From Autoimmunity to $20M—How to Build a Business Without Losing Your Health Transcript

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Introduction and Amy's Origin Story

What if the cost of modern success for women isn't failure, it's disconnection? Today on Everyday Ancestral, I'm sitting down with Amy Lacey to talk about what happens when a woman wired for rhythm and tuition and connection is pushed into a world built on hustle, pressure, and endless performance.

You built one of the most successful grain-free food brands in the country. I mean, you launched in many ways that the grain free food movement while also being a mom and a wife.

Yes, so I have been married for 27 years, it'll be 28 March. I've got three children. To tell my story, I gotta go back to the beginning of how it even happened.

We started the cauliflower buzz, we were the first cauliflower pizza crust, gluten free, grain free. There was nothing on the market like that. The best thing out there was Ooties.

And if you know Oodies, it's not that great. When I grew up, I had a single mom, a dad that was an alcoholic drug addict, wasn't in my life. And when I got married and we started having children, and I was like, "I'm going to create traditions and special moments and were going have these family fun nights and the family is going be the most important thing to me.

Like my children are going the be most thing important to be. I'm just going live vicariously through them a childhood I didn't have." So I had set up this family fun night, Friday night which was pizza, like Domino's or whatever we were gonna eat that night.

Round table pizza. And then it was board games or movies. Basically what happened to me is one day I woke up after a Friday family night and I couldn't get out of bed.

I was inflamed. and my body was attacking itself, and I was in so much pain. And so fast forward, I went to the doctors, was diagnosed with lupus and Sjogren's.

So a lot of autoimmune issues, connective tissue disorder. They immediately put me on shots of steroids, which if you've ever been on steroids or your audience has been in steroids.

It keeps you awake at night. Some prisons use it as a form of punishment. like it makes you crazy. And then for the side effect, excuse me, of steroids, they put me on Wellbutrin for anxiety to try to calm it down.

Well, Butrin is used to help people quit smoking, but it's also an antidepressant. autoimmune issues, which is the drug that everybody was trying to get during COVID.

And I was kind of bedridden. I couldn't even walk. So when I started living gluten-free, grain- free, my inflammation went away and I quickly went off all the medications.

Fast forward, I wanted to bring back family fun night after nine months of being really sick. Then I went online looking for a healthy gluten free grain free pizza crust and actually found a recipe.

made it, it was a complete flop. It was mess. Yucky. And it using cauliflower. I didn't even eat that vegetable because it's white. Let's face it. Last veggie standing on a veggy tray.

Nobody ever eats it! That's true. it's white is it really a veggie and it smells when you cook it so i wasn't a huge fan

of it in the beginning but eventually i perfected it loved it my kids loved i started helping other people kind of be coming to coach without even knowing it but i was helping others people get off their medications and eat gluten-free grain- free and then one of the the clients there said you know you should take this to farmers market teach your kids how to talk to people it'll be fun and Northern California, where I lived in Chico, California had a pretty robust farmer's market.

And I was able to get in there and pretty soon I wasn't a couple of local grocery stores, this pizza crust was, and then people were pre-ordering it and I up all night making it before I could ever even go to farmer market, so the business started that way.

It was really to serve the person I once was which was a very sick person and it was never meant to become what it did. And it literally went viral online.

Yeah, from a blog, right? Yeah. So I had another client who was a single mom whose daughter was severely autistic and she was nonverbal. The doctor actually put her on a low carb diet for that.

And you're well-versed in what sugar can do to you. Autism rates are just through the roof, and it's attributed to our food industry. The doctor put on a low-carb diet, And she knew my pizza crusts were low carb.

They just, gluten-free and grain- free makes them low carbohydrate. So she asked me if I would send her some and of course she was a single mom so it's near and dear to my heart and I sent them to her for like seven months and one day she called me and asked to go visit her.

Her name was Jessie and when I opened the door she had lost 90 pounds herself because her daughter wouldn't eat unless she sat down with her and they were eating other things besides my crust but they're eating like one or two of my crusted day every single day for seven And then Kenzie came running up to me and gave me a big hug and said, thank you.

And she was talking and she and Jesse was so excited to share that with me because she going to school that year. She was going have an aid, but she's going get into school, which had not happened yet.

Fast forward a few months later, you know, I'm still doing farmer's market, But I am in a couple of grocery stores and we're online now direct to consumer.

We have a Shopify store, we are not really doing much. And the business was starting to suck money. My margins were horrific and you and I just talked about offline margins and how important they are.

And I had no business since I was not in the food industry yet. So I wasn't really, I knew that my bank account was getting lower and lower. I'd gone through our savings and we were remodeling our house.

So we didn't have a garage. So I just, you know, I'm a very faith-based. And as I got on my hands and knees, and I've never done that and prayed, And I was just like, look, i'm helping all kinds of people, primarily diabetics, type two diabolics.

get off of their medications and live a healthier life, but I'm not making money and it's eating up and is starting to cause a problem between my husband and I about the finances.

But God, I don't have the ability to shut it down.

Healing Through Diet and Creating Cauliflower Foods

Like my ego doesn't, i don' want to shutdown. I love getting the letters and the accolades and people telling me thank you for getting me off my medications.

So you're going to have to shutting down or make it successful because I dont have it in me to do that. And that

night, no joke, I had a dream that said, share Jesse's story.

So the next day I have one employee, Jimmy, spelled like Jimi Hendrix, but a female. very, very into healthy eating and, you know, just anti-sugar, all of that.

Anyways, I told her about Jessie and I said I dreamt that we should tell Jessie's story. I'm not sure how to tell it, but we shall tell and she said, You better ask Jessie.

And Jessie was so excited. She's like, Oh, be the Jessie of cauliflower foods like the Jared of Subway without the perversion. And I know this is long, but I need people to understand what happened to know where I was in this space that is dominated at the time, all men, very few women.

Now we have all kinds of women rising up. With that being said, we decided to put Jessi's story on Facebook and it ended up going viral. And in January of 2017, in that month, we sold more than we had the entire year of 2016. And by the end of January, We had done 5.3 million in pizza sales.

and then by 2018 we did 21 million and we were the number one pizza cross on Amazon for 16 months straight. So here I am, this stay at home mom, just trying to heal myself and become a mom again.

And I had some business background. I actually worked for Big Pharma, I'd actually had an online clothing store, so I understood how to sell online direct to consumer.

But I no Amazon experience, no food experience. Zero food experiences. So I knew how to apply for a cottage license. I didn't know how find a co-packer.

So, I had to learn all of that and it was a man's world so heavy back then. And I remember somebody told me to go to Fancy Food Show. Actually, if you're a new brand, you could go Walk it, whatever.

If they'll allow you to walk it. I don't even know if they do, but that was the first food show we went to and they had this event where they were talking to new brands the night before the show started.

And so Jimmy and I went into that and there's always remember this guy, Bob Burke, who later on, you know, later on became on my board. But at the time he came up and he started talking to me and we started to talk about cauliflower.

He started using all these acronyms that are used in the food industry and I didn't know any of them. So I said, you know what? I'm sorry, Bob. I can't talk to you right now, I need to use the restroom really bad.

I've got to go right know. And I walked away and went in the rest room and I didn't come out for like an hour. Like I ditched Jimmy. It was so nervous because I don't have a clue of what he was talking about and didn' want to come across ignorant.

The next day I was showcasing my products at the show. We had a little tiny new brands in a new brand's pavilion, a booth which is basically a table top and that's it.

He was going to see me and so I'm looking up all those acronyms trying to figure out what's he's talking but too embarrassed to tell him. that I didn't know what he was talking about.

And that's one thing I would say is to anybody starting out, don't be embarrassed, Don't Be Shy. Especially if you're a woman. People want to help people in general.

It doesn't matter if your a women or a man. If I had told Bob, hey, I'm so new to this and I don' understand what you are talking. He would have sat down with me and explained it all.

But I know I was intimidated. The majority of people that room were men. it was very intimidating. So that was like

my first experience in the food industry of just feeling the pressure of being in a man's world as a woman coming into an industry that I was just starting to learn about.

Now looking back at it though, is there a difference in this world of entrepreneurship, of how women approach it versus men. I mean, for so long, it's been such a male patriarchal society, a mail dominated business acumen in many ways.

And I've always felt like instead of women being in their own power, they are expected to be like how a man would show up with his power. Literally, James, I went into therapy over it.

So if I can fast forward, you know, when people were starting to be interested in my company and acquiring it, and I funded the whole thing myself. At that point, we had EBITDA, the margins.

I learned about margins and no customer acquisition, and all of that. And we were doing very, very well. So I had a lot of people coming to me offering to invest in the company or buy the companies.

At that time, it seemed like a venture capitalist might be the best option for me. I didn't want to sell the business at that, I wanted to still be very involved.

But at that time, there were no, I mean, it's an explosion of female venture capitalists now, which I love because the interview process with a female Venture Capitalist is so different than with the male venture capitalist.

But, at the time I was 4% of women to ever get eight figures of an investment, like 4 percent of were getting that kind of money. It just didn't exist.

My valuation of my company was devalued, and I believe because I was a woman. And here's why I think that from the group that ended up investing in my Company.

When I went out to the boardroom to Boulder, Colorado, there were 19 men in the room and one woman and myself. So there's one other woman. In that situation back then, I was very locked into eye contact with her, eye-contact with others, but asking her questions.

She knew nothing about what I talking about. They planted her there, so I would feel more comfortable. I knew it. So insulting, so insulting. I don't know, maybe women don' think that's insulting I found that extremely insulting Yeah, I'm sure they didn't mean it to be insulting but yeah.

What do you do though? Because those rooms are mostly filled by men, particularly back then. Yeah, and these men were really, they were just learning about direct-to-consumer and email marketing and that you can actually make money off of your email and they we're just all grocery store, previous.

Like the brands that they dealt with were real big brands but just grocery. So they where taking in a lot of what I was saying, very interested in it, giving me that respect and credibility But when it came down to investing in me, the day that the investment was supposed to close, they devalued my company.

There was zero reason for them to do that except for to get a better deal. But I really believe it was because I was a woman. If I had been a man, that company with the EBITDA, margins, amount of money we were bringing in, no debt, easily should have been a nine-figure evaluation, and it was cut in half.

I look back on that, my attorneys and my financial advisors were saying, don't do it. It's a bad deal. They can't that to you. But then I had my family saying do the deal, do a deal.

Yeah, it's a lot of money. This is the most money any of us have ever gotten combined. And I knew I could help move everybody out of Northern California if I sold a portion because I was going to take some off the table.

It felt like it was more in response to you being female versus you been green. It felt, well, by then I had surrounded

myself with the Bob Birx of the world.

I was in my business, so I have experience in business. You know, I've had great people helping me. The CEO who ended up selling Rayos, he was helping.

Me. Um, a lot of great. People around me helping, me that were experienced, that we're lifelongers in the food industry. And so. Do believe just. knowing the group I was working with and all of their brands.

Like for example, they had another brand. very masculine brand, military brand. Joe Rogan represented them for a while, just a very.

Going Viral and Scaling the Business

Masculine brand that was the brand they took previous to me. And then here I am and in all of their portfolio, there was only two female brands ever that I know of that they've ever had myself and one other one cool house and she was only involved with them for a very short time.

I think they have a couple women working for them now, but at the time when I was involved, they had no women for working them. The plant at that table was one of the co-founders girlfriends.

And everyone told me I was being devalued because not for the lack of experience. I mean, you know what it's like, James. If you're a scrappy person and you are willing to get scrapping and get creative and do whatever it takes and no is not an answer, no as next opportunity.

You just twist that no into something that's finally a yes. how it is if you're that person. You're a very valuable founder and CEO and entrepreneur because there are those founders that I've met, and I'm not trying to say they're all men, but pretty much men at the time that were hiring people to do all that.

They weren't in the weeds. Yeah, I do feel like I was devalued because And if I look at their deals with Kill Cliff and some of the other deals they did, they're huge deals.

And then I looked at Cool House and myself and they were not, and we were the only women. So I mean, gosh, if they listen to this podcast, I wouldn't get in trouble.

I didn't say their names, but I think they've changed a lot. I think the food industry has changed a lot. I mean, look at all the women. Look at Lauren, Sweet Lauren's Cookies. I was on a panel with her.

She was doing nothing at the time. She's blowing up. i'm so excited for her and there's all kinds of women, Jamie Kern Lima in the cosmetic industry changed that.i'm learning a lots because my current company just launched a skincare line.

So i am learning alot about the skincare industry. The food industry, as you know, has completely transformed since I launched. I mean, the grocery store, The Frozen Isles, there's healthy, and there are things you can eat, There's cereal that's better for you.

There was none of that. It was terrible cereal for me. Cereal is an example because there is so many options now and at the time there was like nothing.

And I remember when I was really sick, I met a dietitian and she's like, cereal is like giving your kid a candy bar. Don't eat cereal. Now there're all kinds of options.

So I think women have been able to transform the food industry. I'll transform cosmetic industry as well, because fragrances and all the things that are in cosmetics right now, especially the big brands, and you're putting them on the largest organ in your body, your skin.

So, I don't want to discredit men. Women and men like you are changing industries. And I think it's because we have to work harder and be scrappier. You're running a different business now though.

Yeah, how are you running that differently? Yeah. So when Califlower took off, I had to learn everything, like I said, Like I have no experience in the food industry.

I felt this urge to be everywhere. so I was flying to New York all the time, to Austin, meeting with Whole Foods, flying in Bentonville, getting into Walmart.

And I was just gone all the time. And here I have these three kids who are teenagers and then a little one. My husband, he's a physician, has his own practice.

He's gone to school for nine years total to have what he has, not to make money, but to change people's lives. That was his dream. As a family, we always said we would not have a nanny.

We had the ability to stay at home. I had ability be a stay-at-home mom, and I didn't want to take that for granted. So Jim cut back on his practice and he went part-time, and they used to call him Dr.

Mom, so that one of us was always home. But if I could go back and I won't do it in this business, I was gone more than I were home, And I felt like I had to.

I feel like had I to hustle that hard to be successful in the industry. And now what I'm learning is I didn't have to do that. I don't. Have to. Do that in the current business.

Um, I. Don't Have. To. Travel. As. Much. Like. The. Business. It. May. Grow. Slower. But. And I look back on that, and I can't change that now. He's 17. We go fishing together, we bond, but he will go to his dad for help, whereas the other two used to go me.

And, I cannot ever get that back. It's not worth it. No amount of money is worth sacrificing that. Either hire somebody you trust that can be there in your place, And I know the hustle is real.

Like you've got to hustle. So I still have to hassle in what I'm currently doing. There's gotta be balance. And, I think for women, when I am, getting ready to speak at the end of the month in San Diego, and one of things I want to talk about is balance, balancing, like being a wife, being the mom, having a business, it is tricky.

I mean, think it's harder for us to balance than men. Definitely. Yeah. It's very, very tricky And so my advice is, no means a lot. When you say no, you're saying yes to something else.

when you said yes, your saying no to someone else, and so I say, No, to a lotta shows right now and a lots of events, so, I can be at these events where my son is playing sports, or I could be everything.

I will not, not be something. And I've taken red eyes to be swim meets, because I miss so much during Cali flower, In my mind, it was like, let me just build this and then I'll sell it and I will always be home with them.

But that's not how it works. When you get the buzz of entrepreneurship and you change people's lives and can create a product that changes people lives, when you sell and it's gone, you mourn the loss of that.

And you see opportunities where you can make a difference in other areas. The supplement area, not to change subjects, but the supplement Excuse my language, but it's a shit show.

I'm on Amazon, But be very careful about what you buy. There's no regulations, there's nobody out there making sure that we're doing the right things.

And there are a lot of people doing wrong, bad things right now in the supplement industry. It kind of reminds me of the beginning of a food industry like the FDA.

One thing that I always say is that the FDA allows a 20% variance on your labels so I could have 20 percent more sugar or hydrogenated oils which I don't in my products but if I did I couldn't and not claim it 20%. 20% allowance.

So you could have 20%, whatever ingredient you don't like in your product and not claim it. You can be 20 percent off. you can look it up. Well let alone the ingredients you dont have to list, right?

The ingredients that are within the ingredient that you do not have list. Like natural flavors has other ingredients but no one lists it Exactly. So, and then there's all this thing in the supplement, like we're getting off subject, but I think it's really important.

And I hate to say this, I'm not this huge feminist. I love men. Men are awesome and men have created amazing things in this world. But men have also created those little rules.

And in the supplement industry, I mean, you can get a patent on a list of ingredients and not list them and call it something. It's just a joke. Like I interviewed with Sean Wells, we did a series and he was like, yeah, if you see that, run because those people are hiding something.

When life gets busy, you're moving through your day, it's not always easy finding real food. That's why I've been keeping these with me. Our sponsor, Prima, makes protein bars using simple traditional ingredients like grass-fed collagen and whey, organic raw honey, beef tallow, cacao, coconut, sea salt, and they're offering 25% off for listeners of this show.

Look, I have a simple test when it comes to protein First, I have to recognize all the ingredients. Second, it's got to not wreck my gut. While Prima passes that test, each bar has 21 grams of animal-based protein and all nine essential amino acids.

Look, go give them a try. Go to eatprima.com, use code ANCESTRAL25 and get 25% off. Women are held to a different standard. The man who is away from the household for work, who's traveling more than as a father, he doesn't get slack.

He doesn' get treated the way a woman who was in that position does.

Navigating a Male-Dominated Industry and Fundraising

Yeah. I was treated, I'll just go by the school alone, events where I would miss, you know, my kids were playing sports, all three of them played sports.

I wouldn't miss some events during cauliflower. This is before I taking the red eyes to make them. And I isolated from the moms, like the mom's that were all there.

Uh, was I treated terrible? I can just remember being at food shows where we were talking and Men would, like, we would be in a circle and I might be the only woman there.

And men would talk to each other, looking at each in the eyes and not even make eye contact. directly at me. And it's just, whether they were talking about sports or food or what have you, it is so different now, because you go to a food show now and the supplements and like Expo West is all together right now.

The supplements in the food industry is still together. You go into that show, there's so many female founded brands. So men and female, they're working together better than ever.

But yeah, back then I just felt like it was really, I really had to fight for my position in that circle and be taken serious. You know, when you're interviewing people to buy your company or to invest in your companies, you are going through a series of due diligence like no other and a serious of interviews.

And it wasn't just the people I chose. I can honestly tell you, out of all of them, like 12 of the them there might have

been maybe three women in any of those interviews there to interview me at the level that the men were.

Now that's all changed because there's these women venture capitalists that have popped up and it's incredible. But I think the reason why is because the stat was 4% of women get money and 96% of men get it, like the rest is going to men.

That's a huge, that's so, it's such a discrepancy there. And now I would, if I'd known we were gonna talk this subject, I will look at the numbers today.

I don't know what they are today, but I know they're a lot higher, But they not high enough. Yeah, It's not equal. No, it's like 18% now versus 4%. And we have the people like Sarah Blakely who paved, you know, a path for us and gave us like, she was the one.

She did Spanx, right? She started with $5,000 and she had a manufacturing company that was run by men and had to really like say, no, we're doing it this way.

and she had to prove herself at Nordstrom's and places like that. She had like, just be really scrappy and prove yourself. And so she was kind of one of those people that I looked up to in the food industry.

I look up her and how she handled things and I was like okay. she's kind of paving the path for women. And I'd like to think that I'm one of those women too, that's paved the paths, but it is, it was hard and, and I had to go into therapy over it too.

I can just remember I was on the board and i'd be in board meetings and go to talk and just be talked over. Like I have to fight for the respect. And I'm not saying all men are like that, but just in the industry, it was such a good old boy industry.

Now I don't think it's so much that way, I think a lot of industries are that. Nestle brought me out to speak. on their panel. They had this big event for all their employees.

And so they asked me to come out on a panel and I was the only female on the panel, and it was interesting because the questions that were asked to the other panel members were pretty, they were good, intellectual, great questions, but for me, it was very fluffy, very fluffy questions.

Interesting. One of the things though that was happening during my time, and this is in 2019 now, I think the change from 2017 to 2019, the food industry was huge.

And I thinking a lot of industries, It's really become huge after COVID. one of things that is really interesting is when I went to Walmart, when went Bittenville, Arkansas, The way that we got into Walmart is they came to us.

They called me and they said, we want you to come out here. It wasn't during a time where they were interviewing and looking at brands. And it was a female that called and she had just replaced a man in her position.

She was the frozen buyer. And she was a nutritionist, and Walmart wanted to up their game and bring in products that were healthier and have a healthier section.

So she she, was 26 years old. She was, a registered dietitian. she had no buying experience. It was crazy. If you're in the food industry, you know how Walmart is.

You don't wanna put your brand in every single Walmart because when Walmart decides they're not gonna have you like Costco, then your toast, like you got inventory out there and it could really kill a brand.

They'll send it back to you and charge you for it. Exactly, and it can just kill a brand. So she was like, I want you every product you have. And at the time we had six and I wanted them in every single Walmart.

I was, like yeah, okay, yeah. Let's do this. Then I go back to my advisors who have experience. mail, Bob and those guys, and they're like, no, you are not going to put every product in every Walmart because the minute they decide that it's not turning and you're going have chargebacks and it is going kill you.

It is gonna kill your margins. So I had to educate her on how a new brand should go into Walmart because literally Walmart just said, OK, let's clean up our act and let us get rid of these good old boys and start hiring these young females.

And they had hired like five females in different departments. It was interesting that some of the bigger companies had decided that they needed to bring in some women executives and women buyers.

Kellogg's the same thing. I do wonder though, because you mentioned that with your new company, you're finding more balance. Is that balance connected to relationship with you husband, to your kids, your own identity?

How have you achieved that? Yeah. So when the venture capitalists came in and they bought the majority of my company and I took money off the table, a lot of people thought I was just going to like go away and, you know, move to Florida, buy my dream home and sail away on the ocean and be happy.

And that wasn't the case because I wanted to still be involved. It was like my fourth child. That was my baby. part of the negotiations was I wanted to be on the board of directors.

I was willing to give up the CEO position because I needed to more of a mom. And it was at a point where I felt like I would slow the company down with my lack of experience.

So they put a CEO in there that had a lot of experience and I was okay with that. And they let me be part of that decision-making. But once they took control, they fired my team, They changed the recipe and they Put me on sabbatical.

and while I Was on Sabbatica, l they changed my passwords to things like the bank account and things Like that now that was a huge big fight, like big problem, and I had to really fight for my position at that time.

And I'll be honest, behind the scenes, I could be really stoic and put up a good argument, a lot of wisdom, good arguments. I don't yell, scream. And, you know, Patrick Leoncy wrote a book, and one of the things he says when you're hiring people is to hire people with emotional intelligence.

And it's a fact, it has been studied that women have more emotional intelligent than men. I remember when, this is before I sold, so I'm kind of going away from what I was going to talk about, but I'll get back there.

We had one man we hired on our team before we sold the company. once we hired him, we started having drama, internal drama. And I'm not saying it was his fault, but it like the way that he worked with all of us.

It was so different. We all got along so well. Sometimes women can be catty, for the most part. Women can get along with each other. So going back to the Venture Capitalist, I had to go into therapy.

One of the things I learned about in therapy Well, I learned a few things. I learnt that I should have dealt with my childhood trauma, and that's probably why it manifested into autoimmune issues.

So for all of you out there listening, if you have any kind of trauma in your life that you've buried, which we all do, You gotta deal with it because eventually it will manifest itself into illness.

It's like it's known. So when I turned 40, that trauma I experienced as a 12-year-old manifested it into lupus and Sjogren's. Definitely, I know that's how that happened.

I could feel the trauma. Felt like I was experiencing trauma again, like, was losing my fourth child and I losing control. And when you don't have control, your emotions can become very angry.

And I didn't like how I was. So I went into therapy. I did tell anybody in the company I wasn't in therapy, but it was just to really keep that emotional intelligence in place.

It's interesting because I can remember, and I won't say his name because he's very well known in food industry.

Work-Life Balance, Motherhood, and Slowing Down

Very well-known. You will know him. He's gone through many exits. But he was also on our board. And I remember I just stayed very, very calm. He couldn't handle it.

Started screaming, yelling, and eventually hung up on me. We're friends now, but I think it's so important to have strong emotional intelligence. I also think that it is really important, if you're a mom and you have kids, to sit down with your spouse.

Jim was never part of the business. You look at Poppy, the couple. They were together the whole time in that business. And I didn't have that. Jim and I talked about it a lot.

If we could go back, we probably would have done that together. He would've just taken a leave of absence. But he was so firm in how hard he had worked to get where he is, and he wasn't doing it for the money.

It was doing to make a difference in people's lives as well. but we would have done it together. I think that would've been a big difference for us, and we probably woulda homeschooled our children and taken them on the road with us instead of me being gone all the time.

I won't be gone now. I limit how, and I sit down with my family and say, okay, there's these events and how do they fit in the calendar for our family?

I will not be going more than once a month for a few days, whereas before I was only home for few a days every month. There's really no difference in what I'm doing now as far as the success goes than what was doing then other than me being really gone and busy.

And then when I'm home, I am just very present. And I would say this is really important for little kids, too. I used to, with Cali, if I had my computer out while I was playing with them or doing something with, or I'd have my phone out.

And I, if I just spend an hour with them doing what they want, like, you know, one of my college kids is a gamer still, and I will go in and like game with him, look at what he's doing, spend that time with.

My daughter loves fashion, so I'm, I put everything away. It actually buys me more time. And it will with your little ones too. Like put away everything, do what the want.

If it's Legos, If its gaming, whatever it is. Do what they want, not what you think they should be doing. And connect with them in that way. If you have an hour of connection with like that, it's going to buy you so much time.

That's what their going remember. So if you ask my kids back in 2017 about me, they will say, oh, my mom was gone all the time because she had this pizza business.

Now, if ask them, They don't say my mum has a soursop business, No, my mom, we just skied in Breckenridge. My mom was skiing with us. And when we went to Breckinridge, it's an annual trip we take every year.

Many years with Kelly Flower, I was in the lodge making videos, making pizza recipes. I wasn't out on the slopes with them. So even though I there, wasn' there is my point.

Be there and you can in an eight-hour day or a 10- hour day, or whatever your day looks like, just take an hour and devote it to them at their level. That's the key.

You gotta do what they want to do at there level and it makes a big difference. And the other thing that I think really helps is having them involved in the business.

So we have a warehouse. I send the kids there all the time to package up things and they're really involved. Of course they are older so it's easier. But I can think back on it when they were little, I should have had them helping me make innovation, make different pizzas and stuff like that and we didn't.

We did it for photo shoots. We pretended we did that but we weren't actually doing that because innovation I was quick and I Was you know in a hurry, let's get more products out and i didn't have time to play around in the kitchen with the kids I think it's really important to have your family your whole family involved in your business Is entrepreneurship truly something that is ideal for how a woman, and not saying that women can't do it, there's a very difference, but saying is there a sacrifice?

Is there something in a society that we miss when women are in the warrior role? And more and more I'm just hearing so much about how burnt out so many of the women I know who have been in that warrior mode are.

And yet I don't hear as much of it for the men. So it's almost like there is this element of like that they're kind of a little bit more designed for that mode for longevity.

That's why I say that I wish I would have brought my kids in more and Jim in war because he was Dr. Mom and he wasn't. He's still not the mom. He is not mom, right.

It's not when they're sick or they are not feeling good. They want you. Yeah, and that is such a hard balance. And that's why I look at Poppy, for example, because they were so popular right now that they had that big exit and they have their kids with them and it was like a family thing.

So yeah, she was in the limelight. she was there and he was behind the scenes, but their kids were also with them. And you see that their are kids are with a lot.

So it just, and not everyone can do that, you know, especially if they're not experienced success yet, because that costs a lotta money to have your kids going with you.

and to your partner also focusing on business that may not be profitable at the time. But I think that's kinda my point, is that I started out thinking, one way.

And what I'm now hearing you say, though, that's very moving to me is that it's not necessarily about, oh, men should be in this role, women should in that role.

But it is more about like, well, how do we choose to be IN that roll? Like, can we include the kids? Can we as a family do this? In a sense, bring the pieces that may be missing when you're away.

Can you bring those with you? who you are as a woman is being supported, well, not just a women, as woman and a mother and wife is been supported in your role as warrior.

We went viral, so I didn't have a choice. It kind of just happened, but I definitely fed, I put fuel on the fire for sure. I think it's okay to go slower.

I go much slower now. It's OK that my current business isn't doing millions right now, I know it is going to, it has got the growth, It is OK to slow down because there are other things that are important to me.

that it's okay to have a slower business, less money coming in. For me, and it is easy for me to say that because I have, you know, the money that I made from the other business.

So that's easy to me say. But I look back on it, if I could go back, I would have slowed CaliFlower down so that could have been more present. And I think it's okay to have slow growth in that you can still be a mom and still a

wife, and you've gotta have a lot of self-care.

And that's the other thing I would say is that I always was in some kind of mastermind. I've always had some kinda coach. Because you got to self care and, you know this, whether you're a man or a woman, your business is only gonna grow at the pace that your growing.

internally. And so for us, I think it's really important if you're balancing that role of motherhood, wife, entrepreneur, CEO, founder, whatever the business is, you better have a lot of self-care.

You better take a lotta time for whatever that looks like for you, journaling, massages, eating right, exercising. That's another thing that I had a full circle moment.

I got sick again after, like I worked myself to getting sick. Again, here I am creating a product to help me serve the person I once was. And I just made myself sick, again, through stress and overworking.

And it was just like this full circle moment, this hamster that couldn't get off the wheel. Like I just, for the purposes of why I created the brand to begin with, I allowed it to take over.

I looked back on then and I wasn't, but now I am. Always in some kind of a mastermind that's pouring into me or with a coach that is pouring in to me so that I know they can help me.

And one of the things they'll say to is, what is the number one thing you need help with? And I will say balance. work-life balance, time management. It used to be my health, but now time, and health is right up there too with time.

But time is so important to me. So I think giving yourself permission to go a little slower and not look at other people and say, oh, I gotta be like that person, or I'm gonna be that brand.

It's okay, it's gonna happen. If I look at the brands that are still around, that're really successful, they have longevity. Look at Califar, It doesn't exist anymore.

I had sold it in 2022, the rest of it. And by the end of 2023, They shut it down. It grew so fast, so quickly. and I think these longevity brands, It allows for more balance and I think they last longer too, like they have more of a chance of being successful.

I know that this is probably not answering it the way, we're not getting into the weeds of what you're trying to get into, but I just want to be really practical about what has helped me and the differences from then and to now.

Like the brand I have now is going very slow. I know it's gonna be around forever. It's not going anywhere. And it is okay that I can go a little slower.

Before I could remember looking at other brands going, oh, I gotta be like them, like Nut Pods. Well, Madeline had been around for a long time, but I wanted her success instantly.

Just take a step back, enjoy the moment. Be really present in the moment. Take it one day at a time. Lean on other people. Don't think that you're the only one that can do everything.

You're, for me, my faith is number one. My family's number two. And I look at it back then, Cali Flower is Number One. my family was somewhere way down like number five.

That is a really important piece to all this and to this whole talk is, you know, one of the most ancestral things we can do is be present, but our modern society really pushes us into comparison mode, into judgment mode where there's two other people towards ourself, right?

Cause you're being inundated with information that you would never ancestrally know. I would ever know what a

thousand people think of me. ever of a photo of me or whatever it is.

You know, I would never hear of so much world news. I never would hear so many opinions based off of something that I share, right? Our nervous systems are constantly being taxed.

Our presence is constantly challenged.

Faith, Family, and Returning to Ancestral Food

And I think tethering yourself, from what I'm hearing you say, tethering yourself to family and faith is so crucial to then being able to go back out and continue on your path of mission and heart with what you believe the world needs.

But it starts and ends with family and faith. You have to be grounded in something to them be able go out, and fight the good fight. Absolutely. And it's what's going to fuel you to keep going.

But if you're on comparison mode and you are on social media and your spending your time and energy doing those things, thinking that you have to work harder, smarter, faster, whatever you thinking, and sacrificing what's really important, then you're going to be like me.

You're gonna wake up one day and your youngest kid doesn't go to you and you are sick again. And yeah, you got millions in your pocket, but what good does that do if you don't have your family or your health?

Trust me, like I used to think all the time, oh, if I had this amount of money, life would be so much easier. No, not at all. What makes it easier is just being grounded, slow down, appreciate what you have, spend the time with the things and the people that are important, because the success will follow that.

It will following that, it might not be as fast, but it will followed that and again, fast in our industry is not good. Well, I have a final question I always ask my guests.

If you could wave a magic wand, and bring back one ancestral practice, what would it be and why? I don't know if this is gonna be a good answer or not.

This is going way back. I think I'm thinking of Rob Wolf and the caveman and hunting and gathering, but I just wish We had meat and food that was as clean as back then, like hundreds of years ago.

We have so many preservatives and like chicken. You can't buy a chicken and it tastes good anymore. It's rubbery. I just want our food industry to clean up.

Like there's nothing better than catching your own fish, cleaning it and eating it. I mean, that's going way back. And I don't know if that the way you want me to answer it, but- No, I want you to answered however you wanna.

I like to just know that like I'm a big meat eater and if I wanna kill a calf, a cow, i want it to be eating the right things and I dont wanna eat a chicken that loaded with steroids.

i wanna stop creating food for a fast buck and start creating it for our health because there's so much disease out there that's coming out because of the way we're eating.

And we need to go back to the basics. Like I look at my great-grandmother who lived to be 102. I remember once I asked her, Grandma Bertie, how is it that you live so, and she said, I don't drink that sodie.

That's what she calls it. I don't smoke, I dont drink alcohol, i grow my own fruits and vegetables and i don t put any of those pesties on them. She raised her own chickens, she grew her garden, plucked her chickens.

She like went back to the basics. She made her own bread and gosh, you can't even make your own breath and

get decent flour unless you're in Italy. Like I want us to clean up our industry so that we can all be better for it.

I love it, yeah. Well, I so appreciate you taking your time. And I know you are so busy and I do want to just quickly share too that very much what Bob was to you or just people that had already been in the industry and how they kind of helped to lead you.

I mean, you were so kind and generous in that way to me when we first met at that trade show. And I just, You really stand out as someone who really walks for talk about that.

You're not jaded about it. Your not above, anyone else. It's like you're right there and you are just so accessible and so generous and kind. And I am I'm really grateful to that because I just like you, I didn't, you know, when I started, you for your phenomenal products.

And I loved putting them on our pizza. I have your little jars still, and I love your products, like you're one of those people that is genuinely putting it out there to make the world a better place, not to a buck.

That's kind of going back to what I was saying, I want us to all go back the basics and quit trying to tweak everything to and faster. So I appreciate you too, very much.

Well, thank you, Amy, and thank all of you. If you're enjoying this podcast, there are a few easy ways to support us. One, tell a family member or a friend, say, hey, you should check out Everyday Ancestral.

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And Amy's going to share where you find her. We're going put that in the show notes and of course you subscribe to the channel. But Amy, where can people buy your products and learn more about you and just connect?

Yeah, so Living Beyond Medicine is a great channel to go to. We're all about the fruit soursop, which is grown in other countries. It's hard to get in this country.

it's been around for generations, like 700 years, it does amazing things. So we're able to source it and get it in here into a supplement form and skincare form.

So go to livingbeyondmedicine.com. I'm all about living beyond medicine, trying to get off of any medications you're on, just living a more natural, healthier life.

And as far as me personally, if you want to connect with me on Facebook or Instagram or LinkedIn, I manage all those myself. So you can DM me at HeyAmyLacey on Instagram and I will message you back.

Well, thank you again, Amy. How much? Everyone be well, stay curious. Thank you so much for joining me on Everyday Ancestral. If you enjoyed this episode, hit subscribe so you don't miss the next one.

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Stay curious, live well, and keep it ancestral.