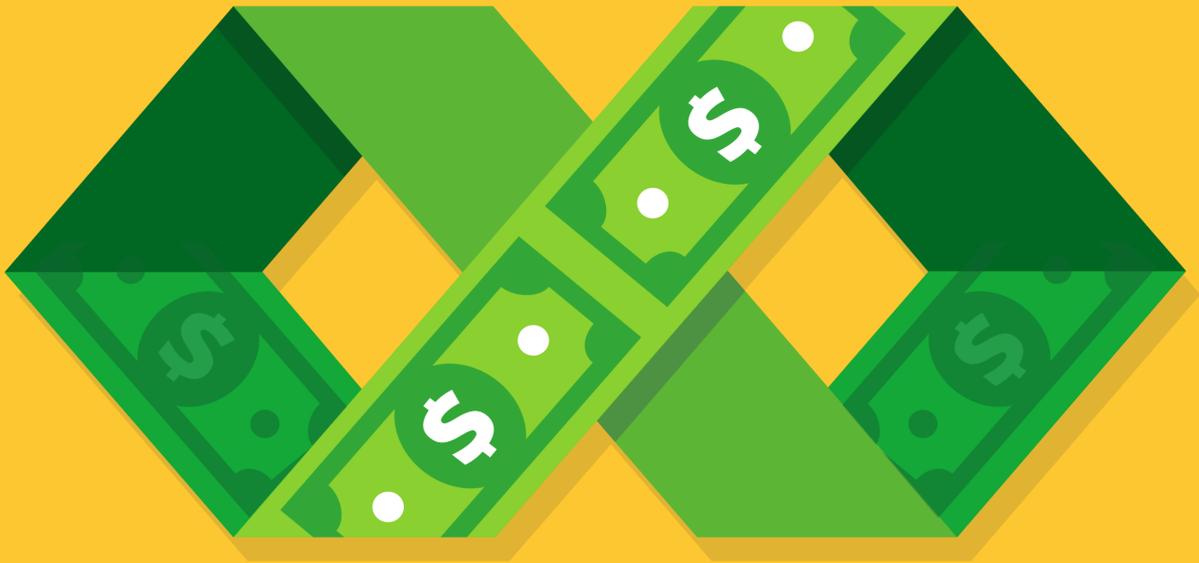


SUBSCRIPTION ENTREPRENEUR



HOSTED BY ERIC TURNNESSEN, FOUNDER OF [membermouse™](#)

How to Build a Thriving Community that Converts with Neely Quinn

“And my life's purpose is to give people the resources and information they need to live a better life. That's my purpose whether it's in nutrition or emotional stuff or climbing training or whatever. That's what I want to do and I feel like I have found a perfect outlet for that with TrainingBeta.”

INTRO:

You're listening to Neely Quinn – my special guest on this episode of The Subscription Entrepreneur Podcast.

Neely is the founder of TrainingBeta – a membership site that provides people with world-class rock-climbing training and education.

I'm really excited to share this episode with you because Neely and I discuss the specific things she did to take her initial idea for TrainingBeta and turn it into a profitable online business.

We explore the systems and strategies she's put in place over the past few years to attract a loyal audience, create engaging content, and manage her growing team.

If you've ever wondered what really goes into building a successful membership site, this episode is for you.

As always, I'm your host Eric Turnnessen and this is The Subscription Entrepreneur Podcast.

Eric: Hey Neely! Welcome to the show.

Neely: Hi Eric, thanks for having me.

Eric: Oh yes my pleasure. It's my understanding that you just took a trip out to Wyoming.

Neely: I did. I went to Ten Sleep Wyoming and I went climbing for 2 weeks.

Eric: And how was that?

Neely: It was fantastic! I achieved all of my goals and I had fun with my girlfriends.

Eric: And what was one of your major goals for that trip?

Neely: Oh well this is going to mean nothing to your listeners. I just wanted to climb this one climb that I had tried years ago and then I wanted to do a bunch of other things that were little bit easier than it, but a little more quickly than I would normally do. I did all of those things.

Eric: And what was the rating on that climb that you wanted to do?

Neely: It was a 5.13a

Eric: This is getting into your business and you train for rock climbing. How did you originally get into rock climbing?

Neely: I moved out to Sequoia National Park after my freshman year of college from Wisconsin and I met a guy there and he introduced me into climbing. Then I went back to Wisconsin and kept climbing in the gym and I have not stopped since then.

Eric: Oh, that's awesome. And at what point did you realize that you wanted to do something in business in terms of your climbing?

Neely: Well it wasn't until around 2012. I realized I could do something with it and yeah I had the background I felt to do it. I found a need in the climbing community for really easy to use climbing training programs. I was trying to figure out myself. I was like "I need to train" and I looked online and I read books and I got really confused. I was like "I wish somebody would just have a website that had something that was really step-by-step and easy to read and use," and that's why we started TrainingBeta.

Eric: Right, so and at that time when you recognized that that need was there, did you have any technical experience in creating what you ultimately ended up creating?

Neely: Yes, so I had worked for, well I was currently working for, a company called Paleoplan.com

Eric: Oh, okay yeah I know them. They are a customer of MemberMouse.

Neely: And that's why we came to you guys too was because I had experience with you guys through Paleo Plan. Jason Glaspey was my boss there and he owned the company. I watched him create this subscription program for people wanting to eat paleo and so it was a meal plan and I helped manage it and create it. He put it together, like he had the initial idea and then I came on after that. I saw how it could work and how it can be a very sustainable income to having a subscription program. That was our main goal when we first started TrainingBeta was to have both a program and products that were really helpful for our people and also something that was very predictable income for us.

Eric: Right, so that was kind of like an internship for you, a mini MBA program. You got to get a first-hand glimpse. I think that's the best way to learn. You know you can go to school for two

years and ultimately, it's the practical application of something that actually helps you accomplish something if you want to go do it yourself.

Neely: Yeah exactly. I was very very fortunate to have that and to have an inside view behind the scenes of what really went on at PaleoPlan.

Eric: I'm really excited to have this talk with you today - I'm going to get my notebook and pencil out to take notes. I talked to you a couple weeks ago one of the things that you mentioned that you focus a lot on and had the most success with was building your audience and that's something I find is generally important when you're growing a business and something we're really focusing on here now at MemberMouse. This is the thing that I really want to dive into because you've done a really great job with it. Your site has grown rapidly you've got tons of great content on there. You have a thriving community so obviously you're doing something correct.

Neely: Thank you.

Eric: So, going back to what you just said, you guys started with a plan. You came to it day one and you're like - this is our objective. So, what are some of the first things you did to get everything up and running?

Neely: I did all of the design work on the website, which I'm not a designer and I know it's not great. So that was a huge part of it - was just getting it designed and up. After that, it was about creating content so I would create stuff, my husband would create a blog post. We started to do videos. The end goal was to create these training programs. I'm not a trainer my husband's not a trainer, so we had to outsource that. That was part of the issue too - who is going to create these training programs that I trust and I want to have a business partnership with?

Eric: You had the training programs from early on?

Neely: Do I have them?

Eric: Had you created the training programs early on?

Neely: No, so the first training program - well I think I started the site in 2012 and the first training program was on the site by 2013.

Eric: In the meantime, in that year you're basically like getting things up and you launched but after you launched and in between getting your first training program was focused on content creation and certain things like that?

Neely: Yes

Eric: And just so people know who are listening the site is Trainingbeta.com and this will be in the show notes. Looking at the site yes, it's not an award-winning design but, I think that's important to know because this has not gotten in the way of your success. The fact the fact that the way the site looks has not gotten in the way of your success, which is important for people to understand. I've seen people get tied up in trying to mimic some site that they like and thinking that they need to spend \$5,000, \$10,000 getting an amazing looking site. They think it's about the looks of, but ultimately it's about the value. The fact is you have so much content on the site. Obviously, you built it over time but like you said, when you started your objective was to offer that value, to build that content and have a - what did you say - a predictable income or sustainable reliable income. The way you do that is by building your community that wants to follow you, you are giving them access to something they can't get themselves. The design it's functional, everything is very clear and that's what's important about the design I think.

Neely: Yeah, I think that has been the priority that everything - I'm a very straight to the point person, I just want to get the point across very clearly so that has been the priority - can people read this clearly, is there any junk in the way? No? That's okay for now.

Eric: When you were first creating your content and putting it out there, what kind of response were you getting and how did you make adjustments to move things forward and grow?

Neely: Well I was sort of surprised by the response that we did get. I would write things about nutrition or about my own training and my husband would do the same about training in general blog posts and we would put them out on our Facebook page and we would boost them. So that we would gain more...

Eric: That's a part of the Facebook ads?

Neely: Yeah. That was something we did from the very beginning we also boosted as to get more people to like our page so that they would be seeing our stuff. That was huge because we now have - I mean it's not huge but we have over 35,000 people on our Facebook page which is helpful but, you still have to pay. So anyway, we would pay it to get these blog post out there and I think people were just really hungry for this information. We got in in at a time when training was sort of just this thing that not many people were taking that seriously. It just blew up in the last 5 years. I think we just got in at the right time.

Eric: Yeah for sure. I was in Portland and there was a couple of rock-climbing gyms already and then another one being added. It's a hobby and a sport that people are really getting into. Even mountain biking and stuff like that is really blowing up.

Neely: Yes, it is. The climbing community is getting bigger and so by virtue of that obviously our audience is going to grow and also people are very interested in getting better at climbing. That requires training so - we had a good idea at the right time.

Eric: I think that that's really key that you guys did that Facebook boosting. One of the hardest things to do especially with a new project is to getting that momentum, getting the ball rolling, getting critical mass. Once you get enough people interested and, if you're providing good content, people will grow it themselves in a way. It seems like it was a really important part of your strategy, but of course you had to deliver of course. You couldn't just pay for that and have nothing of value on the other end. Was that just something you naturally were able to accomplish based on both of you backgrounds or did you make or end up course correcting making adjustments based on feedback with the way that you are drafting your content?

Neely: At a certain point I realized that I couldn't do everything myself. You know how it is. There are a million things you could be doing. I was trying to create content and I wasn't getting very much out there because I had so much to do. I ended up hiring a content manager and during the last four years we have definitely evolved what we're putting out there. For a while we were just putting out - we would find good training resources that somebody else had created or posts or articles and we would summarize them on our own blog. One of the main points was to have all of the best training information in one site. That was one of the ways we could do that but now we do blog posts that are just about - I transcribe all of our podcast and so sometimes we'll put transcription highlights up or we'll hire out writers from the community about training - their own training experiences. We do all kinds of things now. We really had to listen to people about what they wanted.

Eric: How did you do that? What were the approaches you took in terms of how to listen?

Neely: We get emails from people. We get Facebook messages from people. Sometimes people would post on Facebook about our posts - what they wanted to be different and sometimes you blow these things off but, most of the time I try to listen. I want to give people what they want. My whole goal and my approach is very to the point - I'm a very honest person and I want my website to be very authentic and useful for people. If I'm not making it useful then there's really no point for me to do it because it's shameful for me almost. I want to have really high-quality content.

Eric: I'd like to dive into an individual content story for a bit. I think that this is really important to the audience building. I'm on this arc in this interest in getting from you how you've built an audience, but I think that content and your approach to it is powering that engine. I'd like to hear more about what are the strategies that you employ for producing content. You mentioned a couple of them. You repurpose blog posts - sorry podcasts and you also reach out to members of the community that have value and you pay them to produce a blog post or something. Are there other methods that you use for producing content?

Neely: Yes, so my content manager's name is Matt Pincus and he is an avid climber and trainer. He actually trains people. I asked him as part of his job to write on a regular basis because he is a good writer as well. And that was my job at PaleoPlan. He's kind of becoming me when I was at PaleoPlan. I would write several articles every week, I would interview people. For that yes, I'll have him write articles. I'll just reach out to friends or people who I've interviewed and ask

them “will you write up your story?” I'll have people write in and tell me about their training program and I'll ask them for a few more details and ask them if I can publish it. Because I'll get these random emails from people who are like “I'm so psyched this is what I'm doing,” and I'm like - this is great content. Sometimes I'll have people ask a question and I'll write an email back to them as an answer and I'll just use that as a blog post like a quick Q&A. Other than that, it's just people's stories, trainer's stories, and sometimes I'll have practitioners on, yoga practitioners, physical therapists. There's a lot of injury prevention stuff on our site too. It was really branched from training for climbing to not being injured for climbing.

Eric: Right, and that must be something that you were hearing. Your audience was telling you.

Neely: Yes and I knew that they loved it because with the podcast I can tell who's listening to what. Three of the most popular podcasts were with a physical therapist who was talking about injuries so, I knew that that is what people wanted.

Eric: That's great. In terms of your overall audience building strategy, what part do you think your content creation efforts play in that? What percentage of the overall strategy?

Neely: Looking at my stats right now I think it's 75% of my traffic is from organic searches. We've put a lot of work into having proper SEO on the site, having keywords that are repeated in articles. I really do think that that makes a huge difference. That's why I started transcribing so that people could find these interviews more easily. I pay somebody - not that much to transcribe every podcast episode which is like pages and pages of content. That's been super helpful too.

Eric: What are some of the top SEO strategies? When you are reviewing, I imagine either you or Matt reviews - like if you have guest writers or somebody else producing the content - do you have a process of reviewing that for strategic things in regards of SEO and if so, what are the things you are looking for before you get it live to maximize the value of that content?

Neely: I'm not super good at that but we use the plugin for SEO that basically makes us check boxes and write things in the proper places and that sort of takes care of it for us. We either get a green light or a red light on it and we know if we've done a good or bad job. We use Yoast.

Eric: Okay you use Yoast. We'll put that in the show notes for people. What is the remaining 25% if 75% is content creation?

Neely: It's Facebook. It's links from Facebook and other social media and so Facebook is definitely number one and then I think Reddit, which we have done nothing with Reddit that was just completely organic from people talking about us. Then Instagram has become really big now too and I'm a little bit scared of Facebook and where it's going. I don't trust that it's going to be our main source of social media traffic for very long. I actually hired somebody to just do my Instagram.

Eric: What are some of the things that you're seeing that make you concerned about the future of Facebook?

Neely: It's just that you have to pay so much more to have your readers or the people who like your page to actually see your stuff. People have disengaged with Facebook a lot. A lot of my friends just don't even use it.

Eric: Yeah, I don't use Facebook.

Neely: Yeah, it's kind of a generational thing and the younger kids are only using Instagram and other platforms. People just don't like it as much because there are so many ads.

Eric: Well Instagram is Facebook.

Neely: Yes, but people like it more for whatever reason. It just seems a little bit more authentic for some reason. We've had to completely change our approach to using social media as a means to getting people over to our site using Instagram. It has to be a way more authentic host instead of just ads.

Eric: Let's go into that. I agree with you and I think for me personally I can smell a mile away if I am dealing with some marketing team or if I'm dealing with a person - that I like. What are the kinds of things you're doing there. It's such a weird thing there. Authenticity - you don't want to start talking about strategy, but at the same time there's a mix between the right-side and the left-side of the brain. If you're doing one-on-one with somebody no problem you're authentic. You are who you are but, as soon as you want to start talking about tapping into who you are and your authenticity and getting it out there there's a conversation that happens and sometimes that conversation can lead you away from authenticity. You can go down the wrong direction and you can make it to mechanical. So how do you play with that balance? What are you guys doing?

Neely: First of all, I will say that I am terrible on social media. I don't like it I'm not on it. I'm only on it for my business and even then, I'm just watching what my people are putting out there for me. I know that if I were to be in charge of my Instagram or Facebook we would do terribly. So that was the first thing that I had to just be okay with. Then I found a friend of mine who has her own pretty big following. I think she has 13,000 or 10,000 followers on her Instagram just for her own climbing. She has this way of speaking to people that people really connect with and enjoy. I asked her to do our Instagram. She has all these ideas. My main point is get somebody who knows what they're doing and who is 24 years old and knows how to speak that generations language.

Eric: Who is who interested in it? Who is enthusiastic about it?

Neely: Exactly.

Eric: That enthusiasm I think is the indicator that it's the right fit. I am the same as you, I could care less about social media in terms of engaging it with myself but I also recognize that it's super important and just because I'm not interested in it doesn't mean that somebody else isn't and somebody else could do it. This goes back to what we were talking about with your journey with the content creation, as an entrepreneur and a business builder you have to learn to let go of the things as you move forward. You have to outsource it. There's only so much a single person can do. If you try to do everything yourself you're not going to be able to - and you're going to naturally steer away from those things that you aren't comfortable with. It doesn't mean that we have to be comfortable it means that we can find people who are to do them.

Neely: Exactly. So, she's just found different ways to engage people. We put photos up that are nice to look at and we pay photographers to give us photos which, I think is really important to be fair to photographers out there and then she writes something about training or about an article that we recently put up and links to them in our bio. That has really helped our Instagram audience to engage with our actual website which is really awesome.

Eric: For those people who may have never created content or managed content strategy - I know for me before I got into behind-the-scenes stuff I naively thought this stuff is magic and it just shows up - this blog post posted today, this guy woke up and just wrote it. But no, there's a schedule, you plan this stuff in advance and you've got a schedule looking out for what's going to be produced and you have the resources to do it. I'm guessing that that's Matt's job you have a schedule and you guys go over it?

Neely: Yeah, we make a schedule. It's rough. I'm not super stringent about when things get published. He has a rhythm that he sticks with the podcast and transcript highlights. He'll have a thing that he does on Mondays and the things that he does on Tuesdays and so forth. We also have spreadsheets about different authors that we bring in and windows are going to be published and how often they should be published and how often we can afford to have them be published because we are paying these people to do these things. Yes, there is a schedule for sure.

Eric: How much do you guys consider stats? Do you look at Google Analytics? Do you look at anything in regards to how people are engaging with the content, the metrics and do you determine what you're going to do based on that?

Neely: We do look at stats for sure, but we don't determine what we're going to - we do - I shouldn't say that. The things that we have stuck with now are definitely things that we have looked back on and seen that people were engaged with them. But, it's so hit-or-miss. That was even with the Paleo blogging stuff that I did. You would write a blog post and think nobody is even going to care about this and then thousands of people would read it. I would think - okay well now I know. We kind of go off of what we know is going to work but, we also let ourselves be surprised by other topics. We want it to be very variable what we're talking about.

Eric: I want to start to pivot her because we have talked a lot about audience building, content strategy, but at the same time like you were saying - you have to pay these people, you have to run the business and you are supported by your business. This is supporting your lifestyle. It's something that supports you, it supports other people so there has to be some profitability. All those expenses at the very least have to be covered. There is this whole thing about ok you are getting this huge audience now so how do we convert these into paying customers? This kind of gets back to the beginning - originally you wanted to do training and you are getting into that can we talk a little bit about how you started making the business profitable?

Neely: The first thing we did was partner with a trainer and his name is Chris Peters. At the time he was pretty well-known climbing trainer. We made an eBook with him and it was this 6-week power endurance training program. We paid somebody to make it into a pretty e-book for us and then we sold it through MemberMouse as a product. It was \$39 and I remember the first time we sold one and I got the little email and I was like omg we're making money!

Eric: Yes \$39!

Neely: Then we partnered with another trainer to do a different e-book and then we partnered with some other people who already had eBooks created and we just sold them on our site. All these people were getting a percentage. Then finally we made our first subscription program. Now we have two of those and those are definitely our bread and butter. We are in the process of creating new ones that are more in line with the current thoughts and theories in training.

Eric: Again, I think this is amazing. You are using the strategy of strategic outsourcing and partnership, which is great. You are not putting out everything on yourself and you are allowing yourself to be more nimble and move by partnering with these people who are experts who have a place in the community, somebody who has something to say about you.

Neely: Yes exactly. I recognize I am not a trainer and these people have a lot of knowledge to give.

Eric: I hear you say a lot of what you are not. So, what are you then? You are not a trainer, right? You are not a social media person but, you are real and straightforward. Do you consider yourself and entrepreneur?

Neely: Yes, for sure. I think by definition I am an entrepreneur, but I'm also a nutritionist and I haven't talked about that.

Eric: How does that play a part in it?

Neely: I have a wonderfully huge - not huge, but pretty big audience. I have the opportunity to offer my nutrition services to people all over the world. I'll have Skype and email coaching with them. That's something I do for part of my income. Then, Matt Pincus does personal training online as well so that's another revenue source for us. I'm a big picture person and I'm a doer, I

can follow through with things and I can manage people, in a very fair way. What I wanted this whole thing to do was to support me and some people in my community so they can live the lifestyle that they want which is - we want to be climbing and traveling around the world and that's exactly what I provide for people - an income so they can do that and freedom to have their own schedule, which is what I have and always wanted to have.

Eric: That's amazing. Doing what we love to do. If we are not doing that then things are good. I can imagine a personality similarity between the fact that you do rock climbing - I've never done rock climbing actually, I did go to a gym once and I was doing bouldering. I was completely making those rookie mistakes. I'm like "oh I can climb to the top of this wall," but of course I used 200% more energy than I needed. Right, so I could only climb for 10 minutes. Then you realize oh this is about stamina this is about a lot more than getting up this wall.

Neely: Yes, it's a whole mental game, there is a lot of scheming.

Eric: These are two such big parts of your life. I'm sure that there are lessons learned in one that apply to the other and vice versa. You may be on a wall and like - my muscles are saying this but I need to get to that point and pushing through that. That's a lesson and experience that can be applied.

Neely: I think so. My husband is the opposite of me as a programmer and he has a job with a big company and he likes taking direction from people. He likes having somebody to tell him what to do. When I said to him I want you to quit your job and go on the road with me I will support you doing this thing. He was like "oh my God are you crazy that's such a huge risk." For him that's what this is always been - a risk, and for me I'm an optimist. I think you have to be as an entrepreneur. I knew that this would work. I knew I could make it work.

Eric: An optimist and a little bit naive.

Neely: Yeah, a little bit crazy.

Eric: How is it working with your partner? We have a lot of customers who do that - a husband and wife team. I just wonder what's that like?

Neely: It was hard. It's hard sometimes. He doesn't really work with me very much anymore. He does some back-end stuff that I don't really have much to do with. It wasn't the greatest thing for our dynamic but, it also allowed us to be on the road for more than a year and have the freedom. I would not necessarily recommend it to people and I don't know how people do it for years and years. I did want to say one other thing about what I am. I did some business coaching recently and found out what my life's purpose was. And my life's purpose is to give people the resources and information they need to live a better life. That's my purpose whether it's in nutrition or emotional stuff or climbing training or whatever. That's what I want to do and I feel like I have found a perfect outlet for that with training videos.

Eric: That's amazing. Coming back to your coaching program, we talked a little about how you get these created, how you're outsourcing that leveraging other resources. What's the approach that you were using, to expose these things to people? So, people are coming to your site from these different channels: organic search, Facebook, they're coming through your content, they're coming through your podcast. Where and how are you then saying to them - hey we also have training?

Neely: We could be doing a better job at this to be honest. I don't like to be in your face about things. I put it on the side bars of the blog, I put it at the bottom of the blog. I have a little description of what we do. I have banners. It's obviously in the top menu. But also, in the podcast I mention it in the beginning and at the end. And I have mentioned it in the middle. I used to take ads/sponsors for the podcast and I realized it was more worth my time to use those spots for myself. That's really big. I know the podcast is definitely where my biggest audience is for sure.

Eric: We haven't even gotten into the podcast. When did you decide to do that as part of your content strategy and what impact has it played?

Neely: In the very beginning I started Interviewing my friends who are professional climbers because I lived in Boulder Colorado where they all lived - or a lot of them lived - and they were my friends. I am just going to put some interviews on videos out there of us talking about your training. Then, I realized that video was a pain in the butt and people were more into podcast. I started doing the interviews in 2012 and my first podcast was out in 2013. I just wanted to give people free information and that's what the podcast is. That's how that started and it grew pretty quickly. I started out with getting 1000 downloads or something and now it's way beyond that in fact millions of downloads in the last 5 years which is amazing! The biggest thing with that is the podcast is not about me. It's just me interviewing people - just like yours - about different topics and again it was the right place at the right time.

Eric: I resonate with a lot of the things you're saying especially around life purpose. I'm in a similar situation being the founder of MemberMouse and we have a huge community of really brilliant entrepreneurs who are a lot more successful than I personally am. Like you, I just happen to be around these people and I can put a microphone in front of them and other people can benefit from what they have to say. That's something that I'm really resonating with now and enjoying. I can see the stats of people signing up for a MemberMouse and not everybody makes it. There's a lot of obstacles. It's not about MemberMouse. It's about starting a business. There's a lot of obstacles in starting a business. If somebody comes to us and they have experience - they know what they're doing they'll get it right and MemberMouse will support them technically but there's a lot of people that come and it's their first gig. They have something they want to do and I feel like conversations like this with people like you who have done it - and I think the most brilliant thing about this - is the things that I'm hearing is you're still yourself. You say - oh I don't like doing this thing, I could do a better job with marketing my content - but the fact of the matter is, you're in the top 10% of all MemberMouse customers in terms of success.

Neely: Oh my

Eric: The numbers show it. I think that one of the keys for me and listeners can take away is - you can be yourself, be authentic. Don't think that you need to change who you are or copy - there's a lot of emphasis in online business that here is the perfect strategy here is what you have to do, here is the launch formula, here's all these things. Of course, that stuff has value but what I have come to learn from watching thousands of customers who have come and gone through MemberMouse, the ones that are successful the ones that aren't, is that you have to be aligned with your passion and enthusiasm. When you do that people respond to that. No questions asked - if you put yourself out there and you share what you are interested in - you will have success, period.

Neely: I hope so. Yeah, I think so. If you're diligent with it and you keep trying.

Eric: That's the thing, you'll run up to yourself even when you're enthusiastic and you're excited, you run up into yourself every single day. It's like yes you're enthusiastic about climbing a mountain but, that mountains not going to magically go into to an easy slope for you to walk up. Right?

Neely: Nope

Eric: You're climbing that mountain and there is an obviousness to the fact that you're climbing a mountain. It's a shear wall and you could fall off of it. There's some risk involved. You're putting yourself up against that. The business is the same way but it's less tangible. People don't look at it that way. They think they may have different ideas - think it should be easy - because it's challenging it means that it's not the right thing for me to do. But no, it is challenging

Neely: Yeah

Eric: That's the point of it.

Neely: When I first got into it I was like, "I'm going to make millions of dollars!"

Eric: We got to put some echo on that in the editing by the way - millions of dollars!

Neely: I haven't been as financially successful as I wanted to be. That's something that really caused me a lot of strife for a while. I was really sad about that for a while. Then I was like - I work 20 hours a week sometimes and I get to climb whenever I want to climb. My measuring stick for what success is has definitely changed.

Eric: I had that same journey in the beginning. I was a consultant and I was working two jobs to fund MemberMouse. It was a bootstrap operation. In the beginning it was my dream board - those were the days of The Secret, the book - we aren't going to put that in the show notes. I

had a dream board and on that dream board was a Bentley and taking trips to tropical locations and blah blah blah like a certain type of house and I don't care about any of that stuff now. It's more the things that are of value are - what do you do every day, are you interested in it? There's only the day. You wake up each day you go to bed each day and in between those two things it doesn't matter what you have or where you are, you're there and how you feel about things and how you are with yourself - your outlook on things - it paints the entire perspective. So, getting to those points where you are okay and you can do those things that you are naturally enjoying. You've made it.

Neely: I think so. As long as you can do the things that you want to do and feed yourself - maybe even have a husband who makes lots of money to help you out. You know whatever works, but I'm definitely content.

Eric: I'm definitely going to take notes on that. I need to find a husband who's going to support me and who makes lots of money. I'm going to put that in the show notes. I have a couple final questions. If you had to do this journey over again, would there be anything that you would do differently?

Neely: That's a good question. What I do anything differently? Yes, I think I would have been - I probably would have bet had better boundaries about my partnerships with people. I would have had more firm expectations of them and of myself so that I wouldn't have had some of the disappointment I've had.

Eric: Can you be a little bit more clear about that when you say more firm boundaries with your partnerships? What's an example?

Neely: Sure. That's extremely vague and new-agey. I got into a partnership with a certain trainer and he gets a certain percentage from me every month from the sales that we make and he doesn't do anything. He literally doesn't do anything at this point, which is fine, but it breeds resentment in me. I should have had the foresight to see this coming and put into place something that was more comfortable for me. That's something that I will do going forward, so I did learn from it. Things like that I'm a little bit willy-nilly about certain things. I just want to have good relationships with people and it's hard for me to be a hard-ass sometimes.

Eric: Or recognize your own value. I have made that mistake too early on and I do things differently now. For me, how I see why the change happened, I'm like "oh actually I am bringing value to the table here." We need to make it a fair opportunity for both people. I'm not coming to this person begging them. No, here's what I bring to the table and I think it's a win-win. I don't need to give away the farm to get this person to get involved.

Neely: Yes exactly.

Eric: The second question, in your business today what is the biggest challenge or growth opportunity, the new area that you want to get into?

Neely: The biggest challenge that I'm facing is honestly - the biggest challenge with this business I am so interested in so many different things that it's really hard for me to sit down and do the amount of work that I know I need to do to get to the next level. I know that that makes me sound really lazy and maybe that's a word that someone could use to describe me. I don't think I'm lazy, I think I'm overly excited about all different things. I don't think there's any specific technological challenge that we have or anything like that.

Eric: What is the next level in your mind?

Neely: The next level is having X more number of members and making X more number of dollars and having X more number of podcast listeners and readers. Something in my mind that is really really respectable.

Eric: The thing is - we had a conversation with Martin Wilson in our last podcast and this comes up frequently in conversations I have - when you get to a certain level, the technique you used to get to that level is not the same technique that you can use to get to the next level. It seems like maybe there is a shift that needs to happen. Whatever you have done to get to wherever you are now, which is an amazing place to be, was done with a certain set of strategies and certain natural aspects of your personality. Whatever it's going to take to get to the next stage of the business seems logical to think something different has to happen. I'm in a similar place. We have all this success, everything's great, but how do I get to the next level? I feel resonant with the idea of being lazy. I think it's just because I'm hard on myself I'm like - oh I should be doing this or - but the fact of the matter is we are not lazy, obviously. One thing you mentioned was a business coach. I have been thinking of doing recently is talking to a lot more people who are at the levels of where I am looking to go. I feel like there is a magic synergy happening there. You know what it is? It's nice to have somebody else to tell me what to do.

Neely: Yes, it is.

Eric: It's great running the business and being that guy, but I also sometimes go volunteer at a retreat center. I work in the kitchen and it's one of my most favorite aspects of me doing that. There're all these older Indian women who run the kitchen and I go in there and I'm not a CEO, I'm nothing. They're like "you go chop vegetables" and I'm like - great! "You wash dishes," and this is awesome. Just do what somebody else tells me to do.

Neely: Having a business coach is good in that way for sure.

Eric: In any event, I know you're going to figure it out. Either way it's good to recognize that you have arrived in a sense. At this point anything else that comes is gravy.

Neely: Yes I think so. Thank you.

Eric: I really appreciate you taking the time to talk to us. There's been a lot of great information here. I'm thankful to have you as a customer and I wish you the best of success going forward.

Neely: Thank you. It's been an honor. I'm honored that you asked me to be on the show. Thanks. I appreciate it.

OUTRO:

Thank you so much for listening to my entire conversation with Neely.

I hope you're walking away with a clearer picture of what really goes in to build a successful online business.

Many thanks to Neely for coming on the show and sharing from her experience.

To get links to all the resources we talked about in this episode, you can head on over to SubscriptionEntrepreneur.com/180.

There you'll also find the complete show notes and a downloadable transcript of our conversation.

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Thanks for being here and we'll see you next time!