

Theresa:

And hello and welcome everybody to this week's episode of the Locally Grown podcast, as well as the weekly show here on LinkedIn. I am joined today by Linda Perry, and I am super, super, super excited for this conversation. I met Linda recently. We have some mutual friends, and we just hit it off automatically, I mean, immediately when we started talking. We both share the same views in business and entrepreneurship, and I'm just really, really excited to have her speak today because I think the topic that we're going to talk about a lot of people are struggling with right now. And you're the first, I think you're the first mindset person I have had on the podcast. I really think you're the first one. Isn't that amazing?

Linda Perry:

Yeah, I feel really special now.

Theresa:

But Linda is actually a mindset coach and business strategist for small business owners. You've worked with lawyers, you've worked with brick and mortar businesses, business owners, online business owners, online entrepreneurs. She's kind of worked with everybody.

Linda Perry:

And a lawyer, too.

Theresa:

I know. I was going to ask you, I want you to tell everybody a little bit about your background. But you are going to want to definitely get, and I have my notebook, you're going to want to get some paper and a pencil or pen, whatever, get your cup of coffee, because she's going to be dropping some gold nuggets here. So before we get into our topic today, tell us a little bit about you, Linda.

Linda Perry:

Well, thank you for having me, and I really do agree. Immediately we hit it off. I was so excited to be able to be part of this conversation. So truly, thank you for letting me be on your platform.

Theresa:

Absolutely.

Linda Perry:

About me is, as I mentioned, I started out my career as an attorney. I was a criminal defense attorney for 17 years. And like so many people, I ended up being a lawyer not necessarily because it was my purpose or passion, but it was really about checking the box. How am I going to get to success? And in my family, it was about being a professional. My parents were doctors. They were immigrants, first generation. So I had really limited choices as to what I was going to do. I mean, they came over from the former Yugoslavia, and they were lucky to be doctors here, but they were like, "So you get to be a doctor or a lawyer."

And I'm like, well, I faint at the sight of blood, so I guess I know where I'm going. And I like to talk and I can argue anything, so here I go. However, I think after so many years I just felt like I was not really

fulfilling what I had come to do in this planet. And I loved being a lawyer. I mean, there's so much about it that I love. I really do admire the profession still. However, there was something else calling me.

And so I found the work of Debbie Ford somewhere where I was going through a divorce in 2004. And Debbie's work really helped me see how I was responsible for the life I was creating. And ultimately, I was lucky that Debbie was certifying coaches, and I went and trained in her year-long program, and then followed up with a second certification and I became a coach.

The funny thing is, like so many business owners, I knew nothing about how to market myself or get out in the world. And so I started studying everything, and really for a while I actually helped coaches develop their own business strategies, their copywriting, all of those kinds of things. But what I really noticed was is that so many business owners, it doesn't matter whether you're a brick and mortar business, whether you're an online business owner, we reach this point that I always call it this crowded entrepreneurial ceiling where we're all hanging out but we can't quite get to the success we want. There's something standing in the way. And my job is really to help people get beyond that plateau so they can actually achieve more things.

Theresa:

That's amazing. And one of the things I always tell people when I first start working them, because I'm a business consultant myself and a business strategist, and I always tell them, because everybody when they first start working with me, they're like, "I need a marketing plan. I need to grow my business, so I need to figure out how to bring in more sales." And what it ends up coming down to is they need to really first work on shifting their mindset about their business and the perspective about their business and what they feel is possible for their business.

And long ago, a mentor of mine said to me, "Theresa, business is 90% mindset, 10% tactic and strategy." And people, they don't realize that. And I just think it's so important that people, especially being an entrepreneur, because you open up your business and you're like, okay, I just need to just start making money. I need to just open up my door and put my sign out, and just really get at it and just bring in sales. And eventually they get stuck or they have to go backwards and say, all right, what's really happening here? What's really happening in my business, and how do I need to shift away from doing all the work to being the visionary? And there's a huge mindset shift there.

So the work that you're doing with people is so, so important. I mean, I was talking to a friend of mine, she's a therapist, and she said, "Every entrepreneur program, every business program out there needs to have a therapist or a mindset coach," because that is the part that people struggle with the most. And especially, we're going to talk about this, right now, that feeling of being stuck and that feeling, I've heard it a lot from people because we've been through so much over the past three years, what is, we just kind of dig into that feeling of being stuck.

And we went from being shut down during a pandemic to dealing with the whole Black Lives Matter and the whole shift that happened in our culture there, and then going into the war over in Ukraine and now the recession. And there's just so much stuff, trying to get back on your feet with sales and trying to get your doors open again. I mean, a lot of businesses had to close. So what are you seeing or what do you do to help people to get through that stuck, and what is your philosophy behind this?

Linda Perry:

Yeah, we all have been through a lot. And so I want to say all of those things are real, because there's a tendency for us to just go, "Yeah, that's in the past, let's brush through that." But all of those things do have an impact on us. I have so many people say, "Oh, I don't have mindset issues, I don't have a

mindset thing going on." Because I think mindset gets a bad rap. It's like this, okay, let's go meditate, let's go hang out.

But mindset is more than that. Mindset is really how are we approaching those challenges in the external world? How are we looking at everything that's happening? How's it impacting our patterns, our habits, our behaviors, the way we show up, the way we don't show up, the things we take action in, the things we don't, the overwhelm we get into? And so these are all of these kinds of things.

And with everything that's impacted us, I think one of the biggest things that I see is a lot of fear showing up for people. Fear is this kind of block that will tell us, hey, be extra careful what you're doing or how you're putting yourself out there. Or fear says, you have to stay open extra long or you have to do more things because what if you have to let another employee go again?

And so fear will drive us to make certain decisions that actually cause us to plateau. Because maybe we are either holding onto things for too long, or we're not getting the right team in place, or we are wearing so many hats. I mean, there isn't a business owner I know that isn't wearing some sort of hat of here's what I'm offering to the public, here's what I'm an expert at, but I'm also managing the business, I'm also running the books. I'm also coordinating my teams. Whatever it is, I think that fear will drive us really most often to do too much and not get that [inaudible 00:08:51] that we need these days.

And so it's an interesting thing that fear is really driving a lot of our decisions. And when fear drives decision making, it is really hard to scale. It's really hard to grow [inaudible 00:09:05] stuck in these patterns of overwhelm and working so hard, and honestly not getting the clarity we need. That stuck is really often sometimes about pulling back and not saying, I'm going to make a choice from fear, but why did I get in this business in the first place?

So I see a lot of that happening these days, especially post-recession or post, we are in this spot, but it's this, if I put this out there too, no one's going to want it. So we've got a lot of fear in the way we're showing up, and honestly, it's really hard to grow your business from that space.

Theresa:

Yeah, no, absolutely. And I tell my own clients, because I get the, we're functioning in crisis mode because we can't hire people and when we hire people, they leave a week later, and we're trying to get our sales back up to the level that we were at, and we're functioning in crisis mode. And it's like what good can come out of that thinking that you're in crisis mode? So when people are stuck like that, what are some things that you help people to do to not make decisions in crisis mode, or even to look at a crisis as an opportunity, or look at the stuckness as an opportunity?

Linda Perry:

We were talking about this before we started to record. These plateaus or these stuck moments are actually opportunities to look back and assess. I actually think the time of COVID, or all of these sort of bumps in the road that we've had, are opportunities for us to assess and learn some of the lessons of our business. How were we operating? Were we operating with all of the right systems in place? Were we operating with even the right kinds of offers or products that we really wanted to be putting out there? How much was fear already dictating our decision making?

When we get stuck, it's an opportunity to look back, not with judgment. A lot of us look back with judgment. We're going to look back and say, "I did this wrong, I did this wrong. I suck. I'm terrible. Everybody else is better. I'm not enough." All the head trash starts to spin.

But I encourage clients to start here, take a look back at what are the lessons? You cannot move forward unless you're looking at the lessons of how did I get here, how did every choice I make lead me to this

moment, and what gold is there? What did I do right? What do I need to change? It's not, what did I do wrong? Because here's the thing, business is often an opportunity to experiment and try new things. But it is what can I actually learn from this? So that's step one.

Step two is really the stories we tell ourselves. We've got to start to look at them. I'm in crisis mode is a story we tell ourselves. Is that true? Fear will tell us all sorts of things. Fear acts with absolute conviction about what's going to happen next. Fear's going to tell you, well, because COVID happened, there's going to be some next disaster. Because the recession is happening, there's going to be some next ... I have to prepare. And so we're always on guard and we're not building a business out of intentionality, but we're building a business out of being on guard.

So fear will tell you, "Hey, this is going to happen. This is how you have to build your business." Fear acts as if it has a crystal ball to the future. However, the only thing that fear can tell you is what happened yesterday. It has no ability to tell you what will happen in the future. What will tell you is the choices you're making present moment. My friend Nancy Levin always says, "If you want a crystal ball to the future, you have to look at the choices you're making today."

And I think when you know that you have that power to actually direct your future, you start to look at your choices differently, as opposed to if I make it out of fear, how is that going to be limiting me? If I make it out of the vision that I have for my business, how will that help me? And I think if we can anchor ourselves so deeply into that vision that we have, we start to make better choices, we start to grow, we start to see wealth accumulate faster. And that's really how we want to start to approach things like fear. Separate out the fact from the fiction.

Is it true that we're going to have a crisis tomorrow? Well, I don't know. Nobody knows. Is it true that I'm going to fall flat on my face tomorrow because I did yesterday? No, it's not true. It only tells you about yesterday. And I think it's a really great place to pull back from the stories we tell ourselves.

Theresa:

And people do get, I know I'm not immune to this myself, I mean, we all tell ourselves these stories, but one of the things that you said, there were two things that you said that I thought were so powerful. You can't give your power to the fear. You have to keep your power to focus on the future. And I think that is, that's a huge thing because so many people, so many business owners give their power to the fear, and that's why they're constantly chasing money or they're constantly chasing the next bright shiny object.

And you're right. And I want to talk to you about vision, because vision is a big thing with me. I'm going to talk to you about that, because a lot of people, they think it's one thing sometimes and don't realize that it's actually something else. But the other thing that you said that I thought was so key, and I think it's going to be something that we pull out and highlight, is you have to build your business out of intentionality, basically not like circumstances. So powerful.

Linda Perry:

The circumstances will be there. Fear will be there. So people are like, "Can you help me get rid of fear?" I'm like, "Sorry, no." It's hardwired into us. We haven't evolved much from caveman time. We're looking for the saber-toothed tiger. Although it looks different today, it's hardwired. What I can do is really allow you to have a different relationship with fear. You don't have to follow it. Hear it, be like, "Hey buddy, thanks for showing up and looking out for me, but I got this."

Theresa:

So good. So good. So let's kind of pivot a little bit because, well, I want to ask you a question. What is your practical-woo? I thought that was good. It was on your website when my assistant was looking for stuff. So tell me what practical-woo is.

Linda Perry:

It's kind of funny because my friend Rob Marsh coined that term for me, and he said basically that what I do is really about creating a lot of awareness first, a lot of internal shifts, so that your external world can look differently than it does today. But I think the practical piece is, look, I'm a lawyer, and by trade I am a business strategist. I believe in action. I will never tell you to think about positive thinking affirmations. I love crystals. I mean, there's some crystals back there and I think they're wonderful. But am I going to tell you to hold your crystals and not take action and hope that things come to you? Absolutely not. I really, truly believe that in order to get the things we want, we actually have to follow the strategies. But the woo part is I really do believe in shifting those mindsets. I do believe in getting quiet and really connecting with what's happening inside because it is making an impact on what you're seeing in your everyday world.

Theresa:

Yeah, it's like that, what is it, as above, so below, or as within ... I'm butchering it. But I mean, it follows that principle. Because you're right. I had another mentor tell me years ago that your outside world is a representation of what's going on inside too. So if you're struggling in your business and you're trying to force things to happen and you're making decisions based on fear, which we've all done, and I think a lot of people are doing it a lot right now, just because of they're not really sure what's going to happen with the recession, that they don't realize that in order to fix it, you've got to start inside and work out.

Linda Perry:

This is why plateaus are actually good things. This is what we started to talk about, even off camera. But it was this idea that plateaus are an opportunity to look inside and say how is what is happening in my outside world a reflection of what I haven't resolved inside? And how can I start here so that I truly have what I want in the world? That's really what it means to build with intentionality, is looking inside first.

Theresa:

Yeah, love that. Love that. Oh, this conversation is so good, so good and so much needed right now. So okay, so once people realize that they have this, they're stuck and they know it's a plateau, and then they go through, they look for the lessons, they examine in kind of what's happened, they examine the stories that are going through their head, to try and find the facts. We talked a little bit about from there really focusing on your vision and staying focused on that.

So tell me, what does that mean to you, and what can people do to start to define that for themselves so that they have that powerful resource or tool or whatever you want to say, so that when they feel like they're hitting these plateaus and stuff, they can stay focused on that?

Linda Perry:

Yeah, you and I could probably get on this big soapbox about this topic, but it is the one thing I say to business owners all the time. Do you have a clear vision? Do you understand where you're going? Look, if you get in your car and you tell your car, I want to go somewhere fun, you might end up in Disney

World. You also might end up in Peoria, Illinois. Because if you are not being clear, your car doesn't need to know where it's actually going.

Too many people define vision as a goal. So when I talk to people about what's your vision, they'll be like, "So I want to make 200,000 this year and I want to implement this program, that program, and I want to grow my list." And it gets very tactical. And I'm like, "So is that going to inspire you to get out of bed every day?" And usually the answer's like, "Well, no." And this is how overwhelm happens. This is how we get stuck, because we don't have a clear vision that is inspiring.

We need a vision that is going to be the big picture of our life. We need a big picture for our business. I like to separate the two because sometimes I think my business fuels my life vision. And so we want to make sure we have a big picture, and it really comes down to how do I want to work every day? Who do I want to work with every day? What is the mark I want to leave? What is that big thing that I want to accomplish in this world?

We were talking about this before, but it is this opportunity to what's your passion? I mean, when I was a lawyer, I could've continued to do that. I loved being the voice for people who didn't have a voice. But here's the thing. I have a bigger picture of showing people how great they really are. And when I start from there, those pieces of how am I going to really do that start to fall in place. We go too quickly to the how, we get stuck, we get in overwhelm, we get into, I'm not capable of that. It automatically sets us up to go into story about limitation.

When you have a vision, and it is so powerful, so compelling, you wake up every day really excited, going, that is exactly what my life is looking like, going to look like, the impact I'm going to make, you can bypass all the noise in your head. You can bypass the challenges of the world.

I remember during COVID, I was still doing a little bit of marketing and copywriting back then at the beginning. And I had a client that I fired in March, and it was a retainer client. It was month after month money, and I fired her because of my vision. I went, I could stay here in fear, or I can trust and follow my vision. And I think those are those powerful moments that when you anchor so deeply into your vision, you can actually take the actions that maybe feel hard, that feel overwhelming, and you can start to make choices that go, is this right? Your no becomes super clear. And we all need to know when our no is clear.

Theresa:

It's the decision, it's the decision tree. It's the thing that if it's not a heck yes, then it's a heck no. But yeah, it makes a decision tree very, very easy, when you do have that clear focus on what it is that, you know, what legacy are you building by the decisions that you make, by the people that you surround yourself with, by what you're doing every day, by how you show up every day. It's so, so, so important.

Linda Perry:

I want to add one little thing to this, because people are like, "That sounds great, Linda, I can't even get to my vision." I want people to understand vision is not something you get married to. This is something that, this or something better awaits me is always the greatest way of looking at it. We do not experiment enough with vision. Because right now, your vision might be like, I just want five minutes alone. And that's okay.

But that's how it expands. Every sort of, "No, I don't want that. No, I don't want that. No, I don't want that," starts to help you unpack your vision. Because I think vision feels really overwhelming for some people. And so I want to make it a little bit easier to think about, like play. It's okay to do that.

Theresa:

Do you have any three things that people could do, or one thing that people could do to start figuring out what their vision is?

Linda Perry:

Sure. There's a couple of different ways to go about it. I mean, I have whole programs around it, but I start with, I think for people who really struggle with trying to figure out their vision, make it more than money, first of all. Number one, put money last. That's the byproduct.

Theresa:

Everybody wants to put it first.

Linda Perry:

I know. Put it last. It is going to be the byproduct of what happens. But start to think about what is it that I want, even on the smallest level, for my life? What is it I want my days to look like? I had to literally start out with, I just want to have 20 minutes to myself in the morning with a cup of coffee. I still honor that, but now my mornings are a cup of coffee, I read, I journal, I spend time getting ready for the day, I go to the gym, and then I can start my day. It literally had to start with five minutes of how do I want to feel?

And I think there is an opportunity that we put everybody else on the map, how do I put myself on the map? Even if it's just five minutes. We make it so grand. We think, I've got to lay out the whole buffet. I've got to know if I'm having mashed potatoes, this and that or whatever on it. No, start with really small. How is it that I can capture something for me, five minutes in a day? What is this business fueling anyway?

And so I think this is an opportunity, because so much of being a business owner is about serving others, being there for others, showing up, making sure this machine runs. What's it for? And I want people to start really tiny. What's the smallest want I have in this? And put yourself back on the map. I think that's where vision has an opportunity to expand.

Theresa:

Yeah, no, wow, that's so powerful. Because you're right. When people start with their vision, they start with money, and then, okay, so maybe then they define what they want in their business, what they want to do. Most people don't ever think of how do I want to feel? And I think it's so important to say when you're building a business, or if you're just starting out or you've had a business for a while, to say, how do I want to feel every day?

Because this is your dream. And so quickly that dream can turn into feeling like you're in a prison or like you're chained to your business. And it can turn into, I mean, I've seen business owners resent the things that they've built. I've seen business owners that have gone through major burnout, all because they never took time to define, well, how is it that I want to feel?

If you want to be able to have a cup of coffee every morning, if you really think about it and you say, I want to be able to have a cup of coffee in the morning, sit for 30 minutes, take my kids to school and not feel rushed into the day, but you've built a business where you have to be there at 6:00 AM and you don't have time to even breathe, well, those two things don't align. And I think that's where people go off the rails.

Linda Perry:

And they automatically say, "I can't change it." And I can't close the door. I think the better question is, who can help me change it? Because how is never an easy answer. It's like Who Not How is a great book. Who can help me change this?

The other piece of this that I really want to clarify is it is be, do, have. We screw this up as business owners. We're doing the thing every day to have the money, the thing that's going to give us the freedom so we can be peaceful, confident, happy, joyful, whatever it is. I think when you have your vision, what happens is you finally do it the right way. You put the be upfront.

If you want to be happy, what are the things you have to do? If you want to be confident, if you want to be successful, what are successful people doing that you're not? And that anchors you so clearly into different choices. And I think that's where we can move beyond that plateau that we all get stuck in. I mean, we all do. I do. Everybody does. We're human. And I want that to be super clear. If you're there, it's really okay. And so these are the small ways out. Just give yourself permission. Who do I want to be in this moment? Even start there.

Theresa:

I love that. I love that so much. This has been such a good conversation, and I think anybody who's watching this or listening to this, if you are feeling, I mean, we've had a lot of stress as business owners, and just as a society, as a culture, as people over the past three years. And who knows what's going to happen in the next year, the next two years, whatever? And I think this is a powerful conversation to have, especially if you're a business owner who has had a lot of struggles these past couple years and maybe has been feeling anxious and maybe has been feeling hopeless. And this isn't ... How am I ever going to be able to turn this business around? How am I ever going to be able to get people? How am I ever going to be able to achieve these goals I want to have?

This is a very, very important conversation, and I love the way that you put it, Linda. It's that practical-woo. But I mean, I love the way that you put it in terms of asking who can help me? Not how can I get out of this, but who can help me? And then finding a mentor or a guide, such as yourself, to help us to walk through the steps to start getting out of that plateau.

Because I'll tell you what, I've seen it so many times. Once you shift your mindset about business, once you shift your mindset about yourself as an owner or a leader and about your business and what your business is capable of, but also what does it mean to you, once you shift that mindset around it, once you shift your perspective, everything else shifts. People think I'm crazy when I say it, but it is so true. I've seen it for myself and I've seen it for so many other people.

But this is such a good conversation to have. And the way that you put it, it gives people hope. It gives people hope, and it also makes it like these things can be achievable. They absolutely can. You just have to take time to get quiet and figure out how do I want to feel, and what do I want my life to look like? And I just think that's just so, so good.

So before we wrap up, I have a couple questions for you. And again, I hope everybody took notes. I took notes. I have tons of notes.

Linda Perry:

I love it.

Theresa:

So before I let you go, I have a couple just fun questions for you. So before we got on, we were talking about superheroes. So if you were a superhero, what would your superpower be?

Linda Perry:

Oh my gosh. I would have this special laser gun that would go straight into your brain, into your mindset, and really eradicate some of those things that cause imposter complex, money mindset. I'd be like zap, move on ahead, zap, move on ahead. It'd be great. It's [inaudible 00:31:52] fun. I love it.

Theresa:

All right. What is something really interesting about you that people might not know, that you want to share?

Linda Perry:

Oh goodness. It's kind of funny, I always talk about this. So I represented an individual charged with a war crime once upon a time and was actually afraid to go to a certain country for several years as a result.

Theresa:

Oh my gosh.

Linda Perry:

Yeah, that was kind of fun. And I actually told this story to a bunch of lawyers the other day, and I was really proud because I won the case. It was a very masculine society, and I was the one girl who was vying to, would get the case. And I got it and I won, and I actually did the job of justice and it was great.

Theresa:

Oh, that's awesome. Yeah. Oh, war crime. Holy moly. They might need your help with what's going on over there.

Linda Perry:

I know.

Theresa:

Over in ... Yeah. So what are you most grateful for?

Linda Perry:

I mean, the first thing that always pops into my head is my children and the ability to have helped them through so much of their own head trash already. They're 22 and 20, and they're incredible people and they're so much better set up for the world than I was. And I think that part is special, and they really, they're pursuing their passion, and it's the most grateful thing. They don't feel constrained. And it's just joy. It's pure joy.

Theresa:

I like that. I love that. So last question, what kind of legacy do you want to leave in this world?

Linda Perry:

It's funny, that's been a topic today, but I really want to leave a legacy of helping people achieve the things that they're so afraid they can't. I know what it's like to be on a plateau. I know what it's like to see the thing I want, and it just elude me. And if I can leave a legacy of helping, it's not a million, it's not whatever. But really, truly helping people that come across my path to get there, that's amazing to me.

Theresa:

I love it. I love it. This is so, so good. Thank you so much for joining me. Especially it's the holiday season when we're recording this. It's right before Christmas, and people are extra stressed just right now. So I'm hoping that so many people get so many gold nuggets out of this because, I mean, this is so, so good. And like I said, I think you're the first mindset person I've had on.

Linda Perry:

That's awesome. I love it.

Theresa:

So this is awesome. Before we go, how can people find you and check out your stuff, check out your goods?

Linda Perry:

Yeah, I encourage people to listen to my podcast. It's the Mindset First Podcast. You can find it wherever you tune in. And get a little flavor of what I talk about. And I also have a book that's actually being rewritten in this first quarter, but it is called Unstoppable. And you can get it at lindamperry.com/unstoppable. It is free, but it is about getting through these plateaus. And so if you're interested, grab a copy of it. But it is about how do we become that unstoppable thing? So please feel free to check it out.

Theresa:

And we will definitely put that link and a link to your social platforms as well, a link to your podcast, link to the book, link to your social platforms in our show notes. So in case you miss that link, you can always go grab it in the show notes.

Thank you so much, Linda. It has been an honor to meet you. It has been an honor to have you on the show. And like I said, I think so many people are going to gain so much from this, and you are definitely, definitely a change maker and a difference maker, and definitely leaving this world better than we all found it.

Linda Perry:

Thank you so much.

Theresa:

Thank you so much for joining us, and thank you everyone. I hope you have a great rest of your week, and I will see you soon.