**Interview 7 With Katrina Streatfeild - Facing The Future**

[00:00:00]

**Trudy Rankin:** Welcome to the Online Business Launchpad podcast. I'm your host Trudy Rankin. And I've been fascinated to watch the stats for the different podcast episodes that I put out there every week. And if you are a business owner and you don't pay attention to your statistics, you really should be paying attention to your statistics because they tell you things that are really important for you to know about what's working and what's not. And I've noticed over the last few weeks, that one particular podcast episode has just shot right up to the top of the charts in terms of the number of people listening to this particular podcast. And I've been fascinated by it. And it was actually the podcast episode around burnout. How to stop burnout before burnout [00:01:00] stops you.

And I just thought to myself, that's fascinating. I must tell Katrina about the fact that this podcast has gone right up to the top. And we were meeting today anyway, and we got started talking about the fact that this podcast episode on this particular topic has just taken off. And we both started to reflect on why that was and what it is that people are looking for in particular topics that they search for, that they listen to.

And so basically I've decided that we'll have Katrina on again today for this particular podcast episode. And we just want to take that theme of burnout, but take it to its next level because we started talking about why are people feeling the way they're feeling. Like I'm feeling like certain ways. Katrina's feeling certain ways. And lots of people have really resonated with this.

So Katrina, thank you again for being on the podcast and for sharing with us.

**Katrina Streatfeild:** Thank you for having me.

**Trudy Rankin:** Yeah. So we're just to [00:02:00] really pretty much just have a bit of a conversation and just talk about some of the bits that we talked about before we started recording. We decided we should have hit record at the very beginning, but we weren't didn't realize it was going to turn into a podcast episode.

But that's the joy of it all. We can be flexible.

**[00:02:15] Marker - Beyond normal - all the things happening in the world right now**

**Trudy Rankin:** But I think the thing is that we started talking about first was that we are going through a period of time in the world that many, many... and this was, Katrina's thought... that many, many generations have not been through. Do you want to just talk about that a little bit, Katrina? And just explain what you were thinking about around that particular point.

**Katrina Streatfeild:** Yes. Yes. So we were really, yeah, as you said, pondering about what it was that the burnout was adding value for people, why people were so curious about it and why they were listening to the podcast.

And you're right. That one of the things I was reflecting on with you was, well, is it that [00:03:00] people are kind of searching for an explanation, I guess, of why they're feeling the way they're feeling and because possibly they've never felt like this before? You know, what is going on for me? Is there something wrong with me?

You know, why am I feeling this way? I don't understand it. I'm trying to make sense of it. You know, people searching for answers and understanding because that's really what we need to move forward and not feel like that. Isn't it really?

And I guess I was reflecting in a bigger sense that we've really come from a society where even before COVID in so many ways we were stretched to the limit and pushing ourselves. We were really working hard. We were trying to integrate this idea of, being able to parent and work full time and progress at work and run our own businesses and things like that. You know, we want to have full lives, we want to be able to do everything.

But our infrastructure isn't quite there perhaps to support that in a way that doesn't [00:04:00] really push us too hard yet. We're working on it. We're getting there, but not quite yet that, the digital world, I guess, has meant that we are now in this always on environment. That was all happening before COVID.

**[00:04:11] Marker - How old coping mechanisms might not be enough anymore**

**Katrina Streatfeild:** And then COVID hit and we've been through something over, what is it? Two or three years now? I think we're up to, yeah, something like that. That's something that really, no one in our generation certainly, or, is alive these days has been through. And it is a bit different to some of the other, disasters that have happened. Because we've talked before in other podcasts, Trudy, about how social connectedness and that feeling of belonging and being with other people is really the pathway to psychological safety and good wellbeing and mental health.

So I think the uniqueness around COVID is that we actually had those removed from us because of ISO, you know, we've all been there. And when we think back perhaps to stories about how we, as a society have dealt with disasters in the [00:05:00] past, one of the things that always comes up is, we banded together, we helped each other, we support each other.

This is wonderful. It's exactly what we're supposed to do. But COVID kind of took that strategy away. And so I think we're already you know, pushing things, as I said, before COVID, and then COVID came along and then we were trying to, I guess, maintain our output and our expectations and goals as we moved into COVID. Because in the beginning we hoped it was temporary, and that we'd kind of push through it and get out the other side and go into normal.

And it hasn't worked out that way. We've just kept pushing and pushing and pushing. And it's still not done, you know, we've replaced the challenges of being isolated with the challenges of everyone being sick and systems being overwhelmed. So, you know, I think it's, yeah, it's a really unique context and it's new and we haven't been here before and we don't have a lot of terms of reference [00:06:00] for what would be a normal feeling around that and what to do about it.

**Trudy Rankin:** I think the other thing too is that it's, and it's not just COVID it's the after effects of COVID and how it's affected the supply chain and some of the agro that's happening between countries in the world and things like that, where we've lost some of our sense of safety.

**Katrina Streatfeild:** Absolutely, on a very wide scale and internationally, as you said right down to the fact that, you know, at the moment, in some city areas, you can't ring an ambulance and know that they're going to turn up in a timely manner or go to a hospital emergency department and know that you'll be seen in a timely manner.

And the hospital staff are working hard and the ambos are working hard. It's not about people not putting the effort in from that perspective. It's just that we've been very fortunate up until now to live in a society where for the most part, I suppose, those systems are generally good enough.

I'm not saying they're perfect, but certainly a lot better than in other parts of the world. And suddenly we're a bit [00:07:00] destabilized and we can't rely on things in the same way that we used to internationally, nationally, at a local level. And perhaps we're even starting to wonder if we can rely on ourselves the same way that we used to, when we are not feeling like ourselves. And sometimes not acting like ourselves and thinking like ourselves and performing like ourselves. Because we don't recognize this place that we're in.

**Trudy Rankin:** Yeah. I mean that's definitely true. It's interesting. Just observing my own journey and talking to other people, other entrepreneurs, both people that are further ahead than me and people that aren't quite as far along as I am and things like that. And that is a very interesting reflection, I think, on people's general state of mind. And then, it's not just COVID, as I said, it's the impact of COVID.

And then you want to throw in things like how the weather's behaving where we are. Here in Australia, we're experiencing a colder winter than we've experienced in many, many years. When I talk to people in Europe [00:08:00] or I talk to people in the US, you ask them what it's like, and they're just going, it's boiling. They're hot. They're so hot. And they're struggling with the heat because it's not something that they're used to, to be that hot.

Although I have to smile a little bit sometimes because they tell me how hot it is and it gets translated from Fahrenheit into Celsius. And I'm thinking it's not very hot. But it's what you're used to.

**Katrina Streatfeild:** It's so relative, isn't it? Isn't it.

**Trudy Rankin:** Yeah. It's what you're used to. And if you are not used to a particular temperature and the systems around you and your environment around you is not set up to allow you to cope with temperature. Yeah, it can become life threatening.

And once again, it comes back to that sense of safety. Things have changed so significantly around us and in our lives that we can feel really lost. And as we're saying, if we've gotten to the place where we are feeling so lost and nothing that used to work for us works for us anymore, we starting to lose our belief in ourselves. About whether we can cope. And I [00:09:00] think that's a really interesting observation. And it was one of the things that I thought was worth talking about just a little bit more, as we talk about this.

**[00:09:08] Marker - Long term stressors, stress hormones and our ability to cope**

**Trudy Rankin:** Because you mentioned as we were talking earlier, that we're sort of starting to experience something that's beyond burnout and you talked about it as being a response to long term exposure to stress hormones and what that does to us and our ability to cope. Do you want to just talk about that a little bit?

**Katrina Streatfeild:** Yeah. Yep. I guess we can go back to biology, can't we really, that our systems are designed to get us activated and moving. It's called our sympathetic nervous system it's called.

We all know about adrenaline and all of that sort of stuff. We are designed to activate, to keep ourselves safe under certain circumstances, when you know, that's adaptable for short periods of time and then go and have a rest and get ourselves back to physiological equilibrium. [00:10:00] And go about our day. And then, use that activation from time to.

I mean there's also positive use uses of adrenaline as well. Of course, when we are safe and we have adrenaline, we're having fun and that's play and the rollercoaster and all that good stuff we get to do. So not all stress hormones are bad, they can be good. But in this context, obviously we're being a bit more specific that our safety systems went off. We all activated. We tried to cope with everything that was going on. And we tried and we tried, and then we kept trying and we tried some more and tried some more.

And I guess eventually what happens is that, well, you don't rest between activations and you become very fatigued on every level, physiologically mentally, cognitively, emotionally, like, however you choose to divide up, you know, those ways of thinking in your world. We're just worn out we're a bit done.

And we can go into something, a different part of our safety system [00:11:00] called shutting down. So we can begin to bounce between feeling like completely shut down and just wanting to hide under the dona and kind of trying to activate continually, but just being completely and utterly exhausted from doing it again and again and again.

So our bodies are trying to go back to this safety system that, you know, when it's adaptable in short bursts with rests, is very effective for us. But when it's just on all the time, it dampens the response when you do need it. Yeah? Because you gotta put the accelerator on, there's just nowhere to go. But if we're not taking the brakes off to have a rest, then we are just in this kind of constant chronic state of activation, which is not necessarily achieving the rest or the actual outcome that we want. So we're just stuck in this place.

**[00:11:56] Marker - How do we get off the hamster wheel?**

**Katrina Streatfeild:** We're kind of on, but we're not going anywhere. It's like a hamster on a wheel in a [00:12:00] roundabout way. And eventually you're going to get really, really, really tired. Yeah.

**Trudy Rankin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, for sure. And you know, we talked about that a little bit in the previous episode on burnout and things like that. But when we were discussing earlier, I was basically asking the question, well, you know, if that's the case for so many people, what is it that has to change in terms of just moving away from that always on thing. And knowing that there's no going back to the way the world used to be.

Is there other things that we could do to readjust, reset and just to be able to move forward without dragging all that baggage with us around the whole stress hormones and being on all the time and not giving ourselves breaks.

**Katrina Streatfeild:** I think you've actually, well, you've named a couple of things there that we've talked about already, which I think is first of all, noticing that just acknowledging [00:13:00] and validating to yourself... bit of good old self-compassion doesn't hurt... cuz I think it's really easy to start getting annoyed and frustrated with yourself, like, come on, like what's wrong with me? You know? And that kind of very harsh, critical voice coming out, get your act together, you know, all that stuff that we say to ourselves.

So I think it's really useful in the first instance, just pull up and go hang on a minute. This is not about me not trying. It's not about me failing. It's not about, you know, this is a kind of normal human reaction to what has happened to me and to the world around me and the people around me. And the first step really is validating that experience and having self-compassion because that allows us to feel a little bit safer.

And to take a deep breath and to just say, I guess to ourselves, you know, it's okay. This makes sense. There isn't, as I said before, there isn't anything wrong with me. This is what has happened to me in my [00:14:00] world and around me and that what I actually need to do is to be kind to myself and just understand and accept and sit with the fact that this happened and not judge myself.

Because these are normal human reactions to such a big thing happening on so many levels in our world. And I think that it's actually really, really important to stop and establish that baseline because until you do that, you can't actually calm down enough to get your thinking back online again.

**[00:14:33] Marker -The impact on others when we are compassionate for ourselves**

**Katrina Streatfeild:** Yeah. So it's actually important to stop and just allow enough time for that to be able to happen and to get into that head space. And it's a nice side effect, I think of being able to think about yourself compassionately is that it's much easier to then think about other people compassionately, which means you'll find yourself getting much less frustrated with the people around you if you're just in that compassionate space. It's not easy do. And it does take a lot of [00:15:00] reminding if that's not a familiar space for you and that, you know, critical voice likes to pop in as your default fall back. So you have to watch yourself. So I think that's very important.

**[00:15:10] Marker - The necessity of acknowledging that the world has changed**

**Katrina Streatfeild:** And I think the next thing that you mentioned that we talked about is really that idea of stopping and accepting that when all of this first started... and as you said, it's not just COVID. And you know, in Australia, amongst all of that, we had bushfires. We've had floods. We've had horrendous things going on. So, the world's just been really chaotic the last few years... is to accept that at the beginning of some of these things, I think we all kind of went, as I said before, look, I can't... talking about business here... I can't run my business as it was before at the moment, because this is all going on. But still holding onto that idea that when it was over, we'd go back to how we were. And I think we it's important with that compassionate voice to get to the point where we all go. You know what? [00:16:00] This is not going back to how it was before.

**[00:16:03] Marker - What's now realistic in terms of goals**

**Katrina Streatfeild:** And whatever goals I had, and I guess whether they're personal, business or anything, are they actually still relevant in the context that I'm now in, with the resources that I actually now have to work with? Are they realistic anymore? Do I still define success in various areas of my life in the same way that I used to? What have I actually learned from COVID that's meant that maybe I've actually shifted what I value in my life and, am I even working towards the same success that I thought I was before? Yeah? What does success look like?

What are business goals that are relevant for me now, moving forward in this environment with its inherent limits. And just stopping with that compassionate voice to check in around all of that. Did I have subconscious expectations that were outside of my awareness until I sat and thought about [00:17:00] this? That things are just going to go back to how they were? Or that I can just continue to apply the same formulas and plans and goals that worked before with the assumption that somehow I'm going to make them work now.

It really is about stopping and checking in around all of that. And if you need to, rejigging it all, and saying, all right, well, how do I shift my... how do I accept this change is in a greater or lesser way you know, semi-permanent to some degree. And how do I now adjust my goals and expectations and definitions of success to the current environment?

**Trudy Rankin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, absolutely.

**Katrina Streatfeild:** Expectations. Yep.

**[00:17:38] Marker - How do we figure out what's meaningful now?**

**Trudy Rankin:** Yeah because basically after we were sort of chatting about all of this stuff, it's just like the question that pops up is what do we have to do to be able to live our lives in a meaningful way now? How do we have to run our businesses so that what we're doing is meaningful and things like that.

And so, we started talking about a process [00:18:00] that people could use to go through that self-reflection process that you were mentioning, which was really a reflection process. And basically using that as a mechanism for getting us starting to think about what could should be different about how we move forward into the future. Do you want to just talk about that a little bit? We started out, I'm just looking at my notes here, cuz I started making notes while we were talking.

I'm thinking, wow, this is really powerful stuff. And basically it's kind of like a homework process for people to take away and do on their own time with a hot drink of something really nice. And in your favorite spot with a little bit of quiet, if you can find a place like that. But, yeah. So there was a process that you were talking about. What would that process be? Get us started with that process. What would be the first thing that you would have people do if they're wanting to rethink things?

**Katrina Streatfeild:** Yeah. Yes. Okay. So if some of what we've talked about has spoken to people and they're identifying with that and they want to kind of go, okay, well, yeah, this sounds like a [00:19:00] good thing for me to do. One of the things that I'll often recommend to people is simply just to get a piece of paper, big piece of paper and, you know, divide it up into to boxes.

However you want to do that and really just put headings in each of those boxes for each part of your life. And it doesn't really matter how you do that, just in a way that makes sense to you. So you might put you know, work I dunno, kids or home, or you know, my own health, whatever it is that you want to do to divide that up into parts and what's meaningful for you.

And then to have a bit of a think about what your definition of success looks like in each of the areas of your life. So, you know, what would good enough look like? What would success look like for you? What's the ultimate goal here? If you could have things in that area of your life as you would like them to be, that you would be content with.

**[00:19:55] Marker - Breaking it down into short, medium and long-term**

**Katrina Streatfeild:** And I'd encourage people to be realistic here. Yeah? I mean, we're really [00:20:00] talking about what would help you feel content. And that would align with your integrity so that you're feeling good about it. Yeah? If that makes sense? And then I think to invite people to think about, if that's the ultimate goal, is it short, medium or long term to actually achieve that?

And if it's a longer term goal, what the short and medium term goals would be to slowly begin to start doing things in the here and now, or in that timeline to work towards that, keeping your eye on that kind of ultimate goal of what you'd like to achieve.

And once they've done that to then think about what resources or other people they would need support they'd need to implement those short, medium and long term steps towards that ultimate goal in that era of their life. Bearing in mind all the while of the context, the current [00:21:00] context and what, you know, the next little while we might guess would look like whether that goal is realistic under current circumstances and in our current context.

So just to go through a bit of a mapping, I guess, exercise to have a think about just helps people to put their thoughts on paper and do it in a way that they can keep track of and a record of that they can come back to semi-regularly and check in with and adjust just to keep their eye on the ball.

**[00:21:27] Marker - Do a before and after and set new baselines**

**Trudy Rankin:** Yeah. But also it seems to me like it's a really good way of being able to even do like a compare and contrast, because you could do a... if you've done this exercise before you can look at what you did have in the past. Cause most people have business plans. They have an idea about what success is. They've thought about, you know, what it is that they want to achieve in their life out of what they're doing.

And then to redo the exercise with this new context in mind of hey, we're still ...COVID's just not going to go [00:22:00] away anytime soon. Like, we're just going to keep on having these waves and spikes and waves and spikes. And we have to be able to live our lives around that or with that, and with all the other uncertainty that's happening.

So what's realistic to think about in those respects. But to see what the difference is between those two, the before and after, I guess maybe before COVID and after COVID and just see what's different. And then put in place a plan for making those new things happen that you've decided are going to be your goals and what are important to you.

And just that whole mindset of, okay. Life has changed. It is what it is. Let's just start taking little baby steps towards a different future. But taking the opportunity to start to flesh out what you want that future to look like, so that you have a little bit more control, or a feeling or a sense of at least a little bit of control over where you're trying to go, [00:23:00] where you're trying to take your business.

And so instead of that feeling of sort of steamrollered or, all of a sudden, what happened? You sit there like a washing machine going round and round and round and around and going, wait, hang on. Where's the exit? There isn't one or a gerbil wheel, whatever an analogy you want to use. So yeah, I think that's really, really powerful.

**[00:23:17] Marker - Maximising this process**

**Trudy Rankin:** So in terms of the thinking that people do, is there any advice that you would give people in terms of how to maximize the time that they have for that? I guess I'm asking the question a little bit backwards. What can people do... knowing that they're going to do this exercise.. How can people set up the time for this so that it'd be the most effective use of their time?

**Katrina Streatfeild:** Yeah. Look, I think you touched on that a little bit earlier, actually about, you know, if you're able to, setting some quiet time aside where you're not really going to get distracted and you're not, yeah, going to get interrupted and distracted. You know, where you can just sit down.

I mean, if it means putting headphones on and listening to your favorite music, cuz the house [00:24:00] is kind of noisy or wherever you are then, so be it. That's all right. And just make sure it's a private spot. You don't necessarily have to share this with anyone. Or you could with your partner or a friend or whatever, if that was meaningful for you as well.

But you know, whatever works for you to just make sure you have that quiet time aside that you really have... Look, you can do it in five or 10 minutes. You don't even have to do it in the one sitting. Do one box at a time and do it over a period of time. People don't need to make it bigger than it is. It really is just about making a little bit of time to sit it aside and just start that thinking process.

**[00:24:34] Marker - What to do if you don't know what success looks like any longer**

**Katrina Streatfeild:** And I think sometimes, even just the act of putting the boxes there and writing the labels in, even if you just kind of have it as a bit of a living document, it just gets the whole concept ticking in your head and, you know, you're just sitting with it and sometimes that's even a better way to do it because you may not have the answers straight away.

You might go actually, that's a really interesting question. I don't actually know what success would look like in that area of my life. I need to think about that. So, you know, [00:25:00] that's okay to kind of roll with it and do it as you can.

**Trudy Rankin:** Yeah, I think that's really important to give yourself permission to not have the answers. We're supposedly as adults and business owners, especially people who've been around for a while in their business, they're supposed to have all the answers, theoretically, have all the answers.

And I've discovered that's never the case. There's always things that are still unknown because... and it's a good thing because otherwise life would be so boring. Just imagine thinking that you are really knowing everything there is to know. How boring is that? You want to be able to continue learning and growing and being able to just pick up new skills, new thoughts, new ideas, and things like that. So taking the time to sit down and do that exercise is really good.

But I like that idea of give yourself permission to not have the answer. That's really, really, really, really good.

**Katrina Streatfeild:** I think in these sorts of cases, answers that tend to come from, you know, our body and our subconscious and really checking in with [00:26:00] ourselves tend to be more accurate than answers that kind of come from here [points to head].

So I think if you're able to sit with that and really make sure that what you come up with resonates with you on a kind of physical level, it's worth sitting with them and just wondering, and being curious.

**Trudy Rankin:** Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. It's been a really, really interesting conversation today. I've really enjoyed it.

**[00:26:25] Marker - Last piece of advice**

**Trudy Rankin:** Katrina. Do you have any last pieces of advice for people who might be thinking about taking us up on the opportunity to do this exercise? I mean, we're not involved in it in any way. I didn't mean that. I just meant that they're going to take the time and go away and do this exercise.

Any pieces of advice that you... last piece of advice you'd like to leave me.

**Katrina Streatfeild:** Look, I think sometimes it's good just to remember that kind of idea that at the end of the day, we are in control of absolutely nothing in our worlds, except the [00:27:00] way that we step up as people in the world and our ability to step up as ourselves. And the choices that we make in terms of how we do that.

So I think it's just useful sometimes to stop and reflect on that and what it means, cuz it's quite a deep thing when you stop to think about it. And I think it helps us to define maybe what some of the sorts of goals that we are thinking about might be, that are those goals really about things that I can control or not. Yeah. I think that's a useful reflection.

And I think, the other thing is probably to reiterate what you said, which is not knowing is actually good. I think sometimes you were talking about experts knowing everything, but I sometimes wonder whether the real experts are the people that know enough to know when they don't know.

**Trudy Rankin:** Yes.

**Katrina Streatfeild:** And, we are experts for ourselves. We [00:28:00] are our own experts. And so therefore, being able to say, I know enough to know that I don't know yet is actually a pretty good space to be, and that's okay. And just so sit with it because it won't be like that forever. It'll come to you. Have faith in your own ability to be able to listen to yourself.

**Trudy Rankin:** Yeah. I think that's really, really good advice. Look, Katrina, thank you so much for that. I'm just going to really mention something cuz Katrina and I, for our listeners, Katrina and I, we get together probably about, I don't know, four or five times a year. And we sit down and we talk about stuff for podcast and we are also working on a collaboration and in one of the future podcast episodes, we're going to actually bring you in onto the thing that we're working on together.

And it's going to be something that I think you'll enjoy and appreciate because it's a mix of both business focused, but also sort of self-help focused if that makes any sense. And it's just going to be a really interesting case study and just a discussion about our journey of collaborating together [00:29:00] as we're working on this thing, but that'll come to you later in the year. We'll talk about that.

But Katrina, I just really enjoy chatting with you. We cover all kinds of topics. It's a lot of fun. And just thank you once again for being on the podcast.

**Katrina Streatfeild:** Yeah. Thank you for having me as always, Trudy. It's always a pleasure. Thank you.