

## S2: E102: 'The Messy Middle' is Where Magnetic Brands Are Born

Hey there, I'm Tiffany, and you are listening to the Your Legacy Brand Podcast. If you're a high-achieving, mission-driven entrepreneur who wants to elevate your income, impact, and influence, you're in the right place. I left my corporate career as a creative director for Fortune 500 brands to create a legacy with my life's work and to support entrepreneurs like you to do the same. You pour your time, energy, and passion into your business, so let's make sure your efforts will create a ripple effect that reaches far into the future. I'm here to provide you tools and ideas to make massive shifts and quantum leaps in your business, transforming you from entrepreneur into legacy brand. Whether your big vision is to be a New York Times bestselling book author, stepping onto the TEDx stage, or simply having a sustainable business and income doing the work you love, my goal is to take you to being seen as the go-to expert in your space. So sit back, relax, and let's jump into today's episode. Hey there, and welcome back to the Your Legacy Brand Podcast. Today we're diving into something we all face on the path to success. Something I call the messy middle. So if you're feeling a little bit stuck, impatient, maybe even like you've taken a few steps back, this episode is for you. And maybe you're doing well and you're leaning towards a massive and exciting breakthrough, but it's been a little bit of a journey to get there, this is also for you. Because we're talking about the part of the journey that's anything but glamorous, but is actually where the most growth happens in our businesses. And I'm here to remind you today that you're exactly where you need to be. Settle in, grab a coffee, maybe some tea, my favorite is matcha, and let's talk about playing the long game, building patience, and making the messy middle part of your brand and business journey. So a little bit more about the messy middle itself. This is a phrase I use to explain that stage where you've put in a lot of work, but maybe you're not seeing the results you were hoping for yet. It's that place where you're doing everything, air quotes, right, and yet progress may feel really slow. And in the branding stage, it's when you have momentum, you have some clarity, but it's not fully integrated yet. And in my experience, even in the corporate world, but especially as an entrepreneur supporting tons of clients through the branding process and through growing their businesses, I see this messy middle always playing out. And oftentimes it's either when people completely quit and bow out, make silly decisions because they're kind of desperate in the moment and, or get really impatient and make things a lot harder on themselves when if they would just ride it out, it would all be beautiful in the end. And oftentimes it feels so slow in the moment, but once we get through the messy middle, looking back, it actually feels like it flies by. And before you know it, you'll forget. I mean, it'll still be in your memory somewhere, but you'll forget about it. It's just like when you have small children and you feel like the stage of like messy diapers or something like that while you're in it, it's like, oh my gosh, this lasts forever. But now as a 10 year old, I look at my daughter and I'm like, I barely even remember changing all of those messy diapers, right? The cool thing about this phase is it's actually where legacy brands are built. The messy middle is where your commitment to the long game, your vision is tested the most because in reality, anyone can feel excited at the start of something, right? It's actually when things get a little bit tough that your true character and your brand are revealed. So when I look at my personal journey, it's clear that the messy middle was training ground for building resilience, refining my own message and ultimately establishing my own brand as a legacy brand. And the truth is the work is never completely done, right? We continue to evolve.

We continue to grow. But once we've set the foundation for our legacy brand and business, the ride becomes way less bumpy and way more full of fun and flow. And that's really what I want to talk about today. So before we go any further, take a deep breath with me. And I want you to acknowledge that being in the messy middle is okay. Whether you're there today or not, this information is valuable because we go through ebbs and flows. We hit upper limits, we break through, and then we complete and repeat the cycle, right? And the messy middle isn't just okay, it's necessary. And it's so interesting to me that as entrepreneurs, we are conditioned to think that if we're not seeing immediate growth, something's wrong, right? We are told that our business should double year over year. But if you're here to build a legacy brand, the long game is non-negotiable. A personal brand isn't about a one hit or one viral moment. It's about creating something lasting, something that people can rely on. So if we think about brands like Levi's jeans or Coca-Cola, even though I don't drink soda, those brands stand the test of time. And that's what we need to do as entrepreneurs if we want to reach our long-term goals. And those only come with time. Yes, there are overnight successes. But typically, the people that we see as, air quote, overnight successes, actually have been playing the long game, and then it just appears like an overnight success, right? So it's in the consistency, showing up time and time again, that your brand becomes magnetic, right? And for me, staying rooted in my bigger vision has helped me move through all the doubts and the challenges of the messy middle. Because I know my brand isn't just about what I achieve in six months or a year. It's about what I'll be known for and the ripple effect that I'm creating over 10 years, 15 years, 20 years. So if you're feeling impatient in this moment about where your brand is or where you're going, remember that every action you take is laying a brick in the foundation of your legacy. So I was just on a call with one of my treasured clients and friends this morning. And we were talking about all of this. And it's so funny because I had this podcast recording planned for this afternoon. And it came up, this discussion became between us very organically. It wasn't like I had asked her about it. It just kind of came up. And she was talking through some of the current things that she's going through and how it's difficult. And I reminded her of the patience aspect. And she was so grateful. And she's like, you're right. I just need patience. Like one of the things she had done, because I encouraged her on my own 10X journey, I'm shifting a lot of things in business. If you've been listening, you've heard about that. And I've been encouraging all of my clients, like during a rebrand process, 10X is inevitable if you allow and you plan for it and you're open to receiving it. And it's so amazing just watching my clients thrive as and after we go through the rebranding process. And there's a messy middle involved. And so patience isn't something we naturally celebrate in this world of instant gratification at all. But it's a skill that can change everything. And I reminded her of that. And she's like, oh, my gosh, you're right. I'm playing the long game. And she doubled her prices after my encouragement that she double her prices. And so her sales went down a little bit. But I reminded her, when you double your prices, you need less people. And that was the goal for her to have more space in her world and her life. And so I said, you'll need to be more patient. Maybe things won't sell like hotcakes as often, but you need half the amount of people to make the same amount of money. And that shifted everything for her. And so if there's something that you're being impatient about, I'd like you to reflect on that and think about, you know, how is your impatience actually making it take longer, right? So also take it from me. I have ADHD. Not intense case, but definitely realized I have that in the past few years. I'm also a quick start who makes shit happen quickly. If you know me, I

get an idea. I act on it. Let's go. So it's probably the hardest thing that I've personally struggled with. The patience. And I've learned to, and I'm still learning to deal with this. And that's why I'm so excited to talk about it today. And so slowing down to speed up has literally become one of my main mantras. Because when we have that patience, when we slow down, when we trust our intuition, when we let things brew and take time, it actually will speed up the process. And I feel called to share what helped me today. I want you to think of patience as part of your personal brand. Of course, yes, I'm a brand strategist. I'm going to wrap everything into branding, but it's so true. When patience is part of your brand, people will sense it. When you're calm, you're grounded, you're intentional, your audience will feel it. They'll see you as a steady, reliable person that they want to follow. And as I realized that and integrated that into my own personal brand, I can't tell you how many people reflect that back to me. That how grounded I make them feel, how comfortable it makes them feel, how I'm showing up and my cadence and my pace is grounding to them. Although, of course, that doesn't mean standing still. It means taking steady, aligned steps forward, trusting that results are coming, even if they're not here yet. And it also doesn't mean when a perfect aligned opportunity comes or you need to take swift action, because sometimes we do, it doesn't mean that you don't act. So really what I'm looking to say here is, let's reframe patience as a pillar in our brand and also choose flexibility as needed. Which leads me to the concept of contrast. You know, those tough moments when it feels like everything is going against you. Maybe you have tech issue or I was just talking to a colleague of mine and she was like, oh my gosh, Tiffany, I put the wrong date on my sales page and the email went out with the name in it and it didn't auto-populate. Honestly, I had a mistake in last week's podcast interview. I had someone reach out to me and say, hey, Tiffany, just so you know, looks like your team kind of forgot to edit out one of the portions where you said, please edit this out. And you know, shit happens and that's embarrassing. But I'm not going to go rail on my team and be like, I can't believe you did that because honestly, most of the time I don't even ask them to edit anything. I just keep going if I make a mistake because that's authentic and it's real. But it's just so funny how those things happen. And the thing is, when those moments, again, when it feels like shit's hitting the fan, the thing is contrast isn't the enemy. It's a teacher, right? Contrast offers clarity. When you experience what you don't want, you will actually get crystal clear on what you want. And that clarity, it's gold for your personal brand. It'll help you refine your voice. It'll help you come across as more authentic. It helps you refine your values, your message, so that when you show up, you're showing up as the truest, most authentic version of yourself. And I think when contrast happens, most of us, and this is me, I'm still working on this myself too, but I've grown so much. Most of us react. We take that swift action without at least pausing for a moment where we freak out and, oh my gosh, I can't believe this happened. Instead of saying, okay, contrast is showing up. Life is lifing. How can I fix this quickly? Life is lifing. How can I fix this quickly and move on and learn from it and share it? So my advice to my colleague that reached out and was like, Tiffany, this happened. What do I do? Was don't really do anything. Just admit it. You're being authentic with your audience. Let it go. Let it pass. Show up and take ownership. And that's the best things that we can do for our brand. Because when you are not in congruence with what you're saying in your brand, you're showing up in misalignment. And the more visible you get and the more successful you get, the more people will feel that misalignment. Right? So we need to own our mistakes and own things that are happening behind the scenes. So one of the most valuable lessons I've learned is not to

fear the contrast. It's part of the journey. It's shaping your brand into something truly unique. That's you that nobody else has. And in this messy middle phase, I also love the concept of the gap versus the gain. And this is something that I've learned. This idea, actually Credit Where Credit's Due, came from an author named Dan Sullivan, who has a book named the same, Gap Versus the Game. It's another game changer. When you're adding it to everything we've been talking about today, the thing is, most of us measure our success by the gap between where we are now and where we want to be. So we may feel like failures because we're measuring this vision that we have for ourselves and we're not there yet. So immediately we feel like a failure. Not to mention that we're also measuring ourselves against other people who may be having more success or further along than us, right? And this also leads to something that I talk about all the time with my clients, which is goal trauma. And goal trauma happens when we set big goals, we don't meet them, and then we're afraid to try it again. And that's where the gap in the game is so beautiful because when we measure our success by where we want to be, that's discouraging. Instead, when we focus on the gain, that means looking back at how far we've come, right? That allows us to focus and measure ourselves against ourselves and where we've been, and it feels so much more empowering. So for your personal brand, measuring the gain versus the gap is incredibly powerful. Your audience doesn't just want to know where you're going, they want to see where you've been too. The progress you've made, the lessons you've learned, that's what makes your brand relatable and real. So I'm going to go more into this in the next podcast episode, which comes out next week, but for a moment, I'd like you to just take two minutes, maybe pause this for a moment, and think about three ways you've grown over the past year. Maybe even take a quick pause and write them down and celebrate them because they're proof that you're on the right path. And I think so often in entrepreneurship, we're always talking about vision, we're always talking about goals, and those things are important because without them, we wouldn't know where we're heading, right? We couldn't land the plane if we don't know where it's going. However, the problem with that is it creates the goal trauma and then it holds us back. So again, don't forget to come back next week and I'm going to walk you through an actual process to look at the gain and really set intentions for 2025. But as we wrap up today's episode, I also want to touch on one more thing, which these all obviously lead and work together. And this last thing is success metrics. We're often tempted to adopt other people's definition of success, or maybe we don't even do that consciously, but subconsciously we look at the collective and what other people deem successful and we think we need to do there or that needs to be our goal too. For instance, the whole idea of a seven or eight figure business or how many followers you have on social. The thing is to build a brand that resonates, it's essential to define success on your own terms because when you're chasing other people's dreams, sometimes not even realizing that it's always going to end up in disalignment. So for me personally, success isn't about revenue or followers. For me, it's so much more about profit versus revenue, work-life balance, client impact, client success, and most importantly, building something that aligns with my values. So your personal metrics are what keep you grounded in the messy middle, which is why I wanted to talk about success metrics as we wrap up today, because when you're in the messy middle and you know your values and you know your success metrics, you're looking at the gain versus the gap while you're still focused on the future. That's where ultimate success will come more rapidly than you would ever imagine. And when you're clear on what success means to you, it's so much easier to stop comparing yourself

to others and your brand stands out as a reflection of you, your unique essence. And this is where your audience feels the connection. They see that you're not just in it for the numbers, but you're dedicated to something bigger. So the next challenge for you today is if you have not already, get super clear on what your personal measure of success is and start to focus on that. And then you're able to put some blinders on and grow your brand and business your way. All right, let's do a quick recap. The messy middle is where your brand grows in resilience and depth. By committing to the long game, you cultivate patience, you can embrace contrast, focus on the game and set your own measures of success. You're not only building a business and a personal brand, you're crafting a legacy. So I want you to take a moment today and honor where you are. This is your journey and it's worth every step. Remember your legacy brand isn't built overnight, it's built over time with intention, heart and resilience. Thank you as always for being here, sharing this journey and letting me be part of your path. Make sure to stay tuned as we have some amazing episodes coming up around why LinkedIn is the place to be right now to grow your brand and so much more about following your own path. We'll see you in the upcoming weeks as we dive deeper into these topics and as always sending love and we'll talk to you soon. Thank you so much for joining me on today's episode of the Your Legacy Brand Podcast. I'm so grateful that you took the time to hit play and listen to the show. If you loved this episode, please provide a rating or review and I will be forever grateful. My favorite place to hang out these days is LinkedIn, so hop on over and let's connect. Or if you prefer Instagram, follow me at Tiffany Newman Creative. I'd love to get to know you and hear your feedback on what topics really resonate and what you'd like to hear more of in the future. You can always find links and resources shared on the show and learn about how to create your legacy brand by going to [yourlegacybrand.com](http://yourlegacybrand.com). Remember that what you leave behind is not what's engraved in each day's monument, but what is woven into the lives and hearts of others. What are you doing today to inform others to leave your legacy?