

Business For Superheroes Podcast Transcription: Episode One Hundred And Ninety Eight: Growing Like a Rotting Badger



This is a podcast about one woman's mission to help entrepreneurs and business owners write better business books. Each week, we tackle your writing excuses because they're our excuses too, and help you beat the blank page of doom so that you can write the book that will grow your life and your business. Now here's your host, Vicky Fraser...

Vicky: Hello and welcome to the "1000 Authors Show." And happy New Year, this is the first podcast of 2020.

Joe: Happy New Year.

Vicky: The Roaring 20s, sounds like the future.

Joe: It does. Where's my hover board?

Vicky: Don't know. We wa--, oh, I'm Vicky Fraser, and this is my husband, Joe.

Joe: Hello.

Vicky: This is the "1000 Authors Show", in which we talk about all the problems that we have writing book, well you don't write books. I write books.

Joe: I don't write books, I'm just the sidekick.

Vicky: Yeah, so it's 2020 and we are drinking gin and tonic.

Joe: Bath orange gin.

Vicky: Yes, Bath orange gin, which I bought at Bath Christmas, well, not at Bath Christmas market, but when we went to visit Bath Christmas market with my cousin, Charlene. Hi Charlene.

Joe: Hi Charlene.

Vicky: I think she listens.

Joe: Really?

Vicky: Yeah.

Joe: Blimey.

Vicky: I know. Cheers!

Joe: Cheers!

Vicky: It's very nice this is, very nice. Do you like it?

Joe: Mm.

Vicky: And what's in it, is it tonic water?

Joe: Yeah.

Vicky: Good, thanks for expanding on that one, I had so--

Joe: Not just gin, for sure.

Vicky: Not just gin. That would be a big gin.

Joe: Big gin.

Vicky: Okay, so we always start the podcast, if you are new to the podcast, hello, welcome. We always start the podcast with a little book review, I guess, of what we're reading at the moment. I tell you what I'm reading fiction and non-fiction and Joe's tells, mostly be reading fiction.

Joe: Mostly be reading fiction. Although this is non-fiction, what I'm reading. I am reading *The Soul of an Octopus* by Sy Montgomery. Father Christmas brought it in my Christmas stocking a couple of weeks ago.

Vicky: Yeah.

Joe: It's very interesting, I'm only like 20 pages into it. But it's nice, 'cause octopuses are basically amazing.

Vicky: Yes, they are.

Joe: Closest thing to aliens we've got.

Vicky: They are. Is that what Sy Montgomery says as well?

Joe: Pretty much.

Vicky: Cool. Would you like to tell the listeners about your theory of octopuses and goats?

Joe: Well, basically goats are wrong. I mean, I think most people can agree with me on that, they're just basically wrong. They smell wrong, they look wrong, their eyeballs are wrong, everything is wrong about them.

Vicky: Goats are not wrong, goats are awesome, carry on.

Joe: And I think, basically, if you look at a goats eyes and an octopus' eyes, they're basically the same thing.

Vicky: You just said basically 17 times.

Joe: You're exaggerating, basically. So, I think goats are the landing craft for octopods. I think if you opened a goat's head, you would find an octopus inside pulling levers, pretty sure.

Vicky: So that's Joe's octopus-goat theory. I, on the other hand, I don't think Sy Montgomery mentions that in his book.

Joe: I'm not sure he does. I haven't read the whole book. If he agrees with me, I will feel vindicated.

Vicky: If you're listening to this Sy, get in touch. Tell us...

Joe: Hi Sy.

Vicky: Tell us how wrong Joe is. I, on the other hand, I'm reading fiction at the moment. I am reading *The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms* by N. K. Jemisin because I liked her *Obelisk, Stone Sky*--

Joe: Trilogy?

Vicky: Yeah, trilogy. The broken world trilogy, I think it is. I like that so much. And it's great so far, it's different. It deals with some of the same issues of kind of, prejudice and slavery and all that kind of thing, but in a fantasy setting. And there's gods and there's epic battles and there's all sorts of stuff.

Joe: Cool.

Vicky: It's very cool. I'm about half-way through, I'm really enjoying it. And non-fiction, I am still reading *The Art of Asking* by Amanda Palmer, which is her memoir, and I quite like it. She's an interesting person. I think she's quite marmite-y, you either really like her or you really hate her. I haven't made up my mind on her yet. But she's married to Neil Gaiman and he is awesome, so she can't be that bad.

Joe: I always kinda worry at the point where you're saying, "I am still reading this." It kind of feels like you absolutely thrash away through books at a great rate if you're enjoying yourself and you don't thrash through them if you're not enjoying yourself.

Vicky: Oh no, that's not true, because it took me ages to read *Atomic Habits*, but that's because I was making a lot of notes and I was implementing stuff as I went along and I was re-reading bits of it and all sorts. The reason I haven't made very much progress on *The Art of Asking* is because I've spent the last two weeks basically doing nothing.

Joe: Eating cake.

Vicky: Eating cake and playing computer games, and really doing very little. I've been reading a lot of fiction.

Joe: It's been Christmas.

Vicky: It's been Christmas, so yeah. So that's what I'm reading at the moment. I will be reading another non-fiction book, or probably another fiction book by the time we do our next podcast, so yeah. Right, this week we are, you might be wondering what we're talking about this week. If you've seen the title of the episode, which is Growing like a Rotting Badger.

Joe: Like a rotting badger.

Vicky: Like a rotting badger. We are talking this week about how we are told by every single guru and his mom and his dog that we must grow, grow, grow all the time or we're basically shit.

Joe: Right.

Vicky: It's just this message that is put out there, along with the kind of 24/7 hustle and you gotta like, be working so hard all the time and you wear exhaustion like a badge of honor and all that. I lump all that stuff into the same arena. I always think, when everybody is shouting the same thing at you, you need to stop and look at what everybody is doing and then go, you know what, I'm just gonna go in the other direction. And I've got a few reasons for that.

Joe: I would like, as a sidekick, to put forward a theory.

Vicky: Go on.

Joe: Okay, so you know how like, beauty and fashion magazines are there to A, make you feel bad about yourself, and B, spend money.

Vicky: Yes.

Joe: I think it's the same thing.

Vicky: It is the same thing, and I think I make that point later on.

Joe: Oh, I should have read the show notes.

Vicky: No, that's cool, no you can make it now, because it's fine, cause it's a good point, we can come back to it. But yeah, we're just told, it's like a public shaming thing, it's like a shaming thing. If you're not on this bandwagon, you know, we're told that we've got to create something enormous, that we have to, that we want to sell, that we have got to make as much money as possible as fast as possible, and then make some more. Regardless of the consequences. And that we've gotta have like, have loads of employees, and outsource absolutely everything, even if it's stuff that we enjoy. And that we've got to go after as many customers as we possibly can, you know, if you haven't, you're told that if you haven't got like a massive list, email list, and a massive customer list, then you're basically unsuccessful. And that is problematic for a bunch of reasons. Really fast growth is really damaging.

Joe: Chaotic.

Vicky: It's chaotic, yeah. And for somebody like me, I can't, you know, if ten people told me they wanted me to ghostwrite their books, that's not going to happen. You know, even if I gave up everything on working on my own business, there's no way I could do that.

Joe: Yeah.

Vicky: So, but we're told this, and we're told that we must create endless products and services, and write a bazillion books, and sell more copies than anybody else. I see people bragging every now and then, "Oh, I've written and published, you know, ten books this year." And I'm like, okay. Are they all good? And I'm absolutely not knocking people who can put out books that quickly, because one of them is one of my best friends, Dom. And he puts out really good books, really quickly, but he's not, he doesn't put out a book a month, you know? And I see people bragging about that all the time, and I just think that it just becomes this, it just becomes this crazy badge of honor that you know I've got to, it's more, more, more, all the time.

Joe: Sure.

Vicky: And, yeah, I don't think that all, I don't think that all growth is good.

Joe: No. Well it's--

Vicky: Some of it is cancerous, and some of it is like a rotting badger at the side of the road.

Joe: Inflating.

Vicky: Yeah, it's getting bigger on the outside, but inside is like a seething mass of maggots and decay.

Joe: Enormous gaps.

Vicky: And enormous gaps, and poisonous gas, and you know, I was really obsessed with growth for such a long time, and it made me really miserable. I was like a rotting badger. Not stinky, I don't think.

Joe: Moving on... It's a good thing, I like it. I like the rotting badger analogy.

Vicky: Yeah, because on the outside, even an inflated badger, it's not something that you would think.

Joe: It's not something that you aspire to is it really?

Vicky: No, you could think oh, you know, nice plump badger, if that's what you like. I'm going to stop now.

Joe: Stretching.

Vicky: My point is that not all growth is good. Not all growth is good. So today I wanted to talk about, and this is quite good timing as well. I'm not going to talk about goals, and all of that kind of thing, really, because there are plenty, I've done that before, and there are plenty of podcasts and books out there about that and I write about that quite a lot, 'cause goals are important.

Joe: Goal setting and plans and-

Vicky: And ignoring your goals is important as well because if you focus only on your goal, you'll never do the things you need to do to get yourself there. But I want you today to think about what you really want out of your business. So I'm gonna ask you, what do you want? What do you really want? What do you really really want?

Joe: No, I'm not doing it.

Vicky: Oh, why? Spice girls are great. What do you want from your business, and what do you want from your life? And I think that's quite a difficult question.

Joe: It's a big question.

Vicky: So I would like you to also think about what you don't want. 'Cause I think that can be an easier place to start.

Joe: Yes.

Vicky: And also think about, and this is really important because most people never do this, they talk about goals and they talk about what they're gonna do to get there and all the rest of it. But I also want you to think about what you are willing to endure to get to where you want to be.

Joe: Yeah.

Vicky: Because, you know, I hear people say, "Oh, I'd love to run a marathon." and it's like, okay, what are you gonna do to get there? Are you willing to actually endure the, what is, quite epic pain at times. And most of the time the answer is no, and that's fine, but I think you've got to think about that before you go into whatever it is you want to achieve because if you, if you don't really think about what you might have to endure to get there and the pain you might, and discomfort, that you might have to endure, whether it's physical or psychological or emotional or whatever. Then you're not gonna be prepared and you're gonna fall at that first hurdle.

Joe: And some of those things that you choose to endure are not just yours, you know, you might have a partner, you might be raising children, you might be renovating a house, you might be doing all kinds of other things and if you kinda say, unilaterally, what I'm gonna endure, not seeing the children after seven o'clock at night 'cause that's when I'm gonna do my business development or whatever. Ya know, your partner needs to be onboard with that.

Vicky: Yeah.

Joe: Your kids need to understand that.

Vicky: Well, if they're like, young kids, they should be in bed by seven anyway.

Joe: Well, yeah. You know what I'm saying. There's people around you that you're affecting, it's not just yourself.

Vicky: Usually, yeah. That is true, that is a really good point. So, what are you willing to endure and how much is your family and the people around you willing to support you in what you want to do. Really important. So think about all of that, but I would like to start, right now, by getting you to think about what you don't want. And I'm gonna just kick you off by listing a few things that I don't want because they spark ideas, 'cause I think sometimes it can be a bit like, oh, here's an open question, and so, how do I start? So, here's what I don't want. I don't want the responsibility of lots of employees working for me.

Joe: Okay.

Vicky: Because it's a big responsibility and it's like, it's not just paying my wages and paying for my bills and things like that, it's making sure that somebody else is looked after as well. And then there's all of the admin as well that goes with it. There's a lot of responsibility involved in having actual employees.

Joe: Yes.

Vicky: Maybe one day, maybe one day I will want to because I have an idea that I would quite like to open a publishing house one day, but that's quite a long way down the line and right now I don't want employees. I don't want more and more software to break and get confused by, because that's something that I do well.

Joe: Reasonable.

Vicky: But, again, we're told you need this shiny object, you need this, you need that to do this, that and the other. And I just got myself in such a muddle over the years and I've pared everything back super simple now and I'm managing to make things work for me with the bare minimum of tools. And I think that you need to start, keep things as simple for as long as possible.

Joe: Again, but I think a lot of those messages that you're receiving at that point, you need this thing, you need that thing, are the same as those fashion magazines that say you need bigger eyebrows, you need smaller eyebrows, you need plumper lips.

Vicky: Yeah.

Joe: Go and buy some stuff. And they're all pumping an industry, and it's exactly the same thing. As a business owner, you're getting hit with these messages too. Buy this shiny object, buy that website plugin, buy this thing, it'll help you.

Vicky: And the way they market it, I don't like. Some of it is marketed fine. You know, it's marketed in a way that I would call ethical. It's like, we've got this thing, it solves this problem, perhaps you would like it. But then there's the unethical marketing that you see a lot of and it's really insidious. Some of it's quite... Some of it's not obviously insidiously nasty, but it's that kind of, all the loud voices on the internet are shouting, "This is what you need", and they're subtly implying that if you don't have it then you're somehow obsolete.

Joe: Mm hm.

Vicky: Or stupid or not worthy, you know what I mean? Just, there's a way to market your stuff ethically. And you can tell as well because when you look at marketing on an advert that makes you feel like, "Oh, this could be really cool." then that is generally ethical marketing. When you see marketing that makes you think, "Oh god, I need that." It makes you just feel icky and just like, oh my god I'm not good enough, I'm not worthy, if I don't have this then I'm not a good enough person. That's the kind of marketing, that I think will tell you, that the person is possibly not the type of person you want to be buying stuff from. And there's a lot of it, there's a lot of it around. So, yeah, don't want shiny objects, I don't want thousands and thousands of customers who just become faceless numbers.

Joe: No, you really enjoy relationships with your customers, don't you? You really enjoy knowing them and getting stuck into their business--

Vicky: Yeah.

Joe: And climbing round in their heads.

Vicky: And even the people who, I mean, I can't get to know intimately, everybody who buys a copy of my book, obviously. But even the people who buy my book from my website, it's more difficult if they buy it through Amazon, but if they buy it from my website they get a follow-up emails from me. And I encourage them to get in touch with me and tell me about the book that they want to write and the ideas that they have. And I love, I love reading those emails. If you think I don't read them and I don't reply, then that's not true. I might not reply, it might take me a while to reply but I reply to every single email that I get because I love hearing peoples' stories. So that kind of thing, you can't do it. If I had like, 10,000 people a month buying my book there is no way, there's no way that I could keep up with all those people and nor would I be expected to. But that would make me sad because--

Joe: You'd be missing out on those experiences and those contacts.

Vicky: Yeah, I would. But, you know, if 10,000 people a month want to buy my book, then bloody hell go ahead. But I wouldn't be able to have the same kind of relationship that I like.

Joe: Probably buy it on Amazon, that would make life easier, if you were gonna buy 10,000 copies.

Vicky: Yeah, that would be awesome. I don't want an expensive and convoluted website.

Joe: No.

Vicky: I've had so many years of pain and setting fire to money. And then last year I was like, ya know what, I'm gonna build the damn thing myself. And I have, and is it the world's most bestest professionally designed website? No, it's not. But it looks pretty good. It works, it's very simple to navigate, does exactly what I need it to do.

Joe: You understand everything that is going on there.

Vicky: I understand everything that is going on there. I've got a few plugins, I've got a few bits and pieces, I've got someone looking after things behind the scenes. Hi Louise.

Joe: Hi Louise.

Vicky: She does a fabulous job but I make sure that I at least know the basics of what's going on and how things fit together. So, I don't want an expensive and convoluted website and you don't need one either. And if you are in the early stages of like, writing a book or growing your business. Do not, please do not spend a bazillion pounds on a really expensive website. Because unless you can make it work for you, it's just gonna be a waste of your money. You can build a great site with something like, if you must, Squarespace or Wix, which are super super simple. I would go for WordPress because in the long run it will give you a lot more flexibility. So yeah, I don't want thousands and thousands of products that I can confuse myself with, and confuse my customers with.

Joe: And struggle to keep up-to-date.

Vicky: Struggle to keep up-to-date. And don't want to jump on the latest marketing fad bandwagon and spread myself even thinner.

Joe: Mm hm.

Vicky: I don't want more time away from you.

Joe: Yay!

Vicky: I don't want more stress. I don't want just like, more, more, more of everything. Ya know, for a long time I thought I needed all of those things to be a success because that's what the loud voices on the internet tell us.

Joe: Mm hm.

Vicky: And it's not true. Ya know, we're always being shrieked at to keep up and pay attention and stay ahead of the curve.

Joe: Yeah, yeah. Ten-Xing everything.

Vicky: And we're also told. Ya know what, we're also told that, and this really bugs me, because I was thinking about this the other day. I was thinking about this because I've just bought Ryan Wallman's new book, called *Delusions of Grandeur*. Which is hilarious by the way. I've only just started reading it, but it's hilarious. He is a medical marketer. He used to be a doctor, an actual doctor in Australia and now he runs a marketing agency for healthcare professionals.

Joe: Okay.

Vicky: And he's absolutely hilarious on Twitter. Follow him on Twitter, he's Dr Draper on Twitter. And he's just written this book and it's fantastic. A lot of the things that he shouts about on Twitter are railing against the new breed of marketers who are like, "Email marketing's dead, direct mail's dead, the new thing is social media, all of our attention spans have shrunk." And it's like, if you know anything about human psychology and human evolution,

we did not spend millions of years evolving to what we basically are now, which is how our brains work in a certain way. In the last 10 years that hasn't changed. You know, our basic neurophysiology has not changed in the last 10 years. We don't have shorter attention spans. We have more distractions, but we are perfectly capable of concentrating as long as we ever have been. Anyway, all the stuff that used to work five years, 10 years, a hundred years ago in marketing, still works because the basic way that human brains work has not changed. And it's not gonna change in our lifetime because that aint how evolution works. So, yeah, all of that shiny bandwagon stuff, all of those people saying, "Oh, the next big thing is Snapchat." Remember Snapchat?

Joe: Mm mm.

Vicky: No? No you don't because it's for 12-year-olds now. The next big thing, if you're not on Snapchat then your marketing is dead. You can ignore all of that. Yeah, experiment with the odd marketing platform or whatever but you've got to keep in mind that it's strategies that are important. And the strategies haven't changed, the tactics are changing quite often. But I tell you what, one of my predictions is that SEO is gonna come back in a big way because Facebook ads are just gonna become beyond most peoples reach, in terms of being able to afford them.

Joe: You reckon?

Vicky: Yeah, I think so. The big advertising platforms are just getting more and more expensive and more difficult to put ads out for. Especially if you're in certain types of industry. So I think SEO is gonna come back in a fairly big way this year. And that's not a bad thing because it's helping people solve problems. And I also think that direct mail, and email, is gonna continue to be super important because nobody does direct mail anymore because all the loud voices on the internet said it's dead.

Joe: Mm hm.

Vicky: So if you're the only ones sending interesting stuff to people through the post, who do you think they're gonna buy from? I buy from the companies that send me catalogs.

Joe: Yeah.

Vicky: You can sit and laugh at me, or not, I don't really care. You're wrong.

Joe: That's where you spend your money?

Vicky: Yeah, yeah. That's where a lot of people spend their money. So, I'm not saying that the new ways don't work.

Joe: Mm hm.

Vicky: Some of them do, but don't ignore the old ways in favor of a new fad.

Joe: Yeah, if you invest 50 grand on a shiny new platform, to take advantage of something that's up-and-coming--

Vicky: And then it dies.

Joe: And then it dies.

Vicky: Remember MySpace? Nope. There's a whole generation of people out there who have no idea MySpace is.

Joe: I know, I know.

Vicky: It's really funny. Okay, so, all of that stuff. That was a bit of a rant that was a bit of a tangent but was still relevant I think.

Joe: Still relevant.

Vicky: Still relevant. Because I want you to think about what you don't want and all of those things are things that I don't want. And now you've had a think about what you don't want, I want you to have a think about what you do want. What do you want your life to look like, what do you want your business to look like.

Joe: What do you want your time to be spent on.

Vicky: Yeah. What do you want your time to be spent on. Because time is really the only thing that we can't get back, ever. You can make more money but ya know, I don't want you spending your time on stuff that you regret or you hate. Life is too short for that, it really is. So, here is what I want from my life and my business. And it does sound a bit wanky, but I don't care. I know that's a bit cliché because it's true. But, I want to make a difference in peoples lives and I want to be significant. Which is what all humans want. We all want to be significant and important. I want to help make someones life and business better for them so they can make a difference.

Joe: Mm hm.

Vicky: And to do that I want to serve a small number of private clients really well and get to know them well. Same with coaching clients, I could serve more coaching clients, but not a huge number.

Joe: Mm hm.

Vicky: And I don't want to serve a huge number. I don't wanna be working with any more than a maximum of five coaching clients at a time. 'cause any more than that and it's like... I would rather, and even those on the courses, I don't wanna fill my courses full of a hundred people. I would rather have 20 people on a really in-depth course.

Joe: Yeah, recognizable people that you can build a relationship with, rather than a hundred who you don't know who they are.

Vicky: And work, you know, have them work with me in a kind of like, this is a thing that we're gonna do over six weeks and by the end of six weeks you will have your book outline done, your introduction done, your conclusion written. Or I would rather do like, a really in-depth 12 week course that's like, right, we're right a damn book in 12 weeks, ya know? And by the time you've finished that course, if you do all of the things you're supposed to do, you will have the first draft of your book by the end of that. It's not like, I don't wanna be selling courses to people, to hundreds and hundreds of people at a time and have only a tiny percentage of them actually do the thing. Which is what happens with most. See, I would rather charge much more and far fewer customers but give them a much better service than a lot of my competitors

can. So that's what I want, I wanna find my weirdos basically, and I don't mind if it takes me longer to get to where I want to be. 'cause I think that shortcuts can be...

Joe: Yeah, and it's like... If you're doing the things that you want to be doing then it's not hard.

Vicky: It's not work.

Joe: It's not horrible. You're not grinding away and... Ya know, it's nice. Much, much more pleasant way to spend your time.

Vicky: And I feel also like saying, I'm not knocking anybody who wants to grow something big and that they can sell and all the rest of it but I think there's a lot of voices out there, there's a lot of help out there for people like that. Because the whole world is geared towards bigger, better, more. And that's fine if that's you, that's fine. But I very rarely hear anybody talk about people who want to stay small and do, do work that matters to them on a smaller scale. Ya know, create something that might grow into something bigger one day but for now is ya know, it's got a smaller sphere of influence.

Joe: Well there's practical things you have to cover aren't there? I mean, there's an amount of money you need to clear a profit.

Vicky: Yeah.

Joe: So there are some minimum sizes that you have to hit.

Vicky: Yeah, and on that note, I want enough money to not have to worry about money. I want enough money to be able to do what we want to our Dingle.

Joe: Mm hm.

Vicky: And I want enough money to travel some more and have adventures. I want more time, time is the most important thing.

Joe: But that's not, I wanna make 10 million pounds in five years.

Vicky: For the sake of it, no. It's like, we say this a lot. What can you do, what will the money enable you to do? Which is really important. And I have other ideas as well, I want to be able to set up reading and writing programs for people and improve literacy across the board. I've got big ideas for what I would like to do and to do that I'm gonna need money because I need money to give me the time to do it and probably for some infrastructure shit as well.

Joe: Sure.

Vicky: What else do I want? I want more time to spend doing work that matters to me, to spend having adventures with Joe, 'cause we have adventures. And to train at the aerial studio 'cause I wanna do more of that and to play the guitar, get better at that 'cause I'm not very good. And learn languages.

Vicky: Yeah?

Vicky: Yeah, and to study. I really miss studying physics. When I was studying physics at the Open university.

Joe: Yeah.

Vicky: I miss, I did that for a while and then I just didn't have time. Which is sad, I want to do that. Do ya know what I wish would come back? Lecture series. You know in Victorian times people used to go to lectures?

Joe: Yes.

Vicky: Like public lectures. Is that a thing anymore?

Joe: There's a series of them, there's like Christmas lectures aren't there and things.

Vicky: But they're on the telly, I'd like to actually go to them.

Joe: I think you might be hard-pushed in the Welsh borders.

Vicky: I don't mind traveling. But I don't... Do live lectures still exist people and science nerds? I'm not talking about the skeptics in the pub kind of thing 'cause there are lots of those all over the place, I'm talking about, ya know, actual physicists being like, right I'm gonna do a lecture on quarks. And you can just go and listen to it and ask questions.

Joe: I imagine so.

Vicky: 'cause I would like, I think I belong in Victorian times, where you used to go to like, fancy salons--

Joe: Join the Royal Society.

Vicky: Could do couldn't I. I'm totally gonna do that.

Joe: Write that down.

Vicky: Write that down. Well no, I have to write it down because otherwise it won't happen. Hang on, gonna write it down on my to do list. Join--

Joe: Join Royal Society.

Vicky: I can't believe I'm not a member of the Royal Society already. Anyway, back on the podcast. Basically I want to grow my life.

Joe: Yep, not just the business.

Vicky: Yeah, and I want to grow a business that I enjoy so much that it's part of my life. And most of the time I do enjoy my business that much. But I have lots of work that I need to do to get it stable and I'm still kind of pivoting... At the moment

Joe: Sure.

Vicky: So yeah, think about what you really want out of your business and your life.

Joe: Okay.

Vicky: And what you don't want, and what you're willing to endure to make it happen. That's really important, what are you willing to endure.

Joe: Yeah.

Vicky: What are you willing to give up? Are you willing to give up an hour a night of telly to write your book?

Joe: Hell yes.

Vicky: Are you willing to give up one of your daily cups of coffee from Starbucks to save enough money to invest in a course or something? What are you willing to do, what are you willing to endure to make it happen? So, what's the takeaway?

Joe: Well, decide what you really want out of your life and your business.

Vicky: Yeah.

Joe: It's not that complicated, but it is quite difficult to do. I think a lot of people are on a treadmill and they go through school and they just, they just take the next step. And very rarely do people stop and think and kind of go, "Is this actually the direction I want?" I think that's really worth doing.

Vicky: There's a really good and alarming quote, and I can't remember the exact quote and nor can I remember who said it. But it goes something along the lines of, you'll probably recognize it, "If you don't make plans for your life, you'll find yourself living to someone else's plan, and guess what they've got in store for you, not much." Nobody will plan your life for you, and unless you plan your own life and make your own decisions, you will find yourself dancing to somebody else's tune for your whole life.

Joe: We've said this before. I mean, you don't have to have like, the shining sun on the horizon as your destination. You can be a person who says, well the next couple of years I'm gonna go in this direction.

Vicky: Yeah.

Joe: You don't have to have like a, well when I'm 80 I want to have, I wanna be in this position.

Vicky: No.

Joe: You can take steps throughout your life, and you can change direction every few years.

Vicky: Yeah. So I mean, I've kind of done that 'cause my, I guess my identity's always been that I am a creative person, I'm a writer, I double with arty stuff, ya know, I play musical instruments, I learn languages. I'm a creative person, I always have been. And I'm a scientist, but that is creative I think. So everything that I have done has been in that, I've done lots of different things and gone in lots of different directions but they've all been in that sphere of creativity.

Joe: Sure.

Vicky: And so the goals that I have all tend to be that kind of thing. It's like, I wanna help more people write books, I want books to be a bigger thing, I want books to be on the pedestal they should be on. And that's kind of, I guess my life's purpose, but there's lots of goals that I'll have along the way to get me there.

Joe: Yeah.

- [Vicky] Yeah, cool. So, happy new year everybody.

Joe: Happy new year.

Vicky: Have a think about what you want your life to look like and what you're gonna do for the rest of this year to make it happen. Because if you're just hoping that 2020 will be a good year for you, you're probably gonna be disappointed.

Joe: It's probably gonna be much the same as recent years.

Vicky: I see a lot of people, and it makes me sad, I see a lot of people kind of post, "Oh, I hope next year is better." And it's the same thing they posted on social media the year before and the year before that. And what I would like to see is people posting, "This is what I am going to do to make sure I have a better year next year." And for people who have had a crap year last year, I really do hope that this next year is better for you. And I want you to know that you've got the power to make it better.

Joe: Yeah.

Vicky: And you're the only one who has got that power.

Joe: For sure. It's kind of your prime responsibility, is to look after yourself and your people and take steps.

Vicky: It's your prime superpower as well. 'cause as soon as you acknowledge that actually it's my responsibility to make my life better, that's a really empowering thing because it's like, wow, nobody else as the power to make my life shit actually, I am totally in control of this. And sometimes shit happens that you can't control. But it's up to you to deal with it and make it better.

Joe: Deal, step round, move forwards, bounce off, whatever.

Vicky: Yeah, and sometimes it's really shit and ya know, you might lose someone you love or you might, just something awful might happen, you might get sick. And again, it's like, I'm not dismissing those things at all because I've had those things happen to me. But still, how you deal with it really does determine how much power it has over the rest of your life. I don't want to sound like I'm dismissing people's woes because I'm not at all.

Joe: But you do get to choose which way you are facing when you take your steps.

Vicky: Yes, yes.

Joe: You can face the same way as everyone else, you can pick a destination you like the look of and head that way.

Vicky: Yeah. So yeah, decide what you want out of your business and your life and how you're gonna grow your life. 'cause growing your life, I think, is far more important.

Joe: Right.

Vicky: Right! Next week we are gonna be reviewing the book Atomic Habits by James Clear, which I talk about a lot because it's basically one of the best books I've read in a long time.

Joe: Cool.

Vicky: And on January the 30th I'm launching my book officially.

Joe: Nice.

Vicky: There's gonna be some cool swag. If you've already bought my book I would get in touch with me when I launch it because some of the swag I will give you access to because I don't want you to miss out just because you got in there first. 'cause you're basically awesome. So, yeah, I will be making some of the swag available to you too. Running a writing retreat in Fuerteventura in late February, date to be decided, but that is going to be, there's gonna be a page up to book that in the next couple of weeks. And if you want to come along and write the shitty first draft of your book or polish the shitty first draft of your book, that would be the perfect place to do so. Somewhere warm and sunny. If you've listened to every episode, email me with your postal address and I will send you a silly gift.

Joe: If you like the podcast, go to iTunes, subscribe, it helps us climb the rankings, it helps people find us. Go to Stitcher, whatever it is you use, subscribe.

Vicky: Leave us a review.

Joe: Leave us a review. Five stars. If you don't want to leave us a review with five stars, there are other podcasts available.

Vicky: Um, share it with people as well. Moxiebooks.co.uk/podcast. Share it on social media, share it with your friends, share it with people you don't like if you think it'll annoy them.

Joe: Nice.

Vicky: And we will be back same time next week with another episode of the "1,000 Authors Show".

Joe: Nice.

Vicky: Bye.

Joe: Bye!

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