

Theresa:

So I wanted to talk today about past failures and how they, indeed, set us up for something that we don't even know is coming our way, something even more amazing, and we always look at it like a setback. But before I do that, I wanted to just talk a little bit about, and I think I've said this before on the podcast, but I hate the ocean. It's so bizarre because I love the beach. I love going to the ocean, but I do not like going into the ocean. It's not because I can't swim and it's not because I'm afraid of water. I'm actually an amazing swimmer, and I was on the swim team for many years. I can swim. I just can't stand not being able to see your feet because of what's swimming around in the ocean and you never know. You can't see and you never know what's going to happen. You never know what's out there.

One time, knowing that I can't stand the ocean, we were on vacation with my best friend and her husband, my best friend, Vanessa, who had just passed, and her husband, Mike and my husband, Dennis. Mike says, "Theresa, let's go on a snorkeling trip." He's like, "It'll be great. We're going to go on a boat." Second thing I don't like are boats. So I said, "Okay, fine. I'll do this. I'll get on the boat." I said, "Mike, we're going to be by land, right?" "Yep. We're going to be by land. Don't worry, Teresa. It's going to be fine. We're going to be near the shore. No big deal." So day comes, get on the boat, go down. I am panicking. I am filled up on Dramamine and all kinds of stuff and I am like, "Okay, I got to get on the boat. I got to do this." So we go to get on the boat and we're going out to sea and I'm panicking already and we get to the spot. They're like, "Okay, everybody get your snorkeling gear. We're going moor here and we're going to go snorkeling."

I look, and we are in the middle of the ocean, literally the middle of the ocean. There is no shore in sight, not for way off in the distance. I'm looking at him like, "You got to be kidding me. I am not getting in this water," and everybody's getting their snorkeling gear and I'm standing there and my feet are stuck to the deck of the boat. I am shaking like a leaf, freaking out. I'm looking at my husband and my husband said, "Look, if you can't get in, I'll stay here with you." I'm like, "No, no." I'm like, "I don't know if I can do this," and I'm crying. Vanessa looks at me and she goes, "Teresa, come on. Get in the boat. Get in the boat. We can do this. It's fine. You'll be fine. Get a noodle. Throw her a noodle. Get a noodle. Put it underneath your arms. You'll be good." I'm looking and I'm like, "Oh, my God. Oh my gosh." I'm shaking and my feet are stuck and my husband's like, "It's okay."

The people that were still on the boat, they got me the noodle and I'm ready to jump in. I start thinking about, "Oh, my gosh. I've survived so much stuff in my life." I was married and divorced by the age of 23. I was severely in debt. After that, I lost my job. I had no idea what I was going to do. On top of that, years later going through a vertebral artery dissection with a clot in my brain, and I'm thinking to myself, "Theresa, come on. You've been through a lot worse. Just get in the boat." So what did I do? I jumped in. The reason why I tell you this story is because the way that I just jumped into the boat, I didn't know what was on the other side. I didn't know what was going to happen. I couldn't see the water, but I jumped. Just like I jumped into the water at that time, Vanessa and I started our first business. We jumped right into that retail business. We were like, "Okay, we got this. We totally got this."

I had my experience as a marketing director. She had her experience as a past paralegal and operations director and we were like, "We got this." So we jumped and we had fun. We had lots of stories and lots of things happen, but in the end, our business was failing. Our business was failing, and as it was tanking, I just remember being so upset and feeling like the biggest failure. We had gotten our business. We built it while we were working full-time and we got it to a point where we were finally starting to see some results, and then we lost our space. After we lost our space, after our second store, we had an issue with our landlord and we ended up losing our space. After we lost our space was when the business started to tank and the business kept tanking. We were so frustrated because no matter

what we did, we couldn't figure it out. Shortly after, the business started to tank and I just felt so guilty. I felt like it was my fault and I was just so frustrated.

Her and I, as much as we loved each other, like sisters and we got along like sisters, we also fought like sisters. In that time, arguing about what was happening with the store and how it was that things weren't working and dah, dah, dah, and it was all this negative energy. While the business was tanking and we were saying, "Maybe it's time to let go of this. Maybe it's time to close up shop. Maybe it's time to do something different." After we started thinking about that, shortly after it was when Vanessa got sick. I thought to myself, "Oh, my gosh." I'm definitely not going to be able to, or I don't want to keep this business open. I don't want to continue doing this without her." I thought to myself, "Oh, my gosh," I need to be there for her. I can't keep a failing business going because it's just going to continue to fail and fail and fail.

So I made the decision that it was more important for me to be there for her and take care of her and help her as best as I possibly can and let go of this big, giant failure of a business. Shortly after Vanessa was diagnosed with cancer, my husband was diagnosed. Definitely, I'm thinking to myself, "There's no way I'm going to lose my best friend and my husband at the same time. No way." So I close up this failing business and I still had my business going on. I still had the consulting business and I still continued with that. That business, the fact that I had this retail store that I couldn't get to work, and even though it was more important for me to be there and I wanted to be there for my best friend and for my husband while they were going through the biggest fights of their life, I still hung on to that feeling of that my first business failed and that it made me a failure.

It's something that has haunted me for a really, really long time. Even though I started building this successful consulting business, this successful business coaching business where I do high-level coaching with small business owners. But that feeling of having my first business not work and then feeling like, "Oh, my gosh. We had bickered over this business. We fought over this business and there was so much negative energy and then she ended up getting sick and feeling like, 'Was that negative energy? Did it cause that?'" Well, no. It didn't cause her to get sick, but the other thing is, and why I wanted to tell this whole story is that our past failures are not really failures. I heard something that was just so profound and I wanted to share it with my audience, with all of you, because I know right now businesses are struggling a lot with what's happening out there.

Businesses are struggling a lot just with the climate of how business is being conducted right now. I heard this the other day, this moral decay in society that's happening, whether it's resulting from COVID or from world events or whatever is happening, but this people not taking responsibility for their actions and people not taking responsibility for showing up and for doing the work and for making things better. I know that a lot of people are struggling, whether it's hiring people, being able to hire, being able to keep their business going with a lack of staff, or when they do hire staff, the staff isn't great, or trying to make up lost revenue from the past 18 months. So here's the thing I want you to understand, just as I understand this or learned to understand it. That first endeavor we jumped into it just like I jumped into that water when we went snorkeling.

We jumped into it, had no idea and what we did is, we put our best foot forward and our best effort into what we were doing. Here's the thing, that business was not a failure. Did it end up working out the way that we wanted it to? No. Did we get the results out of it that we initially wanted to? No. But what that business did is it made us as successful as we were meant to be in that point in time with that particular opportunity. But at the same time, life handed us a situation that needed to give us perspective and set us up, set me up for the future success that was coming my way; to set me up, to be on a path to do what I was truly meant to do, and to be. That life situation that was handed to me

helped me to enjoy a deeper bond and a deeper relationship with my best friend, while also helping her fight the biggest fight of her life.

That situation and that opportunity allowed me to be able to have my own schedule and take care of my husband as he was going through his own battle with cancer, to be able to take him to appointments and take him to treatments and as well as take my best friend to treatments. But also, that situation also allowed me to shift my perspective away from believing that this business and everything that we did in it was wrong, or it was a mistake, or it was a giant failure and therefore, it meant that I was a failure and I didn't know what I was doing. The truth is, is that's not what happened. The truth is, is that opportunity, that first business that I had was a chance to prove to myself, no one else, prove to myself that if I had a dream and I had an idea that I could make it happen.

Did we make mistakes? Absolutely. Have I learned from those mistakes? Absolutely. It's part of why I teach what I teach, how I teach it. The other thing is, is that that opportunity number one, gave me a chance to get out of corporate. Number two, it also gave me a chance to dive right in, to jump right in to entrepreneurship, not knowing what was on the other side, not knowing what was in the water, but just to say to myself that if I don't jump and I don't try this, I will never know what it was like to be an entrepreneur. At the end of the day, at the end of my life, that is something that I would tremendously regret. So that store, that initial business, was not a failure. It was a past experience that, at the time, I thought was a setback, but really what it was, was a set up for the future success that I was going to experience doing what I do now.

Again, I wanted to bring this to you because of you might be experiencing failures. You might have tried stuff over and over and over again these past 18 months and tried to hire people. They haven't worked out time and time again, tried to put new things into place and they haven't worked out time and time again. What I'm saying to you is, is that if you have experienced any of that, they are not setbacks. They are not reasons to function in chaos and crisis, to operate in crisis mode. They are not reasons to think that you are a failure and that your business is a failure. What they are, are reasons to be grateful for that experience, to be grateful for that opportunity that you were given. That is what gives you the stepping stones to go from where you are right now to the next level of where you've been meant to be.

It took me a long time to understand it and that because for a long time, I always thought that that business not working out the way that I wanted it to work out, that it meant that I was a failure. Indeed, that is not what it meant, and indeed, if you are experiencing the same things right now, you are not a failure. The business is not a failure. You're not a failure. You know what you're doing, and all this is, all this time is, is it's a transformation for all of us to go to the next level, by trying new things, by disrupting our industry and doing things our own way, by shifting our focus away from surviving to thriving. But in order for us to do that, a lot of times we have to go through what we don't want in order to get and to understand what it is that we really do want for our business, for our life, for ourselves.

So this past year in January, not January, in March, I gave the eulogy at Vanessa's funeral. I stood on the podium, again, scared out of my mind. I remembered that story about the snorkeling, and that's how, it's one of the stories that I told as well as all these other stories that I recounted, especially what we went through by being brave by taking action and by building our dream. Did our dream turn out the way that we wanted it to? No, but rarely anything does, because we don't have control over the outcome. But what I realized as I stood up there on the podium and looking out over everybody, my heart was just torn in two and just breaking is that, you know what? You need to own everything that happens in your life. You need to own that Uber badass that you are and understand that every experience that we go through is either a distraction in a better direction for us, or it's a set up for future success.

It doesn't mean that there's anything wrong with what you did, it just means that it's a mistake and a lesson that we need to learn. Here's the other thing we're never going to know, when we go, when we make that leap, we don't know what ultimately is going to happen. We don't know what people are going to say. We don't know how people are going to feel. We don't know what's going to happen on the other side when we jump. But that's okay, because that's when all the excitement and all the lessons and all the experiences and all the learning happens to help us to get one step further to the success that we're looking to achieve. So I hope this helped you. Every episode, I always say, "I hope this helped you", and I really hope this helped you, because I talk to a lot of business owners lately and I know it's a struggle right now.

But here's the thing, we need to just jump in. We need to just jump in and take inspired action and really, really hone in on what can we learn? What are the things that we need to learn and how can we make things better? So until next time, have a great rest of your week and I will see you back here next week. Bye for now. Hey, there. It's Teresa. I'm so glad you're here. I'm so glad that you join me every week to listen to this podcast. This podcast has been a dream of mine, and when we hit episode 100, I was super, super, super excited. I know now we are on our way to episode 200. We're only at 121, but we're getting there.

If you like what you hear, I know you do because you're here, I would love, love, love if you could head on over and leave us a review either on iTunes, on Google Play on Stitcher, whatever it is that you're listening to, I would absolutely love it. When we get reviews, it enables us to show up higher in the different categories so that more people can find us and we can make a difference in more small business owners' lives. So I would love, love, love if you could go on and leave me a review and also tell me what you love, tell me what you want to hear more of and how I can help you, because that's what I'm here for. But until next week, take care and I will see you soon.