



The Professional Writer Podcast

Episode #9 Transcript

Being True to Yourself

<https://bloggingbistro.com/podcast/being-true-to-yourself/>

In the 2019 movie, [Late Night](#), Emma Thompson plays the role of Katherine Newbury, the first and only female late night network TV talk show host. But Katherine's show's ratings have steadily declined for the past 10 years. She's lost her mojo.

The reason why her show has become stale: She stopped taking risks. She uses the same jokes, the same format, and even the same cadence as the other guys. Somewhere along the way, she stopped being herself, got complacent, and was content with pleasing others.

Katherine's new female writer, Molly, tells her, "This is *your* show. It's an expression of who you are." Molly urges Katherine to make the show more authentic and personal.

When we're building our writing business, it's so easy to get sucked into acting in ways that we think will please others. We can become obsessed with getting our name in print or adding to our publishing credits – so obsessed that we sell out to an editor or publisher who wants us to write a

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certain book or write an article a certain way, when that way goes against everything we believe in.

We attend workshops on platform building or listen to podcasts where the instructors and hosts assert that we have to do certain things in order to build our platform, get noticed, and achieve success.

I've seen or heard every single one of these platform-building recommendations this week alone! Here are the promotional messages I've received during the last couple of days:

- You need to join my year-long mastermind and pay me \$40,000 to get access to me and my expertise.
- You need to buy my Facebook advertising course for \$1400 and then spend thousands more dollars on Facebook ads to get people to notice your brand.
- You need to create lead magnets (which are free downloadable products you give away to subscribers in exchange for their email address).
- You need to develop several high-priced digital training programs. You must charge at least \$1,000 per program, or no one will believe that your content is worthwhile.

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- You need to host weekly live webinars and evergreen webinars (in other words, pre-recorded, access-anytime webinars) to sell your online training programs.
- You need to develop affiliate programs and JV, or Joint Venture partnerships. Another person I heard advised, “You do NOT need to develop affiliate programs or JV partnerships.”
- You need to create a membership site. (That’s where people pay a set monthly or annual fee so they can access all the courses, coaching calls and other premium goodies that are available only to subscribers).
- You need to host a Facebook group.
- You need to start a podcast.
- You need to use chat bots and messenger bots.
- You need to be active on at least 5 different social networks: Instagram, particularly IG stories, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

The biggie I’ve been hearing lately, in terms of advice:

You have to stop trading hours for dollars. You must stop doing things like consulting, where you work with a client for a certain amount of time in exchange for them paying you a certain amount of money. Instead of

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trading hours for dollars, you're supposed to set up systems for generating recurring revenue.... Things that will earn you money while you sleep.

Things that will enable you to earn at least a 6-figure income – or better yet, a 7-figure or multiple 7-figure income, if you want to be successful.

I've been in the marketing business full-time since 2007, and over the years, I've tried many of these techniques, as well as several I haven't mentioned. None of the techniques are inherently bad or good. If you don't use a particular technique, that doesn't guarantee that your business will fail. In the same manner, if you DO use a particular technique, that doesn't guarantee your business will succeed.

What makes me feel uncomfortable with some of this advice is that many of the so-called gurus seem obsessed with defining their "success" in terms of earning a 6-figure or 7-figure income.

I have no problem with earning money. I'm currently the sole wage-earner in my family, and so earning an income pays the mortgage and keeps food on the table. But I've never defined myself in terms of how much income I earn. This may stem back to my childhood, growing up in a small farm town in the middle of nowhere and having parents who worked hard and earned a very low income.

For me, earning enough to take care of my family's needs and enjoy the occasional vacation has been satisfying.

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Still, I felt this pressure from all these voices in the marketing world, telling me I needed to do this and this and this and this in order to fit in to what they define as “successful.”

And then one day everything changed. I spotted a Facebook ad in which a marketer laid out a framework for running a business. At the end of his video, he said something like, “If what I said resonates with you, I invite you to visit my landing page, where you’ll learn more about what I have to offer. If you’re not interested, that’s fine, too. Just grab your freebie and we’ll call it a day.”

Hearing those words was like a breath of fresh air. Here was someone who was so confident in what he had to offer his ideal audience that he didn’t feel the need to apply ANY pressure to get people to sign up.

He was matter-of-fact. “If this sounds good, here’s what to do next. If not, thanks for stopping by.”

I immediately signed up for the free offer, and then I followed this person for at least a year – without buying anything. He continued to provide free video trainings and webinars, again, with no pressure to buy.

After a year of following him, he made an offer I couldn’t refuse, and I purchased his program, which is one of the best business investments I have made.

I’ve gone through the training multiple times, and 95% of it was stuff I already knew and was already doing. But what I enjoyed most about it was

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that he never, ever pushed anything on me. Certainly, he offered upsells – which are premium or high-priced offers you build into a program that help generate repeat revenue – that means that people pay you a monthly fee for the privilege of being part of your “inner circle.”

But I never felt pressured to join anything.

This person consistently comes across as someone who’s comfortable in his own skin. He helped me realize that this internal battle I was waging of feeling as if I had to do all the things was not a battle I needed to fight. Ever.

So I stopped fighting it and asked myself, “How do I like doing business? What services and products do I most love providing for my clients? What brings me the most joy, while simultaneously helping my clients the most?”

I discovered three important things about myself:

1. I love giving away high-value content.
2. I love trading hours for dollars.
3. If I don’t earn 6 figures, I’m fine with that.

I know; these realizations fly in the face of what most marketers advise. But for me, being myself is more important than trying to be somebody marketers say I need to be.

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So, when I re-branded Blogging Bistro, I stayed true to my core values. I developed several new trainings that I am giving away. I've seen other marketers who charge over \$1,000 for the caliber of content that I'm giving away.

I know they'd tell me, "Don't give away so much free stuff. You won't have any paid material left to sell to people."

While I give away a ton of valuable content in my free courses, I know that some people who go through the training will realize they have gaps in their knowledge and experience – gaps that a private coaching session with me will fill.

So I include low-key upsell offers in my free trainings – opportunities for you to work with me, one-on-one, to take what you're learning in my free training to the next level. To ask questions, to fill in the gaps.

My offers are truly low-key. During a training, I say things like, "If you're satisfied with what you're learning in this course, great. Enjoy the free resource! If you'd like more help in this area, here's how to set up a private coaching session with me."

Yeah, I'm breaking the "rules" here, too, trading hours for dollars. But there are few things I enjoy more than working one-on-one with my clients and helping them stride forward in their business.

Even when I do a [quick chat](#) with a prospective client – which is a free, 15-minute call where you can ask me about a challenge you're facing with your

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brand messaging, your website, blog, or email marketing – I feel SO energized and content.

It delights me when I show someone how to do something, they implement it, and it works!

Even though I could be earning a lot more money by automating everything and setting up a membership site, that's not where I'm at right now.

I may eventually decide to do that – that's another thing I know about myself. I'm a lifelong learner and I love to try new things and master the latest techniques. But right now, I delight in coaching people one-one-one and in small groups.

I delight in giving away content. I enjoy the challenge of creating a variety of products, services, and programs – some at extremely low price points, others, middle-of-the-road, and still others, at a premium price – so that my target audience can find something that fits their need and their budget.

At this stage of my career, with several decades of career experience under my belt, I'm still learning things about myself. To me, pleasing others no longer means "people pleasing," or trying to please everyone or running my business the way the top-earning marketers say I'm *supposed* to.

It means helping people, which is what I most love to do. It means embracing the spirit of generosity – giving from the heart without expecting anything in return.

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It's definitely a balancing act – of remaining true to myself, of not people-pleasing but honestly seeking to please and delight my ideal target reader.

What about you?

Does all the noise from platform-building experts and marketers and industry pros leave you feeling overwhelmed, frustrated, and stuck?

What “things you MUST DO” have you been hearing that resonate with you? Things that, when you hear someone describe it, you think, “Ah ha! That feels like a really good fit for my personality style and the way I roll? I'd love to give this a try.”

What things you MUST DO turn you off?

You hear them and think, “That sounds awful. I know I'd hate doing that.”

My suggestion is to put the “things that sound awful” aside, for now, anyway. What sounds awful and difficult and impossible today may seem very doable and exciting in a year or two.

A word of caution here:

Don't say NO to something just because you're scared to try it or you don't think you can master it. Say NO to it because you truly don't believe that doing this thing will benefit your business, as your business looks today.

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Choose one thing from the “that sounds interesting; I’d like to try that” list and actually try it. Give it a 3-month trial period – that’s long enough to learn a lot and put into practice what you’re learning.

If you need help prioritizing which platform-building technique to start with or to do next, [schedule a quick chat](#) with me.

In episode #10, I’m going to follow up with a fun mental exercise that will help you examine in more depth that platform-building technique you will work on next.

Be sure to subscribe to the show at BloggingBistro.com so you’ll get email notifications of each new episode.

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