

## You and Your Many Ways of Being in Relationship

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**Jennifer Navarrete:** Welcome to the show that shares insights into how you can **Build Your Business Once** with hosts Sherry Lowry, and Jennifer Navarrete.

Thank you for joining us today, my name is Jennifer Navarrete, and I am joined by Sherry Lowry and her 20-plus years of experience in how you can **Build Your Business Once**.

On Today's show, we are talking about **You and Your Many Ways of Being in Relationship In Your Business**. I thought, ok, I dig it, I am ready to dive in, let's see what this is all about.

**SL:** I had no idea what I was opening up when I wrote the title. Then I began to seriously think about over the more than two decades I have been in this particular business, and how many ways I am still am in relationship with Clients and with colleagues and collaborators. Jennifer, I know your business, though it is in media, a different format so to speak, is also a tandem business in many ways. We both have many overlapping ways of being in business, doing business, and in our relationships in our businesses.

I made a list of all the different ways I knew, for sure, I was in relationship, and didn't know how many of those would strike cord and resonance with you. So I thought the best way was to ask you.

**JN:** Like I said, I have read it, and thought ok, so being in relationship with my Clients, Industry Professionals and Colleagues, I still say you did strike a cord with me. Because, some folks who are my colleagues started out as being in community with me. If you recall, I started all this because of podcasting and I wanted to be with fellow podcasters to talk shop, essentially. Shop being this new hobby, new tacky thing, then suddenly it transitioned to where we were colleagues because we started to work in this space. Then fast forward a dozen years later, we are now Industry Professionals.

Because, a hobby turned into an industry, and relationships with my Clients something additional as we build that contract or agreement and is always in collaboration, in partnership, we are doing this together. We touch base, we ensure we are on-track, and not on exploration down a rabbit hole that is doesn't need to be chased, or we need to get back on-track.

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This title is something I have never put into words, but that is exactly what it is.

**SL:** Yes, it is for me, as well. I realized yesterday as I was driving through Austin with most of it closed for the holiday, I had a big smile on my face as I went by everyone of my bank branches and realized over the years, how many people at several I've engaged with since I have lived in so many parts of Austin since 2002. I realized I have banking relationships with one bank but in multiple places depending upon who is in charge with that particular bank branch. I thought it was funny on a holiday I was thinking about good bank relationships.

They are part of my business model. They have relationship to the state of business I am in, and in some ways they have relationship to the business structure I am in. It involves how to do my billing, how simple that is since I never have any banking issues. They, this bank I've had for decades, are responsible for the good parts of that.

Let's start out talking about how we are in relationship to Clients. In my case, almost all of my Clients tend to be either founders, owners, or high potentials in their firm if they are employed or full-time contractors. So a lot of the thinking we do together, and decisions they make as the result of us being together, impact on other people.

You are in a little different Client relationship because you have a multiplicity of types of Clients that you work with. Jennifer can you talk a little about how that may differ in terms of the types of relationships you have with your clients?

**JN:** Absolutely, if I think back to the early days of my business, it was a lot of one on one or one to small, it is still that but the growing trend is more on the corporate side, or Agency side. I shared in an earlier episode the concept of working with larger entities used to frustrate me because they moved like cruise ships instead of speed boats, which is more the way my mind operates. And, in the early days when I wanted the end results quickly and to work with Clients who were in the speed boat with me, that worked really well. As my business matured, things have changed. I can appreciate having a variety of Clients and you talked about this in another episode about having Clients at differing business stages.

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I enjoy the speed boat Clients, but I have learned to appreciate the cruise ship clients. Having that mix really has become the big piece that is satisfying to my business.

**SL:** That is right. Next session, Show #25, we are going to get a little more into the business model and stage of business structure. At some point along the way, including during our next show, I want to begin to bring in the 1-Page Business Plan and structure process and about pulling that out, or keeping it on your desk, then keeping on pulling it out of the drawer on a regular basis, and re-vamp from where you are. So, that is going to come as we are talking more about the changing relationship we have with our own business over time. That can also be into the relationship we have at this point with our industry.

I helped start my particular industry, but I did not realize I was doing that. I was early on the scene for the whole concept of Business Coaching. Where I got that idea in the very beginning, almost three decades ago, was when professional shoppers came on-board. I lived in Houston at the time, and Neiman Marcus stores introduced the concept of professional shoppers.

I thought, "Wow, I don't know of a thing like that." I wonder if I could be hired as a Professional Business Person who is a person you could go to talk about business, not just the industry but how do you put this thing together someone may want to start?

At the time I had a 2,000-client organization I was the Executive Director of, so I wasn't going to do it immediately, but already I had my eye on the possibility.

You started out in your industry as a pioneer in bringing podcasting and much more in more fully into your area in San Antonio. You can remember well when more outreach from there the whole concept started when blogging began to be on the forefront, and podcasting already was established, but not very much there or here in Austin. You helped it get established in your city. Can you speak to how your industry changed and your personal relationship? What kind of benefit did that bring to you as your industry started to change?

**JN:** In the early days, like anything else, the tacky, geeky folks were playing with something new, of course we thought it was the best thing since sliced bread, but

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the average business person had no idea what we are talking about. I would go to business mixers in San Antonio, one of the topics people asked what are you working on, or what is new in your business? I would talk about podcasting, and would ask folks if they were listening to podcasts, or were podcasting themselves.

The majority of the time, I got a blank look where folks had no idea what I was talking about. I was speaking Klingon is the way I make that comparison, speaking a fictional, foreign language nobody understood. Then the time asked and folks were coming to me, "You know, you have been talking about podcasting, this social media approach for a while now. We are wondering, can you come talk to our Breakfast Group, or our Luncheon, can you come talk to my Company? Come give a class?"

It shifted over time, then of course, it got into a little bit of a lull. Now everybody is kind of doing it, and most recently I have seen a resurgence of interest as far as education goes, and also as far as business goes. Now there are a lot of bigger businesses that are delving into podcasting. It is growing quite a bit.

The last couple of years is where the Agency side of my business began. Someone who has known me for many years as a podcaster was working for an Agency and said, "One of our Clients is interested in launching a podcast. When I thought of that, the first person I thought of was you."

Then they began sitting in meetings with us, and seeing if there was potential working opportunity, and I became someone who naturally works with Agencies.

I have a production team and my company works with Advertising Agencies and Digital Agencies on top of that, and works directly with their Clients and does post production to ensure everything gets done properly.

That has been gratifying shift for me that I knew was the best thing since sliced bread, and the right audience. Now I am succeeding in the main stream and in being able to financially benefit from that. Also to also treat these Clients the right way.

There is going to be a snake oil salesman in any scenario, I don't care what it is, there will be a snake oil salesman in your industry. Alternatively, I steer folks in

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how to do the right things properly, and just the way it should be done feels really great, and hopefully keeps potential snake oil salesmen from coming in there and taking advantage of folks who don't know, don't understand.

There is a ripe opportunity for that, because we have such a robust community that knows how to do it right. Because we have such a robust community that knows how to do it right because we developed the community that way.

I have not personally experienced it, but I have heard stories which is why I am such an advocate for community, education, for the Social Media Club, and Social Media Chapters in San Antonio. I have those because it is important for a person to know there is a community that cares, and we can go to one another with those pain points in our industry. To ensure what gets added to the, hopefully, proper way things should be done. Not allowing opportunity for snake oil salesmen to come in and kind of wreck shop.

**SL:** I think the key word was **educate**. As early adopters, we often have been in the position to educate our industry, and to some extent, definitely our community. That makes a lot of difference and gives them almost a check-list if they are coming to us or another, we help them understand what they need to know and what they need to ask in advance.

Part of this and one of the relationships I was going to talk about today that you and I have in common is that of **pushing edges**. We also were **early adopters**, and are going to experiment and explore in new territories. Yours were more in media, mine were in business concept; we both experiment with theory, testing water, and in my case, mine have been more with people and the 11 core competencies that I come from in terms of my International Coach Federation membership.

All these relate in building relationships, trust, helping stretch boundaries with people.

We have both gone at this as creative endeavors, inventing and re-inventing ourselves. Part of this whole month of work we are doing is about building your business base once, meaning operational principles and concepts on which we base our value and services, also a bit of re-invention with we both re-invented

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our business. As we expanded to new territory, moved away from old territory through all of that, a lot of the same people have come with us.

That might bring us to a discussion about **tribe** and the importance of our important go-to people. We probably both have and sometimes serve as a “go-to person” for our business field, for the actual happening of business access exchanges, business transactions, business of the business also. I’m speaking about who we stay on-board with. who we drop back to, with when we have had a disappointment, who do we share excitement and successes with?

For me it is the kind of tribe that is national, international, as well as local. For me it started first because I wanted and I didn’t yet have the local tribe, community, I thought I would find it in Houston, but did not, and I did find it nationally.

You and I had not yet met, I don’t know how that started with you, but I know you are now part of a national and international scene.

**JN:** We talk about community, and growth, and being part of it. Joining something like Social Media Club and Social Media Breakfast, I was actually approached by someone running the group in Austin, saying to me, “You really need to create a chapter for San Antonio. At the time I was running events, running my group, she was very persistent that I needed to do it.

Finally I thought, ok, and I did, then I realized why it was important even though I was already very active in the community. There needed to be larger events in SA, it made everyone realize, “Oh! It isn’t just happening here, it is happening all over the world! You, by being part of this, can see what is happening globally in this space.”

It was liberating, the networking Social Media Breakfast that launched maybe six months later, and I had a different co-organizer for that group, and that was interesting. We were growing quickly for many years as folks were attending our meetings, then as organizers getting busy in the space, running our businesses in the multimedia industry, but suddenly, we didn’t have time for meetings. It cut into then faded out for over a year. A year and a half, almost two years.

Recently one of our former members for the last six or seven months has been starting up meetings again. There is so much information available on-line now,

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than there was then. There is so much going on now than there was then, why do we need to hold a meeting again?

They were just so insistent, I was getting calls, in-box messages, getting email, people were just like I wish you would bring that back.

I thought ok, and in August, I went ahead and said, “Ok. Let/s see what will happen.” I did the first meeting and I was surprised at the response.

Folks, who have attended meetings before, were thrilled to have the platform back. Then we had new folks that were not around the City or the State before, they were thrilled that there was such a thing in the system they could trust that talked about the nuts and bolts of working in the industry. Working on projects, getting that learning, sharing, growing that was not competitive, but was cooperative, was way fun and useful again.

**SL:** That is the key.

I think for me we are talking about a tribe, and part of my tribe was interested in coming to San Antonio originally for International Coach Federation (ICF) involvement. But, going right along in tandem with that was social media. I was involved with the Austin Social Media Club local and National Board, as you were.

We were delighted when you would come over here, and talk periodically go to San Antonio. We were involved in community on both ends of that, in the Coaching Business interested in that whole technology and way of communicating. Our business is communication and it fit with business model. It made a perfect time of change for all of us.

Also Jennifer, when the social media expansion began, podcasting and this whole thing went across industries and began bringing industries of difference down to common interest and shared benefits. We would have people from all kind of industries that had never met, or never had shown up just for one branch of the field. So, I thought it strengthened this model that each of us was building off. Sherry, I really have enjoyed talking with you about this industry.

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**SL:** We are having a revival in Austin as well, our whole International Coach Federation has very robust Chapter involvement. You, in turn see new phases in business industry in San Antonio, too. Do you have any last comments you wish to discuss today? Then we can talk about what we will do for the next show.

**JN:** Right now, I think the Community piece was big, and it wasn't just Austin, but it was Dallas, and all the spaces between. Past of that was because we were all were engaging. I know you were traveling here, I was traveling there, and to Dallas, and Houston we wanted to develop the Community and Tribe. There was not time, I feel that being exposed to all those Community leaders and still do today because of those. Texas is big, if you are not from Texas, you don't understand we are jumping in the car and making an effort, doing what we want to.

**SL:** That is true, I was fortunate enough in the very beginning, there was a lot of stuff based in Houston, it was mostly happening outside of Houston. It went beyond Texas, went nationally, and quickly into global countries. So, rather than cultivate all over Texas, some of us was cultivating all over North America, then England, and Germany, pretty much we realized we were the nerds here and Austin, people who spoke English as a second language, which was good quality English. That has been great for me and I have maintained international relationships, and I know you have as well.

Next time, I want to talk a bit more about what kind of evolving business models were created almost with serendipity, but at the same time with purpose in different ways. Maybe also address what stage I find my business entering, and you find your business entering, and how that (or this) changed our business structure a little bit. Again we are going back to the **Build Your Business Once** concept. How do we keep evolving our businesses, as trends come and go and relationships deepen and expand, and as new technologies embrace us, and also want to touch a bit on foundation as a springboard for exploration plus also as a safety net. Who has our back, so to speak?

Thanks for the time today.

**JN:** Fantastic, **Relationships Based In Business Foundation** is the topic for tomorrow, and we will see you tomorrow.



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