

94. Evolving Your Business with Gabby Male – Episode Transcript

Leah: Welcome to Her Story of Success, a podcast sharing stories of influential women trailblazers and business leaders who have defined and pursued their own versions of success and fulfillment. We hope these stories, lessons learned and celebrations inspire you to believe in yourself and your own journey a little bit more. I'm Leah Glover Hayes, CEO and podcast host of Her Story of Success women's business mentor and media collective.

In today's episode, I'm going to be sharing a conversation I had with Gabby Male, as part of our first LIVE podcast of 2021. Gabby is a health coach, content creator and certified personal trainer who's helping women ditch dieting and learn to feel empowered in their bodies. And she's also the co-founder of The Rose Retreats and founder of an upcycled apparel shop called Relic96.

Gabby is going to share her inspiring story of starting and growing a business in college, seeing her brand evolve as she grew and changed, and overcoming imposter syndrome. She'll also explain how she's built a community that's based on collaboration instead of competition.

If you enjoy this conversation with Gabby, I want to encourage you to join us for our next live podcast. They're free to attend and streamed on multiple platforms. All you have to do is sign up for our email newsletter at HerStoryofSuccess.com, in order to be the first to know about our upcoming events. But for now, I hope you enjoy this conversation with Gabby Male.

Welcome Gabby!

Gabby: Thank you for having me. I'm so excited to be here.

Leah: So tell us just a little bit about yourself and then I want to talk about kind of your journey of getting to where you are.

Gabby: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So I always struggle with my bios. I guess my title is entrepreneur because I do a lot of different things. I'm still working on that glamorous

title. I'm going to, I'm going to come up with one soon, but I'm an entrepreneur. I'm a content creator. I'm an influencer, just because when you have a platform on social media, that's, you have influence. And so I do a lot of things in different spaces, but I've really turned it into a couple of different businesses and ventures, and it's really fun.

Leah: I love that. One of the things that I really want to touch on today, cause I think it's relevant for all of us. So you built a business and it was very successful, you know, you did it really young, and then you came to a point where you got really real with yourself and decided, "You know what, who I'm projecting is not who I am and who I want to be." And going through that personal identity and brand identity pivot point and what that looks like, because you, you did lose a lot of audience and following at that time, and how that was the best decision for you. And then when you built what that looked like. So let's talk a little bit about, what did it look like to build your business? Like where were you in your headspace and in life when you started your business, and was it just an influencer marketing then, or did you know that you wanted to start a company?

Gabby: So I started my sophomore year of college. I had gotten back into fitness after going through an eating disorder, and what I thought was recovering, but I was really just masking my eating disorder with fitness and health, but it wasn't super healthy. I didn't know that at the time though. So I was working at a gym, and I was working out a lot and sharing it on my personal Instagram. And this is back in 2015 when influencers were really few and far between, it was not really a thing. And I was posting about my fitness journey and stuff on Instagram, and I was getting so many messages, and actually, my older brother was the one that was like, "You should probably like start a different, like a separate page. Like people are doing that now. Like they have fitness Instagrams," and I was like, "You know what, let's try it." And so I started.

Leah: I love the encouragement from your brother, he's empowering women!

Gabby: I know, he's actually been really, he's been really, really involved in my business and stuff, especially in the earlier stages, but I started my fitness Instagram my sophomore year of college, and from there, it just really snowballed. Because I was getting so many questions, and naturally in the fitness space, when you get

questions, it kind of leads you down the path of, "Maybe I should do personal training. Maybe I should do online personal training. Cause all these people ask me questions, they don't necessarily live around me.

I can't train them in person, but I can train them online." And so I kind of just started my own little online, personal training business and health coaching business. And I did like spring challenges and summer challenges. And my business was really focused on fitness. And as I grew, and as I changed in my personal journey and realized I hadn't really fully recovered from my eating issues, when I finally found food freedom and self-love, and self-acceptance, and not, like, I'm very like anti-dieting now. And when I finally let go of that, my business had to shift too, because it was still so centered around fitness. And when I finally let that go, like you said, it was like an identity crisis. I kind of had always been known as the fit girl, the fit one, the girl you go to for fitness. And I was suddenly dropping that. And a lot of people followed me for fitness and health advice. And so, yeah, it was really difficult.

Leah: You start this Instagram and you're getting a lot of attention, right. But attention isn't dollars, right? You can't, you can't build a business on attention or followers. What did it look like when you started making money? How did you monetize this passion and an Instagram page that you had?

Gabby: So originally it was creating a digital product. So for me, that was workout PDFs, which is a great business model because those are free, technically, like there's no inventory,

Leah: It didn't cost you anything other than your time. Okay.

Gabby: And as a college student, that was really great. Cause I didn't have much, I didn't have much overhead except for just my own time. So it was a lot of workout PDFs and challenges, like fitness challenges, one-on-one coaching, that kind of model. And it was a lot of just me and clients or me and my audience, but as it's shifted and changed, and as my personal page grew over time, companies started asking me to promote things, and I started getting more of the influencer, and just times were changing as we went from 2015 to 2018, 2019, influencer marketing became a thing. And I was really at the beginning of that and kind of watch that develop slowly over time. As I was growing, it was growing as a form of marketing,

which was really cool to kind of see how it has grown and how much it's completely changed in the past couple of years. So I would say at the beginning of my journey, it was really just me and digital products and kind of just, I didn't really, again, imposter syndrome, didn't really think I was like, doing a full business. It was kind of just like, "Oh yeah, this is something I just do for fun." But when it came to graduation time, I was like, "Wow, I have a decision to make, do I want to keep doing this? Or do I want to get a job? Like, what do I do now?" And so I knew that I wanted to be my own boss. I actually, Not many people know this, but I actually got fired from, from the gym that I worked at because I was working so much on my personal business. And they just had seen that, like, I'm not good at having a boss to be honest. And so I knew that I wanted to be my own boss. I had no idea what that looked like, though. So that transition from college to now being on my own and having to make those decisions and having to really, then, actually build a business, that was hard. That was really hard. Cause I had no idea like how to work from home successfully and how to do all of those things. So that transition was really difficult too. And you have, you know, I have a really good support system, but you always have those thoughts in the back of your mind and people around you being like, "Really like, you're really going to do that? Like, are you sure that safe? Like what about healthcare? What about 401ks?"

Leah: Well, and let's talk about that for a second. Cause when you were in college, did you not consider, like, not finishing? I want to talk a little bit about that. And then the pushback that you got from your advisors on actually making this a business. Because it's so hard when you have those doubts yourself. But when you have someone that you trust that you look up to that also is like breathing doubt into you. I want to talk about how you still push through and what you chose to believe. And how did you choose to believe when you had voices that you trusted telling you that you shouldn't do that?

Gabby: So I went, I remember so vividly going into my advisor's office. I have my degree in public health. So I was a public health major with health communications and health promotion as a minor. And so I was kind of in the right area with my degree, but I was using it in a different way than what they had an idea of how we would use it. And I went in and talked to my advisor. She was actually really great because she was really supportive of what I was doing. And I kind of explained it to her and she was supportive, but she also had that, I could tell she was like, "But," like,

there was that but, and I remember leaving there and I think once I left that office, that's when I kind of made the decision. Like, I'm not going to do the internships. I'm not even going to entertain that idea because if I do, I'm creating doubt within myself. I have to be, I have to be a hundred percent in. I'm a very much like a hell yes or hell no kind of person. And especially with this, I had to be hell yes, because I had to not only prove to others, but prove to myself that I could do it.

And on the point of how did I push through that and get those, get that belief in myself? I've always believed in myself, to be honest. Like it's something that I think my parents really drilled into me and just, they made me very independent and kind of told me that I can do anything, because they're immigrants and have created their own life. And I've seen them, like their success story in not doing it the traditional way. And so I did have a great support system, however, as much as you believe in yourself, and as much as you can tell yourself that you're going to do great and it's going to be awesome, there is always going to be that little gremlin just sitting on your shoulder, like just telling you like, "But what about this, but what about this? You have student loans to pay off. What about health insurance? What about your car bill?" Like all of these, it was mostly financial, I think was my doubt and the part that made me scared, because when you're an entrepreneur, there can be a lack of security. You're not getting every two weeks a pay stub or monthly pay stub. You're creating your own income. And that was the scariest part for me was not having the security, because I do have a lot of student loans to pay off.

Leah: Well, it can be the most freeing, empowering thing, but it can also be really, really terrifying because things can change.

Gabby: Right. And you don't have a limit, then, you have the, the sky is the limit when you're an entrepreneur, because you're not, you're not limited by a paycheck, which is really incredible. And so I really took that idea of like, "I can create whatever I want to now, like I have the freedom to do this," and I really used that to motivate me and to fuel me and to push me into creating more and reaching out to more people and putting more time and energy into my content and really being more vulnerable to reach more people. That's what really fuels me to keep doing what I'm doing, even when it gets really chaotic and gets crazy and can be really hard sometimes.

Leah: Oh, absolutely. And I want to encourage the listener that one of the things that you and I talked about is that on the road to success, we all learn the same lessons, we just learn them at different times. And for someone that's like, as old or older than me, it can get kind of, seeing someone so successful at your age, you're like, "Oh man, I can't like, I can't be that successful at 22. I can't go backwards." But the truth is like, you learned so many lessons as a child because you learned it and saw it from your parents. And I didn't have that. Right? Like I didn't have the parents that I saw be successful. I had to like find that outwardly, but what I am really impressed with too is, you learned all those lessons you did have self-confidence, you saw that success, but you still had doubts of your own. You still had self-doubt, you still have imposter syndrome. So I think that that's just (a) it's like, it's just human. Right? We have those doubts. So I want to talk a little bit about now, even after you left college and you were growing your business, what do you do in the moment when you feel that imposter syndrome creep up, like, what are the things you do in general, and then like in the moment, how do you fight that doubt?

Gabby: A lot of times I have to sit back and ask myself, "What's actually happening here?" Because I've noticed throughout my life, with feeling this way, if I hear those thoughts creeping up, it's usually not actually about my business or anything about having imposter syndrome. It's usually more about, "Am I feeling anxious because taxes are due soon and I'm feeling financially anxious." And so then it's kind of creating this doubt from another place. "Was I scrolling on Instagram earlier and I saw someone who's super successful and doing something that I wish I could do, and then that planted a seed of doubt?" I have to ask myself, where is this actually coming from, besides me? Because this idea was given to me. I didn't create this idea. It's been given to me from somewhere. And if I can figure out where that came from, just kind of backtracking and be like, "Do I need to maybe unfollow this person? Do I need to do a cleanse of my social media? Do I need to sit down and actually like just kind of work through these thoughts of like where these things are? Is there someone in my life who's planting these seeds of doubt that I maybe need to have a chat with and really like limiting the external source?" And then more like, I guess, practical, like in those moments too, I'm a big journaler. Writing is a way of healing to me. And so even just writing down, like literally what you're feeling right now, like, "I feel like I don't have a successful business, or I am really scared about this next

launch." Write those things down and then literally cross them out. And even if you don't believe it, rewriting that sentence to be, "I am going to have a successful launch. I have an incredible business," and just rephrasing and reframing those negative thought loops that we have created in our minds. And you can do it in the notes section of your phone.

Leah: At any time. I was just thinking that because I was like, even if you don't have pen and paper, cause I was thinking like, "Oh my gosh, what if you're in like a meeting or you're in like some sort of, right outside of an interview, or you're waiting for something?" That is such an awesome practice to start in the moment. So that, I mean, gosh, we could end the podcast right now, that was huge. I

Gabby: Yeah. Affirmation is a huge thing.

Leah: But, and it's not just like, "Oh, find a quiet time in the morning." You know, it's not about that. It's like either, this is what you can do, like in the moment when you're having that doubt. So that's awesome.

Well, I want to talk a little bit about, so growing your business, so you did the PDFs. You now have companies reaching out to you as you're starting to have more income. At what point did it stop being just you? Cause you were doing everything. You were creating the content, you were posting content, you're dealing with the money side, the negotiations, all of that. So what did that look like when you started to either bring people on or outsource or what did that look as a business owner?

Gabby: Yeah. I am very controlling, and that doesn't have to be a bad thing. That can be a good thing, but it also can be a very bad thing. And so I've had to really sit down and make peace with that side of me and realize when it is helping me and when it is hurting me. And there was a point in my business where I was so stressed, like to the point where I could not be productive, and I actually started avoiding things and I wasn't enjoying it anymore. One of my best friends does something very similar to me, and she's grown her business five times bigger than I have. And she said to me, she was like, "Where can you outsource? What do you hate doing? What is the one part of your business that you absolutely hate?" And I instantly said, "Emails. I hate emails. I hate getting all of these emails companies and going back and forth..."

Leah: Same.

Gabby: The process of communication and having to respond.” And so she was like, “You should get a manager, you should get a manager to manage all of the, like the influencer side of things, because you don’t love that. You love creating the content, but you don’t love like negotiating deals and stuff.” And it’s not my forte, it’s not where I’m an expert in. And so I did, I got a manager and I’m now with a management team, and they’re incredible and have, have literally tripled my income from allowing someone else to take over that part of my business. I would say that’s the best business move I’ve ever made is getting a manager during just getting help in that area. And then especially when it comes to like creating content and stuff, like, yes, I can get great pictures with my iPhone. Yes, I can do the bare minimum with just my phone and just me, but content and that side of my business really elevates when I bring in a photographer, when I pay a photographer or a videographer to do what they are experts in and to do what they are great at to help me create better content. So I can then put an amazing caption to that, or I can put really great meaning to that, to impact people’s lives. And so I’ve just, I think, outsourcing and seeing the positive impact and result that it’s had has allowed me then to loosen up the reigns and other areas of my business as well. I still can do it better, but I think also too, for people who are just starting, who might not be financially as able, it can be really scary to start paying someone when you feel like you, maybe even your personal financial security isn’t great. But you have to just trust that, bringing more people in and allowing more people to help you is going to ultimately grow your business.

Leah: And I love that this is coming from a, I don’t know, I don’t want to use the word control freak, but someone that you do want to do it, you did it all yourself, and it is harder for you to outsource and to let go of that stuff. For me, maybe it’s because I’m older and I’ve been through it. I’m like, “Nope.” You know, on the call right now, I have my producer Claire, who is amazing, she does podcast producing. I have Bronte who writes all of my copy, helps me with emails. Kylie does my social media posting. And I’m not as big as you yet. And some people are like, “Well, you, you probably outsourced too soon,” but I’m like, “No, I know what I’m building. And to build something scalable and sustainable, there has to be systems and people.”

Gabby: And you know how you operate. My friend Mic is a great example. She has almost a million followers on social media and we are very different people in how we operate. Like, I am very much like, “I will just do it. I will get it done. I will lead a

group. I will do this." She's like, "Take everything. I will do what I am good at and I will let and else do everything. "And so we, we balance each other cause we own a business together. But she has really helped me with seeing that, like, I can let go. And I've also helped her with seeing, like, "There are some things that you don't need to spend the money on that, like you can do this."

Leah: So let's dive into that a little bit. So one of the things that when you and I connected, I loved that you also have. This group of women around you, that could be your competitors, right? The other influencers. But I love that you all like work together. You talk about brands that have, you've had a good experience with, brands that have like maybe been challenging, or if you come up to a challenge, you're like, Hey, this is what I faced. Have you guys experienced this? I really want you to, to give you a chance to really talk about what that looks like it, and how did that get started? And anyone that is an entrepreneur, I want you to like, stop and take notes. Having people around you that you can bounce ideas off of. If you're a 1099, a freelancer, find other freelancers that you can get information from, you know, share stories and really help each other. So tell us a little bit about how did this get started? How did, how did your group form?

Gabby: It actually was this past year with quarantine and stuff. I think a lot of creators, we already create a lot, but with quarantine, I think we were almost like hyper creating and that people were sharing more and more people were on social media. And so my best friend Mick, she's always, we do very similar stuff. And so she's a part of that. But then just over time, when you do something very similar to other people, you, you do come across their page and message back and forth and kind of just create relationships that are really, really important because I can pull ideas from what they've created and they can pull ideas from me, and we can have this amazing rapport with each other and help build each other, which ultimately helps us all at the end of the day. And so we kind of all came together and just, we were like, We were DM-ing on Instagram, all of us kind of separately, but also in some small groups. And we were like, let's just make a big group chat and we can help each other with any brand deals or if we've had good experiences, bad experiences there. If there's a day on Instagram, when engagement is really crap, we can complain to each other and see if, "Hey, are your story views really low today?" And kind of just like getting an outside perspective from someone with a similar, but different audience

has been really helpful. And also affirming, because there are some times when you do doubt yourself, and you are struggling, or someone sends you a really harsh DM, or you're dealing with a situation, and you can reach out to these women who are doing something very similar to you, but live on a completely different side of the country, and you can connect because you guys do similar things. That's not traditional too, because this isn't a traditional job. This isn't something that's very typical. It's really nice to like, be able to connect with people who get it, cause not many people do. And so I think connecting with like vulnerability and connecting on struggles is an amazing way to create relationships and then you can help each other through it too. So if you're an entrepreneur or a freelancer, like I highly recommend, or if you're an aspiring influencer, like if you are trying to grow your page, reach out to people with similar followings as you and similar audiences as you. And I promise you, collaboration is so much better than competition. I know it may seem like, "Well, we have the same audience. Like what if, what if we're selling the same thing?" I promise you, you will get so much more out of collaborating.

Leah: One of the things that I really appreciated when I was talking to you earlier is just this, the spirit that you have of, of helping others and taking what you learned and being honest about it. And, and now this is, you know, since Brene Brown, and we talk about shame and vulnerability, but I feel like that's something that you naturally did and that you naturally do. And that's probably how this group came together. I want to talk about something that we, we talked about yesterday, as far as like, if someone's in a hard place. And the, the quote that you talked about with remembering when you wanted what you have. Can you talk to us a little bit about when you have those days where you're looking at your friend that has almost a million views? And it's hard to create content when you're not motivated or you're not inspired. So talk to us a little bit about, like, when you read that quote, what it meant to you and how that kind of shows up for you to remember who you are when you're doubting yourself.

Gabby: Yeah. The quote is, "Remember when you wanted what you currently have," and for me that it, like, I honestly might get a tattooed on my body because like, it just, it was one of those, like full-stop moments when I heard it, because there's been so many times, I remember in college, like sitting there just like literally yearning for success and yearning for financial freedom and really wanting a bigger platform

and a bigger audience. And sometimes I have to stop and I have to tell myself, "Gabby, remember when what you currently have right now is literally everything you ever wanted and more. Like you always said to yourself, 'Imagine when you have a hundred thousand followers,' and then you get it and it's actually not as exciting as you think. It's like, it's just a number. It's really just a number, but the impact of that number, if you choose to use it wisely can be incredible." And as I've grown and as my audience has grown, I've been able to see that impact. And I think for me on those days, when I'm, I actually just talked to my therapist about this yesterday. Cause I'm in a phase right now where I really am kind of in a rut with content creation and not feeling that inspired. And so I have to give myself some grace and remind myself that, "It's okay. You've been creating for five to six years now, every single day of your life. It's okay if you have a little bit of time where you don't have something influential to say," and I also, I need to be the student and I it's something I really have adopted, today was my first day I woke up earlier, did some meditation, I started a new book. Because a lot of times in life, we go through these growth phases and we are like reading all the self-help books, reading all the business books, we're like really motivated and excited. And then you almost hit a wall and you just start doing, like, you start implementing all these things that you've learned, and it's really great. But then you start to go on autopilot. And I think last year, really heightened that autopilot, at least for me personally, and people that I've talked to, we kind of just like are doing the things until things, air quotes get better. And I think that I recently have really realized I need to turn the autopilot off and I need to get present again. And I need to also become a student because I think I've reached a cap with my business and with my personal growth where I need to learn more, and I need to be open to learning more, because I don't know everything. At all. I know a fraction of everything, and I love that. And so I sat back and bought some books on Audible, and I'm ready to be the student again so that I can learn. And I know the second I start listening and doing that work again, the creative juices are going to start flowing.

Leah: Absolutely. I want to talk a little bit about the impact, because that's one thing that you're really passionate about. You're not, you're not creating content just for the sake of creating content, you're doing it to help other people. So give us some stories of some of your followers and your audience that has reached out to you to said,

“Hey, because of you, this changed or this happened,” give us some of those success stories that you have.

Gabby: I am so blessed because I could pull up my DMs right now and read you three that just came in today. And it, the, it makes me emotional. It is the most incredible feeling. It is my purpose of being here on this planet is to help and inspire and allow women to feel like they have a safe space to just accept themselves. And more specifically recently, recently in the past couple of years, as I've been a lot more open and talking about things like having cellulite and being okay with it, and actually wearing shorts and not hiding yourself in leggings and jeans all the time, specifically with that and with eating disorders and just having issues with eating. Those are the most impactful stories that I get back is women that, because of my content they finally wore shorts. I've had so many moms and like, not even older women, women in their thirties and forties message me and say, “I haven't worn shorts since I was 16. And because I've been following you, because I've been following your friends and people like you and following more positive, accepting people, I have realized that I have one life to live, and it's okay if you have some bumps on the back of your legs and some stretch marks or whatever it is.”

Leah: We all do. Oh my gosh. I am like super thin and I have it. So it doesn't matter your size.

Gabby: I think it's important to mention too, with that, the key, especially if you're looking to build your audience online, and if you're looking to use social media as a tool to your business, vulnerability is so important. And being vulnerable, I know it's scary. Yes. It comes easier to me just naturally, but there's still things that I have like boundaries on and limits on where I'm like still scared to talk about, but when you click post, I promise you, you will get more feedback and more positive feedback and more conversations started when you are more vulnerable about your journey or about your business or about whatever the case may be. And again, I know it's scary, but I promise it's one of the most rewarding things that you'll do.

Leah: I love that. I know my team is like “Leah, you know, you're not on there very much.” And I'm like, “You know, I'm not,” I mean, you saying that like, yeah, I have been afraid to really, I mean, I'm honest and vulnerable on the podcast. Like this is my medium, but putting it out there on social media has been a challenge. Like it's, it's

really hard. I don't know if it's, maybe this is an excuse, but like my husband is so anti social media that like, you know, I don't have the partner that will take pictures of me or support it. Like he, he's the most supportive wonderful man ever, it's just that, like, he doesn't see the value in social media, and he doesn't like to be photographed and he doesn't like to post. So from like, I'm trying to balance, like, "I want to have that valuable time with him, and I want to post about him. Cause like I spend every day with him. He's my favorite person. So I'm trying to balance.

Gabby: I actually. So very similar. I, my boyfriend hate social media.

Leah: Really? Tell me your secrets, tell me what you do.

Gabby: He doesn't post on his social media, like last time he posted was like two years ago.

Leah: Yeah. But Josh has not, okay, we've been married for seven years. He has not posted on Facebook in over seven years. Like legit.

Gabby: To be fair though, I love it. And I actually don't talk about, I actually, I talked about this recently on my social media. I don't talk about my boyfriend that much, because it's something that is so, it's my safe space. It's my, cause work is social media for me. So I love the, our relationship isn't social media based, especially because when you post about your relationship on social media, you instantly opened the door to opinions and expectations. Like, "Oh, you haven't posted with him in this long. Like, are you still together?" You know, and I know you guys are married, so it's a little different, but we're, we've been together for five plus years now. We're life partners, that's a done deal. And I don't want there to ever be expectations. I don't want to feel like I owe anyone anything, and I want it to be my safe space away from work. And so he loves taking, he's like great at taking pictures for me when I ask him to, but he really isn't involved in my social media, cause it's my work, you know, I do, I kind of create that boundary. But yeah, it's been difficult to kind of create that boundary with it, because it can be kind of funky sometimes.

Leah: Well, thank you. You just, I felt like you just mentored me today, so I will leave him out of it. I think that I just was like, but he is so much of my life. Like he is the person that believes in me and helps me and like, I just, everything we do together. So, but you know what, that's a good point. I'll just have to leave him off of that.

Gabby: To be fair though, I think creating Relic96, the clothing company that we own together. That's a great segue because that's been really great for me to integrate him into social media a little bit more because he is the other half to that business.

Leah: So let's pause real quick. Cause I want you to be able to explain what Relic96 is. So tell us your other company, it's an events based company, and then when quarantine happened and you were not able to really pursue and grow that business, what came out of that time that you had? So let's talk about that a little bit. So you have your, your business on Instagram, you're a coach, you're doing all these things, but you also created, um, and tell us about the retreat company and then let's talk about how your new company that you started? Well, you know, during quarantine.

Gabby: Yeah. So, um, me and my friend, Mikayla, Mik Zazon on Instagram, we have a company called The Rose Retreats, and we created about three years ago. We do female empowerment retreats all over the world, actually, technically, cause we went to Canada last year or two years ago now. But yeah, we do events for women, and they are incredible, but we had to click pause because of COVID and all of that stuff. So we literally clicked the pause button, and that kind of freed up a lot of my time to create more content. But then I just felt like, because I was creating so much content and everything was so social media based, like being at home on our phones all day, I was really craving being creative, like without any type of social media. And so I'm sure a lot of people have seen the trends of like bleach dyeing and tidying kind of became really popular, like to do at home. And so I did it a little bit and then before I knew it, everything in my closet became bleach dyed. And my boyfriend was like, "You need to not bleach dye everything we own. How about you go to Goodwill and get some stuff to bleach dye?" And so I did, and I loved it and I was kind of hilarious sharing this on social media as I'm doing it. And people are like, "Can I buy that? Can I, can I pay you for that?" And I was like, "Yeah. Sure." And so, yeah, the entrepreneur in me was like, wait a second. There's a market here. And so I love it. We are so blessed. We, we really have created an insane business in the past couple of months. It's, we do, and we're expanding now to we, we do like graphic T-shirts, a lot of like sports teams and stuff, and now we're kind of going into like denim and flannels and stuff and everything is eco-friendly because it's thrifted and yeah, it's, it's just like a real, I'm really big on being eco-friendly, and I'm a vegetarian and that kind of stuff is

really important to me too. So I love kind of bringing that into the business, but my, my stipulation, cause my boyfriend was really the one pushing me to do this. I was like, "I have so much going on. I can't do this too." And he was like, "I will help you." And so we own the business 50-50, and he does all of the upload because each piece is unique and individual and, and so we have to upload, a lot of stuff. And so he does all the uploading and pictures and stuff, and I do all of the creating and thrifting, and it's been really, really fun to like get away from social media and just be creative.

Leah: And physically do something with your hands. I love that. And it's like, I wonder, like how has that helped? So think about like, okay, you create digitally all day and now you're also going and creating something with your hands and physically like creating and making something. Have you seen, does it help you when you go back into create things digitally?

Gabby: 100%. Relic, I almost still think of it as a hobby. Like it hasn't gotten to the point yet where it's like, kind of like too much. And yeah, it's really been a way for me to like de-stress, and I'm able to like put in a podcast or an audio book and make these shirts and like take pictures of them and just be more creative in a completely different way than I'm used to. So yeah, it's been, it's been nice to kind of step away. And also, I think we talked about this yesterday, but I've always sent people digital products. It's been like, here's the PDF or whatever, or events or in-person, but you're not like giving someone something physical. And so it's really cool to be able to like ship out a shirt or a pair of jeans or whatever, and then see people like wearing it and tagging you in it. And actually physically like getting something in the mail is really cool, because a lot of times, these days we're moving more digitally and everything's like super digital. And I it's been really nice to kind of almost do the opposite and take a step back and do things a little bit more traditionally.

Leah: I love that. So where can everyone find you on the socials? Cause you have a few businesses now. So where are all of your businesses and where can we find you?

Gabby: So my main page on Instagram is just Gabby Male. And from there you can kind of find everything, but, @Relic96 on Instagram and The Rose Retreats, we actually are doing a virtual retreat coming up here. Soon I on there will be more information about that. The Instagram on that is @theroseretreats. Pretty simple.

And, but if you go to my Instagram at @gabbymale, you'll see all of those links and can check all of that stuff out. And I know I have a decent number next to my name, but I do pretty well with responding and seeing, I'd say like 85 to 90% of my DMS. And so if you have any questions or want to reach out or whatever, I'm always here to chat and I love meeting new people. So send me a DM.

Leah: I love that. That's awesome. Well, I do want to ask just a couple more questions before we wrap up. I just want to give you an opportunity to just, like pretend this is a people meeting you for the first time. What is it that you want them to know about themselves, that they can connect with you on? Like, what's your passion? Like, what's the thing that you want to like really give out to the world and want to be remembered by?

Gabby: I want people to know that they can do anything that they set their mind to. And if you have a passion, if you have something that really excites you and that you love, I really, really, I think my purpose on this planet is to give people that permission slip to pursue that and get people that the confidence to follow their dreams and to create whatever they want and to do those things. And I have a tattoo on my spine. I got it in college when I was like, really like adopting all of these beliefs, I guess. And it's kind of cliché now, but it's the, "She believes she could, so she did." And, but it really is like, a big foundation of who I think I am. And I really do think, if I believe in something, I can do it and I will do it. And if you adopt that mindset and try your best to silence the noise, I promise you, I mean, it's going to be so fricking hard, but you will get it done, but it has to start with believing in yourself because if that's not there as your foundation, it's going to be a really rocky road.

Leah: Agreed. I mean, I think for years on the bottom of my email signature on my phone, it says "Empowering women and girls to be beautifully confident," because confidence is at the core of everything. And confidence comes from believing in yourself. And it doesn't matter how you grew up. Like, you have to choose to believe in yourself, whether you had supportive parents or not supportive parents, or if you even had parents, like, we've all seen so many success stories of people that come from nothing in and make it and make it huge.

I mean, look at Tyler Perry, you know, I mean, he's one of my favorite mentors, he just doesn't know it yet, but I love that you are so focused on a woman believing in

herself. And really saying, "Hey, you can do it." And when people follow you, it is about loving themselves and saying, "Yes, it's great to have wellness." I've just interviewed, um, TRILUNA Wellness. They're a program that's like they're anti diet, I think you would get along so well, but they're, anti-diet and the whole concept is, "You know, we're all different. We have to love ourselves." And you have to love who you are and believe in yourself to have any kind of success in life or business, it does all start from, from internal belief. And then I love what you did is you said, "I look at the voices that are coming into me and seeing where I need to let those go." So it's like, self-belief, looking at who you're allowing to speak into your life and editing that, right? Like that's a constant, right? Both of those are constant. That's not like you have belief and then you're done. And just being able to always say, "Hey who am I allowing to speak into my life? And then how do I continue to love myself more?" So I'm excited to continue to learn from you, you are wise beyond your years, and it's just an honor to get to know you.

And I want you to end with how you define success for yourself today. Cause I know that that has definitely changed for you over the years. So what does it mean to you today and maybe how has that changed for you since you got started as a sophomore?

Gabby: Yeah. So success used to look like, or at least I thought it looked like a certain number, as far as like followers, or a certain number, as far as a paycheck and a salary or how much you're making or a car you were driving or how big square foot your house is. I think I was very materialistic, especially in college. And like when you start making money, it like, you don't know how to really handle that. But as I've grown up, even though I'm only 24, I really now define success as how happy you are and how much gratitude you have in your life. And honestly, it just comes down to happiness for me. Like when I think of success, I think of like, are you happy? Because you can be Jeff Bezos. But is he happy? I mean, he's got a lot of money to make him get happy, but you know, it's like you can have all the money in the world, you can have the most successful businesses in the world, but you can be drowning and stress and anxiety.

And my mom has MS. And I've seen her go through having such a successful career. But because she wasn't taking care of herself with stress and all that, it all got ripped

away from her. And that's a whole other podcast, but I think having that as a role model to look onto, cause she's, she was the breadwinner, she's the business woman, she's really someone that I've modeled my life after. I've fortunately, and unfortunately, in a way, been able to really take a step back and realize like, I need to take care of myself. Am I happy? And like, really just getting centered with that because at the end of the day, all the other stuff doesn't matter if you're not happy.

Leah: Hmm, that's so true. Well, thank you so much, Gaddy Male for coming and blessing us with your presence and just your wisdom of how to, how to take care of ourselves and how to grow a beautiful business by enjoying what you do and believing in yourself. So thank you. And I hope that everyone connects with you and I look forward to continuing to learn from you.

Gabby: Thank you so much for having me. It was awesome.

Leah: Thanks for tuning in! I know I learned so much from this conversation with Gabby, and I hope it leaves you feeling inspired and motivated to grow your own business and move past imposter syndrome.

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