

It was a Sunday night, starting to get dark out. I sat in my office. I put my red jacket on, my favorite red blazer, black top. Had my hair all done, my makeup all done. Had pajama bottoms on the bottom. But that's okay, nobody could see the bottom. And I sat there in my office and I had already planned out during the day exactly what I was going to say. I was nervous, but I was excited. Again, I had my power blazer on, I had my hair done. My makeup was on point. I had my ring on from Vanessa, my amethyst ring, and I also had the rings on that were my grandmother's 50th wedding anniversary. All of this to give me that extra oomph and that extra confidence to do what I needed to do next. I had spent the whole entire day laying out all of the things that I was going to say, all of the things that I was going to talk about in my first virtual summit, my first virtual online summit, that was all about scaling to seven figures and beyond.

I had never done a virtual summit before, ever. And I thought to myself when I was asked to do it, "Okay, sure. I can do this. I've spoken before." But I didn't know who else was going to be on this virtual summit, who these other speakers were that were going to be on this virtual summit with me. They were amazing. Some of them were even mentors of mine, people who I've looked up to, people who have scaled their business to eight and nine figures. And here I am on a Sunday night ready to talk about my own expertise, about the things that I've done to grow my business. And the question that I ask everybody is, "What do you want to be the best at? What is going to be your declaration to be the best at this year?" And my talk, as I set during the day on Sunday writing out what I was going to be speaking about, which was all about how to not just recession proof your business, but actually build an agile business instead and what that meant.

And I opened up with how the Great Resignation, this recession that we're about to go through, COVID, and everything in between has changed people, has changed business. Business is different, people are different, and how we do things needs to be different. And I talked about how scaling your business from six to seven, seven to eight figures, it's easier than we think it is, how we make it complicated. But what it comes back to is letting go of who you've always been to become the person that your dreams need you to become. And, again, asking yourself that question, what do you want to be the best at? What is going to be your declaration of what you want to be the best at? And it's funny because I had this conversation with my mentor, first time I've ever been nervous to speak to him, and we had the conversation about, what do I want to be the best at? And I just sat there and I just thought to myself, huh, what do I want to be the best at?

And I remembered going back to this conversation and asking people that same question. And in that moment on the call with my mentor, on the virtual call, looking through the screen at him with his soft brown eyes and his very calming voice and saying, "I'm not totally sure. I know there's something big that I want to do. I know there's something that is just right there, but I can't quite figure out exactly what it is, but also exactly what I need to do to get to that point." And he said, "Well, what do you want to be the best at?" And I said, "Well, I want to be the best at being an investor for small businesses. I want to be the best at being the female Damon John," which is what I've been telling everybody. "And I want to be the best at helping people to streamline their operations and helping people to grow their business, to find the gaps that have been holding them back and to fix them and to continue to move forward and grow their business. I want to be the best at building an agile business."

And he looks at me and he said, "But what do you really want to be the best at? Who is Theresa Cantley?" And I thought, oh my gosh, that's a loaded question. And in that moment, I really couldn't answer. I couldn't answer it. And I was starting to get upset because I was like, "Oh my gosh, who is Theresa Cantley?" And he asked me, he said, "What have you been doing lately? What have you been working on?" I'm like, "Well," and I just listed all these projects, tasks, and all these things. And he said, "You haven't been giving yourself enough white space. You have been really loyal to the person that you

were instead of being loyal to the person that you need to become." And I was just like, "[inaudible 00:06:23]," talk about getting super philosophical and I don't know, digging into, like I said, philosophical. And I thought to myself, again, going back to that question of, who do you want to be? What do you want to be the best at? And my mentor asking me that question.

And it has nothing to do with tactics or strategies or any of the stuff as far as what you do. And I remember my business partner, Vanessa, before she passed and I was going through a rough period of time, and I remember her saying to me, "Theresa, your purpose," because I said, "I don't know what my purpose is. I don't know what I'm doing," and she said, "Your purpose has nothing to do with what you do, but rather who you are and how you show up in this world and the legacy that you leave because of who you are." So, again, the question is, what do you want to be the best at? What are you going to declare to be the best at? And, again, my mentor asking me and telling me, "You have been super loyal, super loyal." And I am a loyal person. Ask anybody that that knows me.

I am very loyal, and I will go to the ends of the earth for you, just like I would go to the ends of the earth for the person who I was, the person who has been scared to break out of the mold, the person that has been afraid to really show up on social media for fear of being rejected, the person who is talks and tells people not to focus on being busy all the time, and I'm actually that person who is busy all the time, the person who books meetings back to back to back and does tasks after task after task after task, the person who focuses on doing all of the work for everybody else and doesn't do the work that she needs to do to build her dream. That is what I was focusing on, being the best at, until it was pointed out to me that instead of being loyal to the person that I was, I need to be loyal and all of those things that have been preventing me from moving forward.

And instead I need to be loyal to the person that I need to become, the person that delivered this online summit and talked all about building an agile business, about how businesses get out of recession proofing and think differently about what needs to happen next to keep their business going, whether we're in a recession or not. Because pivoting in your business or pivoting in your life doesn't necessarily come from a looming recession or a downturn in the economy or quiet quitting. Sometimes it comes from being out of alignment with your dreams. Being out of alignment was something that you set out to do in the beginning. And so many distractions and things have gotten in the way, so many constraints have held us back and we focus so much on fighting the obstacles that instead we haven't been able to see past the obstacle or actually look at the obstacle as a stepping stone to get us closer to our dream.

So during this talk that I gave, I talked a lot about what it takes to really build an agile business. And the first piece of it, what it takes, is being the person that your dreams need you to be, being the person that your team needs you to be, being the leader that is going to be able to see the vision for the business beyond what anybody else can see, and to lead the team towards that vision. And that's really what it starts with. Also, it's a matter of building that stability in your business, the diversity, building in diversity and building in sustainability. But even more than that, it's about building radical resilience. And what do I mean by that? Radical resilience in that no matter what curve balls get thrown your way, no matter what life decides that it's going to deliver to your doorstep, in business, in your everyday life, whatever that is, you kick into that sixth sense of knowing that you got to get back up and keep going.

That sixth sense, that resilience to know I'm slipping back into bad habits, I'm slipping back into thinking that I need to do everything in my business. Slipping back into looking at your budget all the time and freaking out because you're completely off budget, you're missing your targets, you're missing your numbers, or slipping back into a bad habit of checking your bank account all the time wondering, where the heck is the money going? That is not the person that your dreams require. That is not the person that's going to build this agile business that is built on stability, diversity, and sustainability. That is not the person that you need to be loyal to. Just like my mentor sat across from me on the screen and said,

"You're a very loyal person and you need to stop being loyal to your old self." And it was just like, oh, holy mackerel.

So if that's you, if you've been loyal to your old self, the old self, the self that's like, "We just want to go back to the way that things were. We just want to go back to how we did business before," we're just going to go back into survival mode. If that is you, you need to stop being loyal to your old self. You need to break those habits now and start being loyal to the person that your dreams require because you're never going to be able to achieve the things that you want to achieve if you're being somebody that you were, somebody who hasn't achieved the results that you want to achieve, somebody that was afraid to put themselves out there, somebody that was afraid to open up the doors to their business, somebody that was afraid to do a live video on social media. No. You want to be loyal to the person that is going to do it messy, do it scared, do it scrappy, my new favorite word, and just do it anyway.

You want to be loyal to that person that is going to show up every single day with conviction and confidence. Whether there are people flooding through your doors, there's only one person sitting there. You are going to continue to show up as that badass, super empowered leader who is going to make a difference one life at a time with whatever it is that your business does. You need to be that leader and that person that keeps the vision of the business in front of them no matter what, that vision that you can't quite clearly see but you're going to put one foot in front of the other and continue to just take steps forward. So I'm going to ask you, what is it that you are wanting to be the best at? Not from a, this is what you do, but rather who you are. Who do you want to be? What do you want to be the best at? And what are you going to declare to be the best at?

For me, I declare to be the best at building radical resilience for myself, but for others, so that they don't ever have to close their doors or feel like they failed, but instead feel like they achieved everything that they wanted to achieve. They left no rock unturned, no stone unturned, and at the end of the day, at their life that they built a legacy for the people to come after them. That is what I want to be the best at. Yes, I know I freaking rock at processes and I rock at systems and I totally rock at building teams, but what I really want to be the best at is being a leader, showing people how to have radical resilience so that they can keep going no matter what comes their way, so that they can keep showing up and keep leading their people to a place that they never thought that they would ever get to. And that, my friends, is what's going to make the world a better place.

So I hope this episode helped you and I look forward to seeing you next week. And, remember, I want to know, what are you looking to be the best at? What are you going to declare to be the best at? What is your superpower? My superpower is that radical resilience, that sixth gear that kicks in that says, "Oh no. Not today. We're doing this." What is your superpower and how are you going to be loyal to your future self so that you can be the person that shows up for what your dreams need? Have a great rest of your week.