

## 81. Embracing What's Next with Lori Allen – Transcript

**Leah:** Welcome to Her Story of Success, a podcast featuring stories from influential women trailblazers and business leaders who have defined & pursued their own versions of success and fulfillment. We hope these stories, lessons learned, and celebrations inspire you to believe in yourself and enjoy your own journey a little more. I'm Leah Glover Hayes, your host and CEO of Her Story of Success Women's Business Collective.

On today's show, I have the honor of speaking with Lori Allen. She's the founder of Bridals By Lori and star of *Say Yes to the Dress Atlanta* and *Say Yes to the Dress Bridesmaids*. In the 40 years since she opened Bridals by Lori, Lori has grown her business to become the major success it is today, and she's built a reputation as one of the world's top experts in bridal couture. Most recently, Lori also wrote a book called *Say Yes to What's Next*.

Lori is obviously an incredible example of a successful woman business owner, but I especially admired how open she was about some of the struggles she's faced. In our interview, Lori talks about battling breast cancer, raising kids while running a business, and keeping her marriage healthy throughout big life transitions.

Before we jump in, I wanted to let you know that this conversation was actually part of a live event I hosted with Insperity back in August. If you'd like to be a part of these virtuals meetings and get to network with amazing women like Lori, visit [herstoryofsuccess.com/events](https://herstoryofsuccess.com/events) to sign up for some of our upcoming events.

Lori, welcome. We are so excited to have you. And I would just love to have you start with this book. So we all know that you have *Say Yes to the Dress*, but share with us, why did you write this book and who is it for?

**Lori:** Well first, thank you for having me. I mean, what an honor it is to speak to other women in business, because that's who I am and where I come from. So this is the perfect platform for me. And I admire you for doing this and getting women together to discuss things. *Say Yes to What's Next* evolved from a lot of people asking me when I turned 60, which was last year, I'm 61 now. And when I turned 60, several people started asking me when I was going to retire. And I'm thinking "what?!" I mean, it really took the breath and the wind out of me. And I'm thinking, "I have so

much to offer. I have such a wealth of knowledge in my business that no one else has, and I'm not near ready for that." And then it started making me mad. I'm like, "Would you ask that of a man? And why would you assume that at age 60, that I was going to put a sweater on and go on a rocker at the Cracker Barrel?" That's not happening girls. No way. So I'm taking a shower, I'm getting madder and madder, I call my daughter, she has her own company also, she's got a marketing company. And I'm like, "Molly, I want to write a book." And she's like, "What do you want your book to be about Mom?" And I said, "Women over 50, women in general, because I want to reach all women, but I specifically want to reach the demographic of women over 50, and how important it is to say yes to what's next and how to just stop and take a moment in our lives and figure out if we really have passion, and if we're truly happy with where our life is going." And that's kind of how the book evolved.

Molly supported me 110%, and I went to her company and I'm like, "Let's just lock ourselves in a room." I took three days off work and we made the outline. We came up with the first chapter, I turned it into my agent, who turned it into a booking agent, and it sold in no time. So I think the book was meant to be, and I think the message, more importantly, is so prevalent right now, because with COVID and all of us having to slow down, I think we've all, at this point in time, taken a step back and said, "You know, life's changing, everything's changing, but we cannot give up. We have to keep moving forward and going forward and saying yes to what's next."

**Leah:** I love it. And you're so right. We all have so much more to give. I love that you are focused on that. And I get the privilege of interviewing women over 50 all the time, and I feel like there's just this energy right now of women that are like owning it saying, "Yes, I have so much experience. I have so much knowledge. I have so much to give, and my time is valuable and it's worth it for me to continue to, to learn how to make money while I'm helping other people." So, yeah, I love that. Let's go back. A lot of us are business owners on this. I have a new, I call it my baby business, I've been in business for a couple of years. Take us back to when you started Bridals by Lori, because there were not as many women business owners back in the day as there are today. So can you share with us a little bit about what that looked like when you said you wanted to start a business? Was everybody supportive? Did you get all the funding you needed? What did that look like? Getting started 40 years ago?

**Lori:** Yeah. So this December will be my 40th year in business. And I went to an all-girls college in Columbia, South Carolina, I'm actually a business major, not a fashion merchandising major, not a design major, a business major. My father pushed me into that respect, and I really do appreciate that because I understand the business side of owning a retail store also. And I stand on the shoulders of my parents, because they are the ones that believed in me. I could not get any funding. Are you kidding? I'm a 21-year-old graduate of college and nobody, I mean, they're not going to say, "Hey Lori, here's \$50,000 or \$40,000," which is what I started this store with, and "Here you go, girl, you go for it." I had to go to family.

And all along, I knew I wanted to own my own business. I knew I did. I mean, I've got that personality. I knew and know that I'm a leader, and I knew that I could become even a better leader, and so my parents strongly believed in me. They lent me \$40,000, and I repaid it soon as I could, and pretty much every dime back into the business. For years — and I tell many people this, and it's also in my book — for years, I took \$100 a week out of the store. Now you may say, "How did you even survive Lori?" Well, that hundred dollars a week went towards child care, which I've felt very guilty about also. And I know all of y'all are working moms out there. I've been there, trust me. I dropped them off and cried the whole way and then come back and they're happy as all get out. I've been there, I've been through it. And I know the guilt that we have as women.

And so my parents trusted in me and believed in me, and I kept reinvesting in myself and my business. Now, many times I could have given up, because it took a long time. I'm a late bloomer. I didn't, you know, I wasn't on Say Yes until I was 50. But by the time I was in my later forties and mid forties, I figured it out. I had figured out how to save enough money to buy my building. And that building was the building we had before this building. And I figured out that people would come and shop and do destination shopping. Like if you had a very large selection, you know, you would be all they needed to see rather than going to all these little boutiques. So we did that, and then I evolved into this building now. Now the building now that I have is 25,000 square feet. So it's 25 times the size of what I started out in.

**Leah:** Let's talk about that, about growth and how that looked. So you said that you were a late bloomer, but you started your business in your twenties, and you weren't on *Say Yes to the Dress* until you were, you said 50?

**Lori:** Yes

**Leah:** What did growth look like for you in the beginning? Like what did that process look like of, of growth and getting to the place that you could buy your own building?

**Lori:** I think that I've always been a saver. And like I said, I've always invested in myself. I felt like in order to grow the business, I had to have the cash there to be able to do things. So I put the money back into the business, everything I could. And I moved slowly and, you know, success like I have now does not happen overnight, and I tell younger women that all the time. You cannot come into this business and open a 25,000 square foot store and expect it to just be able to do this. I'm so thankful that I started out small like I did, a thousand square feet, and grew slowly. The thousand square foot store, I was renting that, you know, then I moved into to a 3,500 square foot store, and then I had two stores in strip centers, and then I had saved enough it's money to buy my own building. So I bought a 7,500 square foot building in Sandy Springs. And then this building became available, that I absolutely loved and I had always wanted, and I really knew deep in my heart, it should be the home of *Bridals by Lori*. And I bought that building in the year 2000. So it was a slow process.

**Leah:** I love the fact that you said you grew slowly. So like you grew into who you are today. And I know that you mentor other women and you love talking to other business owners. When you mentor other business owners, whether it's retail or really any kind of company, what are some of those foundational things that you did as a business owner that helped you get to that place? Like where did you put your focus? Was it on your employees? Was it on sales, was it on marketing? And what continued through of where your focus was to really grow your business?

**Lori:** Yeah, I think to grow my business, like the first and foremost thing is you've got to surround yourself with a team of fantastic people. Now that takes a while. And you're going to have bad apples, and they've got to go, and you've got to keep that good core team of people that believe in you and believe in your mission and believe and what your heart is. And I have got the best group working with me that, you know, I

trust with my baby because my story is my baby, but I lead by example. I would never ask anyone in my business to do anything that I would not do myself. So they see me out there on the floor, on the weekends, talking to customers, helping our managers with problems, working with gowns that are late coming in. They see me doing it all. I wear many hats, many, many hats, the financial side of it. But that combined together, and the respect that I have for them and they have for me, has formed a really good core team at Bridals by Lori. So I'm fortunate.

**Leah:** I love that. Well, you're fortunate because you take care of your people. So you're a good leader and a good team at yourself. That's why you have a good team, but we all know anyone that's had a business for a year to 10 years, we've seen ups and downs. And this, you know, crisis that we're in now is definitely unprecedented, but you've seen a lot of ups and downs. So can you share with us some of the lessons that you've learned having a business so long and, and being able to have confidence when you come up to things like COVID or the recession, like, what is it you've learned along the way that's helped you be able to weather the storms?

**Lori:** Well, I've learned that my energy resonates through the entire staff. So I'm the head cheerleader of Bridals by Lori, and whoever you are, the leader of your company, you are the head, the head pom-pom girl. Because you've got to keep the spirit up and the energy up at the store. They're going to be bad times. I mean, there was the recession of 2008, I've been through that, I've been through 9-11. Now we have this pandemic. There are all sorts of things that are going to happen. I mean, I've also had breast cancer, and I fell flat on my face on national TV last season. So there's going to be things that are going to happen personally and professionally, but they've got to know, your staff has to know, that they can count on you, because they look to you. And my energy affects the whole business. So I don't come in like, "Oh my gosh, here's another pandemic day. We've got to put on these masks, but we've got to wear these masks and this is driving me crazy." There's no need for that. Nobody wants to wear that mask. You know, nobody wants to be at home right now, and yes, everybody's gained 5-10 pounds. I've heard it all, all the dresses are fitting tight. We've been through it. But you know, you've gotta be the leader. You're in charge. They look to you. And when people look to you for advice and for spirit, you have to be the head person that they respect. It's bottom line.

**Leah:** Absolutely. You talked about going through breast cancer. I want to touch on that for a moment. Can you share with us, so that rocks anyone's world, but you're a business owner and you've become all of these things, and have all of this weight and pressure and responsibility on you. What did that look like when you found out? How did you shift and adjust so that you could either take a step back or lead from the place that you needed to?

**Lori:** Well, if it would've happened 10 years earlier, it would have been much more difficult, but you've got to remember, and as a business owner, you've gotta be building this team of people that can be there for you, that you rely on, that if you were to have a health crisis or your parents were to have a health crisis, that you can take a step back and somebody can step in for you. It's not you, of course, but they love your business just like you do. That is the kind of people that you have to surround yourself with. Now in 2012, I was diagnosed with two forms of breast cancer. I was filming *Say Yes to the Dress Atlanta*, the bridal version. And then I was filming *Say Yes to the Dress Bridesmaids* on our main floor, and the bridal on our upper floor. I mean, I was crazy busy, and these sorts of things happened to us when we're crazy busy.

And you know, when, when you were just at the top, you know, when you've worked so hard and everything's going your way. Something like this happens and it does to everybody, we all have issues and, and things that happen to us, whether it be us or our parents, or our children, and you've got to be able to step back and you've gotta be able to take care of yourself first. Because if I'm not healthy Lori, I'm not doing any good to the store at all.

Was it scary? Yes, it was. And once I out a long time? Yes, probably three months. I mean, and did I come back and not, and I was not too good. No. I couldn't even raise my arm. I ended up having a double mastectomy, so I couldn't even raise my arms, you know? And I had a lot of therapy and physical therapy and all that. But my staff just came right in there and just picked right up for me, and the prayers from people all over the world. Our show is shown in 120 countries. I had prayers from everybody.

But I did let TLC film my journey. And my daughter talked me into that. And at first I'm like, no, they see enough of me. And she said "You have this huge platform mom, of

women that watch your show, and business owners, and they want to see how you handle this and you need to share this story.”

**Leah:** Yeah, because you give so much inspiration to other people, right? Because other women have gone through this, you know, Beth Stewart said that she got diagnosed with cancer, and then she went and worked for a nonprofit that helps cancer patients. And then there's always a plan, and God's always got a plan.

I want to touch on what it looked like growing a business and a family at the same time. I mean, in the height of you growing your business, is you also growing your family. What did that look like for you and your husband, and maybe what were some of those conversations for you to be able to ask for help and support?

**Lori:** I mean, it's difficult. I'm not going to say it's not. I mean, it's very difficult to grow your business, to live your dream, because this was my dream to have a bridal shop and for it to be successful. And I wasn't going to let that die. But always so important, and even more important to me, was my children, of course, and raising good human beings. That was so important to me as it is to every mom out there. And I know it, but I'm living proof that you can raise good human beings and work. Because I will put my children up against anybody's children. They're both successful business founders, and they have families now, and they are doing great. And I tell women that all the time. I think we are so hard on each other.

Now, as far as growing the business and raising children, it's difficult, you know, and sometimes I would have to take a few days off because the nanny would leave, or Molly would be mean to the nanny and she's out, or Cory would knock up a baseball through the window and the nanny would leave. I went through lots of them. And I went through a lot of guilt too. All moms do. I think you feel guilty if you stay home and you feel guilty if you go to work. I mean, it's just a guilt thing, and we've got to realize it and embrace it. And we do need to be kinder to each other, whether you're an at-home mom working every day and homeschooling, or you're going to work outside the home and trying to raise children, but you've got to cut yourself a break. Because in the end they're going to turn out good. I mean, I'll put them up against anybody. And my friends that worked also, that was a great support system to me because I'd be like, “Oh, I'm so tired. And you know, they've got to go to ballet and

they have to go to soccer," and they'd be in the same boat. So to form a support group is very important.

I think as far as growing the business, my husband was an integral in this. We are very much a team. And I think you have to have that in marriage. And that's a big chapter in my book, but he was very supportive of me also. So I would go be there and then he would be there, and we would jiggle and figure it out. And my kids, you know, they didn't know any different, because I always worked. Bridals by Lori was my first child. Then I had Molly.

**Leah:** Yeah, I love that. I say that too, you know, I'm 38, I don't care to tell my age. And people are always like, what are you gonna have kids? I'm like, I have one. Her name is Her Story of Success. She's beautiful. And she needs a lot of my attention right now.

One of the things that you talk about in your book that I'm really passionate about also is women gaining financial literacy. Can we talk for a minute about why you put that in there and what you want women to understand about learning about financial literacy for themselves and for their businesses.

**Lori:** I am absolutely astounded at the number of women that don't know what their social security is going to be. Don't know if they have proper insurance, don't know how much taxes they paid. Do not know what their property taxes are. Just basic things. I mean, it blows my mind. We, as women, cannot bury our heads in the sand about these issues.

And, you know, after 50, which the book's kind of geared to, but like I said to all women, because I'm preaching it to all women. But after 50, you know, sometimes our spouse is not here any longer. And what are you going to do? Now's the time more than ever to take control of this. I mean, we're all at home a little bit more now. What should you be doing? You should be saying how much life insurance you have. You should be checking on your 401k. Do you have a pension? All these things are so important. There needs to be a document that everything is listed if something happens to your spouse and you can go straight to, and you're not going to come unglued. I mean, you need to take control. We are smart here, women. We are way smarter than that. Now my mother's generation, a lot of them, my mother included, I hope she's not watching, but you know, they turned it all over to my dad, or all over to

the man and that is over. That needs to be over. Because even now my mom says, you know, I don't know what I'm going to do if something happens to your dad. I don't want to be in that situation. I want to be able to take care of Lori.

**Leah:** Yeah. One of the things that I know I'm interested in, and I know everyone else is too. Tell us again about, for anyone that doesn't already know, how you got started on TLC. So how did *Say Yes to the Dress* happen? This is so, I don't know, I mean, you've had it for so long, but it's still so cool. Like did they come to you? Did you submit, like, what did that look like? And how fun! Like I want to hear about your relationship with your best friend and all of that.

**Lori:** They actually approached us. I had been approached before the New York show aired, and I got a phone call from a production company. And I'm like "What?" They're like, we want to do a reality show in bridal. Now this shows you that I wasn't thinking clear, and you know, it, maybe it wasn't my time also. And they were like, we want to do a show. And I don't know if you saw any of the original shows out of New York, but it was very much back room and arguing with the employees and da da da da da. And I'm like, "I'm not doing that." You know, I just didn't like that at all, so I said, no thank you, turned that down.

So then the show evolved over about a couple of years, the New York version, into being about the dress, *Say Yes to the Dress*, not about "say yes to all this mess going on back behind the scenes." So we got another phone call, and they called and they said, "Would you be interested in shooting a pilot for *Say Yes to the Dress*?"

And I said, yeah, cause I liked the way the show was going then, you know? This is really good now, it's about dresses and it's about families and it's about what we deal with every day, because this is reality. This is real. What you see of me on TV is the real Lori. I don't put on any airs.

**Leah:** It aligned with your mission and who you are.

**Lori:** Yes.

**Leah:** So I love what you said, it's about timing. It wasn't your time because it wasn't something that aligned with you then, you know, I'm sure that you got to see it more, and then once it aligned with who you are, you're like, yes. I think that's an important

lesson for people of, when you're approached with something, if it doesn't feel right, it's maybe not a no, it's maybe a not right now.

So what did it look like once they approached you, and you're like, "Oh, this sounds really good"? And I do want to say you already had a successful business.

**Lori:** I already had my building, we had grown and evolved. I was successful before I got the television show. The television show was gravy on the biscuit. You know, it was the cherry on top of the whipped cream. I had worked so hard, and we were in this building, and this beautiful brand new building was there.

So anyway, they approached me about this. I said, "yeah, I'll shoot the pilot." So I called my best friend, which is Monte Durham. We have been best of friends, and I think you can see that on the show, for years. And I said, "Monte, they have asked me to shoot a pilot, will you come down?" Monte and I have always had this, you know, we give each other a hard time. So we've always had this banter between us. It's fun. And I'm like, "I can't do that show without you Monte. So will you come down and will you shoot this with me?" So Jen Halbach, who was our producer, she came in on a Saturday. Monte and I were just giving each other a hard time. We just played and had fun, and they took it back to TLC and we were green lit like in a couple of weeks. And that's the story of how we got started.

Now you do have to have a large store in order to shoot a television show. Most of our brides are shot in the morning. As you can see, there's not a lot of people walking around, and you can tell when we open up, cause you're going to start seeing on the screen people walking around and that sort of thing, but most of our brides are shot early in the morning. You've got the production crew there, which is 8 or 10 people. You've got hair and makeup, because Lord knows I need it. And you got it all that other stuff factors into place. Plus you have the bride and her entourage, and we have a room where they do their pickup interviews. So all that has to, you've got to have space for all this. You know, it can't be shot in that thousand square foot store. So it's almost like God's plan was meant for me to have this larger store and then get this television show, you know? It was that perfect timing of me not giving up, me hanging in there and working hard. And then it came to be.

**Leah:** I love it. One of the things you talked about was, you know, your husband and you being like partners and he's right in there with it. And you talk about avoiding gray divorce in your book. What does that mean? And what's your message around avoiding gray divorce. What did you learn?

**Lori:** Well, I think as all of us age, well, let's go back. As we have children, we all are running back and forth. We're going to work. We're going to ballet. We've got to go to soccer. We've got to go to the baseball field. I've done it all. I've been there. We've got to take this child to the dentist and then to the orthodontist, you barely even see your spouse. I mean, you are lucky to see each other for 30 minutes a day. That's just kind of how it goes. And we get through it together. We may meet for dinner or whatever, occasionally, but that's just kinda how our lives go.

And then this child grows up and goes in, maybe to high school and they start having friends and you start seeing less and less of them and you become kind of unimportant. And they still love you and need you back there, but you're not quite their whole world. And then they go off to college and pretty much when they go to college, they're not coming back home. So gray divorce starts happening. And that is where we really don't know our partner anymore. We have drifted apart, and we each have our own individual lives and we're not meeting in the middle anymore.

And I don't want that to happen for us. We have to rediscover our laughter, because somewhere along the way, our joy and our laughter has gotten pushed to the side, and we don't value each other anymore. And you've got to find the reason why you married this person to begin with anyway. And I think all that is just part of turning 50. You have to rediscover your marriage. You do. It's work. It's never going to be easy. I say that in my book. It's not a fairytale. Marriage is not a fairy tale. I see the bride over and over again. "Oh my gosh. This is going to be so perfect. And I'm just gonna stay home and have babies and I'm just going to stay home and not work and everything's going to be perfect in my life"

That's not how you've got to approach this. You have to approach this as, this is work too. You've got work, and then this is work too, and you have to make time for your husband and your relationship together. You really, really do.

**Leah:** I love that. And I just, I just appreciate you being honest. You know, it's not a fairy tale, but obviously, it's so beautiful. We, yeah, we got to meet your husband right before you jumped on and he is just a delight. And you know, my husband's the same way. I couldn't do what I do without him. And I am a strong, independent businesswoman. I'm not with him cause I need him, I'm with him cause I like him and I enjoy him.

**Lori:** Cause you want to be.

**Leah:** And so I love that you're honest about that. In the different stages of your life, of your business, of your marriage, of your parenting together, and then all of those stages. I just appreciate the way that you break that down and are honest about it. You know, there's a lot of folks like you that have been married for a long time, or that have gotten divorced and are, you know, congratulations cause you needed to. So there's all kinds.

But I think that it's important for us to all be honest about our own journey. Right. And saying. It takes work, whatever it looks like.

**Lori:** I mean, I'm not saying to stay in a relationship that does not make you happy, but most of the time you've married them for a reason. And you've got to get back to that teamwork aspect. Absolutely. It's takes two.

**Leah:** Yes, there's a couple of things, you also talk about the importance of finding and keeping friends, and also the good kind of PMS. And so as women that are business owners and we're busy and we're stretched, I love that you focus on friendships and how that's so important and also, you know, taking care of your, well, I guess some people call it self care, but I like you call it the good PMs, physical, mental, and spiritual health. So share with us a little bit about how that's looked in your journey.

**Lori:** You know, totally being honest here, which I am in the book also. I mean, I'm just a straight shooter, so everything that is real in my life is real in the book too. I feel like as I have gotten older, I am taking back my time again, you know, I do, I'm claiming me back and I'm not all perfect either. It takes, sometimes I start feeling guilty. Like you need to get to work. Don't go work out. I hate working out by the way. I hate sweating, but I do it, but I hate it. Anyway, I'm like, "You don't need to go workout today

Lori, you need to get to that shop. Or you don't need to read that devotional today, Lori, you got to get, you got to get busy. You got stuff to do." But I am reclaiming me, and that makes me a better person. And I know it does. I feel better when I work out, I'm healthier, and I'm patting myself on the back for getting through it. And then the devotional helps me so much, you know, just adjusting my mind, taking time for myself. And then I look back and I think, "why haven't I been doing this all along?" You know, why haven't I? I could have taken 30 minutes for myself every day or however long I'm going to take, and I could have done that, but I didn't. And I'm sorry that I didn't now.

And I think having breast cancer, really when you have a health concern, really makes you stop and start reclaiming yourself and reclaiming your life. And as far as the friendship goes, I talk a lot in the book about how my friends are probably not your normal friends. I have a lot of designer friends, a lot of friends just from all over the world because of what I do. And I have girlfriends also, but some of my best friends in the world are men like Monte Durham. Your friends can wear many hats. Don't just shy away from somebody because you think, "Oh, they fit into my mold," because there's really no, you've got to embrace everyone in this world, and they can become some of your best friends ever.

**Leah:** I just love that. What does say yes to what's next, what does that mean to you? And maybe can you share what that looks like in your life right now?

**Lori:** Okay. So "say yes to what's next" means, for me right now, that I want to motivate and inspire other women. I've been doing it for 40 years. I've been motivating women for 40 years. "Yes, you look good in that dress girl. Yes, your booty looks good in that dress. Yes, you can own that." I've been doing it for years. And I've also been motivating her mother, because her mother is the one that needs it more than anybody. The mother has given and given and given, you know, and I see it over and over again. She's like, "you get my baby anything, my baby deserves anything on this floor," and then you get to her dress and she's like, "I've just let myself go. I just really don't deserve anything." I mean, it just breaks my heart to see that. So I want to motivate and inspire her to motivate and inspire her to live this —I call it a cookie, if you saw that in the book. And this last quarter or next quarter of her cookie, I want her to eat that down to the last crumb. I want her grandchildren and her children to say

“My nana or my bella (that’s what I am) is amazing. She is absolutely fantastic.” And I want her to feel that way about herself.

**Leah:** I think that's so beautiful. You just, you inspire me. So I'm so excited to have you. And the last question I always ask my guest is what does success mean to you today? Because to your point, we go through different seasons, and I'm a different person today than I was five years ago. And hopefully I'll be a different woman than I am today in five years. So in this season that you're in today, what does success mean to you?

**Lori:** Success to me right now means that I am happy within me, that I love Lori, you know? And it takes a while to really love yourself and embrace yourself, and to look forward to your future. So that's my version of success, for Lori to just keep on tearing it up, to keep going after her goals and to keep setting goals and not resting on her laurels. I'm going to go for it.

I just want to encourage every woman out there to just stop because we have time now to stop. Life's a little bit slower. We're all home more. We all have more time, to stop and look at ourselves and look truly at our heart and make sure that we are happy with where we're going and going forward. You know, just stop and reevaluate. Because we all have time to do it, and you certainly have time to change things now, if you want to. So definitely say yes to your future and say yes to what's next.

**Leah:** Thank you so much, Lori, for being, I'm so grateful for you for showing up today, for empowering women for the last 40 years, not just for brides, for moms, but for all women. I just appreciate who you are as a woman, as a business leader. And I just appreciate you being here today.

Thanks for tuning in! At Her Story of Success, we are on a mission to help women-business owners, leaders and professionals build your tribe and reach your next level of success by connecting you to one another, equipping you with resources and empowering you along your journey. We would love for you to be a part of our tribe and further this mission by sharing this podcast with a friend or

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The Her Story of Success podcast is produced by women and for women. Our Executive Producer is Claire Bidigare-Curtis, and our Production Coordinator is Bronte Lebo. And I'm your host, Leah Glover Hayes. Talk to you soon!