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Well hello there and welcome to another episode of the, Your Next Best Step podcast. And this is the bonus episode. I was going through my archives and I pulled a video that I did a little while ago and I thought it was super fitting for what we're dealing with right now, which is all about how our experiences actually shape us and help us to get through whatever it is that we go through so that we can help others moving forward. Or also it gives us what we need so that we can grow and we can learn and we can move whatever it is that we're trying to achieve forward. And I thought it would be great to bring this on and have you take a listen to it because it was such an informative video that I did and I got a lot of great feedback from it. And I wanted to give you this extra special bonus, especially with everything that's going on in our world today.

And also, I just wanted to remind you, I have registration open for my free training called The Three Keys to Grow your Business, Even in the Toughest Times. And that's another reason why I wanted to do this bonus episode, because we are going to be talking about these things in this free training that I'm doing. And I would love to have you join me. It's a three-part training where we will talk about mistakes that people make and how to avoid them. And we'll also go through the three keys that you need to build your business as well as so much more amazing content if I say so myself, but until then enjoy this episode and have a great rest of your week.

Good morning, everyone. How are you? Hopefully you guys are all having a great week. It has been a little bit of a crazy week here with me. And I have tried to get on here. This is my fourth time trying to get on here to chat with you guys about this topic that has just been coming up all over the place for me, with people that I work with every day, in my own life, in my own business. And it's all about the experiences and the things that we've done in our life that have helped to shape who we are and how we can help and serve people better, from jobs that we've had to things that we've been through. And I've kind of been reflecting on this myself and I wanted to just get on here and talk about it a little bit.

So, in case this is the first time you've been on with me, and in case you don't know who I am, my name is Theresa Cantley and I am a marketing and business strategist. And I work with entrepreneurs all over the place. And we kind of really get in there and dig into their business and figure out what they need to do to really move their business forward. See, it's been a crazy week. I can't even talk right. But we do all kinds of things to gain some clarity and put some strategies together and some things that they can do to take action so they can get the results that they've always wanted.

And how that relates to what we're going to be talking about today is everything that I've been through, my experiences with the jobs that I've had and things that I've done, everything that I've been through... And my camera's crooked. Has led me to be able to do that with people.

And I really started to kind of dig into this, working with one of my clients this week. And the statement that I... I went to a conference last week and I saw several amazing people, Michelle Obama, Shonda Rhimes, Brené Brown speak. And there was another woman, Carla Thomas, who was phenomenal. And she made this statement in her speech of, you were brought to the table... And that doesn't mean the negotiation table. You were brought to where you are right now. You have everything inside of you to be able to speak your voice, to be able to get your message out there, to be able to help people. You already have everything you need. And this topic came up yesterday. You already know what you need to know. You already have what you need to have to do what you need to do. Have confidence in yourself and really stand in that power and own that power.

So, like I said, this has been a crazy week. I did my video the other day. I got on and I was all talking and all excited about this, and Facebook... I don't know something happened, and my live video went poof. I mean, I had my hair straight actually. I have crazy curly hair. And today's Friday the 13th. So just kind of goes along with everything. And I think we had a full moon last week or something. I don't know.

So anyway, we're talking about experiences. And like I said, just going back and working with a lot of my clients and things that I've been through, and just kind of reflecting on the different jobs that I've had over my career that have really helped me to shape who I am and to be able to do the things that I do to help people, and have that passion to want to help people to build a better, more meaningful business, and to really help them to kind of balance everything out and not be stressed and really beat burnout.

And, I have experienced the good, the bad, the ugly, and the way ugly in business, kind of all over the place. If you don't know my story, I was in corporate America, I was a director of marketing. And I left corporate America and I had a retail store. That was my first business. And then while I had the retail store, I started my marketing business. And then my marketing business has morphed into what it is now. And we actually had to close down the retail store for some personal reasons. My business partner and my husband had actually gotten sick and we made the decision to go ahead and shut the store. But I still had my business. And here we are today.

But what I was reflecting on was this. When I thought back into my business journey, one of the things that... And I had completely forgotten about this. When I was in college, I went to school for fashion design, left fashion design school and switched schools. I was going to school at night and working full time. And I was working, I got this job at this shoe store. I grew up in Allentown and this shoe store was

in the middle of Allentown. And it was a higher end shoe store. But it wasn't like... I mean, these shoes were amazing shoes, great shoes, really good for your feet. But they were really expensive.

And the thing that I learned, and I didn't really realize it until recently, is the man that I worked for, his name was George, and the name of the shoe store was called The Shoe Tree. My mother loved this store, loved this store. She was in there all the time, buying shoes.

But the thing that I realize now, that I didn't realize back then... I mean, back then I was working at this shoe store and it was great because we would get shoes. I think it was once a quarter, we would get to pick out a pair of shoes so we could experience them and figure out what worked, what didn't work. And we had a ton of fun. It was a very small shoe store, weren't many employees, but I got to be as creative as I wanted to. I helped create some little incentives for all the people that worked there. They were very open to ideas. And it was great. And I learned a ton of information about shoes and feet and all kinds of stuff.

But the thing that I know now that I didn't realize back then, is that this man, George, who is quite an amazing entrepreneur, what he really taught us to do, and what he really did is... I mean it's several things, but he really focused on building a community and he really knew how to build a community and build a tribe of people. Like I said, the shoes there were rather expensive. If you've ever heard of Danskos or Naots or Birkenstocks, SAS, you know, they're not cheap shoes. They're very, very, well-made, handcrafted shoes and they're very good for your feet.

But what George knew how to do is he knew how to build a community. He knew how to build an amazing customer experience. And he did that by listening to what the customer needed. And he knew exactly who he wanted to serve and who that customer was. And his background, I believe his father was actually a shoe cobbler, like made shoes back in the day. So George really knew about shoes.

But the premise with this store... I mean, yes, it was an expensive shoe store. But what we did is, every person that came in there had a customized experience. Each person has a different situation with their feet, their knees, their back, whatever. And we were taught, and we got an extensive amount of education on the construction of the shoes and how to fit people and how to match the features of a shoe and the benefits of a shoe to the person and what they were struggling with, whether it was they had knee replacements and they couldn't wear really heavy shoes, or they have certain problems with their feet or whatever. And we really had an extensive education on that.

But the thing that we learned how to do the most is to listen, to really listen to that customer's story. And to listen to what it was that they were struggling with the most. And then we could, from there, get a customized solution for them, a specific type of shoe or several pairs of shoes. How often to wear them and how they would help, how these shoes would help their feet and help them to walk better and help them to feel better.

And that was the ultimate goal. I mean, yes, there were people that came there that were just looking for fashion shoes and love Birkenstocks. They were big Berkey followers and that's all they wanted. But the majority of the people were people who were in pain, people who, their feet hurt, their knees hurt their back hurt, and they were in pain and they wanted to feel better. And when your feet hurt, let me tell you, I know we've all been there, when your feet hurt, you don't feel good. You feel lousy, you feel like crap.

So George's vision... I've never confirmed this with him, but I believe this wholeheartedly, and my perspective on it. He really focused on his strengths and his knowledge that he had about the shoe industry and how to fit people properly for shoes, and the type of customer that he wanted to help and serve, which was somebody who needed to have good shoes for medical reasons or whatever, and to be able to create that experience where they could come in and they could feel comfortable.

We would hear all kinds of stories, numerous stories about people's lives, very interesting things about when they were younger. We actually also used to work with podiatrists and actually go to people's... What's the word? Rehab facilities, like Good Shepherd. Or we would go to retirement homes. And we would actually go and fit people who couldn't come to the store to get fitted. So we actually provided that service.

So everybody had a customized experience. And George really knew how to do that. He really knew how to listen to what his customer needed, not necessarily what he wanted to provide, but really what that core customer needed. Like I said, we would get all kinds of people, which if you've ever done any ideal customer exercises, especially if you work with me, you will serve a variety of people. But there's one core group of people, one particular ideal customer or group of people that you really want to serve. You'll serve everybody. You'll be talking to everybody. But it's really honing in on who it is that you want to serve, that you want to help. And he really knew how to do that. He really knew how to build that customized experience.

And from there he built a tribe. He built a tribe of followers. I mean, those shoes, I still have them, and this was like 25 years ago. I still have shoes from when I worked there. I still have Danskos. I mean, at one time, my dog, years ago, actually ate two pairs of them. But it happens. But I still have shoes from back then.

And when I started to reflect, like I said, on my experiences and things that I've been through and things that I've learned from stuff that I've done, I really honed in on working at the Shoe Tree, and the ability, like I said, that he had to build this customized experience for each customer, to really be able to listen and teach us how to listen to people's stories, to hear their stories. And not just hear it and let it go in one ear and out the other, but really let it sink in, let it absorb so that we could spend time with them and we could help them find what they needed to feel better, to feel good, so that they could do the things that they wanted to do in life.

And the other thing that George really knew how to do, which, when I work with people, they're like, "Oh, well, I'm not doing that good. And I think I need to copy so and so, because they're doing good." No, no, no, no, no. You want to stay in your lane and stay focused on your why and why you want to do what you want to do and what makes you unique. And that was one thing that George really knew how to do from the Shoe Tree. He really knew how to stay very focused on what he wanted to do and the shoes that he wanted to sell and the things that he was trying to accomplish and how he wanted to move that vision forward, to help people, to work with those podiatrists and work with people who really needed help with their feet.

So like I said, I never... I mean, I have experienced really good stuff in business throughout my years on this planet. And I've experienced really ugly stuff. And I've learned from all of it, even the really bad and ugly. I've learned so much from it.

But when I go back to... Because one of my core things, when I work with people and teach people is to really build that customized experience. And every single person that I work with, it's different. I create a different experience because everybody's business is different. Each person is different. And I didn't really realize where that came from until recently, and the amount of experience that I got working at this store.

So I encourage you to go back and think about these experiences. I mean, wherever you are, whether you're trying to build a business and you're still working full time, or you're trying to get a promotion wherever you work, or you're in your business right now, you have your own business and you feel stuck and you're not really sure which way to go, I encourage you to take some time and reflect on the

experiences that you've had and the things that you've done that have brought you to where you are today.

Like I said, if you're working for someone and you're still in corporate America, and you're trying to get ahead and trying to get a promotion, don't be afraid to use your voice. Don't be afraid to really get out there and stand in your power and stand in what makes you unique. If you have a business, your own business, and you're feeling stuck, think about the things that you've experienced and the things that you've gotten through and where you are today, and what kind of an experience you can give people, how you can improve that experience that you're giving people.

And like I said, we've been taught things, we've experienced things, good, bad, indifferent, whatever, and we've learned from them. And we've been brought to the table and we have all that we need to be able to move forward, whatever that means to you. Whether like I said, you're in a job and you're trying to get ahead, or you're trying to get a promotion, or you're trying to switch jobs. Or you have a business and you feel stuck or you're not really sure which way to go, and you're not really sure how to move forward. Or you're working full time and you want to start something on the side.

Don't be afraid to stand in your power. Don't be afraid, even if it looks different than what everybody else is doing, which is beautiful. And I encourage that. Don't be afraid to move forward with what's important for you and what you want to do to help and serve others. Don't be afraid to be unique.

My story about the Shoe Tree, George wasn't afraid, and this was 25 years ago. He wasn't afraid to be unique. He wasn't afraid to be different. There was really no other shoe store like him. I mean, there were things that were similar, but to come in and have that warm experience where people were highly educated and we took the time to sit with people and really understand them and what they were struggling with, that was an amazing experience. Plus, like I said, we got shoes every quarter, which again was another amazing thing because we were able to wear those shoes and figure out, because all of us, amazingly enough, we all have problems with our feet. And we all have problems with her feet or our hips. I mean, I've had my feet operated on several times. My best friend worked with me and she was a ballet dancer, and she had some pretty gnarly looking toes. So we all had... And Kelly, if you're on, I love you. But we all had different things.

So it's just amazing that the universe brought us all together to work for this amazing entrepreneur. And I had amazing managers that really coached us. I mean, you rarely saw George, but he had an amazing group of people surrounding him, amazing managers, Rachel and Debbie, who really helped us to get educated and to learn these things.

And kind of to sum that all up, the other thing that was a big philosophy with him is to be kind, always, no matter what. I mean, we got people in there, like I said, we heard all kinds of stories. And a lot of the people were in pain. And to just sit with them and be kind and listen and do what we could do to help them.

So I hope, wherever you are in your journey, your business journey, your career journey, take some time to reflect where you've been, what you've been through, what you've experienced, what you've learned, and how you can take all of that and put it together to help your business or wherever you are, whatever you want to do to help you move forward, and to stay centered and focused on what you want to do, and the difference that you want to make in this world.

And kind of going along with this, and I am going to put a link in the comments below. I recently did a blog post and it was based on all of these reflections that I went through with the things that I've done in my life. And actually surveying a lot of the people that I work with, a lot of the entrepreneurs to figure out what were the top five lessons that they've learned being an entrepreneur. Because the

entrepreneurial journey is hard. And I know, working for George, he started small and just kept building and building and building, and built it into this amazing business.

But I put together the top five lessons. And like I said, they're based on my reflections with the experiences that I've been through working for entrepreneurs, myself as an entrepreneur, and then also some feedback that I've gotten from people.

So make sure you download it, make sure you go to the blog post and read it because these five lessons are so amazing. And like I said, whether you are still in corporate America and you're trying to either switch jobs or move forward, and really you've been working hard to get a promotion, these five lessons will help you. If you're an entrepreneur, if you're still in corporate America, if you are working full time and you're starting something on the side, these five lessons, these are the top five lessons. I mean, there's many more lessons than five, believe me, but these top five lessons are the ones that helped me the most. And when I pulled them out, they were the ones that kind of kept coming up over and over again as the top ones.

So the one that I wanted to share with you today, that kind of goes along with everything that I just talked about in this live video, that you all have been so graciously watching, thank you. The number one lesson is to really wholeheartedly, with all your heart and soul, believe in your ability to figure things out. If George didn't believe in his ability to figure things out, he would have never built this amazing business that helped so many people and made a huge difference in their life. I wouldn't have been able to build my business and work with these amazing entrepreneurs every single day, all over the place.

So you really need to believe in your ability to figure things out. You were given gifts, unique gifts and unique strengths, and you were given everything that you need at this point in time to be able to move yourself forward. You were given those abilities to figure things out from all the things that you've experienced, good, bad, indifferent. It doesn't matter. All of those, we've all learned from it and we've all moved forward from it.

So the number one lesson is believe in your ability to figure things out. And that applies anywhere. It doesn't matter if you're an entrepreneur or if you're still working in corporate America, or if you are just in everyday life, believe in your ability to figure things out. You've already been given the gifts and everything that you need to be able to stand in your power and to move things forward and make a difference in this world.

So check out the link in the comments below. And there's many more blog posts and some awesome free downloads. I have one in there about planning your week out. I have another one in there about how to create authentic content. So make sure you check out those other free downloads.

And if you want to work with me, I have some new one-on-one coaching packages coming out. So stay tuned for that. You can also sign up to get on my awesome weekly email list, where I send out some really cool tips, some cool videos and encouraging things. Plus just some funny stuff that happens to me because as my husband says, "It's always an adventure with you, Theresa."

So stay tuned for more. Thank you for joining me and have a wonderful rest of the day, this Friday the 13th, that's been a very crazy week, interesting week. And I'm happy to say that my wireless has stayed connected today and it looks like Facebook did not shut my video down in the middle. So thank you for joining and take care and have a great weekend. I will see you soon.