

Becky M: Everything can change in an instant. Out of nowhere, a lightbulb turns on, and we suddenly shift our way of thinking. This is Lightbulb Moment with Becky Mollenkamp, a podcast that explores those moments, what they mean, how they happen, and how they forever reshape our businesses and our lives.

Katie Krimitsos: So, my big lightbulb moment, that I should preface by saying that I kind of keep on learning this lesson, but there was definitely a moment when it really hit me that business is a journey and not a destination. That success is a journey and not a destination. That there is no end point in this whole game.

Becky M: I'm so excited to have Katie Krimitsos of Biz Women Rock! on the show today. I've known Katie for quite a while and she's such a generous woman and a real beacon of light. And I don't say that lightly. She has a really helpful podcast and a growing community of businesswomen. She truly believes in helping women become their best selves through their businesses. I've seen it and I know she means every bit of what she says.

Becky M: Hi, Katie. Thank you so much for being here.

Katie Krimitsos: Hey. What's going on, girl?

Becky M: Before we get too deep into talking about this lightbulb moment, I'd actually like to rewind a bit and talk to me about what it was like for you before the realization. How did you define success and how did you visualize business?

Katie Krimitsos: That was in the early years of me being an entrepreneur, so I was probably about three years into being an entrepreneur. So, for two and half, three years, my mental state was always in stress. I was always hustling my butt off. I mean, I was like a professional hustler, man. I could work anyone under the table, and, but I did it, so that I could reach, quote unquote, success. And, what that looked like, to me back then, was being able to replace my income that I had made from my job. Which I so ignorantly thought I was going to have done within like three months after quitting my job, right?

But that didn't happen and so, what it looked like, my countenance, my entire being was just always in stress. Always like thinking that I needed to full on sprint all the time in order to get to that point, in order to have that level of financial success slash stability, right? I looked like I was doing a lot of really great work and I was, but I constantly had that in my head of, "I'm just trying to reach this point, once we get here, we'll be good, once we get here we'll be good."

Becky M: Boy, oh boy, I've heard that thing before, too, that I just need to get to this and then everything's going to be better.

Katie Krimitsos: Yeah.

Becky M: I think very often we learn that's not the case. Was it sort of black and white for you, then? Was it if I'm not hitting this thing that I define as

success, then I am a failure? Or I'm just not yet successful? How did it look for you?

Katie Krimitsos: It was not that I'm a failure, but it was very black and white. It was just like, I'm not there yet. The negativity would come in with, "Why aren't I there yet? It must be because I'm not working hard enough. It must be because I'm not working smart enough. It must be because we're not doing something right." So, the good qualities about this is that it got me to be very keen on problem solving. Because my answer to how do I reach success, was always like, "What can we fix? Something's not working so we've got to fix something." But, again, it was just constant sense of hurriedness.

But it was black and white, it was like, "OK, if we fix that, then we'll get there. Then we'll jump that revenue so that, you know, we can replace my job income. And then we'll be, and then how do we keep it after that?" It was very black and white, but it was, "If we do this, we'll have that. If we do this, we'll have that." And, if you've been in business longer than two days, you've realized the delineation between, "If I do this, that will happen." There's always a gazillion other factors that are in place in any one of the stories that you're involved in. So, I hadn't grasped that concept.

Becky M: Right. Life is not black and white. Success is not black and white. How you do business is not, you do this thing and then this will happen. It is a hard lesson to learn. When you're going through this, were you enjoying the day to day in front of your business, or were you too focused on trying to hit this mysterious marker of success?

Katie Krimitsos: That's a great question. I enjoyed the hustle at that time. I find a lot of satisfaction out of going after something full force. That is my nature, that I've been my whole life. Hard core athlete, hard core academic, whatever it was that I wanted in my life, I would go after it full force. So there is enjoyment in the going after it, but I don't think there was enjoyment in the process. I don't think I thoroughly enjoyed being an entrepreneur. Being a business owner. I don't think I thoroughly enjoyed that, because I just kept looking at what we didn't have and what was the gap. I kept looking at the gap, like, "Where are we now versus where we want to be?" And I kept looking at that gap and that's all I could see. So, no, I don't think I enjoyed it. I took pride in what I was learning along the ways. I was very ... Again, I enjoyed the toiling of it, the working on it. But, I did not enjoy the journey.

Becky M: So, let's talk then a little bit about this shift. When did this lightbulb moment happen for you and what brought it on?

Katie Krimitsos: There have been probably a dozen of these moments, but probably the most significant was when I attended a Tony Robbins event, the Unleash the Power Within, back in, oh my goodness, 2012? It was either 2011 or 2012. And so by that point, my husband and I had been running our business, our local business for about three years. And, I had quit my job, three years prior. I had been, you know, jumped full time into his business. We now both co-owned it. And I was that person, I was the operations person, so I was the one looking at the financials, the

organization. I was looking at that stuff all of the time. So, I was always seeing what could be improved and where that related to ...

I'm the CFO of our household, too, so I was always looking at that bank account. Not only the business bank account, but our personal bank account, and at that point, our business was not really taking care of us yet. It definitely wasn't the lifestyle business that we were really wanting. I went ... Two things happened simultaneously. Number one, and it was just a couple of months before the Tony Robbins event, I looked at my bank account, our personal bank account, and, at that point, I had drained ... I took out 401Ks, I racked up tons of credit card debt, I literally was doing anything and everything just to pay for our life while we were building this business. And I held on to cash like king, because that was the only ... My mortgage was the only thing I could pay just from cash. I could not put that on credit card, right?

So, I just held onto the cash as much as I could. And so there was this moment when I looked at my bank account and I had what equated to two months worth of mortgage payments left. And no promise of money coming in. That was terrifying and, again, that really got me further away from that moment when ... That made me feel hopeless. Like, oh my gosh, that moment is so far away. So, I went and got a job, built up reserves for the next five months and it was right around that point that I went to a Tony Robbins event.

At the Tony Robbins event, there were a couple things, many, many awesome things happened, but one of the biggest transformational things that happened for me was really making a significant shift from a space of lack of money to abundance of money. It's a lesson I'm constantly learning, but I feel that was the moment where it made a significant shift. All of a sudden, I felt like, "oh my gosh. There's plenty of money out there. We're totally going to be OK. And I just need to focus, I need to stop putting my energies on the gap, I need to stop putting my energies on what if and all the negativity, because that's what I attract if I keep focusing in on that. And let me instead put my energies on the abundance out there and what I'm grateful for and the finances that could come our way and the finances that do come our way already. And just keep focusing on that."

Within a weekend, that seriously shifted for me. So, the combination of having had that job for a little while that gave me a little bit of a reserve and allowed me to breathe a little bit, I quit after a couple of months, but then going back into our company with that attitude of, "OK, let's just focus on abundance." And that simultaneously is what shifted this moment of like, "Oh my gosh, it's, this is a journey, we're in it for the long haul. This is not about a moment of making it happen or bringing in enough money. It's about this whole experience." And all of that made a significant shift during that weekend.

Becky M:

You know, it's interesting. That story's great and we'll talk about a bunch of it, but one of the things that sort of stands out for me is, I could be wrong, but I don't think Tony Robbins events are inexpensive. And so you're sitting there saying, "Oh I was running out of money and freaking out", but you decided to go to that event. What motivated that?

Katie Krimitsos: I did not spend money on it. I got a free ticket from a friend.

Becky M: Ah, that'll do it.

Katie Krimitsos: I would not have in ... I definitely think differently now, but I would not have spent the money on it. And I just happened to have a friend who is like a Platinum Partner and eh had an extra ticket to the, a couple extra tickets to this even and he just sort of put it out there for me and I was like, "Yeah, OK. Why not?" And I would normally have said no, like I would normally have been like, "No I've got to work all weekend long." Because, remember, got to work harder. And I just decided to go and it was transformational.

Becky M: Yeah. And it sounds serendipitous if you believe in serendipity or perhaps it was meant to happen, right?

Katie Krimitsos: I really believe that when you're seeking, when you're actively seeking for answers, they'll come to you as long as you're open to listening to that stuff. I felt really hopeless at the time and really drowning, like, "What are we even doing here?" It is really ... I'll speak from my point of view, but anyone who owns their own business, I really feel could identify this. It is very easy to feel like your business can drown you and you have moments of like, "Why am I even doing this?' If you think about it black and white. Like, "I need to reach this end point in order for me to be successful." Because it's not about that.

But if you stay in that mentality, you absolutely will have many of those moments of feeling drowned and hopeless and like, "I'm never going to get there." Right? So that's why it takes that shift to recognizing it's not about the destination, it's not about the end point and, as a matter of fact, that's actually not really important. What's important is that, is your why. Why are you in here doing this? Why are you showing up in the first place? It actually forces you to take a lot of personal inventory. What's important to you? Why are you showing up all the time? You know?

Becky M: So, coming out of that event, sort of starting to feel that shift of focusing less on the outcome and more on being in the moment, being present, focusing on your why and your passion, what kind of questions were you asking yourself and what kind of discoveries did you come to about your why?

Katie Krimitsos: I was asking myself that question? Why am I doing this? Why am I working so hard? And once I got into having that transformation of really seeing abundance, the questions weren't necessarily why? It was more like, "OK, how can I show up in a way that is joyful? How can I have fun with this? And how can I make impact and how can I be smart about the money?" Let's not pretend money doesn't exist and there aren't very real financial needs that we have. But how can I be money conscious without being money driven? And that was big differentiator.

What I did was just went back into the business with my husband with a completely different attitude and now ... He had that attitude of abundance and so he was working it hardcore and here I was now, all of

a sudden, now the two of us as its leaders, really put both of our energies into like, "How can we continue to bring on members who are amazing and we're providing amazing content and experience for them? And let's just focus on that and everything else will take care of itself." And it did. Within the year, our business was absolutely paying for our lifestyle. Within a year of me doing that.

Becky M:

And, you know, I think a lot of people who are interested or maybe hear about the sort of money mindset work, idea of shifting from scarcity to abundance thinking, all of that. Sometimes it's easy to believe that someone like Tony Robbins, it's like, "Oh, yeah. It's easy for him to say, he's rich." But you are coming to this realization at a time of not feeling wealthy, quite the opposite. I think that's really interesting and says a lot because it's difficult to come to that place when you're in ... Or maybe it's not. Maybe in your experience it's actually in some ways it's easier to come to that place when you are, the chips are kind of down.

Katie Krimitsos:

Truthfully, I've been in similar moments at all sort of different levels of my life. I can recognize I'm very, I'm constantly confronting money blocks that I have, constantly really identifying how I can rid myself of those blocks and identify what limiting beliefs don't work for me anymore. I'm constantly working on that stuff. I've experienced these moments in all sorts of different financial states if you will. For me it had nothing to do, it has had nothing to do with whatever financial state that I'm ... Actually has nothing to do with the realities of financials at the time. It has everything to do with me feeling stuck and that there's no other option than to go inside, totally rattle myself up and approach the world differently. Because, there's no other answer and I really believe that the answers are all inside of us.

That's really what the Tony Robbins experience did for me. His process through that whole weekend experience is really one of discovering and unraveling these layers of yourself so you know the true of who you are and what's important to you and why you're here and what you're doing and how are you showing up and how you want that to be and ... to me, that's the only answer. It's not whether I was super poor, I mean those were definitely the peanut butter and jelly years back then. Or whether I've been in different spots where I definitely have plenty of money in the bank, but still discovering that I'm hitting some serious money blocks.

It's not even just for the money. It's for really that ultimate lightbulb which is that there's no end point, there's no ... It literally is about every single day and what's happening and why am I here on this road? Why am I choosing to be an entrepreneur. Why did I choose this life? Just being in alignment with that and recognizing that the moment I get caught ... This is very challenging for me as a big time ambitious goal setter, right? If I get too caught up in what the end goal is that I have created, that can work as the same thing.

I kind of have a love hate relationship with goal setting. It amplifies this end goal type of a game, black and white type of a game, but business is not black and white. All of this has everything to do with feeling stuck and going inside for those answers and seriously shifting things up.

Because, you have to. Because, I feel like I have no other choice. I cannot breathe in this state of fear, in this state of unknowing, in this state of just feeling stuck. My only answer is figuring, going inside and thinking, what do I need to transform in order to show up differently?

Becky M:

And I've been doing a lot of mindset work myself and the more I get into that and study and think about it, read what other people are saying. This idea of detachment from outcomes and being more fully present in the moment, that comes up time and time again. And, I know for me, some of what I'm now doing is some meditation work and a lot of other kind of reading to really help me to continue to explore that and get in touch with it. Do you do any sort of practices to help you with that idea of letting go of outcomes?

Katie Krimitsos:

Oh my gosh, a lot and I'm constantly changing the routine on this. It's sort of like whatever I need at the moment and how things are flowing. Absolutely do meditation. Insight Timer's one of my favorite apps right now that gives you like hundreds of thousands of free meditations that you can use. You can search on there according to what mood you're in or what kind of outcome you want. I absolutely do meditation. Sometimes it's for 15 minutes in the morning, sometimes it's for five minutes on a walk, whatever it is. I journal and I go through seasons of this. There are definitely seasons where I journal every single day at certain time in the morning and I'm constantly journaling into the future and visioning what I want. Saying positive affirmations.

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Then there are some times where I totally turn that off and it's not there for me. In those moments, I typically then instead of journaling will sort of like audio journal. I will just open up a voice memo on my phone and I'll just start talking to myself, if I need to get that venom out or if I need to get thoughts out. That's very helpful. And even getting into, I want to be in this mind space, right? And then exercising and being out in nature which typically happen at the same time for me. Those are huge. It is amazing to me how simple and how profound that experience of being around nature is for me. And those act really as meditations for me as well.

All of those things really help me keep in this space of always, number one things is it always brings me down to my knees for gratitude. Feeling so grateful for what I do have, and literally was just having this talk with myself, yes I talk to myself, I literally was having this talk to myself this morning on a walk. I was walking out by the water and I was verbally talking to myself, saying, "Stop focusing on what you don't have, because you're going to attract more of it. Start focusing on what you do have and let's just go down the list." And I literally was walking along the water, "I'm grateful for this and I'm grateful for this and I'm grateful for this." And then I see this bird over here and then I see that duck over there. It's swimming in the water and then I see the kids out there in their sailboats and I'm like, "OK, life is kind of good."

All of these things are really practices of getting out of the critical mind and into a space of just being and knowing that from being you can create ... And believing that.

Becky M: And with all the mindset work, everything you're talking about, you, I've heard you say, "Well, sometimes I do these things, sometimes I don't. I have to come back to it a lot." It's not black and white, just like business and everything else and it's not fix it once and it's all done. This is an ongoing thing. We talk about a lightbulb moment as if it's this one thing and then everything changes forever, but a lot of times it's, you're constantly having to come back to this and continue to work on it.

Katie Krimitsos: Oh my gosh. Constantly and I do give myself a lot of grace. I think this ... Probably the biggest lesson that I've learned in entrepreneurship is that, it is not a straight line and the more grace you give yourself to be able to sort of ride the wave ... By that I mean it's OK that you meander, it's OK that something works for you now and all of a sudden it doesn't. It's OK to go find what now will work for you. Six months ago I was hardcore on journaling at five AM every single day and that's how it has to be and I had a certain way I was journaling and that doesn't work for me right now. That just has to be it. Life changes, circumstances change, hormones change, life seasons change.

If I were ignorant enough to believe that there's something that I have stable in my life exactly every single day for the rest of my life, that would feel very limiting to me. Always changing and the lessons, that lightbulb moment, this exact lightbulb moment I literally feel like I'm learning again right now in the moment. But I have learned this more than a dozen times throughout the years of like, "Katie stop focusing on that end point and start focusing on the now and just be here. Enjoy this and do the next best thing that you know how to do and stop focusing on that point over there."

Because, I will always, this is just my nature, I will always focus on the negative gap between the two. And I will put negative association with that and that's not a healthy place for me to be. Instead of that, I bring myself back to the present, enjoy this journey, what are the next best things that you can do and let's just go on with that.

Becky M: And I don't think you're alone in that focusing on the negative or turning that gap into a negative. I think, for other people, just sharing this can be very helpful and I know, when I asked you about your lightbulb moment, you said this idea of it being a journey and not a destination feels a little cliché, but -

Katie Krimitsos: Totally.

Becky M: - you're right. It's so true and for so many people sometimes ... Even if someone else has had this realization or sort of thinks, yeah, I know, I think we all sometimes need the reminder. So just having this time to talk about it, I think can serve as a great reminder for people. I'm very thankful for you doing that.

Katie Krimitsos: Oh, well thank you. At the end of the day, the examples that come to my mind that are real practical are, if you're trying to leave your job and you're trying to build a business so you can leave your job, right? That's kind of a point in time moment. If you're trying to be like this

person over here because they look successful. So, I'm trying to go towards that and if I could only be successful like her. Or if I could only do what ... If you find yourself saying, "Once I do this, then it'll all be OK." That's kind of the red flag for you to really pair back and start saying like, "No. Let me, this is a whole different paradigm that I need to switch to."

Becky M: And, because by the way, and I'm sure you've had this experience as you have seen your business grow and reach new levels of success, you will sometimes reach the marker that at one point in your life you thought was the definition of success. And then you get there and think, "Huh, so this was it. I'm not sure that it feels the way I thought it would."

Katie Krimitsos: Totally. Totally. Or, by the time you reach it, your vision is onto a whole other end point, right? And so you actually don't appreciate where you are right now. That happens to me a lot where I'm like, "I vision big, I've got big goals." My goals are constantly evolving and so, for example, I could say, "OK. January one of 2018, I can reflect back on the year I had before. What I accomplished a year before was like, 'Oh my god, that would be like the end all be all, that'd be amazing.' A year later, I'm looking at it thinking about the next goal that I want and not truly appreciating that I flipping hit that darn goal. That was amazing."

It robs us of the opportunity to really marinate in this experience that we're having and all the awesomeness that happens. That is a personal development thing that I am constantly working on.

Becky M: That's so true. There's some quote which I will butcher now that says something about worrying about tomorrow as robbing yourself of today, or something. And it's just so true. So, thank you so much for this amazing reminder of that and tell people where they can learn more about you and Biz Women Rock!

Katie Krimitsos: Well, thank you, Becky. Yes, you can learn more about Biz Women Rock! Both the community and the podcast at BizWomenRock.com and should you want to join my free private Facebook group, that's at BizWomenRock.com/group. Thank you so much, Becky.

Becky M: Of course, I think we could probably talk about this for another hour and a half, but we will save everyone from that and end things here. So thank you very much for your time. I really appreciate it.

Katie Krimitsos: Thank you.