll call them - from people who are not content creators is that we're all narcissistic. We all talk about ourselves. We talk to ourselves on our camera. We think everybody wants to hear every thought that we have and all that kind of stuff. I don't know, I mean are there parts of this? Yeah, sure, of course. And are there people who are maybe more into that than others? Absolutely. I can think of a few. So, yeah, for sure.

I also think sometimes people don't understand what you do and they don't understand that they might see you talking to your camera and they might see that centering yourself, or talking about your accomplishments, they might see that as centering yourself. But only really you know the impact of your work. I guess I'm kind of coming at it from a different angle where even the things that I'm doing that help other people, I'm still doing it to help my own business and my business helps me. And it is a lot of talking about myself. It's a lot of talking about my business, my experience, my story.

Something I really wrestle with about being a content creator is that as much as I want this to be a conversation, and I do ask you to reach out to

me and to tell me what your thoughts are, and how you feel about it, and what speaks to you, what doesn't speak to you, I'm always very open about my DMs and email being open, and I absolutely read everything that you send to me, it still feels like a one way relationship sometimes that I'm uncomfortable with it. Like, I wish that there was more opportunity. If I could figure out a way that there was more opportunity for us to actually banter, I don't want to be talking at people. I want to do something that really, truly just gives to other people without me being centered at all and without anybody knowing about it.

So, doing things outside myself, like giving, volunteering, even listening and learning from other people - I think a lot about how I am in a position where I'm teaching people every single day about legally protecting their business or about marketing your online business, but I want to learn from other people. I want to shut up and just listen. I'm not the expert in most things. I'm not the expert in anything. Actually, I don't believe that I'm even an expert in what I do. I just know a lot about it and I know a lot more than other people in terms of the legal stuff. But otherwise, I'm just here figuring it out right alongside you.

So, I want to spend as much time listening and learning from other people, not necessarily about business all the time, but about life in general. I want to put myself in the student role and I want to continuously remind myself to be a student of life, not getting this - I don't know.

I never want to be complacent with thinking I've learned enough, reached enough. I want to be a diverse person as well. I want to keep myself out of this bubble that we're in, in online business. And I want to continue to challenge myself and push myself and listen and learn and all of that.

I don't really want to talk about the giving and volunteering because my whole point about that is that it's not something I do so that I can record it and then share it with people. And I think a lot of what I want you to keep in mind today, too, is that a lot of what I'm talking about is the sacredness of doing things for yourself and for others that nobody knows about. It's like your little secret. Maybe it's just me, maybe it's because I'm a Scorpio, but it has felt really good to know that I do things that nobody knows about. I've even gone on trips that I have not shared on

social media and I just keep posting like normal. It almost feels like it's my little secret. I honestly think that that's what helps keep me sane and it keeps me grounded.

I send my friends pictures when I'm out and about or I'm away or of stuff that's happening at my house or something like this, and those are pictures that I then purposefully don't share on social because it feels really good to have something that's outside of this world. Do you know what I mean? So, I'm not going to talk about where I volunteer, what I do, who I give to. I mean, obviously I've shared a lot about the Leukemia Society, that one you know about already. But the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society is a great organization that I do a lot with behind the scenes because my dad had leukemia and they're a really good organization and they were very good to him. And I know that they're good to a lot of other people. But that's number one.

The second thing that I do is to focus on one activity at a time. This has been, I feel like the greatest - I keep using the word antidote, but it's been the greatest antidote to how I feel when I'm running my business, which is very overstimulated. There's things popping up and video and all this stuff going on. There's just so much happening. And then, I feel like when I'm not working, I'm very intentional about making sure that I'm doing one thing at a time to try to train my brain to not need so much overstimulation all the time and to allow my brain a little bit of time to rest and relax.

So, what I mean is that the way that I like to think about this is whatever I'm doing in that moment, that's the only thing I want to be doing. So, if I'm cooking, I'm cooking. I'm not cooking and listening to a podcast and have the T.V. on in the background and music and seven other things. Or if I want to take a walk, I can just go take a walk. I don't have to take a walk to listen to a podcast. Taking a walk and listening to a podcast is great. I do that too. I'm just saying that not every single walk has to be a productive walk. Every time you're cooking doesn't have to be a productive cooking sesh. These things can be independently times of rest.

And using kind of the one thing at a time principle, I really find myself settling down and unwinding. If you've spent a lot of time on your phone lately or you spent a lot of time on social or something like that, and then you go on vacation, watch how uncomfortable it makes you. So, when I started doing this one thing at a time thing every once in a while, I noticed a big difference in how much faster I can unwind now. Because for a while, like a year ago, I feel like if I would go on a trip, it took me like two, three days to unwind. Now, it takes me a couple of hours to be like, "Okay." I'm off social. I don't have to be thinking about things through the lens of how is this helpful to my audience, how can I share this, how can I package this, what lesson is in this. It's really important to train yourself that doing one thing at a time is okay.

And sometimes, by the way, this content watching not related to business - I love YouTube. You're going to hear me talk about that in a few minutes - - I love YouTube, or even Netflix, if you're watching Netflix, how often do you watch Netflix? And then, you're scrolling on social media on your phone and have something else going at the same time and you're texting a friend while you're watching Netflix? It is so hard to just sit and watch Netflix. That's me. I mean, let me know if you feel the same way or if I'm crazy, I don't know, but I have noticed now it is hard for me to sit and just watch a movie and not grab for my phone, not be distracted, and not want to go look at something.

So, the only time that this has gotten better for me is when I started practicing one thing at a time. If I'm watching Netflix, I'm going to sit here and I'm going to watch Netflix. I read a lot of food blogs, for example, and so I usually do that in my iPad. I used to do that on my iPad and then have the T.V. on in the background. Now, I'm like, no, just one thing at a time. I shut down the T.V. I don't need all that extra stimulation. The reason I like reading my food blogs is because they're slow and cozy. And so, I'll just read that and watch that and everything else will be shut off. And my phone is put out of my reach, so I can't do that too. So, that's my one activity at a time. I don't want to call it a rule, but approach.



The third thing that really helps me stay grounded is seeing other people's creativity. I think this is probably the thing that has the biggest direct impact on my business or content creation. It gives me the most content ideas. I don't know why, I don't know if it's just me, but seeing people in the throes of their own creative process or who would just feel so free and dedicated to what they do makes me so inspired, so happy. I always cry. It's so funny, it makes me very emotional.

Like, I went to see the Broadway play, Kimberly Akimbo, a couple of weeks ago. I went to a concert, a guitar concert. These are things that are kind of outside of my comfort zone. We're not talking about going to see a major concert. I'm not going to the Taylor Swift concert. I'm not saying that that's not inspirational, but I actually think that what's been helpful - first of all, to have more repetition, so you can't go to Taylor all the time - also to see people who are just super passionate about their craft and who you get to watch be in the flow. Maybe that's it. Maybe it's that I get to see people in their flow and for some reason that helps to put me in my own. And I really appreciate seeing other people own their art, own their passion, own their flow. And so, yeah, I felt that when I went to see Kimberly Akimbo on Broadway. I felt that when I went to go see the guitar concert. Even watching movies and things on Netflix, when I do just that and I just watch that but I don't watch anything else, that kind of stuff is what makes me the most inspired.

So, I think really seeing other people's creativity and, I guess, also, this is helpful because so much of the content that we are creating or - sorry - consuming day-to-day is content that's related to our business so we're thinking all the time and hearing lots of opinions, and everybody's got a different opinion so it feels really overwhelming. And then, you see people sharing stats or figures that make you feel really intimidated, and so then you start having all this self-doubt creep in. What about consuming some content that just leaves you feeling good? That doesn't have anything to do with your business or with your craft or with your expertise. What about just something that you like that moves you? That's, I think the stuff that ends up having an accidental impact on your business.

The fourth thing that keeps me really grounded is movement. This is something that I have been very dedicated to for the last year. Actually, the week that you're listening to this is exactly one year since I started going to my favorite gym, Energy Fitness. Well, this is a separate episode for a separate day, but it's my favorite little place because - well, maybe this is related because I think that what I have found through my gym is a community, a little community that doesn't have anything to do with what I do for a living and where no one gives a shit how many Instagram followers I have or how much money my business makes or anything like that. It's just a place where the people are really friendly, they kind of all have same common goals. And it's really a positive place, really welcoming, warm place. And you leave feeling good. They help you produce endorphins.

But I think that having a dedication to a movement practice, whatever that looks like for you, if it's a morning walk, if it's biking, if it's - I don't know - Orangetheory classes, yoga, Pilates, there are a million different ways to move your body, I always believe that whatever you have the most fun doing, I think, is then the thing that you'll stick to. And I know for me, variety, I kind of like all movement. I love working out. I love taking classes. I love working out with my personal trainer. I love taking walks. I like biking. I like hiking. I like kayaking. I just like mixing it up.

And so, I have my dedicated personal trainer sessions every week. I have two personal trainer sessions every week where I'm just doing strength training, so just lifting, moving my body. Sometimes I'm doing more dynamic movements of just making sure that I'm stretching and staying flexible, and all these kinds of things, or rehabbing some injuries, stuff like that. But for the most part, I'm doing strength training with them and then I'm complimenting that. Usually with one time a week, I'm taking a more intense kind of like a HIIT class at the gym. I swear to you the reason I go to this HIIT class is because I like the people. I just love the people. First of all, my trainer, Lorraine, teaches the class and I love her. And then, the people who go to - I go every single Friday morning - that class are just so fun and it feels like a little family group that I get to see. And I legitimately feel bad when I don't go, not that anybody cares and no one

probably notices, but it's just one of those things where you become part of a community.

When my parents passed away - oh, my gosh - I came into the gym, everybody knew about it because the people who owned it and ran the front desk told everyone. They all got me a gift and a card and everyone wrote me the sweetest messages in this card. And people are so nice about it and they keep asking me about it and it's been such a solace for me. And so, I think that having not only the movement practice, but maybe creating a community around it.

And maybe that means in your community, you create a walking club. I've talked here on the podcast before about how in my community where I live, there's a 90 year old walking club and they all walk together, like, two times a day. And they text each other to meet up and that's how they stay accountable. It's also how they check each other and make sure that they're all safe. But even something like that, like giving yourself something to look forward to, maybe it's with one friend, maybe you post something in a local community group, you could go hiking. I've always wanted to join a hiking club. I've always thought that would be really cool.

Or try joining a class. Maybe you're not a class person and I think people get too wrapped up in the fitness stuff of being I don't want to take that class, or I don't want to do this, or I'm not sure about that type of movement. I don't always want to do HIIT either because of I'm stressed out enough right now with everything I've got going on personally and grief and everything that it's not always the best thing for my hormones. I go anyway and I tone it down. I just do my own thing. I move at my own pace. I'm just going to go, to be around other people, be in community, move my body. I don't have to do everything exactly the way everybody tells me to in the class. So, consistent movement and maybe creating some sort of community around that movement, if possible.

The fifth thing that keeps me grounded is actually YouTube, because more of what it represents to me, not so much of the kind of content - well, because I'm not using YouTube to watch things about business. So, I'm watching YouTube, I've been very lucky to somehow fall into the whole of

the cozy, slow side of YouTube. I've also fell into the cozy, slow side of YouTube that's primarily not based in the U. S. So, most of the people, if not all of the people, I watch are located somewhere outside of the U.S. and there's just something about their content that's super slow and cozy and deeper, deeper.

You hear me talk here a lot about how I love long form content because we can get into it instead of a seven second TikTok where just everything feels so surface level. So, I'm really obsessed with Cecilia Blomdahl, who lives on an island called Svalbard, which technically belongs to Norway. It's the northernmost place in the world to live, near the North Pole. And her videos are, first of all, beautifully shot. If you like videography, photography, she's incredible. Her drone footage of the glaciers and the different fjords and stuff, unbelievable. And it's just a slow way of living. Oh, my gosh, talk about grounding, when you watch the way that she lives on this island, Svalbard, you're just blown away.

They don't even have running water at their house. They have a water tank now that they put in. Trust me, I literally know everything about her that she puts on YouTube. If you want to know anything, I'm your girl. But she puts water in this tank, it's just unbelievable. I don't even know how to explain it other than just saying her videos are so moving. Every time she shares footage of the Northern Lights, I cry because, I swear to God, it looks like my dad coming down from heaven and just touching down and just being like, "I'm here. I'm here. I can see you." And every single time, I lose it. Every time. But her content is so captivating. I'll link to it in the show notes. You have to watch it.

I also watch Hannah Adkins on YouTube. She's located in a very cozy, quaint village in the UK. I love her stuff. I watch this other YouTuber, who she has a really different handle that's not her name, I'll share it down below. But I watch this YouTuber who doesn't actually even talk or ever show her face. She just shows her kind of day-to-day morning routine, cooking, cleaning, self-care rituals, running errands. She lives in Finland, she lives in Helsinki in Finland, and I've been to Helsinki and I loved it there so that's really fun to watch. I just watch all that stuff.

And I watch a lot of travel and food videos. I find that all to be really helpful to disconnect.

The sixth thing that I do are maintaining relationships and socializing with people and doing things with people that have nothing to do with my job, that are not to create content for my job, and sometimes are hanging out with people who barely even know what I do, don't know what I do, or really just don't understand it or get it, and that is awesome. That's awesome for me because I love to hang out with people. I mean, I have a lot of friends who do know what I do. I don't want to say they don't care what I do. I don't mean that they literally don't care. I just mean, it's not important to them or they're not impressed by it, which is exactly what I want.

So, I have had situations in the past where I've met someone, become friendly, and then I'll inevitably hear from them the next time I see them, they'll be like, "Oh, my God. I just found you on Instagram. I had no idea." I'm like, "Who cares? It's just an Instagram account. And I've been doing this for a million years. It's been a lot of hard work and a lot of money spent to try to build something up. It's just my job. It's just my job." So, I really appreciate maintaining those relationships and socializing with people who just, you know, they ask how's work, how's the book. A lot of people now are asking me how's the book, no problem, I would love to talk about it. As you know, I love what I do. I'm happy to talk about it. But it's not the bulk of our relationship. You know what I mean?

The seventh thing that I do to stay grounded is focus on my nourishment and my health generally. So, I really like to treat myself like I'm an athlete, like I'm kind of in game mode. Even when I'm not playing, I'm training for something. I don't know, maybe it's like the former athlete in me, but that's something that's like a mindset and an attitude that has really helped me. I mean, it helps me personally and so it's a good thing to do anyway, but I think it does end up helping my business even though that's not necessarily my intention.

Maybe it's a little bit more my intention with this one in the sense that I know to sustain this level of output to be this energetic, to have to be on

camera all the time, to do all that kind of stuff. I'm going to need to fuel my body and to be in good shape. And so, I think that focusing on getting enough water has really helped me. This is very obviously basic and rudimentary, but this was something that I was not good at for the first couple of years, but getting enough water.

Eating enough food. I tend to just under eat because I'm not hungry in the morning so then I just won't eat that much. And then, I end up eating like a lot more as it gets to night time. So, for the last year or two, it's been a lot more of balanced meals, eating more regularly, eating enough, really balancing my plate. I focus a little bit on blood sugar management because my mom had a lot of issues with her blood sugar, and I tend to see some of these things in myself. So, it's just something I think about a lot, eating my veggies first, eating my fibrous veggies first, eating lots of greens, and then eating my protein, and eating kind of my simple carbs last if I have something like that.

So, yeah, that's kind of the way that I think about balancing that kind of stuff, making sure I get enough sleep. I think the point is I'm not here to prescribe anything to anyone because, I don't know, I'm no expert, that's for sure. But it's more that I think the point I want you to take away from this is that prioritizing this, like if I wasn't sleeping well, for example, that is something that needs to be addressed and figured out and improved before I'm like "Let me go build out this new project and a new funnel and let me start a podcast and do all that." If I'm not sleeping, then how am I ever going to do all that? If I'm not eating enough, how am I ever going to go do all that? So, I try to treat these things like my basic needs, my basic health as being just as important as that new launch, because without it, there is no launch or that launch is not going to be very successful because I'm going to burnout. So, that kind of stuff I take very seriously.

I also go to all my annual checkups, because without you, there is no business. So, please, please, please, if you haven't already, schedule your annual derm checkup. If you need one or if you are someone who qualifies for one, then go get your annual pap, all of these things.

If you're old enough to yet, go get your annual mammo. All of these things are very, very important to keep up with so that we have you and we have the best version of you still around to run your business and to just live your life, more importantly.

The eighth thing that I do will not come as any surprise to you if you follow me on Instagram, but I always read fiction. So, yes, I read nonfiction here and there when it's something I really want to. If I really want to up my game on some subject area about business, or maybe like right now, I'm reading Gina Moffa's book about grief called Moving On Doesn't Mean Letting Go. I'll link to that down below because it's been a great grief book for me. But if there's a subject that I really want to read about, I do read about nonfiction or I do read nonfiction.

But for more of what we're talking about today, I purposefully read a lot of fiction. I'm always reading at least one, if not two, if I want to kind of mix it up and read two very different stories. So, I'm always reading one or two fiction books. And I really try to pick things that are engaging and that I really enjoy and that tend to take me a little bit out of this world. I like either historical fiction, or right now, I'm kind of diving into a little bit of what I would call fantasy adjacent because it's not super fantasy or super sci-fi, but it's a little. I'm reading The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue when I'm recording this. I hope I should be done by the time you're listening to this. If I'm still reading it, it's a problem. But I'm reading that right now. I want to read other stuff by V. E. Schwab because I really, really like her writing right now in The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue.

I read Horse this year, which was incredible. I highly recommend the book Horse. I just read Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow by Gabrielle Zevin, I believe. And, oh, my goodness, if you haven't read that yet, you've got to read that. I just am trying to read. I'm trying to push myself to read things that are a little bit different for me. For whatever reason, I'm going through a phase right now that's wanting to be a little bit outside my comfort zone. And so, yeah, I'm just really, really enjoying those, but I highly recommend reading things that are outside your comfort zone.

If you're not a reader or you don't like to read, well, for one, if you like to listen to audiobooks, I think those kinds of books would be really fun to listen to an audiobook. One thing that I did a couple years ago, because I'm obsessed with Harry Potter, is that I listened to Harry Potter on audiobook, and that was so fun because I've read it several times already, but it was really, really fun to hear it read as an audiobook. So, even just something like that that'll take you out a little bit. Maybe for you, this is more like, I don't know, playing a video game or some kind of music or something like that, anything that you like that kind of takes you outside, lets you, I think, healthfully check out a little bit, I highly recommend it.

The ninth thing I do is to take dedicated social breaks, either every weekend or every weekend that I can. I do take them most weekends. I only didn't take it this past weekend because it was the weekend before a sale, so I was just posting about how that was coming up. But normally, my little strategy is that late on Friday, I post something to Instagram Stories that says what I'm going to be doing that weekend or shares a tip or does something, and then says I'm off until Monday. That way, it runs until Saturday night. And then, basically, it's only 24 hours that your Instagram Stories don't have anything. For one, I mean, who cares? I don't think anybody cares that your Instagram Stories are down. I don't think that it hurts your business in the long run.

These are little, little things. These are little nicks, not big chunks. And so, I think if you're consistent during the week and all that kind of stuff, and then you announce it, and then people get used to it, they know that you're not there on the weekends. I really don't think that it matters very much in the grand scheme of things, but that's just the way that I like to do it, I don't know. So, that's worked for me.

But even beyond those kinds of dedicated social breaks, the last thing, the tenth thing that I do that I want to talk to you about is that I take - I would call it - little tech breaks. So, tech free breaks during my day, during my hours, during my week that are so helpful, and that's why I want to end on this today. So, I take these little tech free breaks to go on a



walk, for example. I take a lot of walks without my phone or without listening to anything, like I was saying earlier, not double dipping, not being like, "Oh, I'm taking a walk. I should listen to a business podcast. I should make this worth my while." It doesn't have to be. So, you can just take a tech free walk or take a business free walk, take a walk where you do listen to something but it's music, or it's an audio book that you enjoy, or it's a podcast about some other topic that you enjoy, even that would, I think, be better.

I also just try to be mindful of being tech free. For example, back to my one thing at a time rule, if I'm reading, I'm reading, I'm not reading and scrolling or reading and picking things up. I'm just reading. I've also taken myself on a couple of coffee shop dates. I've noticed how uncomfortable it makes me feel. I think that's always really interesting. I'll go to a coffee shop and just sit and have a cappuccino and just sit there and look around and it's very uncomfortable for me. Often it's gotten better, but I do notice how naked I feel. It's very strange.

That idea was actually born to me from living in France a few years ago. If you go back far enough with me, you know that I lived in France in 2017 and then early 2018. And when I lived in France, we lived in Lyon. And when we lived in France, I would go to my local coffee shop, like everybody in the coffee shop was just sitting and either just sitting or sitting and reading or sitting and chatting with someone. But I remember the first time I went there and I lunked out my computer and plopped it down onto the tiny little cafe table that barely even fit the size of my computer, and it was like the record stopped. Everyone was like, "What are you doing?" And I felt so silly. And then, I noticed how uncomfortable it made me. And that discomfort really challenged me to be if I feel that uncomfortable just sitting there, that's probably something I want to work on sometimes.

Now, do I go to coffee shops and work? Absolutely. Do I go to coffee shops and try to write my book? Yes. I should be doing that more. But even sometimes on those dates, one thing I really like to do is set a task goal. If I'm going to go outside of the house, like a coffee shop or I've been going to the library, especially to write my book, and so I'll go to the coffee shop and be like "The only reason I'm going to this coffee shop

work-wise is to sit here and write the next month's worth of emails." So, I'll sit there and write a month's worth of emails. And then, at the end I will sit and have a cappuccino without doing anything, without my computer being open, without scrolling social media. And I try to even integrate it into those kinds of little dates, even if it's a work date.

So, I thought before we wrapped up today, I would share two things that I'm still working on, two things that I want to share and hold myself accountable for of two things I want to do more of that in a future iteration of this episode, I hope that this is part of it.

So, one thing I'm still looking for and I keep talking about wanting to do it and I'm just like not doing it, those things you keep saying you're going to do it and you just don't, is that I've been looking for an expression activity. Some kind of activity, it doesn't have to be a physical activity, movement activity necessarily. I'm thinking more art related, like expressive art to move things through me and out of me. I have obviously a lot of grief. I have a lot of sadness from losing both of my parents. I have a lot of anger surrounding the loss of my mom because of it's a pure tragedy and it was a traumatic, traumatic loss and tragedy and everything else. That's what I'll say about that right now, and it's ongoing.

And it's been horrible and I need some way, like my therapist was saying about how I am doing a lot of work in terms of healing and calming down and feeling better, but what about moving those very valid feelings of anger and sadness and disappointment and frustration and abandonment and all these other things. What about moving that through me somehow? Really processing it and moving it through, not just constantly being "I got to calm down. I have to calm down. Let me do a calming activity." So, I kind of feel like that about fitness. I feel like when I go to my fitness classes, I almost envision it as the anxiety moving out, shooting out of my fingertips. I really do feel that. But I also know that it revs up my nervous system as well, so I want something that's a bit more expressive.

So, I've thought about trying to learn how to knit. That's something I need to follow up on. Actually with my friend, Michelle, is reminding me, so

thanks for having this conversation with me. But I've been thinking about learning how to knit because my mom was an incredible knitter and I have all her knitting supplies, a lot of it, so I think I want to learn how to do that. I emailed a local art studio about signing up for some sort of art class, something kind of expressive, so I'm thinking about that.

And there was something else I was thinking of - oh, I know. I want to take a pottery class. So, I'm thinking that living here, I live on the North Shore of Long Island, and it feels like a vacation living here. It's just so beautiful and we're surrounded by water and there's so much to do. I love it here so much. During the winter though, it's hard to live in a place that's primarily based around the water and the beach because we can't do that stuff. It's cold here. So, I've been thinking about taking a pottery class this winter because they tend to be really time intensive and lasts several hours, so that's what I'm thinking.

Well, the only other things that right now are kind of on my list of things I want to continue to work on are spending more time with friends in-person. I'd love to have more time where people just like want to get together for coffee or go out to dinner or go take a walk together. I just want to spend more time with friends locally. I also want to spend more time with my friends on the phone who don't live here. Because that was something I was doing regularly at least once or twice a week before my mom died, especially. But since my mom died, I've just not felt up to a lot of chatting, especially because I don't want to just keep repeating what's going on to my closest friends about what's going on behind the scenes because it feels like it's just re-traumatizing me every single time. And at the end of the day, I have to talk to lawyers and talk to all these people, I don't feel like talking about it more. So, that's been tough, but it's something that I want to get back to sometime in the future.

The other two things are just about travel. I've been kind of inspired by some of the YouTubers that I've watched about doing some solo travel. I don't think I've really ever travelled by myself outside of going to China when I was 16 to play volleyball, but I went with a group of the other girls who are on the team who I didn't know going into it. But I want to do that and then I also want to travel more with Ryan, with friends, to go see

friends, anything like that. I just want to travel more. I want to take vacations and apply my one thing at a time rule, where if I'm on vacation, I'm on vacation. I've been to so many places in the world, but if you love to travel, you know that it's never enough. There's so many more places to go. I could go everywhere seven times, I'd be happy. So, I want to get more travel in sometime, sometime soon.

So, those are my things that I think keep me grounded, cozy, slow, let me live a little bit slower of a life. I'm so curious whether any of this was helpful to you because I'm going to be honest with you, as I'm recording this, I'm like, "Is this even remotely helpful? I don't know. Is this interesting? I hope so." But I know that this is the kind of content that I like to hear and I'm hoping that this was helpful for you.

I really just want you to know that everything to grow your business isn't necessarily directly related to business. You know what I mean? And I hope that I've given you some examples today and you can see why when you come back to your business or content creation, you are a better, fuller, calmer, slower person, which I think actually will make you a lot better in business. So, please reach out. Let me know. I would love it if you sent me a message or if you replied to my email, if you get my emails, let me know which one of these things you're actually going to implement. And I will hold you accountable or you can just put it out into the universe, but let me know which one of these things are you going to do something more outside of yourself, do the one activity at a time thing, see other people's creativity more often, some movement practice, socialize more with people have nothing to do with your job, read fiction, take better care of your health, take social breaks, take tech free breaks. I'm really, really curious which one you're going to implement, so you let me know.

And I'll chat with you in a couple of days. I've got a special little mini episode coming up for you on Thursday, Thanksgiving Day, that breaks down my REI strategy and why I don't think that you have to run a sale on Black Friday. You absolutely can run a Black Friday sale if you want to, but you also don't have to. And I highly recommend listening to this episode if you've been beating yourself up, if you've been wondering if you're missing

out, if you feel like you're falling behind, Thursday's episode is going to be a good one for you. So, I'll chat with you in a few days.

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