

# TRANSCRIPT

## On Your Terms



Driven by Goals.  
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Episode #: 223

☀️ How a Rude DM Inspired Me to Do This [Summer Series]

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Sam Vander Wielen:

It was a learning opportunity for me to be like, it's not about doing this for other people. It's not about making sure that the content is perfect enough that you won't get criticism. It's about putting out good content that you feel proud of, and knowing that even if someone criticized you for, let's say, the way that you look when you're offering up really educational content, that you don't give a shit.

Hey, and welcome to On Your Terms. I'm your host, Sam Vander Wielen, and welcome to this very special Summer Series that I'm calling Summer School, Online Business Summer School.

So, here's the deal, this summer, I'm going to be sharing a brand new episode every single Monday. But these episodes are going to be a little bit different than what you're used to in my normal week to week content. Instead of sharing all my best legal tips and how to do stuff in your contracts, instead I'm going to share quick little episodes with you each Monday where I'm out and about and sharing about something that I'm learning right now in my business, something that I have learned, a mistake I've made, a thing I've overcome, and obviously share it in a way that would be most helpful to you too.

So, these are going to be a little bit less produced, a little bit more out and about, taking a walk, on the way home from the gym, all the times when I probably think of things or have relatively good ideas. So, I hope you'll join me this summer for these quick little episodes.

After you listen to this episode, I hope you'll reply to my email if you get my emails. If you don't, make sure you go click the sidebar link down in the show notes below. Or send me a DM on Instagram and let me know what you've been thinking of Sam's Summer School Series. So, I hope you love it. I'll see you in a few minutes on the other side.

So, the other day on Instagram - I assume that this was the video that caused the problem that you're about to hear about. That's Huddy. He's sitting with me while we're recording this podcast - I posted a video where I was, I think, on my Peloton Bike. I was riding the bike. Right now I'm training for a HYROX competition. It's a fitness competition. It's going to be in November in Chicago and it requires a lot of zone two cardio. So, let's just say me and my Peloton Bike right now, we are very good friends.

And when I'm on my Peloton or when I'm doing any exercise, I'm prioritizing what I'm focusing on. I really don't care about how I look. No one's watching. I don't care. Except that I film a lot of what I do for content. And so, I don't even think twice, I film this video. I guess the video was from underneath my face or whatever, so it's not apparently the most flattering angle. Okay. I don't care. So, I don't even think twice. I mean, it goes to show you, I posted it. I don't care. I don't care what I look like.

So, I post this video and then I get this DM on Instagram from someone telling me, "Stop posting videos of yourself from that angle. It's so unflattering. Learn how to hold on a tripod above your head or something like this." Like basically giving me instructions on how to film my videos better.

The funny thing is that, first of all, those kinds of videos are just for fun. That's not my "professional content." I'm not filming an educational video, a Facebook ad, a training for the Bundle. It's just for fun. I really don't care.

But here's the deal, the way I handled it a few days ago when I got that comment versus how I would have handled it several months or years ago couldn't have been any more night and day. And I want to share those differences with you and then share with you a little bit about creating content, and really embracing who you are and doing what's best to grow your business, which is going to take a lot to put yourself out there and might not always mean that you look the absolute best.

So, when I got this DM, well, let me tell you, if I would have gotten this a year or two ago, I would have been very upset. I would have been offended. I would have been probably arguing with them, kind of like justifying, showing them the light, being like, "Do you know how much content I've made? It's doing just fine." And feeling like I had to prove myself or something like that. You know, I'm from Philadelphia. The fact that I've evolved anywhere past picking fights with people or defending myself or arguing, it honestly should be an Olympic medal of some variety. So, anyway, that's how I would've handled it not that long ago.

But a few days ago when I got this message, honestly, my first reaction was that I laughed out loud because they commented on a different picture, which wasn't even from underneath, so I thought that was kind of funny and I didn't understand what they were talking about. But then I pretty quickly was like, "Oh, they were probably talking about my riding the bike video." Which, I think the reason that I laughed at first was that it's so funny how you think one thing and then the internet keyboard warriors teach you another.

Because when I got off of my bike, I was like, "Wow. I'm doing so great. I'm seeing progress. I feel really strong. I'm able to go longer, at harder distances and for longer. My heart rate's lower," which is what my goal is right now and I was just proud of myself. And I took a photo afterwards and I was like, "Wow. I'm feeling strong." Do I feel 100 percent about myself and my body? Absolutely not. I'm human. I'm a woman. I grew up in primarily the '90s. No, I don't. I had a mother who was brutal about body image and just was brutal towards me about my body. I have a lot of things around that as I think some people do and maybe you can relate.

But I also really appreciate, especially these days, how strong I am emotionally, mentally, physically. And after everything I've been through, between having my own brain surgery - I mean, for one, you go have my brain surgery and all you care about is taking a flattering picture on a bike. No. No. Talk to me after I have had my brain surgery, I couldn't have even imagined being on that bike. Forget looking good on it. I can't imagine. I can't believe how far I've come since that surgery. I was the one who had that surgery. I was the one in the hospital for so long. I was the one who

had to learn to walk and do things and have OT and PT at my house every day teaching me how to hold a coffee cup. I know how far I've come in that time period. I'm in my body. And I'm also the one who saw my dad through cancer and was this caretaker and just had my mom killed. I'm the one.

So, I'm sitting here. I'm proud. I'm happy. I'm like, "Boy, you just get off that bike, you're all sweaty. I love a good workout where you sweat." I know that my friend, Athena, who's a fantastic fitness coach always tells me you don't have to sweat to have a good workout, which is true. But I love a good sweat, so no offense to Athena. I just really, really love sweating. But I was proud. And so, that's why I laughed. I was just like, "How ridiculous. I'm feeling so good. Who the hell cares what I look like in it?" I really just didn't care.

In a bigger sense, though, for you as a business owner, it's so important for you to know a couple of things about this situation. Whether somebody ever says anything bad to you or not is besides the point. I know you might be listening to this and you're like, "No one's ever said anything that bad to me" or "I couldn't imagine someone saying that bad of a thing to me about how I look," or whatever. I hope that's the case for you. That would be amazing and I wish that. But that's not really it.

It's, actually, in my experience more about what we think. Because back when I would have handled this comment differently, when I would have been angry and upset and wanted to argue and justify, it was also when I felt a lot of those same things about myself. I had the same story. I had the same story that I had to look and be perfect in order to appear in video. I told myself a story that if I ever didn't do well in something it's because I wasn't as good, or as pretty, or as smart, or as insert probably insult to myself here as this other person. And I was the one who made up all these stories and all these hurdles about all the things I had to do, or be, or act like, or have in place before I took action. So, it's no wonder that if I had those stories for myself, that when somebody else would hit upon those stories, that it would activate me.

But now I don't have those stories. I think with age and wisdom in the online business world of just doing this for long enough, and putting

yourself out there long enough, and realizing that even when you think you look perfect or fantastic in a video or on the Peloton or in a podcast, you sound amazing and you thought it was full of content, you'll get criticism. You get feedback. It wasn't good enough for someone. It wasn't free enough. You could have offered more free information.

So, I think that the longer that you do this, you do toughen up a little bit in that respect or at least it was a learning opportunity, I guess I should say. It was a learning opportunity for me to be like, it's not about doing this for other people. It's not about making sure that the content is perfect enough that you won't get criticism. It's about putting out good content that you feel proud of, and knowing that even if someone criticized you for, let's say, the way that you look when you're offering up really educational content, that you don't give a shit. That's really what it's about. It's not about making yourself more anything for anybody else.

If you want to create content, if you want to be a content creator, sell online courses, do any kind of digital marketing for your online business, I will tell you right now, if you wait until you look or sound perfect, or you have the perfect setup, or the perfect house, and the perfect backdrop, and the perfect camera, the perfect shirt, I don't care, anything perfect, literally anything better than what you have right now as you're listening to this, then it's going to be a long painful road because you would never be able to put out content.

If I cared about all the time what I looked like and how I sounded and who was going to critique me, I would be paralyzed with fear to the point that I wouldn't be able to take action. I wouldn't be able to put out content. I wouldn't be able to create. And guess what? My creativity, my ideas would be significantly stifled because if I was always thinking about ideas from the lens of what's everybody going to think of this, I would be screwed. I wouldn't be able to put anything out.

And so, when people say to me and people say this to me all the time, "Oh, you put out so much content. You have so much content. I don't know how you do it." Part of how I do it is that I don't think it all has to be perfect. I love creating. I love what I do. I'm full of ideas, thank goodness. And

the idea tap has not shut off for over eight years now. But I don't let the fear anymore hold me back of like, "But what am I going to look like?"

Like today, I was on my way home from the gym. I went to the gym early. I was on my way home and I realized my sale started today, as I'm recording this, for the Ultimate Bundle. It was a couple weeks ago. And I was like, "Oh, I have to film an Instagram Story. I want to film an Instagram Story to announce that the sale started, let people know, let them know what the sale includes." And guess what? I was sweating buckets after the gym. It's really hot here today. I was in my gym clothes. My hair is all fuzzy all over the place because I just got done working out. I don't care. I just don't care.

And maybe to each their own. I know that most people, a lot of people care a lot more about probably what they look like and how they present themselves than I do. And I'm not saying you have to be like me or you have to never wear makeup or never do your hair. You should be you. Whatever it is, whatever the homeostasis is of you and being you, what you're most comfortable with, that's what I want for you. I just don't want you to feel like you have to be anything any different than what you are.

And so, this is me. Most of the time I'm coming or going from a workout. I'm not going to wash my hair because I know I have another workout this afternoon or I'm playing tennis. And so, I'm going to wash my hair afterwards. I'm just a very practical person. I don't know, I don't want to be judged on how I look. And maybe this was a result of growing up with a mom who very, very much judged me about how I looked. And I was never quite pretty enough or thin enough or I didn't dress the right way. I didn't dress super sexy like she did. She dressed very, very sexy, very provocative. She loved it. I just didn't. It just wasn't me.

And unfortunately for her, she wasn't able to see me for who I was, and it made me very uncomfortable with who I was because I felt like if I wasn't, as I was, good enough for my mom, then really, who am I good enough for? Like, why would the rest of the world accept me for who I am? But luckily, thanks to a ton of therapy and a lot of working through this, I've realized that that's sad and that's her loss. I feel like, honestly, she didn't

either know me very well or care to. And that's very hurtful but I also understand. And I understand who she was and that she was doing the best she could.

This is all a long way of saying I think I see now the correlation between where you're at and what you believe. Do you believe in your core that you have to look perfect in order to put your content out there, to put yourself out there, to start selling your services, to put your name behind something online, to appear in a video, to start your podcast, to launch your YouTube channel? Do you believe that? Because if you believe that, then either you're going to be paralyzed with fear and never put it out there, or when you do, and you do get a comment eventually from a little troll online, it's going to cut to your core because it's something that you feared. You were like, "Shoot. I thought that I didn't look good enough in that video" or "I thought people thought that about me." And then, when someone says it, it hurts a lot.

I'm not saying, by the way, I'm not made of stone. I'm far from it. I'm like a marshmallow, essentially, when it comes to sensitivity, so I very much still get my feelings hurt on a probably daily basis about things that probably shouldn't or don't bother other people. But I think the point is, especially when it comes to your business, I'm able to grow. I've grown. It's changed. It's gotten better. This is something I actually write about a lot in the book. And I think practicing a little detachment, furthering yourself from the business a bit is really healthy in this way, too, because it doesn't feel so much like people are criticizing you as much as maybe the work.

And it's like, "Well, my work's not going to be for everyone. It doesn't make everyone happy. That's okay. My goal is not to make everybody happy, make a lot of people happy, but I can't make everyone happy."

So, with that, I hope that this was helpful. But I'm grateful actually to the person who sent me that message, because, for one, it gave me a content idea. And this is what I mean, everything to me, every single thing that happens to me, everything I watch, everything I go through, I'm always like, "Oh. There's an idea for content." And so, I'm glad that they did,

because when I saw their message, I felt very bad for them, too, because I felt if that's what you're believing, if that's a story that you're telling yourself that you have to be perfect and always look a certain way or appear a certain way, or satisfy people, have people think something about you, I guess you guys wouldn't like me if you thought I had a little bit of skin under my chin.

Well, newsflash, I do because I'm human and I have a neck, and a chin, and skin, and fat, and muscle, and all kinds of things like a normal human does, I think. So, I'm not trying to shape shift and make myself look any different. And I'm not here to sell legal templates only to people who think I'm beautiful or something like this. I don't really think that's a requirement or a qualification that's important for what I do. So, I feel for the person who sent me that, if that's something that they believe, it's going to be very, very difficult for them to build a business and put themselves out there.

So, yeah, with that, I would love to hear if this episode resonated, what you thought of it, what it brought up for you. Hit reply. I want to hear from you. This is a two-way street. I want to hear from you about the podcast when you listen. So, hit reply to my emails. Let me know. I read all your responses. Or DM me on Instagram, @samvanderwielen. I would love to hear from you and what you've been thinking about this summer series so far.

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substitute for seeking out your own advice from your own lawyer. And please keep in mind that I can't offer you legal advice. I don't ever offer any legal services. But I think I offer some pretty good information.