

SUBSCRIPTION ENTREPRENEUR



HOSTED BY ERIC TURNNESSEN, FOUNDER OF **membermouse™**

EP 130: How To Do What You Love & Attract Your True Fans with Adam Sommer

"So, if you're trying to start a business today, don't really expect its true face or form completely show itself for seven years. Doesn't mean the business can't take off by next week. Doesn't mean that so many amazing events, and networks, and connections can't be made in the seven years, but the true face of this venture will show itself in seven years."

INTRO:

You're listening to Adam Sommer - our guest on today's episode of the podcast.

Adam is a blogger, podcaster, and professional astrologer. And, over the past ten years, he's built up an engaged following and a business around his passions.

Now, he has a robust website where you can buy his products, book a reading, and even join his apprenticeship program.

But things weren't always this way.

In fact, after 7 solid years of creating content, growing his audience, and putting a lot of time, energy, and effort into his podcast, Adam found himself feeling like there was an imbalance in his work. He was fulfilling the needs of so many people, but wasn't being reciprocated in a meaningful way.

And that's when Patreon came out.

From there, Adam successfully launched his Patreon account and provided an easy way for his audience to support him and his work. Over the past three years, he's grown and developed his offerings on Patreon to the point where he's just about able to support himself completely from this community.

What I really enjoyed about this conversation is that Adam isn't your typical entrepreneur. He doesn't think in terms of "branding," "metrics," or even follow a traditional business plan. Instead, he has more of an artist's approach to operating his business and it was really refreshing to hear his perspective.

If you've ever wondered what actually goes into creating a legitimate business around your passion, you won't want to miss this episode. Adam shares with you how to know if you're starting the right business for you and whether or not to continue down the path you're already on.

Now, before we dive into this episode, I want to take a moment and acknowledge you. Yes, you! Thank you for listening to our podcast.

The reason I'm doing this is because last week I received an email from a listener named Warren who's been tuning in to our show regularly for the past 5 months.

Warren let me know that the conversations we have here on this podcast have been absolutely pivotal in helping him build the confidence to start his own subscription business.

It means the world to me to hear that the insights, knowledge, and wisdom shared here on the podcast are helping people in their own entrepreneurial journeys.

It is my aim to give you the knowledge I wish I had 10 years ago when I was starting my business in order to help you avoid some potential pitfalls along your path and move more quickly towards success.

If you've benefited from our podcast or would like us to address a particular topic we've haven't yet covered - I would love to hear from you. Send me an email at hello@membermouse.com.

Alright! Enough from me. As always, I'm your host Eric Turnnessen. And I hope you enjoy episode 130 of the Subscription Entrepreneur Podcast.

Eric: Hey Adam, welcome to the show.

Adam: Thank you Eric. It's good to be here.

Eric: Awesome. Appreciate you taking the time. So, to get started, let's tell our listeners a little bit about you and what you do.

Adam: Right. Well, I too have a podcast. It's called Holes to Heavens. And I've been doing it now for a little over a decade. And yeah, the topics that I like to explore are cosmos, everything. It basically circulates around astrology, bit of astronomy, sky gazing, mythos, some mythology, folklore, storytelling and psyche, which implies psychology, but also the soul in the true meaning of the word. So, it's a wide net that I cast, and it allows me to talk to a lot of interesting folk. And then I do a lot of solo shows myself. And I write, I teach, I counsel, I do a lot of stuff around that work.

Eric: And was the seed of that kind of a passion for astrology? Is that kind of the place that it started?

Adam: As far as the podcast? Yeah. Once upon a time to show was called Exploring Astrology. But as far as my interest and all those topics, they predate the show. For example, I went to Naropa, studied transpersonal psychology, creative writing. I went to a Five Element Acupuncture school, got certified as a medical Qigong therapist. I've always been interested in

consciousness. And astrology was just something that grabbed hold of me about 12 years ago. And there really wasn't much out there at. Well in fact, there was nothing as far as podcasting was concerned back in 2007, '08. So, I don't know if I was the first, but definitely one of the first podcasts on the subject.

Eric: Nice.

Adam: Yeah.

Eric: Now today, if you take a look at your website, you have a ton of stuff on there. I mean you're doing your podcast of course, but you also have the ability for people to sign up for readings, doing apprenticeships with you. You have products for sale. So, can we talk a little bit about how from just your interest and your passion for the different topics then transitioned and turned into something where you were running a business?

Adam: Right. I guess through the lens of astrology, one of the most surprising things that just came along was how you can actually make a living being a professional astrologer. I had no clue that that was actually a path. And one of my first astrology teachers was very helpful in laying it out for me, as far as being lucrative. And you can really create a life for yourself through it.

So, I went for it and it worked from the beginning. But one of the most exciting things still to this date for me around astrology is that it really does include everything. It's like if you're into finance, you could do financial astrology. If you're into doing relationship counseling, you can be a relationship counselor. If you're helping people move or the perfect location, there's astrocartography. There's so much to it. And at this point with modern astrology, so much of it bleeds over to where you can't really tell the difference with psychology. So, there's a lot of that. And when you study the greats of the past 100 years within the movement of psychology, like Carl Jung and Roberto Assagioli, they were all fascinated with astrology. And that's initially what caught my attention is that some of my heroes within that world were very interested in astrology and I wanted to know why. So, now it just feels infinite as far as the exploration.

Eric: Yeah. Well, if there's one thing that's for sure, it's that people aren't going to run out of questions anytime soon.

Adam: No, no. Hence the title of my website, by the way. That's the idea that, did you pick up on it being a Jack Johnson lyric?

Eric: No.

Adam: Okay. Not many people do. You must not be a Jack fan. It's okay.

Eric: I'm forgiven.

Adam: Yeah, for sure. There's a song called Holes to Heaven, and the line in it is, "There would be so many fewer questions of stars were still just holes to heaven." The problem with such an idea is that we do have questions, and that's not really what's going on, at least through our cosmological lens. So, we have questions. So, that's what I like to do with my work.

Eric: Right. And are the answers direct?

Adam: Do I give a direct answer? Sometimes, that'll be my answer.

Eric: An indirect answer indicating a direct question, a bit of both. Okay. So, your teacher early on helped you understand that you could take this astrology somewhere and make a living out of it. I think we who are wanting to turn a passion into a business, we can all end up in a place where we are surrounded by people who are encouraging us. And that's always a good indicator. But then there is another step where people can get caught up in, which is okay, I'm getting encouragement. But now how do I actually, what are the tangible things I need to actually do to get this off the ground and manifested? So, what did that look like for you on your journey?

Adam: I love that question. Consistency and a commitment to every time I step to the page or the microphone to make it better. So, I treat everything that I do even when I'm working with clients, as an opportunity to improve the art. So, I've never felt lazy around what I do. I'm just doing a podcast because I have to, or I'm just writing this because my readers are expecting me to write something. It's like I only create if inspired, and I know that I can fully show up to it. So, with consistency for over 10 years, I've been able to show up like that. And then I think you gain momentum. People are like, "Wow, every time I listen to this, there's something in it for me. Or every time I read it, there's something more for me." So, that's the best advice I can give anyone is just be dedicated to whatever it is that you do as an art form.

Eric: Now taking advantage of the fact that you're the guest right now and you understand psychology and what the role astrology has to play. Let's talk about alignment. Because sometimes people are thinking about doing something and going to something where maybe they don't have the support in terms of their personality, their true interests. And maybe they're just thinking they want to do that because of maybe some external factors. And they may not even be aware that this is what's driving them. But from what I've seen, it's easy to recognize when somebody is in that situation because it's very hard for them to get consistency, because they aren't getting that feedback from the thing that they're doing in a way that it fuels the momentum. So, I'm not sure the exact question here, but do you kind of get a feel of what I'm talking about?

Adam: In the question. I think you're searching for the feedback that is needed for someone that's starting a business or any adventure.

Eric: Yeah. How do they know they're getting into the right thing? Because that's the foundational aspect, right? You have to have certain supports from within your personality to have potential success.

Adam: That's right. Well, I think first and foremost, you have to feel that there's spirit involved. So, when you actually are doing whatever it is that you're setting out to do, it has to fill you up and not take away. That's bottom line.

Now as far as the feedback, I think that no matter what you're doing in the beginning, as long as there's one person that responds every time you create something, that's enough. That one person is putting a log on the fire, and with consistency. And if you're still being filled up by spirit as you're creating, there comes a point... and especially now because say with podcasting, it's not hard to get 1,000 true fans. It might take a year or two, but if you're consistent and there's good content, I think it's pretty manageable to expect 1,000 listeners every time you put out a show.

And Tim Ferriss talks a lot about this, that if you have 1,000 true fans, you've made it. Because if there's people just waiting for you to create something every week, well, I mean it's a bar scenario. Some people want to be the next Joe Rogan or something like that when you're thinking about podcasting. That's not realistic. You have to have realistic bars to set.

So, I'm not much of a goal setter, but like with the way I answered that third part of the question, I think that's a reasonable goal to set for folks, like within a year's time. Yeah.

Eric: Yeah, and I think your first comment about look, if there's one person listening to you, that's good. It's one that really needs to be, especially in today's environment, that people need to remind themselves of. Because you go on every potential social media tool, YouTube, Instagram, etc. And obviously people you follow have tens of thousands of people. So, you want to be there. And it can easily become overwhelming trying to shoot for that. But of course, those people having those numbers, you mentioned Joe Rogan, how long have they been doing it consistently? Right? How many shows does he have?

So, if you want to get the things that people have, you also have to take the time to recognize the work that they've put in and that it doesn't just happen overnight. Because if we look at where people are and what they've achieved without taking into account the reality of how they got there, then we can become overwhelmed and it can block us from taking our first step.

Adam: Yeah Eric, comparisons are odious. And social media encourages comparisons. And also, the dopamine drip of likes, and shares, and comments, and the very commonplace experience of getting trolled as well, which can really knock you down a few pegs if you had momentum. All of a sudden someone's like, "Your voice is terrible. You should just shoot yourself or stop." Right? I've encountered so much darkness doing the podcast because of people that are just troubled, and they're faceless. They have no name, and they just spread that kind of darkness on a social platform. There's a part of you that knows it's not something to pay attention to. It

actually does nestle itself somewhere in your subconscious and it lives on, and you need to be very discerning in working with that, because it will happen. There will be critique.

Eric: Right. So, speaking of darkness, when you were talking about the podcast and getting started, and the importance of consistency and how it helps you grow over time. Now there are also, in the beginning it could have mostly be leaning towards favorable things, favorable responses. There is an energy to that initial growth. That's nice. But there does come a time where the tests start to happen. And I think you've mentioned to me at certain points in time, the podcast has gotten to a place in your relationship to it where you didn't want to do it anymore. So, let's talk about that a little bit and hear how that came up for you, and how you handled it.

Adam: So, I'll answer that within a time span that I think really does apply to all of our ventures in life. Whether it's relationships, or early childhood development, or say something like podcasting or business, and that's the seven-year-itch. You probably are familiar with the term or at least the Marilyn Monroe movie. It's a real phenomenon and it relates to from any given moment, say right now you and I are doing this podcast. In seven years, Saturn will square itself from where it is right now.

And why that's important. I know that probably a lot of your listeners aren't familiar with astrology or care too much about it. Maybe I'm making an assumption with that, but it's a very important concept because Saturn relates to the third dimension or this reality and how time works here. So, the experience of gravity, and the experience of aging, and the experience of just how time works. So, if you're trying to start a business today, don't really expect its true face or form completely show itself for seven years. Doesn't mean the business can't take off by next week. Doesn't mean that so many amazing events, and networks, and connections can't be made in the seven years, but the true face of this venture will show itself in seven years.

So, for myself, after podcasting for seven years, I got to this place where it was very popular podcast. Everyone was always waiting for me to do another one. And thus, it created a really interesting problem where I was doing them every week. I couldn't calculate the amount of time and I was putting into them, but a lot. And podcasts are free.

Now they're also a way of marketing. Say, you mentioned how I do readings and I teach, so I was able to get clients from the podcast, which is amazing. But energetically, it got to a point where it felt quite unbalanced that I was putting all of this effort into the podcast and then the return was minimal. And then Patreon came out, and Patreon in some sense saved the podcast because I was getting very fed up and mentioning of trolls. Actually, at the seven year point, I started to get a ton of trolls. I think that's just a symptom of getting more popular. But almost on a daily there'd be an email, or a comment, or something that would just attempt to knock me off my center. And it was becoming incredibly annoying as well.

So, Patreon comes out, decided to give it a try. And within six months I felt an entirely new relationship to the podcast bloom, because I was now getting paid to do it. And that's where

I'm at now. I feel like I can almost survive off of Patreon. Not fully, but it definitely helps month in and month out.

Eric: And how are you organizing? Well, first of all, I'm not sure everybody's aware of Patreon, so just the brief of patron, but then how are you organizing it so that it's being successful for you?

Adam: Right. So, it's similar to all the other crowdsourcing platforms these days like GoFundMe and Indiegogo. Indiegogo's one, right? Yeah, those types of ideas. But it's a little more specific to say resurrecting the old renaissance idea of having patrons to your work.

And what's different about it is there's all these pledge levels that you can incentivize the support. So, the way I have it structured is there's a dollar level where people have access to podcasts that I only do for them. So, there's 30 of them that the public has never heard, and that's just for a dollar a month. At five there's access to a two-hour parlor or a Q&A that we do as a community. 10, access to a class that I do every month. And 25, I slow release these apprenticeship recordings for people that want to get much more serious about learning astrology. And that 100 level includes everything plus a monthly tutoring session with me. And then if they make it through the entire program and do all the tests, I can certify them as a professional astrologer.

Eric: Yeah. That's cool. And on the surface of it you listing it out like that, it's very elegant. However, each one of those items is something that you personally have to organize and create. Content or otherwise. So, that must have taken a little bit of time to get to the place where it is now.

Adam: Three years I think is how long I've been doing this. And I really do enjoy it because I do see how it's creating a little bit of a community, which is a huge intention that I have with my work is bringing people together. Yet it's also a bit of a prison.

Quick example of that is I was just in England. And in the final weeks of my time in England, I decided to take a break. I'm terrible at taking breaks. And through that break, I didn't do a class. I postponed it to this month. I didn't do podcast, postponed it to this month. So, in that process, which turned out to be actually a three-week rest, I lost a ton of patrons. So, it's finicky like that where people where if people aren't getting what they are signing up for, then they're like, "Screw this. I'm paying for nothing." Where really the true spirit of patronage, which I hope it gets to that point at some stage, is simply to say, "I love what you're doing. Here's energy in the form of money. Keep creating." Michelangelo probably wasn't giving art lessons on the side to his patrons, right? He had patrons who were like, "Keep painting, keep sculpting. You're amazing." So, we'll see. We live in a different world, very capitalistic.

Eric: Yeah. Well that reminds me of a theme that's been showing up recently in my world, which is the idea of if there's something that you want to create, you have to communicate it. So, in this situation, if you have a vision of what patronage means to you, and what you want to

create. So, it would be important then to have that be something that's clearly communicated to patrons. "Hey, I'm going to be taking some time off. This is why it's important to me." And if it's truly a community that supports you, they'll understand and they'll stick with you. And the more that things are communicated openly like that, yes, there's going to be some shakeout, right? But then it's going to attract more people who are resonant with the message that you're putting out, which is ultimately what you want. Because the more that you can be clear about what you're trying to attract to you, the more that it's going to attract those people because you're very open about it.

Adam: That's a great point. It's true. I'm sure you've experienced podcasting for how long, how long have you been doing this show?

Eric: I think it's just almost exactly a year.

Adam: Baby podcast. Okay.

Eric: Baby podcast.

Adam: So, yeah, after doing it for 10 years, it's taken so many forms. What you just said is so accurate to my whole philosophy around doing it. There's certain language that you can always use, there's certain ways of talking about what it is that you're trying to create that always refines who's listening and who you get to work with. And at this point, I feel unbelievably blessed because those that come to my retreats, those that choose to learn with me or get sessions with me. They're my teachers. I attract these people that are just incredible, and I feel incredibly blessed because of that, because it wasn't always that way. In the beginning, I would attract desperate folks. I did donation-based session, so people would have sessions with me and be like, "I have to give you something? I thought I would just say thank you as a dimension." Or I got a pair of socks once for reading. That was fun.

Eric: Amazing.

Adam: Yeah, not even good socks.

Eric: But this is, we're using a certain language with this. But to me this is communication. Effective communication in terms of attracting your market is what marketing is.

And I think this is what also one of the challenges about just getting into starting a business is because I think what happens when we want to start something new, a lot of times we're looking for some sort of guidance from people who have been there and done it. And especially in the business world, what can end up happening, or entrepreneurship let's say. What can end up happening is you go around and look and immediately you're introduced to all sorts of terminology. Marketing, sales, revenue, a lifetime customer value, conversion rates, all this stuff. And the problem with that is it starts, it's such an alien verbiage, disconnecting from the human component. That naturally, I think it takes people away a little bit from their connection

with their passion and what they're doing. And they think that they need to follow these guidelines, do what these people say, in which case now since you're listening to something external instead of listening to something internal, you're going down a road where you will have to rely on that more and more.

And to me, it's important to remind myself even at the stage where I'm at with MemberMouse, it always comes back to our individual relationship with everything. The answers are there. And if we're looking outside of ourselves for the how we should proceed, then where it can easily get lost and guided in directions that aren't our own. It's different for implementation. If you know your direction and you need to implement it, that's totally different. Because then it just becomes about tools for manifestation, which is less, I don't know what the word is. But I think it's more effective to listen to people in regards to those tangible things. Once you visualize the architecture of the building you want to build, sure. Now go hire an architect and a builder. But don't hire somebody to visualize the building for you is I guess what I'm getting at.

Adam: I like it. And what I would add is yeah, this verbiage. For example, brand. I had a brief dance with a business partner last year, and it was a terrible experience and there was a lot of conversation in the beginning of it around my brand. I know it's common speak. People have business plans, they have a brand, they have this whole thing. But the problem with that for me and the way that I work, is I've never once thought about it.

My brand, I don't know. It's what I do. And my business plan is just how I show up and what I do. I guess I have an artist's mentality around all of it. So, it's hard to say put a brand or put any words around exactly what it is. I have a hard time even saying what I do. Because it's not exactly astrology. I use astrology, just like I use many other tools. But I don't know how to put a word to it.

Eric: I'm just visualizing a New Yorker style cartoon where some marketing person in a suit is asking the sun, "What's your brand?" You know? And the sun's like, "Yeah."

Adam: "I'm just painting guy."

Eric: No son, like the sun in the sky.

Adam: Oh, the sun.

Eric: "What's your brand, sun?"

Adam: Okay, I thought you were talking about father, son.

Eric: No, no, no. That's a little bit more complicated. No, the sun in the sky. "What's your brand?" And the sun's like, "I just shine. What do you want from me?"

Adam: That's it. That's a great image.

Eric: Yeah.

Adam: So, okay. Want to go deeper into that?

Eric: What do you want?

Adam: What do I want? I want to be like the sun Eric. I like that. There's a term I use often, borrow it from the Irish I do. Called radiant contentment. And I think when we find radiant contentment in our living, really in anything and everything we do, we're pretty close to wholeness. We've figured something out. But because we're talking about business and this growth process. You have to have, like the way I answered the question initially of how to build something, you have to experience radiant contentment with what you do.

In the beginning I remember thinking that I was only talking to Hermes himself and versions of myself in the audience. I didn't have an audience. I was just talking to a god and then an audience of 1,000 versions of myself judging me. So, I didn't really care if anyone was listening. It was more or less practice in elocution, and practice in delivery. And I'm really into poetics in the power of speech. So, that's what it was in the beginning. I think it's still in the spirit of that today, but I'm now way more aware of my audience. And especially in the environment that we're in, it's sculpted my language unfortunately.

Eric: But is it that you're way more aware of the audience, or that you became way more aware of yourself, which made it that the audience reflected that?

Adam: A bit of both, I would say. I mean the main way of me becoming aware of my audience has to do with this climate we're in. This PC culture that we're in. And I can honestly say that I was pretty naïve to it all until it started to attack me for certain things I would say, or people's names that I would mention. So, I was in a way initiated from my naïve state into being incredibly careful around my speech because I was unaware. Which I'm not saying it's a bad thing, I'm happy that I'm aware of it now. At the same time, it does feel restrictive.

Eric: I like this concept of radiant delight. I've never used those words, but I've often talked about it. In the context I most often talk about it is if somebody is asking me if they should start a business. I'm like, "A, if you're asking if you should do it, you probably shouldn't do it. And B, if you're going to do it, it's really important that you have some passion in regards to what you're doing beyond whatever fruits you think you're going to get from this." Because to me, the beauty of business or any project or anything, any endeavor that one puts themselves into, the value of it is not what we think it is. The value of it is that it will test you and then it will help you become more of who you are. So, there's going to be ups and downs. And to me, the only thing that ever helped me get through those dark times in the business was that connection to radiant delight. It's that constant that you can always go back to regardless of what waves are happening on the surface of the ocean, influenced by whatever storm. Right?

So, it's very important. Now this is, I think one of the biggest questions that maybe people have is how do I find my radiant delayed? What is it for me that is that? Do you have an answer to that? Does astrology have an answer to that?

Adam: I don't know if the chart has it specific attitude. It definitely gets you in the right neighborhood. But there's techniques that are pretty easy to employ that help. And of course, I deal with this question all the time. Because often when people reach out for reading, they are searching for one of three things. A love, a career, or purpose, which is found within the previous two. And I think Chogyam Trungpa, if you're familiar with him, he's who founded Naropa, has a really succinct technique for this. It's called first thought best thought. And he used to employ it with the students, but also in the way that he would write poetry. So, it's like the way I do it is asking a series of questions, like is your name Eric? You answer yes. Are we podcasting? You answer yes. Do a couple of those yeses like that. And then asking a question like, "Well, what brings you radiant contentment? What brings you the most joy?" And the first thought that comes up with, it's in an instant. So, when you see people thinking about, it's like nope stop, we got to do this again.

The first image that enters a person's mind is the answer to that question. And often, it'll come up and then there'll be excuses immediately afterwards. But, I can't be an actress because it's just not realistic. I don't want to move to California, and I don't want to go to acting school, and I don't want to do all that. It's like okay, well that's your passion. And you can often look to a person's early childhood, around age seven funny enough. To what they were up to by default, where their spirit naturally gravitated to early on in life. And find it there. Like a person that wants to be an actress, and then at seven they were a childhood actress or were just totally theatrical all the time.

Eric: Doing plays for their family, whatever.

Adam: You get it. And when you're able to locate that, then you can use something like the chart and see it. Say maybe they've got a Leo Sun with the whole story pointing into the Fifth House, which is a story that would basically resonate with that one. And you're like, "All right, well this is the deal." And then you can work with transits, other timing techniques to help create a plan for them to execute this vision.

And that's where astrology becomes useful. Astrology for the most part, I would say over 90% of the astrology out there in the world, probably even a higher percentage to that is damaging, and uninteresting, and useless to me. It's just not helpful because it's in a way attempting to describe a person's personality, which innately, it can be a little helpful, right? There's some value in that, but the real value of astrology is understanding the complexity of time, and karma, and light. And if you can work with the three of those and find where a person's at in their story and then help them to really own the fact that they are writing the story, and no one else is. That completely changes a person's life. And I think that is probably one of the primary things that I like to do with people is to help them have that epiphany and then find themselves in the story.

Eric: I was just having a conversation with somebody yesterday and reflecting on my journey with MemberMouse and how a lot of the things that happen with that journey followed directly after me going through periods of times where I was adamant that I didn't want to do something that I ended up doing.

For example, I was adamant that I didn't want to start a software company. So, I was doing something else. I was running some business that sold a dating info product or something like that.

And then more recent times, I was adamant that I was a behind the scenes guy and I didn't want to be in front of people. Right? But now I'm doing a podcast. I was adamant that I didn't want to travel a lot, but I've spent in the last 12 months, I've probably been traveling 50% of the time. And I was adamant that solitude is my favorite thing, but now I'm getting more into community stuff. Right? So, it's almost like if you're adamant about something that's really not right for you, it's possible that that is the thing that you're supposed to look into, right?

Adam: You're onto it. There's many voices isn't there in our head? And it's quite confusing to know which one to listen to. But there is voices that we should listen to more often than others. And whatever voice was keeping you adamant around pushing away what spirit was wanting from you, it's probably a voice that you should turn the volume down a little bit on, or at least have a name for it. Like, "There you are again." It's like well ...

Eric: Well luckily for me, there seems to be a component of the universe where if I don't listen, it ultimately just slaps me in the face and makes it so obvious. Right? Like for the adamant about not starting a software company's situation, I basically ended up creating a membership software for the product that I was building, and I simply just built it for that site. And then people started asking me if they could use it. Somehow they found out about it and I'm like, "No, I just built it for myself." And then people kept asking and kept asking. And then at some point, the hardheadedness dissolved and I was like, "Wait a second, I'm not making any money with this thing, and all these people are asking me to pay me money to buy this thing. Maybe I should do that." Right?

So, that's somehow, if I don't end up listening, it becomes obvious in other ways. But in recent years through different meditation practices, I've gotten to the point where I can make things easier for myself by dealing with things when it's just a seed as opposed to waiting until it's a tree, you know? Which was the case of being out of it against a software company. I could have heard that a lot earlier on. It would have been more clear if I had the perception that I do now.

Adam: Eric, that's beautifully stated. And the only way of being able to deal with the seed before it becomes an overgrowth scenario that is suffocating your life is through awareness and contemplative practices. If you don't have that, like a meditation practice. I don't know if it's possible. And I actually think the same is true.

Eric: Possible. It's possible only through grace.

Adam: Through grace, right. And it just makes so much easier in our living to have more awareness and a more careful thought process around what really is going on. Because there's a myriad amount or just myriad voices in our psyche that are all competing for our attention. And without something like meditation, it's very hard to know how to separate all of them. And actually, astrology is quite helpful for that because that's what you're dealing with is these gods and goddesses, these planets that are those different voices. And there is a hierarchy of needs around them. Right? If Mars is the one that a person is constantly paying attention to, they might have a ruddy phase and have a shouting voice, and constantly being lost in drama within all of their relationships. Because that's the only voice that they're responding to. So, it's great insight.

Eric: The way that I've come to look at it is the meditative practice gets you to a place of stillness beyond the mind. And the mind is a conditioned thing. We like to think that there's free will, and maybe there is, but it's not in the context of the mind. And the mind has very predictable behavior, although it's very tricky to our own understanding. So, if we don't go beyond the mind at least a little bit, then there's no opening for some true transformation to happen from beyond. And meditation is about dipping into a deeper place beyond the mind, so that the mind can be influenced beyond thought.

Because if you're trying to influence through thought, then it's just the mind playing with the mind. It can't truly change. It's just like there's so many great books, so many great theories about how to create transformation in your life. But my belief through my direct experience is that if you're truly just making it a logical analytical exercise, you may feel like you're getting somewhere, but really, you're just putting on another pair of clothes in a sense.

Adam: Yeah. The magpie mind is the name I give it. In Buddhism, they talk about the monkey mind of thought to thought, just hopping around and being distracted by all the shiny things and what not. But what you're saying, there is a consciousness beneath all that is zinging around as far as thoughts and memory, and epiphany even that's in there.

Eric: Right. I'm not even separating the consciousness from who we are. Because I think one reaction people can have when they hear about conscious, "It's something beyond me." And it is, and it depends on what you mean by me. But to me it's like think of the sun as yourself. And then your worldly experience is living on the earth. Now if there's a lot of smog in the sky where it's cloudy or it's rainy, you're in some way separated from the true nature of who you are. So, in clearing away those clouds, it's not as if you're changing yourself in a sense. It's just that you're removing the barriers to who you are. You're removing that debris. It's like if you're watching TV in your house with the volume really loud, you're not hearing the birds chirping outside. Both are happening, but your awareness is on one thing because of the loudness and the presence of it, and the other things happening and it's there, but you're not tuning into it. And ultimately, all these things are still important. The TV's important, the birds are important, but it's about which one am I going to focus on? Like you were saying earlier, which voice am I

going to give balance to or a priority to? And ultimately, that discernment, you can't have discernment just without experiencing all the different actors in play.

Adam: Potent metaphor where we landed. Going back to the New York comic strip example of the sun and asking it that question. Well I just shine, and I think that's our true nature. That's the mystery of consciousness that still is as great a mystery as ever. And sure, it might exist outside of the body, but it animates this entire experience as well. And it all does come from the sun, our star who gives life to this whole theater as you might say.

So, that's the job of removing the clouds and awakening the sun within. And all the words that talk about it symbolically point to the idea of awakening or enlightenment, allowing that to occur. It's like becoming a sun. And you can see it in the masters, you can see it beaming from their eyes. Funny enough, the sun rules over the eyes and the spine physiologically speaking, in astrology. So, when the spine is healthy and someone understands the subtle energies, then it comes to their eyes and also you see the halos around heads, don't you? That's this process of, yeah.

And to add to it because I think it's really important to where we've got to in using the sun as this pivot, is the symbol for this sun in astrology is a circle with a dot in the middle of it. Both are non-dual as far as their symbols are concerned. Every other symbol in astrology is dualistic by nature. But the sun is the only one that has a bindi in the middle of it and a perfect circle. And it teaches something profound to us I think.

Eric: Yep. And speaking of profundity, this entire conversation is a metaphor of every single journey. We start off, we started off more in the concrete level. We were talking about business, and then we ramped up and now we're more in etheric realms. So, now as a reminder in about going through life, we do have to come back down. We can't just stay in the etheric, it has to be applied to the real world and how we manifest and move through it. But the relationship to the etheric, through meditative practice, contemplation, is important to inform these things. So, getting back to the more concrete things, in running your business, in a business that's based around a passion where as you said, it's not about you having made a business plan or chosen to focus on a brand. It's just you going on your personal journey and being willing to share that with people. So, how do you stay inspired and motivated at this 10 year plus journey to continue to create content for your audience, and how do you stay consistent and fresh with what you're doing?

Adam: First of all, beautiful segue, Eric. Bring us down, bring it back down. But I'm still going to have a piece of the sun in my answer because to answer it properly, it's to follow the sun. Literally. And what I mean by that is the most manageable language that I use around it is following spirit, and it's a very simple call and response with life. So, as far as staying inspired, it's not hard for me to be inspired, because I am a pretty open minded individual. I'm surrounded with interesting folks. I'm always in conversation that stimulates me. And I'm into a lot of different subjects, very interdisciplinary minded. I've created something that allows anything in. It's not just astrology anymore, right? So, basically, whatever I'm up to at any

different stage, whatever I'm listening to musically is going to show up in my work. Whoever I'm reading is going to show up in my work. I'm very impressionable actually. I'm very influenced by whoever I'm around. Thank God I don't pick up accents or else I'd be talking British right now. I never did that when I was there. I am proud of myself.

But yeah, it's staying relevant. And not in popular sense. I don't care about that. Staying relevant as far as well what's happening in my life and how can I translate what's happening for me into something that is tangible for my listeners and my readers? I think that's the great challenge for all of us that are content creators.

And I don't want anything as well to exist in a vacuum. And that's a huge pitfall for a lot of content creators that are astrologers is writing about new and full moons for example. Well that's irrelevant in a month. No one's going to go back to a post about a new moon two years ago, doesn't matter. So, many people create that because it's what a lot of folks want. Or how about this one? Horoscopes. No one's going to read their horoscope for the last week or 10 years ago. Maybe last week, some people were pretty crazy about it. So, I'm completely disinterested in that, and the main thing I'm trying to do is capture the spirit of where I'm at and to make it timeless. Is it relevant 10 years down the road? I hope so, because that's what I'm intending to do. Does that answer your question?

Eric: Yes.

Adam: Okay. Uh oh.

Eric: No, I mean there was just something about what you were saying that was resonating. I was not fully willing to reengage the mechanism in my mind until I let it settle a little bit. Okay. Well, where do we go from here? Maybe-

Adam: Microphone drop. That's the idea. That's where everyone listening to this needs to go with whatever they're doing. Stay inspired.

Eric: But what about those, is everybody meant to find that in their life?

Adam: I honestly do think yes. And it looks different though because of cultural programming.

Eric: Sure.

Adam: People think that success looks, that's why I mentioned earlier, comparisons are odious. If you don't know the word odious, it's deserving of hate. It's a pretty strong word. That you can't compare yourself to anyone. Like you were saying, you don't know where they've been or how much they've worked. And luck, I mean, people do have breaks. But there's also the whole concept of karma. And I don't know, I think in a lot of sense we do create our own karma. And by saying yes to certain opportunities and being crafty with our choices, we put ourselves in the right place.

So, it will look different for everybody. But I do believe, after doing thousands and thousands of charts for people in my decade long career, it is very clear that everyone has a story that they're planning out. It just doesn't look like anyone else's story. So, once they-

Eric: But there seems to be, and I agree with you. But there also seems to be, for lack of a better word, constipation. Something about, and maybe it's just all part of the journey. But I just encounter a lot of people where it's clear to me, they make it clear in maybe subtle and not so subtle ways. This is what I'm interested in. But then they also have very strong stories about why they can't do it. So, how do you deal with that?

Adam: The essence of the work I do with people. It's like how do you deal with constipation? Well, there's so many layers to it, Eric. For one, just dealing with thoughts that are blockades. And where do they come from? Well, cultural influence, familial influence, philosophical, religious influence. Trauma early on. And I think so many folks, especially in conscious communities, are expert at spiritual bypassing the formative years and going straight into past lives to explain their situation. Not interested in that. And it's not that I don't think there's some strange relevance to past lives, but I mentioned the seven-year thing. Well, there's usually trauma around that age, but also around ages two to four. The birth story Stanislav Grof's work. The nine months we were traveling in our mother experiencing every single thing she experienced. There's all of that content. And if mom never believed in herself or she always wanted to be a writer and never allowed herself to do it because she got pregnant and then was stressing about money, and then just became a full-time mom. Well that story is injected into the very cells, if not the DNA of child. And thank God we now know that epigenetics is real in the sense that we can actually alter this. I do think that we can change the stories, no matter how deep they are. I think it is possible.

So, there is a certain amount of free will. And the deeper you go down the astrological road, you realize that there is an equal amount of faith. It's scary when you see it. So, it's 50/50 to me, but we do always have a choice. So, working with all of that is a way of empowering a person to find the radiant contentment. And just trying. You're not going to be Hemingway probably, but at least you can get a fountain pen and a journal, and begin writing. Because if it makes you feel good, that's all that matters.

Eric: Right. Right. But to be Hemingway is isn't the same thing about ... that was like the social likes of the day. The real value that anybody has imparted. Hemingway, anybody we recall today who lived a while ago. We look at their work, right? We look at their tangible things. But to me, that's just the tip of the iceberg. They were brave enough to go through the journey of life and express themselves fully. And the energy of that expressed in their work. And that is what people are connecting with in their work. Not the words, not the music, not the sound, right? We put too much precedence on the vehicle, and not enough on who's the energy behind that vehicle. Because that's the real thing that speaks to us.

Adam: The spirit.

Eric: Right.

Adam: It's the spirit. And in many different ways we've described that Eric. It's the sun. It's the spirit. That's how it works. And for me, that's how I live my life. I follow the weird with the why spirit through everything. And that's how I can keep doing it because it doesn't feel like it's a road that ends. As long as I'm breathing, there is going to be the capacity of experiencing spirit within myself, but also being able to recognize it in people, and in all of the artistic expression in place, and everything. So, I just follow that. And in a way, I try to get out of the way. I don't take much ownership to my creativity. They're not my words, it's not my podcast, whatever's coming through. I usually don't even remember. And I rarely do this, I rarely listen to my podcast. And when I do, it is an outer body experience for me. I said all that? That's me talking? It's like wow. Sometimes I'm appalled. Sometimes I'm amazed. It's like huh, that's really interesting.

Eric: Yeah. Well speaking of roads that don't end, since we're building our relationship with truth right now, we could continue talking about this stuff endlessly. But I think we've allowed a lot of great stuff to come through here. And I certainly appreciate you coming and sharing all this. I did not know what to expect in doing this episode, which I liked not having expectations. It's just the ride. And I'm very grateful for what's actually come through and I hope people-

Adam: Me too.

Eric: Find value in it.

Adam: Yeah. It's a great pleasure to continue the conversation, Eric. You and I met because of something that we're talking about. Following the spirit. All of a sudden, we're across from each other outside of Santa Fe having tea, and then you come on my show. I come on your show. It's like the conversation continues. Yeah, I see it in you. I see it in you for sure. Yeah, I'm really happy that this is happening and I hope someone listening to this got value as well. One log on the fire.

Eric: Exactly. If one person burns all their clouds out of their vision of their sun, that's enough, right?

Adam: That's it.

Eric: So, yeah, certainly appreciate it Adam. Thank you so much.

Adam: You're so welcome.

OUTRO:

Thank you so much for listening to this entire episode of the podcast. And many thanks to Adam for coming on the show and sharing from his experience.

I sincerely hope you enjoyed and benefited from our conversation and are now walking away with some clarity you can apply to your own life and business.

If you'd like to learn more about Adam, be sure to visit his site at HolesToHeavens.com.

To get a full transcript, the show notes, and links to all the resources mentioned in today's episode, go to SubscriptionEntrepreneur.com/130.

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In our next episode, we'll be speaking with Luke Ward. Luke is a membership site entrepreneur who recently sold his business. We'll be hearing from him about his entire journey: from his first idea for a business, to its creation, and ultimately its sale. This will be a fantastic episode and I can't wait to share it with you.

Stay tuned and we'll see you next time.