

Navigating money and relationships

Guest: Kate Northrup

Disclaimer: The contents of this interview are for informational purposes only and are not intended to be a substitute for professional psychological advice, diagnosis, or treatment. This interview does not provide psychological advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical or psychological condition.

Alex Howard - [00:00:09]

Welcome everyone to this interview where I'm super excited to be talking with Kate Northrup.

Firstly, Kate, welcome and thank you for joining me.

Kate Northrup

Thanks for having me.

Alex Howard

I think this is what we're going to be talking about in this interview. I think it is one of the hardest relationships that many of us have in our lives. And I think it's one of the hardest issues that comes up for many of us in relationship. We're going to be talking about money.

Just to give people a little bit of Kate's background. As a best selling author of *Do Less* and *Money, a Love Story*, which by the way, I love that title because for many of us it doesn't feel like a love story.

Kate is a CEO, planner, creator and regenerative business researcher. Kate is here to explore and share how we can be more relaxed while making the impact we were meant to.

Kate created The Origin Company to help aspiring and established business owners work less while having less stress and creating more abundance.

So, Kate, I think we probably should start with the elephant in the room, money. Why is money such a contentious and difficult issue, do you think, for so many people in relationship?

Kate Northrup

Money is such a difficult and contentious issue because we have been raised in a culture that has us associate our net worth with our self-worth, and we have ourselves so tied up in thinking that how much money we make is how valuable we are. And that's too much pressure and unreasonable.

And I think it has the opposite impact. So of course we want abundance. So having a high net worth is not a bad thing. It's a wonderful thing because of the freedoms that can allow you and the impact. Mother Teresa has a great quote, "it takes a cheque book to change the world".

And so I'm all about earning great money. And also, ironically, the path to creating abundance is in, I believe, divorcing your self-worth from it, but working on that personal relationship with your worth. And it has this wonderful side effect of changing your financial reality. But when we do it backwards from, how much money I make or how abundant I am means how worthy I am, it blocks the money

from coming to you because you're in an inherent place of lack. And starting from a place of lack does not create abundance.

Alex Howard - [00:03:02]

And interesting also, where I come from in the U.K, there's so much shame and talking about money is just not something that people do. People are ashamed of not having money. People are also ashamed of having money. It's a really difficult subject for a lot of people.

Kate Northrup

Well, it's a deeply emotional subject about something that is inherently neutral. So money is neutral and then society and toxic capitalism and the way we do business and all that has layered on, not to mention the money stories that are handed down to us from our parents, from our culture. So many people don't talk about money growing up, and then they're supposed to know how to manage it, how to make it.

I come from New England, which is similar, in terms of I grew up in Maine, and if you have money you hide it, if you don't have, well, although I will say and I'm not sure what this is about, there's more of a pride in not having. Another layer that can happen is that we judge or talk about how people with money are greedy, are bad. And that's another sure fire way to block abundance from you, because if you're judging, if there's a part of you that wants something, but you're judging the people who have it, that's not going to be available to you.

Alex Howard

And of course, we've each got our own relationship with money and our stories and our history and our beliefs around that. We've then got the dynamics in intimate relationship. And we may well come from, sometimes you have people that come from the same background and have this shared narrative. But other times, you can have people, one of the things that's wonderful about how society has evolved over the years, is that people could only really marry people of the same financial class and background. But these days you can have all kinds of different matchups. That can be challenging.

Kate Northrup

That can be very challenging. And I remember, and this is, I remember before I got married I dated all kinds of people. And I remember my parents, and this is very old school of them and I think not particularly evolved, but they said to me relationships are easier when you marry someone with a similar background. And I was like, oh, really? So we're doing that.

And in the end, I did marry someone with some things similar, some things are different. And here's the bottom line. No matter if you grew up the same, grew up in the same area or completely different, what we have to know is that coming into our relationship, our partner has a money story. And the money story is not necessarily obvious. And it's not necessarily based on the facts.

So we all have money experiences but then we have money stories. And so there can often be a very big difference between what happened and the story we have about it. And uncovering our money stories, uncovering our money personalities is really important, especially before getting into a long-term, committed relationship, whether you're going to get married, whether you're going to live together.

One of the things my husband and I did before we got married was, we did this book that somebody gave us called *10 Great Dates Before You Say 'I Do'*, which is actually Christian based. We are not particularly religious, but we just rewrote it in our heads. And one of the dates was this questionnaire that you would both fill out about, and I'm sorry if you hear some children in the background. They're just...

Alex Howard - [00:07:10]

Please don't apologize. You're probably going to hear the same in about 20 minutes.

Kate Northrup

I have some little screechers back there.

But it really helped us to have some of the difficult conversations right up front. Because what I find in my clients is they'll say, well, I've been married 2 years and my husband doesn't know that I'm in \$25,000 worth of credit card debt. And I'm like, wait, that's a pretty big secret to keep. Because we think again, you mentioned money and shame, and the reason we feel ashamed, whether we have money or don't have money is because we have erroneously tied our worth with our finances.

And so we think, oh, if this person knew this about my financial past they wouldn't love me. This part of my financial past makes me unlovable. That's ridiculous. If we actually dial it back and zoom out, we need to look at the story we're telling ourselves, and we need to get clear on what that story is, because that story is creating and recreating over and over again our financial reality.

And what's really important is that we get clear on what the story is both from ourselves and from our partner. So we can know, oh, that's what they're working with, so that we can write our own story together, consciously instead of unconsciously carrying around a story that's usually based on who your parents were, who your grandparents were, great grandparents, now we know about the study of epigenetics and how, of course, experiences are passed down through our DNA that we don't even know what they are but our bodies react. I mean, you're the nervous system person, so you could talk all about that.

But anyway, it's complicated, but it's not insurmountable in any way when we have those open, honest conversations. You can air out so much. And the thing is, shame cannot survive in the light. So when we talk about it, the shame just disintegrates. When we're witnessed by a loving, safe person, then we realize, oh, this thing I've been carrying around for 30 years or 20 years or whatever wasn't even that bad. And I'm actually lovable with that, not in spite of that, but just that part of me, it's part of what makes me me.

Alex Howard

One of the things that comes to mind is that in a number of the interviews in this conference, one of the themes has been the importance of emotional intimacy and emotional honesty. And often when, as you just said, often when we say the things that are the hardest to say, the things we have the most shame about, actually they bring us closer.

We fear we're going to be abandoned or rejected because that's maybe the traumas we have from the past. But actually, when someone shows up in their vulnerability, unless someone's a sociopath, generally, their heart opens to that person.

Kate Northrup

And giving each other the opportunity to see those parts of ourselves is so beautiful. And relationship is the hardest, well, parenting is pretty hard too, but that's not what today is about.

Alex Howard

But parenting also makes money harder as well.

Kate Northrup - [00:10:27]

Parenting makes money harder for sure but money issues are the biggest cause of relationships not working out. And a lot of it is just a lack of communication, because at the core, we are afraid that we're not lovable, given how we have done with money in the past or given whatever scenario. And so just looking at, okay, what am I telling myself? And is there a part of me that thinks I'm not lovable if this person knew this about me? It's going to really open some things up.

Alex Howard

There's also something around the things that we don't own in our lives. We can disown emotions, and we can disown stories and things that have happened in our past. And sometimes we can hide those things. We can get away with those things. But somehow with money, there's just something that's very sort of, as you say, you can hide \$25,000 of credit card debt for a while but at some point someone's going to come and start removing your furniture if you don't actually deal with it.

And there's something that's somewhat unforgiving about the reality. And people can have their habits and their behaviors but there's only so long that one can hide those things.

Kate Northrup

Money is so fascinating as a place to look at our issues because it's either there or it's not. Our bodies are very forgiving. For many, many, many years we cannot care for them and they just keep working with us. Oftentimes, our friends, our parents, our relationships there's much more give and take. Money, because it's neutral, and it's an inanimate object that humans invented. It is made up. So let's just start there. It's completely made up. It's pretend.

Alex Howard

And that's how governments deal with it these days. Well, we'll just make more of this. That's a whole other story.

Kate Northrup

That's a whole other story. But if you ever didn't believe that money is just made up, and then you went through 2020 and 2021, the United States printed more money in 2020, I'm totally botching this, but it was something like 40% of the money printed in all time was printed in 2020.

Alex Howard

Wow. Wow. I don't know about in the U.S. in the U.K, they call it quantitative easing, but it's basically just printing money. But that's another, that really is a whole...

Kate Northrup

That's a whole other thing. Made up.

In the United States we got off the gold standard in the 1970. So it's really just, right. And so what's so interesting to notice, though, is it doesn't have these self-forgiving properties. It's there or it's not. And so it is a wonderful mirror for how we are showing up, because there is an energetic quality. When people say money is just energy, I think there's a bit of spiritual bypassing there because we also need to pay the mortgage. And also we need to buy groceries, and we can't pay the mortgage and groceries with energy.

But at the same time, because we exchange money in exchange for things that we value. So money is just a system that we came up with so we could trade value for value and instead of trading a

donkey for a sheep, we can now buy the sheep with coins. And then the donkey owner can go buy something else that they would like. And so that's just all money is.

And because it is tied up in our human value system, which is very emotional, it is kind of just energy in a way. And so if we can increase the amount of value we're providing in the world, we often can then increase the amount of money we are earning.

So I think saying money is just energy is a little glib. But there are some elements of that when we start looking in the big picture of what money actually is and zoom out from our spreadsheets or our QuickBooks or whatever.

Alex Howard - [00:14:46]

I think what you're saying here also really is important is that sometimes that spiritual bypassing thing that can happen in, let's say, the less intelligent use of things like the law of attraction, where someone's like, I'm just going to think positive thoughts and money is going to show up. But there's something that money is a certain skill. The making of money is a skill and the management of money and the growing of money, they're all different skills, in a sense.

And it's just like for someone to become world class as an athlete or someone to become world class as, whatever. There's an investment in the development of those skills. And often when it comes to money in one's personal life or money in relationship, there's just this assumption that, oh, I'm just going to know how to do it. It's somehow, like in the matrix implanted into our brain one day. But developing those skills is really important.

Kate Northrup

It is really important. What also is important is that anyone can do it. So people will say, oh, that person is just good with money, or I'm just not good with money. All of us were born not even being able to talk. And we all figured, most figured that out. Most figure out walking. We figure out a lot of things, but it takes a lot of practice and training.

And so there's nothing that we were born really knowing how to do other than breathe. And that's unconscious, for the most part, breathing is unconscious. So we've had to learn literally everything. So why would we be good at money?

Why also would we be good at relationships without putting in work? I mean, the most important thing, this is on the whole educational system, the most important things in our lives we are not taught in school. 18 years or 20, however many years we go to school, we're not taught the most fundamental concepts that really make or break a life. How to have a hard conversation, how to set boundaries, how to identify your core skills so that you can add value to the world and make a good living, how to balance your checkbook. I mean, these things, it's really a bummer.

But there are so many amazing places for free at the library that you can learn how to be great with money. And I love how you identified it's not just being great with money, there's a skillset of making money, there's a skillset of managing money, there's a skillset of growing your money. They're all different skill sets. And if we want to be in relationship just like, people say marriage takes work, being in a good relationship with your money takes work. It takes commitment. It takes an ongoing relationship. It's a relationship you'll have for your entire life.

So it's not like learning to knit where you learn to knit and then you know how to knit and then you can just knit. With money it's ever evolving, ever growing because we'll keep digging up these things of oh, wow, I didn't know that was in there in my psyche, I didn't know that behavior was in there or that belief was in there. And it becomes actually really fun if you allow it to be. It's this really fun exploration of our own inner landscape and also our partner's inner landscape, if you're willing to go there.

One of the things I really recommend is doing a weekly money date with yourself, if you're unpartnered or ideally with your partner if you're partnered, to go into what's coming up, and what's going in, what's going out and managing it together. And that can take a while to make it fun, but it's so worth it. And the clarity you receive and how much we clear out detritus that can fester over time, if you just do weekly 30 minutes, it's amazing. You can just clear that stuff out and open up the channels of communication and money flow.

Alex Howard - [00:18:51]

And I guess, initially, if there's been a lot of burying one's head in the sand and not dealing with that initially, that's going to be a project to figure all of that out. But if one does that well there's also going to be a point where actually it's pretty simple because you've dealt with the mess, you've got things organized.

And certainly my experience is that when money is in a mess, money causes a lot of pain. When money is well managed and money is working well it also brings a great deal of freedom and joy. For a lot of people their story is only the misery of money, but there is another side to this.

Kate Northrup

There is another side to it. And I, in my early 20s, I got myself in a ton of credit card debt and I was totally a head in the sand person for at least 5 or 6 years. I had creditors calling me. I wasn't paying attention. I was just spending money and just hoping somehow it would fall from the sky to cover it on my credit cards. And then I finally added everything up. I finally got honest because it was starting to cause so much drama and tension. I realized I couldn't just bury it anymore. And getting it all organized was painful but I had somebody help me. And it wasn't, it's so funny when we finally do something we've been avoiding, because I got it all organized. And I looked at the numbers and I had a much higher amount of debt than I thought.

Alex Howard

Often the case, isn't it.

Kate Northrup

So it was worse than I thought. But I think about the years of energy that I spent avoiding doing, what essentially probably took me 5 hours, maybe years of my life that I'm just like, I can't say it was wasted but at the same time, there's a lot of time and energy that I could have invested in other places, avoiding that 5 hours that was uncomfortable. However, when I found out that the number was worse than I thought, it wasn't devastating. It was actually freeing because suddenly I wasn't wasting all this energy trying to not know the truth.

Avoiding the truth is exhausting and incredibly taxing because there's a part of you that knows actually. So trying to ignore that part of you is incredibly exhausting and will lead to tremendous amounts of stress and burn out and possibly physical issues. And so I recommend just finding somebody who can hold your hand and get in there. A safe person who's loving. And get clear because the clarity will free up your time and energy in profound ways to be able to then change the situation.

Alex Howard

And there's something I think also however bad a situation is, you only discover how bad it is once. And then you've discovered it's that bad but now you've got a plan. And if you're following that plan, every day is a step towards it not being as bad as it was.

And certainly my experience having, early in my business life borrowed far too much money and had horrible personal debts and business debts and all of those things, was that when it came to life

decisions like needing a new car or moving home, because it was just all so overwhelming I'd often spend more than I should have done because I didn't really know where I was, and I was so frustrated and I felt I deserved it.

The irony was when I eventually got out of debt and basically had a total allergic intolerance to any form of debt in any way at this point in my life, I would often choose to make decisions of things I could afford far more, but choose less because there was a whole different relationship to it. And it's really interesting how that can change.

Kate Northrup - [00:22:47]

I love that so much because giving yourself that kind of margin is such a loving act. Giving ourselves financial breathing room is such a beautiful way to care for ourselves.

I talk about creating, instead of an emergency fund, I like calling it a cushion fund, because if we say for emergencies, we get emergencies, but who doesn't want a soft place to land of a cushion? So giving ourselves in our life, like living below our means so that we are not in this pressure and struggle is such a beautiful way. So we can actually create a relationship with our money where we're using it as a way to take beautiful care of ourselves. And that's particularly healing, especially for people who maybe had some gaps in care in their lives. And we can always, it's a way we can repair it actually.

Alex Howard

Yes. Yes. So in relationship, let's say someone's watching this or listening to this, and a lot of what you're saying is resonating, perhaps a little bit too close to the bone at times. There's a recognition that this is something that really needs some attention in their relationship. But maybe they're coupled with someone who perhaps is not so willing to have these conversations. Or perhaps it's their partner that's got their head in the sand and got the big debts or whatever. How does one begin that conversation? How does one invite somebody to engage in this in a different way?

Kate Northrup

This is so good. Okay, so there's a couple of layers here. First of all, it is very common that we want our partner to deal with something because it's actually something that we're not totally dealing with.

The thing that bugs you the most about your partner, money or otherwise, just take a look at, okay, is there any part of me that is avoiding that in myself and projecting that they need to handle that? So just make sure that you're doing your own money work first. Because sometimes what will happen is when you start to upgrade your own money story and when you start to do this work, not for any reason with your partner, but just for yourself, there's a magnetic quality of, hey, what are you doing over there? So there may be that, but you need to take responsibility for your own side of the sidewalk first.

And then coming at it from a place of an open heart, a place of vulnerability is absolutely the way to have that conversation. When we come to a conversation with our partner from any place of blame or thinking they're not doing it right or thinking we know how they should be doing things or they're not doing enough, any of that they will feel and just close down.

So getting to that place, and maybe it's doing a heart coherence meditation before you have this conversation, or swimming in the ocean, or looking at the clouds, doing something that's going to put you in that place of a frequency, of love and of openness so that you can come to the conversation and say, like, hey, babe, here's something I really would love to work on in our relationship. Here's why it's important to me on an emotional level. Would you be up for taking this adventure with me? Would you be up for working on this with me? And can we come up with a way together to do it?

As opposed to, hey, this is bad and we're in so much debt, and you haven't dealt with this and I have this program and we're going to do it together. It's probably not going to work. But a beautiful invitation, and you might want to think about what it is that you know your partner really desires? What are they craving? And how can you invite them into this experience in a way that draws them closer to their desire?

If it's like, hey, I know you love scuba diving, and I know that that's something you've been wanting to prioritize more, and we haven't been able to go on a vacation in a long time. I would love to make that happen for you. And I love lying on the beach. So let's look at this together. I know we can do it. And coming from that place of positive optimism and open heartedness, I think as opposed to coming from your wounded place, makes a huge difference.

Alex Howard - [00:27:10]

That's really important.

And there's also, I want to change track slightly because your second book, *Do Less*, I think in a sense, part of the the approach that also then, once we've got the money piece, we've had those difficult conversations, we've got a plan, we're on the same page, we're working together as a team. As we then start to hopefully evolve, perhaps earning more money, bringing more abundance into the relationship. The place from which we do that is also really important. So say a bit about that.

Kate Northrup

My second book, *Do Less*, is really about the same thing as *Money: A Love Story*, except it's just about your relationship with time as opposed to your relationship with money. Because another cultural idea that we've had and we've inherited is that the only way to work to make money is to have a certain amount of pain and struggle and suffering and self sacrifice. Then in order to deserve to earn, we have to have sacrificed something that matters to us.

And oftentimes that's our physical health, it's our relationship, it's our relationship with our kids, it's our creative pursuits outside of work. And I am really here to be part of changing our collective consciousness around what it means to work. Our culture is so screwed up when it comes to how we work.

So what do we do with that on a personal level? So first of all, we need to understand that if we are in a place of feeling like we have to put in more hours and it's never enough time, and we're never doing enough, and there's always more to do, and there's more things to do than there are hours in the day. We have to know that we are brainwashed to essentially be working robots of production. That our value in society has been wrapped up in our ability to produce something that's good for commerce.

We are not machines, we are not factories, we are human beings and our worth and our value and our identity is so much deeper and broader than how much money we can make in an hour, or what we can produce and the worth of that thing.

And so it's important to know that because so many people think, what is wrong with me? Why can't I manage my time better? Why can't I get more done? There must be something wrong with me. And I just want to say yes, of course, we can all improve time management, I teach that, all of those things, we can be more focused, we get better boundaries, there's so many options. And also there's nothing wrong with you. There's something wrong with society. And in order to shift society, we need to, of course, work on the micro level and change the way we relate to time and the change the way we relate to work.

And we can all do that no matter if you're working from home, if you're working in a company, if you run your own business, we all can make these tiny little shifts that ripple out and give the next person permission. And it's not, when people hear my book title *Do Less*, they're like, I can't do nothing. I have kids to feed. I have to keep the lights on. I never said do nothing.

Alex Howard - [00:30:54]

You said do less.

Kate Northrup

I did have a woman interview me about the book who said, at the beginning of the interview she was like, I was really annoyed by the title of your book, and I was ready to really not like it and I was like, okay. And she said, because I was raised by a single mom who worked three jobs and I expected your book to be about things like hiring a housekeeper and doing things that are only available to people of a certain income level or a certain level of privilege. And she said I was happy to read that there were literally no suggestions in *Do Less* that my mother could not have done.

Alex Howard

Wow.

Kate Northrup

So that's really important to know that, I mean, obviously, if you can hire a housekeeper, hire a housekeeper, but that's not like the strategy.

Alex Howard

You're not anti-housekeeper. Just to be clear.

Kate Northrup

I'm not anti housekeeper.

But there are ways that we over inflate.

Again, same thing, as we were talking about before, we have this idea that the amount we do equals how valuable we are. So the same thing as the money. But it's not. And so we just keep doing more things, trying to fill this endless void of being lovable, which really no amount of getting things done and no amount of making money is ever gonna fill that void if you're not tending to your relationship with the divine, your relationship with your body, your relationship with the people you love, your relationship with the earth and your soul. I mean, that's like a much bigger conversation than your to do list but it matters so much.

Because when we come to our productivity, when we come to our money from a place of wholeness the game changes. But you can't create wholeness through making more money or getting more done.

Alex Howard

What also strikes me as you're talking is, you were saying earlier that money is a thing that we invented, and as are the cultural ideas we have around work.

One of the things that struck me when I started employing a team in the U.S. is I remember someone saying to me, in my last job I got 9 days holiday and I want to make sure I keep those. I was like, you should know that in the U.K. the minimum legal requirement is 20 days holiday a year and most of our staff are 25 years to 30. So you're getting 25 days holiday. And they just like, what! People just normalize, they think that's a normal way to live.

Kate Northrup - [00:33:17]

And that is why it is so important that we keep in touch with people who live in different ways so that we don't just say, well, this is just how it is.

I know in Canada, they get an entire year of maternity leave.

Alex Howard

Yeah, it's 9 months here.

Kate Northrup

My Canadian friends are like, wait, you get 6 weeks, 6 weeks. And it's complete insanity. So it is very important to not normalize the ridiculousness of the way that, in many ways, certainly it's worse in the United States than other places. I don't know every country, but I know it's actually worse in other countries than the United States.

Alex Howard

Japan in particular is very bad like that.

Kate Northrup

Yes. The ways that we've been indoctrinated to be automatons and work our whole lives away.

Bronnie Ware wrote a beautiful book called *The Top Five Regrets of the Dying*, where she chronicled being at the bedside of all these people on their deathbed. And one of the top five regrets was I wish I hadn't worked so much.

My granny just died last week. She was 95. She lived a beautiful life. And she was not lying in her cabin at the end of her life wishing she had gotten more done. I promise you that. So we really need to remember what, none of us, by the way, know what we're actually doing here, but I do know that what we're doing here is not trying to get more done.

Alex Howard

Right that bit we can be clear off.

Kate Northrup

That's not it.

Alex Howard

So what are some of the practical things people can start with? So let's take the example of the lady whose mother's got three jobs and is single parent raising kids and it's just like, God, if I could hire a housekeeper that would change my life but I can't do that. What are some of the things that one can do?

Kate Northrup

So here's, I love this question because I'm very practical, actually. And so we need to look at what it is that is the result that we're looking to get in our life.

So for that woman, maybe her primary goal is to be able to make enough money to feed her kids and not go crazy in the process, probably.

Alex Howard - 100:35:471

To survive, basically.

Kate Northrup

Like basic survival and maybe every now and again, being able to put them to bed and get in a bath for 20 minutes before she goes to bed.

So, what I love doing is an 80/20 analysis. So 80/20 will assess Pareto's Principle. 80% of our results come from 20% of our actions. If you look at your customer base it's always 80% of your revenue comes from 20% of your customers, 80% of your headaches come from 20% of your customers.

So what we need to do is actually just have an analytical look at what is it that I'm doing with my time? And what are the big wins that I'm after? So in any category of your life, and you could do this for your marriage, you could do this for your business, you could do this for email list growth. I mean, you can get as macro or micro as you want.

But for her to write out the big goal survival with a little bit of thriving, probably. And then write on a piece of paper tasks on one side and then results, big wins on the right. And so big wins, she would first write out what were the moments when she felt like she was making it? What have been the biggest wins? Like getting a better apartment, getting one night away, like, what are those things? And having a great friend who's helping and they're supporting each other.

And then on the left side write out the tasks that we do on a daily basis. So laundry and making lunch and making dinner, but also getting really honest with ourselves and maybe doing a time on it where every hour you write down what was it that you were doing in the last hour? Because many, many times people are like, I don't have time. And I'm like, really. Okay, great. So give me your time for the week.

And oftentimes we are scrolling on our phones and zoning out. We are watching a lot of TV. We are drinking wine and sort of spacing out. We are doing things that really are not contributing to the overall dream.

So you've got your list of tasks, you've got your list of big wins, and then you draw a line from the big win to every task that was directly related to that win. And then circle the tasks that have a line drawn from them and that is your 20% in that area of your life.

And so for this woman she may be like, okay, but laundry wasn't related to my big win, but I can't send my kids to school in dirty clothes. Fine. Then figure out how you can make that thing that you do need to do, that's not part of your 20%, easier.

My friend Laura, she has two small kids, she runs a company, she has this system where she does the laundry and then she takes the laundry basket into the room. She opens all the drawers, and she just throws the laundry into the proper drawer. None of it's folded because she's like, my kids are 3 and 6, no one cares. And it takes her 5 minutes. As opposed to what I do, which is like obsessively folding tiny t-shirts. Not a good use of my time for the results that I'm after. So we have to get a little analytical and get honest with ourselves.

Alex Howard

I really like that. That somehow there's something, there's very simple, practical things that can free up a lot of time. And I think part of it is you've got to put that spotlight, you've got to actually take the time to analyze, otherwise you keep on doing what you've always done, you're always gonna get what you've always got.

Kate Northrup - [00:39:27]

And we tell ourselves, just like with money, we tell ourselves a story about our time, but the story is not always based on fact. So I really think a time audit is super important. Writing down what it is that you do over a week of time and then adding it up and seeing what the categories are. It could be sobering, but important. It's like that screen time report that you get on your phone. Some weeks in the past I've been horrified by it.

Alex Howard

I think we all have.

Kate Northrup

And over time I have worked to get that down because it was looking at me in the face saying you spent 4 hours a day on a screen or whatever. That's not how I want my life to go.

Alex Howard

Right.

Kate Northrup

So we have to get honest with ourselves. But the honesty is so freeing, just like with our money messes.

Alex Howard

There's so much more I'd love to ask you, but time unfortunately is flying tonight and I realize we're running out of it.

So people that want to find out more about you and your work, what's the best way to do that and what's some of what they can find?

Kate Northrup

Yeah. So you can head over to the theorigincompany.co

Which is the place that houses all of this work. We have a guide for you to get started with relieving some of the financial and time pressure in your life over at theorigincompany.co/relax

So you could check that out.

We have a blog that goes live weekly on *Strategies for Reimagining Work and Increasing Your Revenue While Being More Relaxed*.

And, of course, you can follow us on Instagram [@theorigincompany.co](https://www.instagram.com/theorigincompany.co) or just my account, [@katenorthrup](https://www.instagram.com/katenorthrup)

Alex Howard

Fantastic. Thank you so much. This has been an important conversation. I really appreciate it.

Kate Northrup

Thank you.