

E24 - How to reframe the struggle of using social media in your business.

Michelle Smit: Welcome to the Empowered Edupreneurs Podcast. My name is Michelle Smit, and I am an ex-teacher turned online business coach for Edupreneurs, the owner of Digiteach and a six-figure entrepreneur. I am in love with empowering educators just like you to create freedom filled online businesses and lives they love.

If you are looking to up-level your skills, your finances, your mindset, and change the trajectory of your life as an educator and business, then you are in the right place. Think of this podcast as your weekly dose of business and mindset development to help unlock the infinite potential within. To play bigger with your life and go after your dreams.

We are going to have so much fun together. So, thank you so much for pushing play today. Now let's dive in.

Welcome, welcome, welcome. Today I am super excited because I have a very special guest on my show, a fellow business buddy of mine, the one and only Ola. I'm so stoked to have you. Yay!

Ola Kowalska: Thank you so much for inviting me.

Michelle Smit: It's a pleasure. It's always so good to chat to you. We actually recently met for the first time in Amsterdam, which was so cool.

We've been business buddies for, I don't know how long has it been now? Like a year? Yes. Or some. Yeah. I feel like, I feel like we met on Instagram last year sometime, like at the beginning of the year.

Ola Kowalska: Yeah. I feel like that and it's been, yeah, we clicked, we clicked very, very, very soon at the beginning of the journey.

I don't know what made me, I, I think I was very, like, I was looking for, People doing similar things to mine. And I didn't have like a clear intention. I didn't know who was going to become a client, who was going to become a friend, who was going to become competition basically. But then I really liked how organically we, we always had like things in common.

I felt we were very different personalities, but. Yes. Yeah, it's, its a really interesting mix, so I'm really excited for this chat as well.

Michelle Smit: Yeah, it's going to be good. I'm excited too. I thought today we would have a bit of fun and also as always, we move between like funny and deep. I think that's why I like our vibes because we do move between funny and deep conversation and it's, that's my favourite kind of like dynamic.

Yeah. So today we are going to be talking about the trials and tribulations plus the lessons of running an online business. I didn't feel like another how to episode. I really just wanted to, authentically for us to share some stories in our business. Some like rights of passage, some good, bad, ugly with the hopes of showing you. You know, the authentic realness of the journey and that, you know, it's not that perfect curated Instagram feed that makes everyone feel like trash.

So yeah, I just think with social media and stuff it's not fully transparent, so I just thought let's have a cool conversation about the good stuff, the bad stuff, the ugly, the ups and downs. Yeah. And yeah, that journey, because as you know, It's, it's like this, right? It's literally a rollercoaster.

Ola Kowalska: It's funny that so many people think that, and I think I was also trapped thinking that it just has to be progress in this. And it even says on so many like posts on Instagram, progress is never linear. But I don't think people actually realize what the opposite means. Well, I can clearly see from my journey and the journey of people I work with, it is literally ups and downs of all sorts in order to you, you are still moving forward, but there's so many different things that happen and contribute to that.

And they're all valid. I feel like without them, we wouldn't be as appreciative maybe of, of what we achieve.

Michelle Smit: Yeah. And I think. There's just things that we need to experience as business owners to become business owners in a way. Oh, definitely. Definitely. You know. And so especially going from like a teacher, because you see we both in the similar niche, especially going from like a teacher to a business owner, there's like a very, it's not a linear journey. It's like a very cyclical, rollercoaster, messy.

Ola Kowalska: kind of thing.

Michelle Smit: There's things you need to go through, like, like that you have to sort of like things that just need to happen. Absolutely. For you to develop into being like a business owner, someone who can run a business. Shifting from that like employee mindset to that entrepreneurial mindset.

There's just things that we need to, and those things. I just feel like a lot of the toughest times in our business. Like those low points are often the times where we, we grow the most, where we, we sort of learn the lesson or learn whatever thing we need to learn in that thing to make us better.

Absolutely. And allow us to grow our business. Right. So it's kind of weird, but the lows are, Meant to be there and they're very normal and we all go through them and like we don't have it all figured out. I think people look at, like, we would look at another coach or whatever and think. You know. Oh, they have it figured out.

It all looks good on the outside world. It all looks perfect, but reality, everyone's just trying to figure it out, right?

Ola Kowalska: Absolutely. At every bloody stage, actually. At every stage. It's not that, just the people who like kind of got there. There is no such thing as getting there.

Michelle Smit: Yeah. What does that mean?

Ola Kowalska: There's no such thing like recently.

Michelle Smit: And success as well is so subjective. Like what does that even mean as well?

Ola Kowalska: I've recently had this reflection, and just going back before I forget because I have a very scattered mind. When you said the journey from becoming a teacher to a business owner is quite bumpy, messy.

I recently realized that I teach my audience a lot. That in order to be successful, they actually have to still start thinking like business owners. But then I went deeper and I started thinking I cannot convince somebody to start thinking like a business owner. Something needs to happen to them so that they start thinking like this. So for most of my clients, it's usually a really shitty situation. Mm-hmm. With their client. It's usually some breaking point of like, no, I can't live like this. One example, I have this fantastic client. I hope she doesn't mind. I'm not mentioning names or anything, but I think it's quite inspirational.

She is a young mom, she's got a young child. I think her child is about three. And she does have and pay for childcare, but she very often gets calls saying that she needs to come and pick her child up because they're sick, because it's the season of the flu and whatever. And she was so bloody stressed about this for the last, I don't know, three or four years.

And then she realised, it's like if she doesn't do anything about it, nothing will ever change. Like there is no change without change, right? Mm-hmm. But like, it was her, she had to reach that point. Mm-hmm. Of feeling embarrassed when it was the, like, the next time telling a client. Sorry, I have to cancel a lesson because you know, my child is sick.

That she had to start thinking of a completely new different system, right? Yes. And I'm like yes, that's how it works. I could have told you, you have to change something before you burnt out, before you reach that point. Nah, she wouldn't have got it. Yeah. But now it's clear. And that's just one example.

Michelle Smit: I think that's crazy. And I think it's so true in in general life. We often have to have something really, and this is just weird, but we need ourselves to hit rock bottom or hit a really low point in order to get us into momentum to change, right? It's like, for example, like you could be living one way and eating.

Like being completely unhealthy, smoking, drinking, doing nothing for your health, and then one day and you give like you just don't care. And then one day maybe you get like a diagnosis that's really hectic, like a disease of some sort. And then from that moment onwards, you've had this awakening of I need to change.

Ola Kowalska: Exactly.

Michelle Smit: You often need to have this thing happen, this low point in order to change or in order to learn the lesson, you need to learn in order.

Ola Kowalska: Yeah.

Michelle Smit: That's life, right? I think we're on this planet literally just to learn lessons. Into becoming the version of us that we were meant to become.

Like that's basically what this life is and in business is the same thing.

Ola Kowalska: And so many people don't get that. Have you noticed that? So many people don't. Yeah. So many people and it's the victim mentality, the kind of like. Woe is me. It's, it's not judgment on my side not at all because I've seen too much. I've experienced too much of my own like shit in life.

But also seeing people who always only complain and they have like even, that's another example. It's very practical and perhaps teachers would kind of resonate with this. When I go to Facebook groups, teachers, there are like tons of teachers complaining that they're not paid enough that an online platform.

Michelle Smit: I see that all the time.

Ola Kowalska: Right? Then people complaining that they have unreliable clients even if they have private students, whatever. But then the only thing they can, they can think of is like a, as if they were thinking that a little tip that somebody gives them is going to be enough to change their situation. And that's, I think that's a part of a bigger conversation of, of the fact that people very often look for very quick solutions for things that actually need proper addressing. But like they don't learn their lessons. They don't, they think it's that tip that's going to solve their whole life and their business, but it doesn't.

Michelle Smit: Or the quick thing that's going to solve the problem. And I think, think we realize that that's not how it goes.

Ola Kowalska: Then don't charge \$20, charge 50 and now it's going to solve your problems.

No, it's not. You have to change.

Michelle Smit: And more money doesn't solve your problems as well. You just have different problems. That's the other thing.

Ola Kowalska: Exactly.

Michelle Smit: You know, so there's not like this, I think you start your business maybe thinking there's the point where you're going to reach success and you're going to have it all figured out.

Is that what happens? Like, I feel like that doesn't happen. You just, you just, you never fully figure it out. There's never, you never finally get there. Whatever getting there is. Because that's, there's, you're always going to be climbing the ladder of whatever that ladder is for you. You're always pushing the goalpost.

Ola Kowalska: Because you're always find a new step for yourself, right? That's exactly my reality. I thought I would stop at a certain like threshold of monthly revenue. Yes. I genuinely did. And then, nah, it's not that I'm greedy, it's not that I want the money, it's just there is so much more to discover. There is so much more.

Michelle Smit: It's part of the expansion though. I feel like as humans and especially as people who have that entrepreneurial flair, it is like innate in our, in our being to want to expand and push ourselves and that includes breaking our income goals that month, having a bigger launch, getting whatever. It includes, all of those things, like we want to keep pushing ourselves or we want to try something new.

We want to build a new skill. We're forever on this journey of like rowing it doesn't end and it, there's no ends.

Ola Kowalska: Growth is addictive.

Michelle Smit: Completely addictive. When you start, you almost can't stop. But I, I think one thing that I've learned in this journey is that we, there's just things that we need to go through as like, we just have to go through the stuff.

Like people are so fearful about like, oh, what if I launch and I don't have. Like a, a lot of sales or what if no one buys? I feel like that's a lesson that you just kind of have to go through, if that's what needs to happen.

Ola Kowalska: I say to people, I need you to have this launched so that nobody buys, so that you know what it feels like so that you don't carry this energy with you anymore.

Michelle Smit: Yes. That's amazing. I love that.

Ola Kowalska: It's, it's like, it's the right of passage. It's as if the first launch was supposed, like, that's not to say that your first launch is not allowed to be a success. It can be, but it's a little bit of a combination of, it's an experiment. You don't really know if your audience are going to love it enough, right? Mm-hmm. It's, it's always a bit of like, of the unknown, right? But like there is so much expectation. I feel like people really get attached to their launches.

Michelle Smit: Yes. So much pressure. So much pressure. That first one is really, I'm always like, it's literally just a learning experience.

Like don't even look at it at anything else except that. And don't make anything mean anything about who you are as a person. There's also something like a lesson in your business journey where you have to learn to not connect your results of your business to your self-worth and your worthiness and like.

Ola Kowalska: Oh my God.

Michelle Smit: That is something that has come up so much for me.

And I think everyone experiences that where you literally launch and then you have maybe not a great launch and then you make it mean something bad about you as a person.

Ola Kowalska: Do you know why that is?

Michelle Smit: It's not good.

Ola Kowalska: Do you know why that is? I figured that out recently and it's not my idea. It's a borrowed idea, but honestly this is because of school. Yes. This is because teachers made us think that grades mean something about us. Yes. Grades mean that we are either a good boy, a good girl, mainly a good girl, right? Mm-hmm. Diligent person, a good student or something. There was always this, this, this like assessment of the person as a whole.

Michelle Smit: Yes.

Ola Kowalska: With their grades and I'm like. Mm-hmm. we cannot detach from it. So, there is no wonder.

Michelle Smit: Conditioned.

Ola Kowalska: Anybody would feel like. Yeah. Yeah.

Michelle Smit: We are so conditioned from that.

Ola Kowalska: Absolutely.

Michelle Smit: When I think about school, you don't have that like exploration thing of like, I'll just try it and see it and I feel like there's not as much exploration and like

Ola Kowalska: It's either black or white. It's either,

Michelle Smit: It's black or white. You good or you're bad. Or you're bad or, yeah. I don't know. It's just. Or you fail. I feel like that's such a good point. I didn't think of it like that.

Ola Kowalska: I also, and another thing about taking it personally, I think it's, it recently came up with, in a, in a call with my clients, we started thinking about business as a marriage and like if you imagine your relationship with your business as a marriage. Mm-hmm. Imagine what it, what you would want it to be. Mm-hmm. You would want it to be a lovely, healthy, nurturing, warm, nurturing relationship. Mm-hmm. But you also need bloody boundaries. You need time away. You need the fact that your marriage is failing, for example, in some area doesn't mean anything about you.

Yes. The fact that. Your partner, so your business, so the launch in your business failed, doesn't mean anything about you. Yes. Because you can still be curious about how you can fix this. Yes. You can go to a therapist, you can hire a new mentor. You can like, honestly, and this, I think I heard this concept before, but like I genuinely feel that I'm very attached to my business.

Like I love it. This business saved me in a way. But I also, I make it thrive. So, like we are perfect match. Mm-hmm. But at the same time, we, we just tend to take it as like, we, we cannot let go. We are a bit of control freaks because we're so close to it.

Michelle Smit: Yes I agree.

Ola Kowalska: And especially if you don't have a team and you're, you're like solo entrepreneur, which I think a lot of people, a lot of people are, are, even if you have a small team, I feel like you are still that person who is the most attached. But yeah.

Michelle Smit: Boundaries. That is the most amazing analogy. I love it. I actually do that analogy with money as well. Like if money was your partner, what relationship would you like to cultivate with that? Like a trusting one or a very like stressful. I can't trust you.

I don't think you're enough. Kind of one, like I always think about money like that. I haven't thought about my business like that. Mm-hmm. I think that is such a good. Yeah, a good analogy. I also think it's funny that we stop businesses with the intention of creating freedom and then we put a hundred thousand cages on us ourselves and make our lives hell.

Ola Kowalska: Absolutely. Kind cages, expectation cages. It also made me think when you said about money, by the way. That's another, like, that's the extension of the analogy. But look at that. What if everybody had their relationships, their romantic relationships or marriages and they were trying to replicate something that they saw on tv, for example.

So, it would be so like, oh, you have to do certain things for it to work. You always have to go on dates. No, maybe you don't. Maybe you're supposed to do things that actually feel fun. Yes. And then I thought that money is basically your babies. It's your babies, isn't it? Yes. It's you and your business working together.

Michelle Smit: Yes. That's your. Money is the baby.

Ola Kowalska: It's still philosophical. I love that so much. But you should.

You should love your babies, but you shouldn't control your babies either. So

Michelle Smit: And you should like have faith in your babies and have faith. Like, yeah, everything's going to work out and not living in like fear and scarcity all the time, which I think that's what most people live in with, with money.

And I think it's just a way of perspective. And I think as business owners, One of the biggest things we need to work on is the

money stuff, right? Because you don't have a business if you're not, if you're not selling something.

Ola Kowalska: Somebody just tried to say to me on Instagram that they are afraid that if they're not selling, they don't have a successful business.

And while I had all the compassion to why they might be feeling so like negative, so frustrated, there was frustration that I felt was coming out of this statement. I said, if you're not selling, you don't have a business. That's it.

Michelle Smit: A hundred percent. Like it, it doesn't exist and I think it's not an option. I feel like that's, it's not an option.

Like selling is the thing that you need to do. It's the one thing, I mean obviously there's lots of things like one needs to do, but selling is like in the core thing. Yeah. At the end of the day We all need to go on a, a journey of that as well as business owners where you're going to have situations where people say no to you.

Mm-hmm. Like on one-on-one calls or whatever. When you pitch your offer, people are going to say no. That first time is going to feel crap. You're going to feel like a little bit of a, like a, in your gut or in your heart, like a little, you know, it's not going to feel good. It's the same with like your first refund.

That's not going to feel good. But if you're going to have a business, you're going to have refunds.

Ola Kowalska: Yeah. also think about, have you never asked for a refund and not thought badly really about the company? Like of course you do. But maybe you just, it wasn't the right product.

Michelle Smit: It wasn't, wasn't right time, right time, right product. It's just that, and you need to go through those first. You have to have that launch that doesn't really work so well. So you learn the thing that you need to learn in order to make that next launch

better. You have to have like a refund or you know, your first troll, oh my gosh.

Ola Kowalska: Oh, last week for me, oh my gosh. Not the first, but like, oh my gosh.

Michelle Smit: O gosh. I mean it's horrible. And like the more visible and bigger you get. The more likely you're going to get that as well.

Ola Kowalska: To be honest, so, last week somebody commented under my ad and they said something horrible about the fact that I should work on my English and like some bullshit.

I obviously didn't take it too personally, but it stings because it was also from a person from my country. This person wasn't anonymous, the minute I saw it, the second I saw it, it was like, okay, this is shit. But at the same time, this is an opportunity because I knew from the past experience that I was going to use it, and it was obvious to me that I was going to use it and that I was like, thank you very much troll.

I've got material for two weeks for my social media, for my emails. Literally, I did the whole Instagram stories that had the most views ever, literally.

Michelle Smit: Oh, wow.

Ola Kowalska: Like, honestly. And the conversations that I had from that people commenting, oh my God, I'm so sorry this happened, but also thank you so much for sharing.

Like I'm so scared of visibility because of that, and I'm like, yeah, I know you are. That's why I'm telling you this is normal. Also, I sent an email this morning actually about it and people are like, oh my God, I'm so glad you didn't take it personally da da da. It creates conversation. It breaks the taboo.

It's like, and I understand that not everybody would feel at capacity to do it. Mm-hmm. Because you need to expose yourself

a little bit. And one of the first reactions when I shared that comment by that mean person, you need to work on your English because there is a mistake in your ad.

That that was the actual text. And people said, I went to look for that ad to look for the mistake. And I'm like, if that's your reaction to it, then I'm like, I didn't feel great about it because I said to people. I didn't go to look for that mistake because I don't give a shit.

Michelle Smit: You give your power away I think when you do that.

Ola Kowalska: Exactly. And I didn't want to give my power away, but then people were like, I couldn't actually find a mistake. At least that, you know.

Michelle Smit: Doesn't even matter if there was a mistake. Like honestly that's the moral of the story.

Ola Kowalska: Exactly. But it's just, I just wanted to show to people that the bolder they get, the more visible they get, the more likely that it'll attract people who are still insecure. Mm-hmm. And who have their own shit, who are probably afraid to do the same thing.

Michelle Smit: But I think that is amazing how you responded, and I think that's such a lesson in itself that you have gotten to a point where you've taken something that was a negative thing. Like a shitty thing to happen. But you've turned it into something that's really positive and that's actually been so valuable to your business in the sense that you've created all this content that's been in such service of all these people who are terrified of visibility and so it's actually served you.

And at the end of the day, I also feel like a lot of these trolls and these experiences with people, it's just their own projections onto you. It's got nothing to do with you. It's all their stuff.

Ola Kowalska: It is. But it's hard to tell yourself that in the moment.

Michelle Smit: It is hard. It is hard. I mean, you're allowed to feel crap. I think if someone's going to be mean to you. Like you're allowed to feel like crap because that's an ugly feeling. But how you react to that situation is the goal.

Ola Kowalska: Is in your control. Isn't it.

Michelle Smit: And that's what you did. You reacted so well. You turned it around, and so now it's been in service of you. And so that's the lesson. That's the thing. It's like in that moment you need to go through that.

Ola Kowalska: This is, so that's it. There is a bigger picture here. Do you know about negativity bias?

Michelle Smit: I have heard of it. Yes.

Ola Kowalska: So basically it's, it's a simple thing. Our brains are coded or wired to see, the negativity and danger because that's how they keep us safe, right? Yes.

It's not even our brains. It's the whole nervous system, right? Mm-hmm. Negativity bias. They need to see because there is nothing interesting and nothing that they can do with positivity, right?

Michelle Smit: Okay. Yeah.

Ola Kowalska: So, that's why the news on TV are all about negative stuff. Because there is nothing that you can do with positive information, right? Mm-hmm. You can just accept it, which you know, I completely disagree with. We should all be looking after our wellbeing, but doesn't matter. So I realized recently that in my business.

This developed positivity bias. So every shitty situation I turn it into, I'm addicted to turning it into a positive. That's, I think it's a personality trait, but also it's something that can definitely be learned. Yes. So like yes, literally you see a shitty situation, a shitty comment, something that is really, really, Could potentially hurt you.

And again, you can feel the bad feelings. Absolutely. But then turn it into something that not only has a positive effect on you, but also on the people around you. Like honestly, the power of that.

Michelle Smit: That's magic.

Ola Kowalska: Is magic. Exactly. It is magic.

Michelle Smit: If you could do that, like. If you can exercise that muscle of turning something negative into positive, and instead of seeing problems and see more solutions, just that. Like negative to positive and instead of problems seeing solutions or opportunities, that is massive.

As a business owner, that's going to be so in service of your entire, everything that you do is going to. It's like instead of telling this negative stories, we just decide to tell a more positive story.

Ola Kowalska: A positive story. That's it. And it's, yeah.

Michelle Smit: But there is always both sides.

Ola Kowalska: I always hear from people, but like, how can you be so positive?

How can you be so positive. I practice, I literally intentionally practice and in business especially business is quite unpredictable, I have to say. Hmm. Like there are lots of things under your control. You can decide how much you're going to make, you can decide what you want to do. And it's like, but there are things that you will never be able to control.

And I feel like. Mm-hmm. If you don't have the tough skin. You at least have to have the ability to like change the way you see those things. You know, the other way of thinking about it is the fixed or growth mindset, right? I, I think that's, that's what touches on.

Yeah, I think it's one of the most important skills you can develop in business.

Michelle Smit: Oh my gosh. Totally. And you can only really develop and exercise that muscle just through being aware and like going through some shit. And like actively reframing it and trying to find the positive. That's the thing, like you have to develop that muscle.

Just like with everything, like confidence for example. People are like, well, how do I get confident at doing this thing? And I'm like, well, just do the thing and then you'll get confident at it.

Ola Kowalska: Yeah. That's it.

Michelle Smit: You know what I mean?

Ola Kowalska: People think that they need to become confident first to be able to start. And it's literally the other way around. It's

Michelle Smit: the other way around.

Ola Kowalska: That's so funny. Yeah.

Michelle Smit: But you learn that, and then when you start doing it, you're like, oh, okay. I see evidence. My brain is seeing evidence for this to be true. This is making sense. And then it makes sense. But I think like you have to go through it.

It's the same with like clarity. Mm-hmm. You know how when you're just trying to like rack your brain to find clarity on something and you try think yourself so hard.

Ola Kowalska: Through the mason, through the fog. Mm-hmm.

Michelle Smit: Yeah, just navigate. That's what everyone I think starts off doing in their business. Like I remember doing that, like trying to mind my way through every single thing ahead of me and try see the clear road ahead of me.

But to be honest, you have to take the action and only after you take the action does a little bit of clarity sort of come and it's sort. It comes from just doing the thing and then you get clear.

Ola Kowalska: It does because even if the thing that you do is the wrong thing. At least that's the one thing off your list.

Michelle Smit: Yes, exactly.

Ola Kowalska: Yeah, I know.

Michelle Smit: So, you're learning, you're like, okay, cool, I'm learning. I don't like this. This is not the right way. I've now learned that information. Now I go shift on an on another thing. I like this.

And then I just think it's, so yeah, these are just things that we have to go through and learn as business owners and there's never, ever, like, at no point have you finally learned it all or that you're at the top or success or whatever it is.

That doesn't even, that doesn't even like exist or it's completely subjective. And I also feel like sometimes, yeah, I feel like we're human beings as well, and I feel like we make ourselves wrong. For having low days in our business. I mean, have you ever. Honestly, have you ever felt like, oh. I just want to burn this all to the ground.

Ola Kowalska: One once a month at least. I recently started getting really in interested in, I think we've got that in common. Most of our audiences are female. Of how our hormones actually, actually affects our relationship to the business. One, it's mystical. Number two, I wonder why every bloody woman goes through a menstrual cycle.

There is so much link to it. Yes. And honestly, I have found that there is a week and I where I want to burn it all to the ground where I question whether there is any point, where I'm like, this doesn't make sense. You're an idiot. What did you do? It's like, honestly. Mm. And where a comment from a hater like that would affect me so much more than some other times during the month.

But it's about learning to accept that that's just a phase. It's temporary. Yes, it goes away and obviously there are things you can do but to like kind of improve the situation, but it's a thing and that's it.

Michelle Smit: I know, I mean, I often, it's so interesting with the hormones as well because that is something that I think people don't even overlook, but I've been doing a lot of research on that at the moment.

As I want to come off birth control and learning about all of that, it makes such a big difference. And they just to learn your body and learn your energy and it's so valuable. And we just need to know in certain phases, like it's okay that you want to give up. It's actually quite normal to want to burn your business to the ground like once a month.

I feel. Like I feel like that's very, very normal. Yes. I don't think anyone, even if they are super successful and. I don't know, have whatever the, whatever it is, they probably also want to burn their business down to the ground.

Ola Kowalska: It's like with your bloody partner, you sometimes just want to throw them out the window, literally.

Michelle Smit: Exactly. You still love them. You're not going to throw them out the window like most of the time. Like you still, there's a lot of good, but there will be phases where you feel like this is. Like what is the meaning of life kind of, I've been going through so much of that, it's unbelievable.

Like what is the meaning of life and what is the purpose of all of this? That existential, exhaustion, exhausting stuff.

Ola Kowalska: I know.

Michelle Smit: But I think that's cool that we can normalize it because people feel really bad about that.

Ola Kowalska: Like people feel bad about everything and I feel like I often feel guilty and I wish I didn't think so much.

I overthink everything. Like I still take more action than I think. And I very often take action before I think myself out of an idea. Which, you know, it's just one way of doing things. Not everybody has that ability, but it's something that I genuinely teach. I think people should be taking more action because even if it's scary, even if it's like it's, it's going to sound a little bit hypocritical.

Because I'm Absolutely. Petrified of going into the sea or ocean, like just like that cold feet and with no preparation. But on the other hand, in my business, I would totally take action like this. Mm-hmm. That's interesting.

So I always teach people just, just bloody do it. Just, just, yeah. Also, yeah. Came to my mind is I notice this when I work with people, with teachers. I think it's, it's a general feature and something that people. I notice something that happens when people become more mature when in their businesses.

And the thing that happens is that they stop asking me for tips that much. Hmm. They do something and they say, what do you think about it? Or maybe they've even done it and they said. I don't care. I've done it. You can share your opinion. And I'm like, I'm so proud of you. I'm here for it. This is it.

I'm not going to be there to hold your hand. So, you need to develop the self-trust to do things.

Michelle Smit: Yes.

Ola Kowalska: Have you noticed that with your clients?

Michelle Smit: Yes. I am always the most excited. When they are proactive. They're taking action, they're doing the thing. In the beginning of business, I think you get really hung up on like cosmetic decisions and like tiny things that don't really matter. Which you need to learn. Through just being in business that they don't matter yourself. I have to tell them like, this doesn't matter.

Like it doesn't matter what your IG handle is. It doesn't matter what your email domain is. Honestly, it really doesn't matter. You just change it.

So there are situations, and I do understand that when you start business there's a lot of like paralysis in making decisions. But I really think one of the best things is just to develop that self-trust and just like. Also just crosscheck your own intuition about stuff. Like, there's a lot that we know that we are not accessing because our mind, you know, we need to like drop down. And I'm always like, okay, well, with clients, I'm like, well, what does it feel like to you? How does that feel to you? Is that like a yes?

Ola Kowalska: They don't know? They don't know.

Michelle Smit: Yeah, they don't know. You have to like develop that skill in itself, that muscle of being able to listen to your own inner guidance.

Yeah. Your own inner compass. Yeah. Which you can only do through just going through taking action and navigating the whole thing.

Ola Kowalska: Learning the lessons. That's it. I know, I know. Exactly. I feel like, yeah, so I, I very often challenge my people. So they know what questions I ask, when they come and ask me for guidance and tips.

I'm always happy to give guidance and tips and like all sorts of things or like my thoughts on things. Mm-hmm. But then I would say, how do you feel about it? They, they get out predicted that I would ask this question and now they've started actually giving each other that kind of advice. Like, do what feels good.

And I think. Well, this is sound advice. Like to me, this is really good business advice and if anyone tries to be prescriptive with me, I know that they're not going to be a good mentor for me, and I feel like my clients also see that or started because there is also like a level of. I think it's a process where people learn that it's okay not to ask.

That it's okay to actually make those tiny mistakes. So that we can like, oh, but at least they did it because it felt good to me, right? Mm-hmm. Not ask someone. Because the danger in listening or following someone's advice in a prescriptive way is that then you, you tend to blame that person for the failure, right?

Michelle Smit: Yes.

Ola Kowalska: And I would never want that to happen, right?

Michelle Smit: Yes. Although I have also found, like, especially for someone who's going from Zero, say for example, zero to launching their first offer, they have no. Data and experience to draw from. And so I found for me, when I was at the beginning, a recipe helped.

So do this, do this, do this kind of recipe. Like for example, if you've never made a cheesecake before going in and making a cheesecake, without any experience or data in it, it's going to be really difficult, you know? And that's why I do feel like having like some sort of framework, method, recipe to follow in the early stages helps just to learn, just to get into the arena.

Ola Kowalska: Yeah, definitely. No, I agree. That's why I said it's a process of, it's a process. Yeah. First you need, and I would never say it's like a blueprint. I like to give people options.

Michelle Smit: Yes, I agree, but just something they can work with and then within that structure, they can develop the muscle of using their intuition to feel into things and feel, if this is good, feel, if this is bad, feel the, if this is a full body yes.

Or a full body, no. And then you can work with that energy and then you're not fully pushing up against resistance points all the time. Like I feel like resistance comes up all the time in business all the time.

Ola Kowalska: People try to fight it, right?

Michelle Smit: Yeah. You want to ask the question of why am I feeling this way? How can I sort of shift. For example, this is an example. I went through a period of time where I was like really happy to do Instagram lives. And I was like energized by that. And I was like, cool, let me do that once a week and that's going to be my thing for now. because I'm feeling that. And then I felt, there was a period of time where I was like, this feels so heavy.

I cannot, like it was so tough. It just brought, it just didn't feel good. Yeah. And then I was like podcasting and that felt so exciting, and I was like, oh my gosh. This finally feels exciting. Then I went with the podcast route and I'm riding that wave and I know that at some point that will feel maybe misaligned for a period of time, and maybe I'll need to shift a little bit, but like it's just listening to where you're at.

Ola Kowalska: You keep looking for that, right? And what I think people are afraid of is that they will be seen as a fluke. So, like, oh, I've committed to Instagram lives now I'm changing. So, it must mean something about me. No, I actually, mm. To an experienced person, to someone who I mean an experienced person, to a person who actually knows how it works. Me that would be totally a sign of bravery, and of maturity. Mm-hmm. Like, obviously don't change your niche every week. I feel like sometimes people do burn things too quickly.

Michelle Smit: Yeah, I agree.

Ola Kowalska: On the wrong grounds, perhaps. But that's a little bit different from listening your intuition and tuning into what's the, what's the word, and just doing what feels good.

Michelle Smit: Yeah, it's definitely nuanced. Like there's, so it's not like a black or white, I don't think you can say, always do what feels good because then you probably do nothing a lot of the time. You do very little. Like often we have to push through our resistance.

Like taking action requires us to push through our resistance. And I don't think resistance is a bad thing. I feel like it's quite normal to

feel fear and all of that stuff. Like that's part of the journey. You can't be like, oh, this doesn't feel good and so I'm not going to do it. Launching your first offer is going to terrify the shit out of you and it's not going to feel good the whole time, but it's needs to happen if you want business.

So, there's definitely like a middle ground. but as you develop into a business owner, you start to be able to feel into, okay, is this like, where is this resistance coming from? Am I not doing it because of that? It just doesn't feel aligned or am I not doing it because I'm just scared to do it Because often its fear is not really mostly, we're scared to do stuff.

Ola Kowalska: Exactly. There is this wonderful book. I think we talked about it by Brianna. We there are a few actually.

Michelle Smit: My gosh. So good.

Ola Kowalska: The 101 essays and then the other one is the mountain.

Michelle Smit: The mountain is you.

Ola Kowalska: Yeah, that one is beautiful. I think it's in the mountain is you, where she offers advice on how to recognize your fear-based thoughts.

Mm-hmm. And your, what would be the other thing like, like let's say resistance, but that kind of the one that you can overcome, right? So she, I think she says that actual fear, so something that you probably shouldn't fight with. Something that is probably not good for you and perhaps you could let go of that is something that keeps coming up that is like this intrusive thing while.

The other thing that you might be a bit afraid of that resistance, it won't be an intrusive thought. Ah, mm-hmm. It would be it would be something that would feel much calmer. That it would feel like, yes, I'm scared, but I'm also kind of like, there is this weird feeling of excitement. So, it's very hard to discern.

It's very hard to, yes. But I really, literally, this part stayed with me because so many people struggle with this. I still struggle with this.

Michelle Smit: I love that.

Ola Kowalska: Cause I can't remember that well. But yeah.

Michelle Smit: Have you listen, have you read the book playing? I think it's playing big or..

Ola Kowalska: Yes, yes with Tara Moore. Yeah.

Michelle Smit: Yeah. So she had the two types of fear as well, and it was Yirah, and Oh, Jiro. Girod. Yes. Yes, maybe. And it was so, it resonated so hard because the Yirah was that like expansive fear. That one, that's, I'm playing big. I'm pushing myself. So the Yirah would be like the launching fear of like, I'm playing big, I'm stepping up, I'm getting visible, or whatever.

Like when you go live or do anything, that's Yirah it's like an opening of your feeling. It's like, It's like that feeling of going live on stage. Say you're doing a TED Talk, that before you get on that stage, it's like it's bloody scary, right? You feel like you might puke. But it's like for your highest good, it's like expanding you. Then the other one was like contracting feeling. Yes. A very irrational fear that's intrusive. Which is exactly what you said.

Ola Kowalska: It's exactly that.

Michelle Smit: That it's hardcore, irrational, intrusive.

Ola Kowalska: Of course.

Michelle Smit: And that's like thinking about someone basically like anxiety, like thinking of really irrational things happening, like someone dying or someone getting hit by like, you know how your mind goes to those dark like that's just like.

Ola Kowalska: Like posting, I won't post cause a hater would comment. So, like it's

Michelle Smit: yes. And then, oh, this launch is going to be fail and then I'm going to end up on the street without any food and no roof over my head. Like very hectic, hardcore, fearful things that actually aren't rooted in, yeah.

Ola Kowalska: That's like such a, such an important thought to. Like skill to be able to distinguish between the two, honestly.

Michelle Smit: And that's what you have to go through, through the business, through just doing it. That's what you develop. So that's the thing. Mm-hmm. These are the lessons that you learn through just being in the arena of business, right? Mm-hmm. And in order for us to, I believe in order for us to become the business owners we need to become, to create the freedom business that we desire.

Whatever that amount is per month or whatever. We need to learn these things. Like that is just what needs to happen.

Ola Kowalska: Absolutely. And do you know what also this was. I had that thought at the very beginning when we started talking, because I was like, when we started was like all the rights of passage and the things you have to go through and learn.

But also what I recently realized, again, I have lots of realizations recently. No, no some breakthrough light bulb kind of moments is that it's very true that everybody starts in their business with a different story. With a different, like everybody starts with at a different stage. Mm-hmm. And then it's a good idea to acknowledge whether there are some things from your past. Mm-hmm.

That might be hindering your progress in business. Mm-hmm. Because they probably usually will. And for me, I don't know how for the last. On and off. But for the last five years I've been in therapy, seriously, working on my past trauma for the last 18 months. And only now I'm realizing that the work I'm doing in therapy, the reparenting, the working through PTSD working through like, things around my ADHD and things that genuinely wear heavy shit from the past. Mm-hmm. Have a tremendous

effect on my business because I was never afraid to start a business, but I was doing things from such a toxic place that I wouldn't be able to carry on like this.

Michelle Smit: Unsustainable.

Ola Kowalska: Absolutely. And it's just mind blowing. So while this all sounds big and grand, what I will say to everybody is if you have a chance, and if that thought ever even appears for a second to you, go to therapy, honestly, go to therapy.

Michelle Smit: Yes. I love that so much. And I feel like, what an amazing thing.

To be able to heal yourself. Only good things can come from that really. And your business will grow from just doing that. I also think that it's like a fine line. You don't want to go to like a business coach to deal with that stuff. I feel like you need to go to a therapist to deal with that stuff and then that will help you overcome certain things.

Because I think that a lot of the traumas in our past. Will show up in our business. For example, I had this event happen to me when I was younger in front of people, which gave me trauma from public speaking and speaking in front of people. And so that for me in my business, has been the biggest challenge in me being on video or talking live or whatever.

That was my biggest fear. It came up as like a trauma response. You know when your body literally gets into that, your nervous system gets all hectic and like you can barely breathe because I was literally in. But then if you go and dissolve that and you heal that, that's going to help you free up that energy for you to go do the thing you need to do in the business.

I mean, I didn't go to therapy with it, but I did a lot of different types of things that helped me regulate my nervous system. Bring myself to a place of safety, like knowing that I'll be okay, and then being able to do the thing.

Ola Kowalska: It's all about that. It's all about, I've been very interested recently in like how our nervous systems are actually activated and there are so many triggers and we don't even know what a trigger might be, and then it will show up in business because again, business is unpredictable.

It's a big arena. There are lots of elements and things that we cannot really predict, and I feel like a lot of people miss the fact. Nobody's just born to be successful. People get there through different roots, and I honestly, with like, in all honesty, I think at least 50% of my success and where my business is currently going is me healing myself.

I used to say, business is like personal growth on steroids. Which I really still think. But this decision to work on me started first that this started first and I feel like the minute I started understanding myself, my past, the people in my life that moment, it made me be more compassionate and made like, honestly, it opened so many different weird doors that I didn't even know existed. I am a better person and I am convinced I'm a better business owner, thanks to that. So, always recommended five stars.

Michelle Smit: 10 out of 10 would recommend.

Ola Kowalska: Absolutely.

Michelle Smit: Oh, I love that. That's such good advice. That's such a great place to even close. Like for me, I've always said that business is my greatest personal development journey because it forces you to shine a light and a torch on areas that you need to heal or things that are, that you need to work on and you just. I don't think I would be the person I am if I hadn't gone through this journey. And that's the best part. It's not about the money and the number of people you work with and all the things. It's just who you become in the process like is so epic.

Ola Kowalska: That's so good. That's so good. Or who you are becoming because you're always becoming, because you never get there. You're always coming.

Michelle Smit: You'll never get there. I love that so much. It feels so good.

Ola Kowalska: Woo.

Michelle Smit: I love that. Yeah.

Ola Kowalska: Perfect that.

Michelle Smit: What a conversation as always. So good to talk to you, Ola. I love our conversations.

Ola Kowalska: Me too.

Michelle Smit: Tell the people listening where they can find you. All of that jazz.

Ola Kowalska: Sure. So you can listen to my solo ramblings, on lots of things. Obviously online business, being a teacher and getting richer as a teacher. That's actually the title of my podcast. Get Richer Teacher. There is an episode with Michelle from like. You just, oh, actually we've known each other for longer than a year because the episode is from like 2021.

So you might be able to dig that out from the archives. It's available on all possible podcasting platforms. Also on my website, www.olaKowalska.com. I'm sure this will be in the show notes. And I'm obviously very active on Instagram where I meet the best people. At [ola_coaches_teachers](https://www.instagram.com/ola_coaches_teachers), and that is it. These are my main channels. Obviously, if anybody wants to read my emails, they can sign up to my newsletters and stuff like that. Mm-hmm. I do lots of weird things. We kind of have a similar niche, but we do very different things, which is so fun. Mm-hmm. I'm experimenting a lot recently with load ticket and like, oh, having fun, just having fun.

Treating my business as a playground. So, if anybody wants to see what all of that fun is about, you are very welcome.

Michelle Smit: I love that you guys go follow Ola, she's amazing. She's just a bundle of energy, which I like. High vibes always. So go follow her and thank you so much Ola for coming on my podcast.

Ola Kowalska: Thank you so much. See you later.

Michelle Smit: All right guys. Bye.

Thank you so much for tuning into today's episode. If you love what you heard today, then be sure to share it with me by leaving a five-star review so I can continue delivering these goodies. If you aren't already following me on social media, then come tune in to some daily inspiration on Instagram by following @_digiteach_ or visiting my website at digiteach.biz.

I appreciate you so much, and I can't wait to connect with you in the next episode. In the meantime, go create a business and life you love.