

Episode 112 Transcript

Laylee Emadi

Welcome to so here's the thing, the podcast for small business owners, entrepreneurs and creative educators who are ready to take their business to the next level, through candid conversations, tactical approaches and a few unpopular opinions. We're lifting the veil on what it takes to build both a life and a business that you love. I'm your host, Laylee Emadi, a coach for creatives and founder of the creative educator Academy, where I help entrepreneurs step into the role of industry leaders and educators. I'm so glad that you're here. Now let's jump into today's episode. Hey, friends, I am so excited about this episode, we are kicking off a brand new series going into a day in the life of an entrepreneur and creative educator. And we're kicking it off with the one and only Dawn Richardson of tech savvy, creative. She is a several time guests and a very good friend of mine. She's also one of our inaugural speakers at the creative educator conference. And I'm thrilled to have her because she just teaches on most important things that not a lot of people think about until you get really stressed out about it. And that is the tech behind all of entrepreneurship. So I'm excited to have her here. But we're going to be talking about a day in the life because they feel like so often on podcasts. And just like on Instagram, we kind of see snippets here and there. But they're really beautifully curated and crafted to kind of put our best foot forward, which is all good things, right? Like, we want to have our best foot forward. But I wanted this podcast from day one, over three years ago when I created it to be like casual candid conversations that you would have with a friend. And so I want to know, like what is a real day in the life look like for the leaders that we look up to like, how much of it is what we expect and how much of it isn't and, and so I'm excited to dive into this. So, Dawn, our longtime listeners already know who you are, but give us like a quick rundown of what you do. And then let's talk about a day in your life.

Dawn Richardson

Yeah, if we haven't met yet, I am done. And I am tech savvy, creative. And I am a software engineer turned wedding photographer. And now I help creative entrepreneurs with the technology in their business. And right now I am focusing on creating courses and online resources for creatives, especially photographers, and those creatives out there who have to rely on their computers a lot. So that's just a little bit about me, I'm a mom of two, I have a three and a half year old and a seven month old. And I'll probably have somebody screaming in the background. So it's just gonna be the very unglamorous side of being an entrepreneur. And I'm really excited about this. Because I know I personally just like, see other people and I'm like idle, how do they do it? Like, everything. So like, wow, there's those dishes in their sinks. And everything's so beautiful, and their office looks great. And that's just not real life. And I know it's not my life. So I'm excited to like, look behind the curtain a little bit here and hear about what's really happening in businesses.

Laylee Emadi

Yeah, me too. Especially like, you know, those dishes are like shoved underneath something, just for the quick picture. I do that myself. Like, I'll pour coffee on Instagram. And I'm like, Okay, let me put everything to the side and zoom in. So no one can see my mess. And so I'm excited to show some of the mess. And some of the good things like some things that people can hopefully learn from I feel like I learned so much when I hear about what people actually do. Like that's why I years ago, I implemented a morning routine because I heard somebody else do it and said it was like life changing. And so now I

have one so let's let's start from the beginning. Like how do your days typically start and I know for you as a mom and an entrepreneur, like a business owner and a mom. I as not a mom can only imagine like it seems so crazy to me like hectic be crazy. And also like you're some kind of superhero. So how do your day start? Like how are you kicking off most of your days

Dawn Richardson

with a lot of coffee. But really, um, so my days are I want to say we have a routine but it's a very loose routine. It's like the routine is survive, get to where we need to be but if I told you it was like exactly the same every day I would be totally lying to you. But my day starts what we have done lately. We've actually pulled both of our girls out of daycare, it was just too expensive for us and we had a lot of illness and a couple of hospital stays because of those illnesses. So we had to bring the girls home. So I have been stay at home mom and that has been a very overwhelming experience for anybody out there who is a stay at home mom, you're my superhero. I am not cut out for this stuff. Oh, you know, it's, it's just so hard. And it's just hard to not have your own time and finding that balance is really hard. Anyway. So in the past couple of weeks, we brought a nanny into our home. And she's only here for 12 hours a week. So that's four hours a day for three days a week. And it's very little time. But that 12 hours for me to work and get stuff done is glorious compared to the zero hours that I had. So our day starts off, get up, get the baby up, first, get her fed, and then I get my toddler up, get her fed, and then our nanny comes in joins us for the day. And then I get a small set of work hours. So I sit down, and I am focused on whatever that task is for the day. And again, because I only have 12 hours a week, I have to be very strategic about what I'm working on. And it kind of encourages me to get stuff done a little bit better, because I am so limited in my time. But I also have to realize that I have to be flexible, because if the baby you know if the baby gets sick, or if something happens, or if there's a doctor's appointment or something, I have to kind of flex to that. So that's just like how our day starts. Basic routine, lots of coffee, and heads down work time while I can. But then after about lunchtime is kind of when my time ends, and then I spent the day with the kiddos up, if I can, I will pick up my laptop and start working a little bit and do some things here and there. But it just depends on the day. And I also just have to keep reminding myself that these days won't last forever. And I'm going to be really sad when they're gone. So I'm trying my best to soak it up. And remember that I'm gonna miss it someday. So it's that weird balance of trying to be productive, but also trying to be present,

Laylee Emadi

I have so many things to say about your morning slash just daily routine that you just kind of threw out there. First off something that I'm I'm really excited to come up because I know I have a lot of people, I feel like in our age range who are listening to this. Probably a lot of people younger actually than me, who are even starting their businesses and starting to get into education and starting to diversify. And it's a lot and it can be overwhelming. And then at the same time, they're starting families and trying to figure out like the balance of that and like how it works. But something that I think you harped on is flexibility. And I liked that you said you have like a routine, but it's loose, and I think that's really important is to be able to like, hold things really loosely and not have to worry about, okay, from you know, whatever 715 to 730, I'm doing this and it's like that's just not how life works. I'm sure you've never in a million years thought your littlest one would be, you know, in the hospital, and then you'd have to pull her from daycare, and then you'd have to find a nanny, and now you have 12 hours a day, or 12 hours a week to work. And when you said that I really want to touch on, I think it's called Parkinson's Law. And it's like this, this principle that basically says, you can work and whatever amount of time is available to work like, like your work can contracts and expands based on the availability of time, you have to complete it. And I used to read about this when I was a full time teacher and a part

time entrepreneur. And I would like work during lunch breaks. And I'd work if like the kids were doing study hall and I'd worked, you know, like I would find places to get my work done. And then when I went full time, I was doing the same amount of work, but it was taking me longer because I had longer to complete it. So there is something to be said about like, I know it can be overwhelming. And I try not to give this advice as a coach. Because I want to be cautious. And maybe you can speak to this better because you are a mom, but I never like to make moms feel like I'm telling them like well you can find the time because that sounds really heartless. And it sounds really rough and like abrasive. But what I mean by that is like, you don't have a choice. Like you only have so much time. So let's like look at it positively and see how we can fill it and like apply that Parkinson's Law kind of like vibe to I'm sure oh my gosh, whoever whoever Parkinson is who like created Parkinson's Law probably never thought somebody would say, Parkinson's Law vibe, but like, how can we apply that to our businesses? And I love hearing the way that you're doing that. So maybe can you talk a little bit about that for the people who are listening who either have kids or have a full time job and they're still trying to scale they're still trying to expand? They're still trying to grow but they feel limited by the time they have.

Dawn Richardson

So yes, I can and I can tell you what has worked well for me and what doesn't work for me too. The first thing I want to mention is that even though I have this 12 hour time slot, I do find myself frustrated, like, oh, I have all this other things that I want to do I want to accomplish. But then I have to like, come back to reality and remind myself, the whole reason I am an entrepreneur is so I can be with my kids. So I can do these things. And it's so easy to kind of forget that. Like, if I was still my corporate job as a software engineer, I wouldn't have this time at all. But that's why I started this business. So I could do this. So it's, I get caught up in this, like, oh, my gosh, I don't have enough time, like, how am I supposed to run my business like this, and like, I have all these things. But at the end of the day, this is why I have this business. So again, it's just one of those things, I have to constantly remind myself, and it's like, on a sticky note on the fridge, like, you know, you started this for a reason. And then it says, You're gonna miss this, like, I have those little notes on the fridge to remind me, I love that. Now, in terms of like day in the life, like what works for me, and you're exactly like Parkinson's Law, it's like, you will feel the time that you have, right. But if you have more time, it'll take more time, and so on. And so for me, things that work well are like situational things, okay? I get the most work done, when I'm with the kids, when I literally have my laptop on my kitchen counter. If I tried to sit down and like focus on something, it's awful, like my daughter climbs on me and she like wants to play and she's talking to me. But if I am standing up and like I go do something, even if it's just for a couple minutes, I slowly start doing things over the day. So I love having my laptop open on the kitchen counter. And when I have a chance, and it makes sense for what is going on, like maybe she's having a snack, or maybe it's she's watching frozen or something, I can like walk over and get a couple things done. And that might be just like posting something on Instagram or scheduling out something to go out in the future or completing an email. I know I sent an email about the creative educator conference yesterday. And I literally did that while I was cooking dinner. So I had my laptop open on my countertop. And in between while I was waiting for things to finish up, I just slowly executed that task. And then at the end of the day, I feel like okay, I did something right, like I accomplished something. But it's again, every day is different some days, you know, baby just wants mama. And that's again, that's why I started this so baby can have mama right. So just trying to remember that is a really important part of it, and then finding those like little pockets throughout your day. I know for me too, like, just getting up and getting dressed is a big deal. And it doesn't have to be like dress dressed like fancy dress, it could be like changing from one set up a Jevons to another set of pajamas. But these are my like sleeping pajamas, and these are my working pajamas. But just doing that, and like putting my tennis shoes on or like whatever shoes on

makes a big difference in how my mind functions. So those are just like little intentional things that I try to do. And just try my best to find those little pockets in the day to get stuff done. And you also just have to remember that you're your own worst critic, like, you feel like that. The internet's like watching you like where is she? Like, how, how is she going to run this business. But in all honesty, nobody else is watching as much as you are. So give yourself grace. Just to remember why you started this to begin with.

Laylee Emadi

Yeah, two things I want to like touch on there. One is I love that you're kind of contradicting a lot of what people are kind of like putting out there, which is like, prioritize, you know, set business hours and don't go beyond them. And that there is so much validity to that I teach on time management, I teach on productivity. But I teach on these things in a way that's like, yeah, you got to know what works for you. And you have to know that like sometimes that's going to be best case scenario, that's going to be like perfect ideal situation of I'm going to work from 10am to 4pm. And that is it. But like, when you have a lot going on, if you do have a side hustle, or you do have a family or you do have a job or whatever, you have to find those pockets of time and not get down on yourself about it, which is the second thing I want to touch on. And this is why I'm excited to start this series with someone who I know so well. We knew like I feel like because we're friends I can say this, and 100% Back it up. You have this positivity about you that I think not everybody has. And I'm not saying like I'm sure you have your moments of being like this is not going well like I'm stressed out I'm gonna cry, whatever. But in general, I feel like you do a really good job of prioritize saying like, your mindset of this is what I'm doing. And I'm lucky to do it, I've chosen to do it, I'm going to write a note that like reminds me of that I'm going to try really hard to prioritize, being reminded of the privilege that I have to be able to do this and the work that I put in to get that privilege. Like, you worked really hard to build up your business to be able to do this and have a family and have an end be working 15 minutes at a time during dinner. You know what I mean? Like, that's all really good things. But it can be so hard in the moment. So like, how do you stay positive? Like I love the idea of the reminders that's like a tangible tip. But like, what else kind of goes on in your mind? I guess I'm just curious, as as your resident negative to your

Dawn Richardson

I, you know, that's funny that you bring that up being positive is like, something that I do for me, right. And there's definitely a fine line between being positive and toxic positivity. And I know that's like rampant in the social media world, right? Like, everything's always great. Like, it's always beautiful. And I try to find that balance between like, positive but also very real, like I want. It's hard. Like, it's hard to be an entrepreneur, it's really hard to be a mom, it's exceptionally hard to be a stay at home mom, like, it's not for everybody. And it took me a while to get to the point where I was comfortable, like saying that I kind of felt like a failure, when I realized I wasn't fulfilled by being just a stay at home mom, as I say, just like being only a stay at home mom, like I needed my work time. And I think that's just like understanding my personality type two, my cup gets filled by feeling productive, feeling accomplished as an Enneagram. Three, right? So I am constantly doing that. And I feel good when I can show my family and my kids and friends that like, it's okay to struggle and have that, you know, those hard times. But I'm still thankful to be here. Like, then that's just like what I tried to do, and it's good for me and my soul and things like that, too. But like, like you said, like I get I am motivated by the productivity aspect of it and accomplishing things. And for me, that might look like sending my emails while I'm riding my peloton. You know, like, you know, like, I feel good because I accomplish something which is getting on that peloton. But I also feel accomplished because I got something done. And I'm like, wow, like, how cool is it that I have a job that I can work from peloton like, you know, or like, work from play room floor,

or you know, and just kind of reminding myself that because if I don't remind myself that I can kind of go down that spiral just like everyone else. So again, it's not so much positivity is more like realism, and being thankful and grateful for this opportunities. And just focusing on that, because that's the only way I'm gonna get through this season. And like I said, like, I've already my daughter is already three, and I have a seven month old, like, where did this time go. And so I'm trying to hold on to that time before it's totally gone. And I wish I would have been better at being present.

Laylee Emadi

I love that. I love that. Like you said, it's not positivity as much as it is like the gratitude, right? The thankfulness, the gratitude mindset. And I just think that's so important. I'm so glad we got to talk about that a little bit. Because I think it's something I forget to do on a daily basis when I get overwhelmed or like, if I look at, you know, if I look at the cold, hard facts and numbers for too long, I'm like, wait, no, where's the gratitude for all of the things that I get to be doing? Like, I get to be doing everything on my to do list, like, you know, it's all it's all things that we have wished and hoped for, for years. And now, you know, like, nearly a decade into business, it's easy to kind of forget the gratitude part. And it's important not to So,

Dawn Richardson

right. And you know that that doesn't mean though, that doesn't mean that if you're having a bad day that you have to get it done, right, that means if you're having a bad day, it's okay to go sit on the couch for the day and watch some Netflix. And the gratitude part of that comes in with the fact that you could do that, right? It's not so much like I should be grateful I have to finish this task. It's more of like, being thankful for the flexibility and this career that you've created for yourself.

Laylee Emadi

Yeah, I love that. Oh my gosh, well, this was so much more than a day in the life I feel like it was a day in the life plus like a motivational talk plus just some fortune cookie. All the best things. Okay, that's amazing. So what so you've got we talked about your morning we talked about your kind of just like your day to day afternoon, like as we talked about evening to because you do have your emails during dinner sometimes and your play room for stuff, but like, do you ever find yourself working late into the night? Like, how has that changed for you? Because I know, before you had kids, because again, we know each other so well, like, I feel like we were all like, okay, we're not we're gonna shut the laptop at night. And lately, I no kids involved, I've been opening my laptop at night, just because that's when I feel inspired to work. And maybe I'll take that Netflix break in the middle of the day, and then work on my laptop at night. So like, how do you feel about that in your day in the life,

Dawn Richardson

I think he like nailed it. Because you talked about like feeling inspired to work. Nighttime, for me is not when I'm inspired to work like I'm a morning person, if I can get up at 5am. Like, my best work is like early morning hours. So when I am not exhausted because the baby is still waking up through the night. So it hasn't happened. But when I'm in that good place, and I really do need to get something done or accomplished. My best work time is in the morning. So I will wake up early before the kids are awake. And there's something so special about like a good glass of coffee and the house is completely silent and watching the sunrise from your office while you're working. Like I really love that that's like my time I feel most inspired to work. So the end of the day, though, for me is just kind of like really mellow out like we we call like we reset the house. So like we reset the playroom, we reset the kitchen just so everything's ready to go I try to get as much done that night. That to make my morning life easier,

because that's where the chaos is normally in the morning, right. So that means like setting the coffeemaker and making sure it's ready to go and making sure that the girls have clothes ready to go. And the dishes are out of the sake like those little things we are resetting so we can feel accomplished and not have more chaos added to the morning. I'm also really big on like audiobooks. I adore the Libby app, if you're not on the Libby app yet you need to it is amazing. It connects to your local library and you get access to all the audiobooks and all the things. But I listen to a lot of books, and I fold laundry and do dishes and that kind of thing. And that's how I decompress for the day is I'm getting stuff done. Like I'm feeling accomplished. But I'm also like tuning out and like not thinking about the things but you know, you just kind of have to figure out what works for you. If you're not a morning person, then clearly don't wake up at 5am and try to work, you know, you have to find that balance and what makes sense for you. And you just have to remember that it's not going to look like what somebody else's looks like. And until you have that realization, it's really difficult because you're gonna be very hard on yourself and like why they can get up at 5am. Why can't I like, it's because everybody's different. And you have to figure that out something else to kind of a little bit off topic. But creating things in your business that makes sense for the season of your life is really important too. So right now in my season of life where things are really crazy, and I'm like sitting down at my computer is not always something that I can do. I've changed and shifted what my offerings are. So in terms of offerings for tech savvy, creative right now, it's mostly online resources and content that's pre recorded its course content, that's ebooks. So I don't have to be present to do that. But it's also Voxer coaching, I do coaching on Voxer, it's all day long, and it's all voice. So if I have to run to go change a baby's diaper, it fits into the day still. And I can still serve my clients in a way while still taking care of the family and being present when I need to. And in turn, you know, closing down those offerings that don't make sense for this season of life, whether that's like all day VIP days, or, you know, in person coaching or different things like that, that doesn't make sense for my schedule right now. So really being intentional about what services I'm offering for this season. And when the season changes, this offerings will change as well.

Laylee Emadi

I love that I feel like there's so much to be said about kind of everything you touched on just kind of relating to the fact that it your business is never going to be one size fits all and it's never gonna look like somebody else's identically like, I am not a morning person. i Oh my gosh, you could not pay me enough to wake up at 5am I had to do that for so many years and I'm so grateful I don't have to anymore, you know, and some of our stuff does look similar like our Voxer coaching looks similar but like other things don't and I just think that's such an important takeaway from this episode for anyone listening. It's like we are getting these this behind the scenes glimpse at like what people are doing day in and day out, but it doesn't have to match what we're doing. doing like, take what you want, and leave what doesn't serve you course, as we wrap up this episode, you know how I do, let's talk about your unpopular opinion. And it can kind of be like an unpopular opinion on anything throughout your day, anything with entrepreneurship or education, whatever you want.

Dawn Richardson

So my unpopular opinion is that it is okay to only work a little bit at a time. And I think there's like a really big buzzword like that's working our industry. And sometimes you just can't, and you have to flex to the season of your life that you're in right now. And I'm in the season of chaos. So work is going to look like chaos, and I'm just going to prioritize what I can and do whatever I can to, you know, make ends meet, and I can still be a successful business owner, even when I'm only working a few hours a

week. So, hustle culture is great, and there is a time to hustle, but you also have to be aware of the season you're in. And that's far more important than the hustle.

Laylee Emadi

I love that. Totally agree. I totally agree. Okay, this was super fun. I'm so glad I got to my first day in Live episode with you don, because you're just such a joy, but also because you keep it real and I know people will walk away feeling like okay, I can do this, you know, and I think that's the whole point of it. So thank you for being here.

Dawn Richardson

Thanks for having me and to anybody listening. You can absolutely do it. Just remember, it's not going to look how you think it's going to look and that's okay. Love it.

Laylee Emadi

100% agree. For show notes and resources mentioned on today's episode head to [so here's the thing podcast.com](https://www.podcast.com) This show is brought to you by the creative educator Academy, where we teach creative entrepreneurs how to teach because I believe that industries thrive when experts can share their knowledge. Well, if you're enjoying the podcast, I'd love to read your review in iTunes or see your rating on Spotify. Thanks so much for listening, and I'll catch you on the next episode.