

077 From Buried in Debt to Seven-Figure CEO with Jessica Zweig



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With Your Host

Rachel Rodgers

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That's what platforms are built on, authenticity. Sometimes I say to my clients, "Stop looking at what everybody else is doing. It's already been done, it's boring now. What do you have, what you got?"

Welcome to the *Hello Seven Podcast*. I'm your host, Rachel Rodgers, wife, mother of four children, a lover of Beyoncé, coffee drinker, and afro-wearer, and I just happen to be the CEO of a seven-figure business. I am on a mission to help every woman I meet become a millionaire. If you want to make more money, you are in the right place. Let's get it going.

People, may I have your attention please? Because we have a very special guest on today's show. The woman you're about to meet went from \$75,000 in debt to running a seven-figure business. Wow, that's a big turnaround, and she did it in less than two years. How did she do it? That is the question. And we're going to answer that question for you on this episode. It's a pretty fabulous story and you're about to hear all of the details. Get ready to meet Jessica Zweig. She runs a personal branding agency called SimplyBe.

And you're going to love my conversation with Jessica because we get into all the things. We talk about self-esteem. We talk about credit card debt. We talk about how to bring in clients. And of course how to bring more money in the door even if that's something that you've really struggled to do in the past. Jessica is going to share her journey and drop some gems. So get your coffee, you might even want to grab a pen and take some notes. Let's do this.

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Rachel Rodgers: Hey Jessica. Welcome to the show. I'm so delighted to have you here.

Jessica Zweig: Rachel, thank you for having me, girl, I'm so pumped to be here.

Rachel Rodgers: Yay. So of course we're all living through a pandemic. And a few weeks ago we had an insurrection in Washington D.C. It's been a lot, I mean thank you God, we have a new president. But tell me how are you feeling today? How are you feeling mind, body and spirit with all that is going on in the world?

Jessica Zweig: Wow, what an amazing question. Honestly, I'm feeling a lot of things. I'm less than three weeks away from a book launch, which you're about to embark on and I've been seeing you crush your marketing game. But, girl, as it gets closer, and closer, and closer it's like birthing a child, like I'm in contractions right now. And it's a book baby for sure. So I'm a bit overwhelmed. I'm really ready. I'm super excited and amped up. But I've got a lot of anxiety. And on top of it I'm an M-path, so I feel the energy of the universe in a real way.

And there's been a lot of intensity in our country and has been for a while. And I haven't been sleeping much and just days are non-stop. But I made a choice a few months ago in fact, because life's going to be overwhelming no matter what. But needless to say when we're going through massive political changes and social unrest, and professionally launching a book on top of running a company, to choose joy, to choose for it to be an adventure.

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To embrace the fact that this is a dream come true. I've been waiting my whole life to write a book. I dreamed about this when I was a little girl. And here I am at the precipice and I can choose to be a victim and overwhelmed. Or I can choose to embrace the overwhelm as a divine gift and a blessing that I'm living out my dreams. So it's a choice. It's a mental game. So that's where I'm at right now.

Rachel Rodgers: I love that so much and it's so true. I constantly think about the fact that where I'm at right now is what I previously dreamed of. So even if there's parts that are janky, or painful, or hard, it's a blessing, it's an opportunity. So I love that, actively choosing joy. And also too who's going to feel sorry for us?

Jessica Zweig: Right. Exactly. Well said. We should not feel sorry for ourselves.

Rachel Rodgers: Yeah, it's like cry me a river. I'm sorry you're so successful and so in demand, life is so hard. Sometimes we just have to hear ourselves and then just be like, "Okay, how can I make this more fun for myself? How can I enjoy this more? Even if, okay, I have interviews all day and maybe there's aspects of that that's challenging. I really just want to rest. What can I do? Could I have warm tea all day? Could I stay in a really cozy place? Can I put on something cozy? What can I do to make this work for me?"

Jessica Zweig: Exactly. It's all about consciousness and we are in control of our daily lives. And those are the exact things that I have really built around as I've expanded and life's gotten busier and my schedule's gotten more insane. And I have become more tired. And you have to proactively make those moments for yourself. And I love that you brought that into this conversation because it really is for me, we're going to talk about this

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today, the experience of abundance. To feel abundant, yes, look at your bank account but also look at yourself in the mirror.

Look at your daily life, how can you make choices that make you feel full and fill your cup in ways that aren't money? That is up to you. That is only up to you.

Rachel Rodgers: Yeah. It reminds me of that Jim Carrey quote when he says, "I hope everyone has money so that they realize it's not about money."

Jessica Zweig: Yes, girl, it's so true. I love that quote. I know that quote, yeah, it is so true.

Rachel Rodgers: It is so true. Yeah, and I think it's good for those who are listening who are working towards their ambitious goals to just understand and see how do we approach our day, how do we think about things. Because I want to transfer that to the listeners as well and just remind them, because I know I needed to hear that when I was in full grind and not a lot of it was fun. It was mostly hard.

Jessica Zweig: It was brutal. It was brutal. And I really love what you teach your community and what I'm teaching mine in different ways, but parallel paths and same end goal. Is to really remind people that my book which is coming out in a few weeks, it's got a bunch of things about it. But the subtitle is Self Worth to Net Worth. And so we're focused on the goal of success and achievement, being financially free, all beautiful goals. But it has to start with believing that you are deserving of it in the first place.

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And that my friend was the rock bottom lessons really was about figuring that piece out and making that decision about myself and my life before I could get myself out of debt, before I started to grow the seven-figure business. All that came second, third, fourth, fifth. It was the decision and choosing I could do it first of all. And secondly, I deserve to be the person to succeed at that level.

Rachel Rodgers: Yes, I 100% agree. It's why people who join the club, we have them do a course called Worthy, first because that's what it's about. It's exactly what you're saying. Okay, so let's roll back a little bit. I love to ask my guests, what did you want to be when you were a kid?

Jessica Zweig: That's so funny, I wanted to be a marine biologist and swim with dolphins and whales. And then I realized I was really bad at math and really bad at science. And that's a prerequisite for becoming a biologist. I love animals, I love. I always thought about being a veterinarian. I ended up going to school for theater and then becoming an entrepreneur. So I really never saw myself in business.

Rachel Rodgers: Okay. So we go from being a child and feeling connected to nature and wanting to be a marine biologist to body dysmorphia, romantic codependency and massively low self-esteem and thousands of dollars in credit card debt. This is life, right?

Jessica Zweig: Yes, it is.

Rachel Rodgers: And that's pretty similar to my 20s too, I'll be honest. So for starters let's talk about the debt. How did you get into debt? Walk me through what was happening in your life.

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Jessica Zweig: I have up until recently and I would say recently being the last five years of my life, and I'm 39, I had a horrible relationship with money. My dad was an accountant and I was a really rebellious kid. And anything he told me to do I did the opposite. And so when it came to understanding finances and a budget I was just basically, "Screw you dad, I hate you." I'm going to be this punk ass teenager.

And it ended up playing itself out in my career in my 20s in a very unhealthy way. I didn't understand. I opened up a credit card with this bum ass limit. But that wasn't my money.

Rachel Rodgers: Isn't that interesting? It's like, but of course it's my money, it has my name on it and I can spend it. I can buy things with it.

Jessica Zweig: I'm holding the bag that I bought with this money that I think is mine. See, it's proof, it's my money. No, it's the bank's money and you are borrowing that money and you have to ultimately pay that money back in real money that you earn, that belongs to you. And if you don't do that it's going to bite you and it's going to catch up with you in a way that is a reality check.

And so as I, you know, I was a struggling actress. I went to school for theater. I got my degree in acting and waitressed and bartended and nannied and did all these temp jobs before I then became an entrepreneur. And started this magazine at the age of 26 and became the largest online magazine for women in the city of Chicago, for seven years in a row. And I had a business partner and God bless, bless and release, haven't spoken to her in quite some time. But we were both young and we both didn't understand money. And neither one of us had those hard skills.

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And so we ended up getting ourselves into over \$75,000 worth of credit card debt. And we just never could catch up. And we kind of over-blew our expenses on our staff, and our office, and our travel. I mean we lived off of credit and ended up going basically broke. And I remember having to call my employees at the end of that seven-year mark and tell them we couldn't pay them. Those conversations will haunt me for the rest of my life. And one of them was a brand-new mom and she was the breadwinner, and we were her income and we couldn't pay her and I had to make that phone call.

Rachel Rodgers: I mean the reality is that the majority of Americans are in debt. The United States Government is in debt. Debt is a part of our lives and I do think that we have to almost make peace with it in some way and then decide what role we want it to have in our financial life. But I agree. It's extraordinarily disempowering when you hide it and when you're like, "I'm the only one and I'm dumb and I've made terrible choices and all of that. So many people feel like debt is the worst thing in the world, it means you're a failure or have some kind of character flaw and I don't agree.

So I'm curious to know what is your attitude around debt now at this important point in your life, are you grateful for the debt that you had? Did debt bring positive things into your life in any way? If you were going to write a thank you letter to your debt what would it say?

Jessica Zweig: Well, in many ways my book is a thank you letter to my debt. I start my book at my rock bottom where I was 33 years old and I had no money in my bank account, negative in my checking account. And we had no clients in our pipeline and they were going to shut off my phone. And I'm going to get emotional even talking about it. It's crazy, it's all these years later and I still feel that.

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And I have parents who are, you know, I'm blessed to have come from parents that could help me to some degree. They definitely did not take – I mean they cut me off and loose when I graduated college. They were like, "Go get a job." But I needed 250 bucks, Rachel, I needed it and I had nowhere to turn. And so my book starts at this journey of me driving up north to my parents' house in the suburbs. They had no idea.

Rachel Rodgers: But I think it's so good to know what it feels like to have a negative balance in your check account. Because when you have millions then it's like your worth is not tied to what is in your bank account, period. Even when there's millions in there you're like it's not that I make a lot of money that makes me valuable. You have to almost really disconnect yourself from the amount of money that you're making this society is so obsessed with.

And I know it seems odd, this is a podcast about millionaires and about becoming a millionaire but the point is that we could all do it and it's not like you have to be a special human being to be a millionaire.

Jessica Zweig: No, you don't. We speak from experience. We're not superhuman. We're not robots. We're just women with flaws, and fears, and mistakes, and triumphs, and all of it in our souls and imperfectly growing our businesses alongside of our humanity.

Rachel Rodgers: Okay. So in the Hello Seven community I talk a lot about million-dollar decisions versus broke ass decisions. And a broke ass decision is obviously a decision that drains you financially, drains your energy, eliminates options, makes you feel trapped. And a million-dollar decision is the opposite. It makes me feel rich, makes you feel powerful, creates more options in your life. And it's moving towards abundance. So I

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would love to know what are some of the broke ass decisions you've made in the past and what are some million-dollar decisions you've made?

Jessica Zweig: I love this. So off the top, just opening six credit cards and having no idea of how that really works. That was broke ass decisions left and right so don't do that. Don't do that. The second thing that came to mind around broke ass decisions was honestly, Rachel, empowering other people to make me feel worthy. So I would get into business partnerships or business relationships with people who I believed at the time knew better than me, were smarter than me, held a greater vision for me than I did for myself.

And allowing myself to take lesser pay, accepting pennies, going into bad business deals with people, who weren't necessarily bad people, but took advantage of the fact, even on a subconscious level that I wasn't confident enough to make those decisions myself. When I first started SimplyBe my agency, I actually had gone into business at a high level with a bunch of men. And they were like, "Jessica, you're just going to be the pretty face. You don't know how to run a business. That's what we'll do. We'll help you run the business while you go be the face and help us sell."

And then the deal that they structured for me, which was all my hustle and heart, getting the clients in the door, I would get a fraction of a percentage of the commission on those clients. And I accepted it for a year. And my intuition was screaming at me the whole time. And I had all of this resentment towards, not just them, but myself. And it kept me really, really small.

And it wasn't until I cut the cord, I heard my inner voice, it was actually the week of the - do you remember the solar eclipse in 2017 when we had to wear those glasses? It was the moon overshadowing the sun, which is a

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metaphor for the feminine, the moon overshadowing the masculine. That was an activation for me. I swear to God, on a spiritual level. And the next week I went to those guys and I'm like, "I'm out. I'm out of this deal." And the following year I tripled my business, I hit a million dollars on my own without them.

Rachel Rodgers: Oh my God, I'm so glad you're talking about this because I think a lot of us as especially women entrepreneurs will get into this place where we think somebody's going to save us. I just need this one person to come in and save my business. I need this person to come in and teach me marketing, or teach me operations, or I need to join this crazy cult like bro mastermind thing that's a \$100,000 so that I can learn from on high. And it's just like, no, that's a broke ass decision. And I definitely made one of those.

I definitely have a shitty business partner shift in my past where I wasn't confident enough to believe I could do it on my own and I thought I needed a partner, for this person to save me, and make it work, and make it successful. So definitely I agree, and that was a million-dollar decision leaving that partnership and betting on yourself. And even just saying it, I feel the expansiveness of just saying, leaving a place where you're not getting the full value, or you're not fully seen and heard and able to really fully contribute. It's so important.

So I'm so glad that you mention that because I think there's a lot of people who are listening who probably have those sort of disguised as opportunities, that you're like you know this ain't right. You know it's going to take you off track. Maybe somebody who's a big deal is now paying attention to you. Listen, they're paying attention because they want to steal your shit.

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Jessica Zweig: Exactly. You've got something they want. It's yours, it doesn't belong to them. It's yours.

Rachel Rodgers: Exactly. And it may not be making you millions in your bank account right now, but it's worth millions. So you can't give that shit away.

Jessica Zweig: Amen yes and listen to your gut. I mean it's never wrong. The mind is a liar, our heart is our math, and our gut is our truth. Listen to your intuition, it will never steer you wrong. And for that entire year I felt it in my gut. I'm like this is off. These dudes are not my people. And you also brought something up which is so powerful. As women entrepreneurs running a business, yes, we have to focus on marketing, and ops, and finance, and product, and leadership. You're not supposed to know all of that stuff. You don't learn it in school. You learn it on the job.

But trust yourself, you're a smart woman, you have the ability to do a lot of things. I got my master's on Google, girl, I just went and looked shit up and figured it out, and asked mentors and advisors, and people who are on team Jessica to support me and teach me. Not to give up my power to people who wanted to take that from me instead. And really, I mean I've listened to your podcast, Rachel, you've got ops, you've got marketing, you've got your team. You've got people helping you with your book.

You're not supposed to know it all but trust that you can figure it out. And then put the people and resources around you that truly have your back and the way you feel that is into your gut at the end of the day.

Rachel Rodgers: I totally agree, completely agree, oh my God, yes, to everything that you just said. Okay, so I know listeners are really curious to

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hear how you went from \$75,000 in debt to running a seven-figure business in just a couple of years. So that's a really large transformation in a short period of time. And I know that you said it came down to a mindset shift. So tell me more about that, what changed for you? What specifically did you start believing? And what were the moves that you make, how did that happen?

Jessica Zweig: Yeah. So the very first quote in my book is a quote that is my north star, I orient to this quote every day. And it states, "Do not be surprised by how fast the universe will respond once you have decided." And it was the decision – it was a series of decisions, micro and macro choices on a daily, monthly basis, just one foot in front of the other. It wasn't this overnight thing. I realized that I was actually working for this corporate job that I got to kind of help me pay off the debt. And I had not a lot of money in savings.

My husband was going through a huge job transition. He wasn't making much money. I had this very cushy salary at this corporate job, but I hated it. I was miserable. So I quit and I told my husband, I was like, "I will make us enough money that I can pay 50% of our rent and groceries, just give me that", because he was in a ton of scarcity and didn't want me to leave. So I found two clients that paid me \$1500 a month each. And I had three grand and some cash for whole foods. So I was like, "I'm going to quit this job, Brian, and we're going to do this."

And so what ended up happening, and I talk about my personal brand in the book and it's a big part of my work. I started to really show up online. Once I quit the job and sort of re-launched SimplyBe, to really come on and speak authentically and to own my story, and to share the highs and the lows on top of the fact that I was an expert in this thing and you could hire me to help you do this. But I was also Jessica. And the more I brought that

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to the table on the internet, and in conversations, and in panels, and wherever I went. That's where people started to resonate with.

And two clients became five clients, and five clients became eight clients. A few months later I had enough work to hire someone, not pay them a ton of money but just to bring on someone to help me kind of run this thing. And that's my first hire, her name's Alexa. And I paid her \$2800 a month on Chase QuickPay, I didn't even have payroll. And it was a lot of money for me but at the same time really wasn't a ton of money for her. And so we both took a chance on each other.

And really hiring when you're maybe just a little bit too, like 90% there, not a 100% there, that for me, investing in my business helped to grow my business. That was such a profound shift in me of really trusting, okay if I put this money into my business it's going to come back to me in spades. I have to trust that. And hiring the right people as you know is an art and a science. You really do have to find the right people. But that was one next step I took. I got really clear on my product. I was kind of just shooting from the hip, I was everything to everyone and anything you needed I could do it.

And then that changed, I was like okay, I'm going to productize my shit and I'm going to create process around my products. And that was the third and the fourth step. And that's where I was able to start to scale. Then I started to get more confident in myself and I took up my pricing. It was no longer \$1500 a month. It was \$3,000 a month. And then I was actually – I worked with a sales coach, so another investment that I made in myself, that was an expensive coach but I was like, "I'm going to do it. It's going to pay itself back."

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And I remember one session we were talking, she was like, “So what’s your price? What’s your retainer?” I’m like, “I’m about \$3500 a month now.” She’s like, “What do you want it to be?” And I said, “I’d like to get paid \$7500 a month.” And I just spit it out. And I almost threw up because it was so fucking scary and nauseating to think of myself in that way. I literally almost barfed in my mouth. I was like, “I mean this is between you and me sales coach, \$7500.” And she was like, “Put it on a post-it note. Stick it on your laptop and look at that number every day.”

So about four weeks later literally, this is a true story, I was on a call with a prospective client and he asked me on the call how much I cost. And I just – I was looking at it, it was on my – it was a sticky note on my laptop. I just said, “\$7500.” And he said, “Okay, cool. Send me a contract.” And in that moment my pricing increased, my value increased, my perception of my value increased.

Rachel Rodgers: I love it so much. First of all, that is exactly the way that I raise my prices, it’s just I’m just going to double the price and I’m just going to say it and then stay silent and say nothing and just deal with the silence on the other end of the call.

Jessica Zweig: Totally, that’s so true.

Rachel Rodgers: And you just say it and you’re talking to somebody and they’re like, “Okay.” And you’re like, oh shit, really? But you can’t say that you’re like, “Okay, great, we’ll get a contract signed”, or whatever. And then you get off the phone and you’re dancing around your house because you’re like holy shit.

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Jessica Zweig: It's such an empowering moment, it's such an activation. It's such an activation, it changed the game. It gave me confidence. It gave you confidence. It allowed you to see your own power and worth. I mean that's what I've learned along the way, your market value is what you say it's simple as that. And to be honest, the perception of value, so I am \$3,000 a month to this prospective client, over \$7500 a month, the same client, his perception is like, holy shit, she's amazing. She's worth this.

He or she is going to show up to that engagement with their back a little straighter because they're playing a bigger game, so it's an equal exchange of energy, because money's just energy.

Rachel Rodgers: Yes. I totally agree. And I love what you've talked about, what you did to get out of debt is not what people typically teach. What people typically teach is get that corporate job, buckle down, save everything, cut all your costs, focus on paying off that debt. And certainly that is a way to do it but that feels very much like scarcity to me.

Jessica Zweig: Me too.

Rachel Rodgers: And what you did was actually the opposite. You were like, okay, what is my earning potential? I know it's bigger than what this corporate job is giving me. I'm going to make enough just to pay the bills, bare minimum right now. And then I'm going to focus on growing my earning potential. And then I'm going to bet on other people's earning potential and invest in them. And then I'm going to invest in myself with coaching. And I'm going to productize my services and look at creating more process.

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You did all of the things that I would say to do to grow and become a millionaire sooner rather than later. It's so interesting. It's not about I buckled down and I saved everything, and I sold off everything that I love and paid off all my debt. It is a completely different approach, so I just think that's so interesting. I want to point that out to everybody.

Jessica Zweig: Thank you girl. And I want to say too, I was making 150 grand working at that corporate job, which is a pretty decent salary.

Rachel Rodgers: Yes, not bad.

Jessica Zweig: No, not bad. But I was miserable and I hated it. And was like this kind of interesting aha moment I had because I had been an entrepreneur and then I went to work for a corporate company. And I remember having this thought like wow, I could work as little as I want or I can work as hard as I want and I'm going to make the same exact amount. And there was something kind of boring about that and uninspiring about that. And I quit the job, again, not a lot of money in savings because I was paying off my debt.

I was just trying to keep up when I was working at that corporate job. And the following year, my first year of business I did 300,000, I had doubled my income as an entrepreneur by taking those choices and making those active steps, one foot in front of the other. And over the course of the last four years, we became a seven-figure business in 18 months. So it's very possible, it's very possible. And I just really want to share that one with your listeners who I know are like, you know, really look to you of such an incredible case study.

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And we all have our own unique paths. I am proud of the one I've taken, I've got to say. It's been really fucking hard, but it's been really worth it.

Rachel Rodgers: Absolutely.

I'm interrupting this episode to share an absolutely free training my team and I have created and we want you to be there. If you're a service provider and you're good at what you do and you're currently earning \$50,000 to \$100,000 per year, then you can absolutely scale to a million per year. It's not that complicated really. It's just a matter of thinking bigger and packaging your skills in a new way.

No matter what industry you're in, whether you're a physician, life coach, yoga teacher, SAT tutor, HR specialist, website designer, stylist, or a high school music teacher you have specialized knowledge, valuable knowledge that people want and need. Let me show you how it's done.

Come to my Power Offers Masterclass, it's completely free. And I will show you how to develop a scalable offer that your customers will find irresistible, head to helloseven.co/poweroffer, that's helloseven.co/poweroffer. And pick the time that works for you. I cannot wait to see what power offer you create, now, back to the show.

Rachel Rodgers: And I think part of the reason why you were able to do that in 18 months is some of that is like lessons learned. You learned some lessons the hard way which I certainly did as well. Everybody wants to be a millionaire in six weeks, just take this course. And it's just like maybe not six weeks, but yeah, a year and a half. What we tell our clients is three years you can do it. I think the vast majority of people if they follow the steps they can do it in three years. And it might happen faster.

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I've had people have it happen faster, it might take longer. But I think that's a really solid average. And it's just like it's so possible, just follow the steps and keep trusting yourself and it will literally slowly happen, you just have to keep investing in yourself and keep taking that scary step. And keep playing to the edge and not staying in the safe zone, that's what it is.

Jessica Zweig: Yes girl, I talk a lot about that in my book and I know you do in yours. It just keeps expanding. I heard on your show, you had a million dollar a month in 2020. And you already had reached that seven-figure mark. And then you kept going. So whether it's three years, or five years, or six years, or two years, keep going. There's so much more on the other side, of the other side. I say the sky is the beginning. That's my motto, it's not the limit, the sky is the beginning, and you operate from that energy and knowingness. And it really does expand you.

Rachel Rodgers: Yes, I agree, totally. Okay, so we have some seasoned business owners in the Hello Seven community, people who are earning seven figures and more. And then we have a lot of beginners as well, people who are just starting out. And for the beginners, one of the most common questions is, "Where do I find clients? How do I start bringing money in the door when I'm brand new?"

So, Jessica let's roll back to when you were just starting your business, day one. And you probably didn't have a huge following then and you probably didn't have a massive mailing list. So you were new, so back then what did you do to bring clients in the door?

Jessica Zweig: So I have a very strong opinion about this one because this is what I do for a living. So SimplyBe Agency is a personal branding company. And I believe that we are never in the B2B or the B2C industries, it's really people to people. And at the end of the day someone's going to

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hire you, invest in you, choose you, refer you based on you, based on how you make them feel.

And when we bring our whole selves to our platforms, and when I say whole selves, it's the intersection of what makes you great at what you do professionally, why someone would pay you money and who you are as a human being because you are more than what you do. And when you architect a brand message that is fully authentic and 360, you actually magnetize your right clients. And that's the way it works. And I really want to encourage people to get out of the head space of I need millions of followers online to make millions of dollars.

No. You and I both can probably speak – you just need the right couple of thousand to make millions of dollars. So get over the vanity metrics of I need a big following in order to be a successful entrepreneur. It really starts with your brand. It starts with your story. It starts with your value. What do you have to give? What makes you different? Owning it and then putting it online in whatever way feels good to you and where your audience is. Maybe LinkedIn's your place, maybe Pinterest is your place. Maybe Instagram is your place. Clubhouse is now a thing.

Really finding your spaces and then showing up consistently there and constantly, and rinse and repeat that. And that is how you compound, similar to what Rachel and I were just saying about money, it's about three years. Audience, client base, it compounds over time, it's a long game. And the more you stick to it the more clients you grow.

And then the last thing I'll say is you want to deliver. You want it to be amazing. You want, client referral sources are the best kinds of clients you'll get because those are the people that are connected in your sort of atmosphere of your clients, friends, and their friends and friends. And so

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make sure you're delivering a quality experience, a quality service, an incredible program, a memorable life changing experience working with them so that they go tell all their friends about you. And that's how you get more clients. So that's a really important piece too.

Rachel Rodgers: Yes, I 100% agree. I was running a law practice that was making 700,000 a year and I had 1100 people on my mailing list.

Jessica Zweig: There you go girl, wow.

Rachel Rodgers: You don't need to, I mean my friend, Susan Hyatt we used to always talk about how we had tiny mailing lists. We were making – I think she had a mailing list of under 10,000, maybe 7,000 people or something like that and she was making a million dollars. You don't need hundreds of thousands. I guess that's playing a numbers game. If I just can reach a million people, maybe 1% of them will actually be interested in my thing. And sure, you can cast a wide net.

Or you can do what you're saying, be your fully authentic self, really own your stuff, own your expertise, put out there what you want to put out, put your own stink on it as I like to say.

Jessica Zweig: Yeah, I love that.

Rachel Rodgers: And put that out there and then there's going to people who respond to that immediately. And they're not going to need to be caught in a wide net. You know what I mean? In order to respond to what you're putting out there. So I love that you're sharing that because I do think that's what platforms are built on, authenticity. Sometimes I say to my

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clients, “Stop looking at what everybody else is doing. It’s already been done, it’s boring now. What do you have, what you got?”

Jessica Zweig: Yeah, so true, I love that. And one last thing I want to say about that is when you really step forward into your authenticity and that word has so many meanings but I’m going to breathe new life into it hopefully this year with my book that two things happen when you really start being you. You start to repel people who are not about that. Not everybody is going to like you.

Rachel Rodgers: And I am definitely are repelling, absolutely.

Jessica Zweig: Yeah, me too, a 100%. And that’s often data; people are tapping out, “No, that’s not for me. I don’t get it. I’m unfollowing or I don’t get it.” That’s none of your business by the way anyway.

Rachel Rodgers: Yeah. Bye.

Jessica Zweig: Right. See you. Bye. I would highly encourage people to look at that as affirmation actually that they are on the right path. The second thing that happens when you become that repellent, you also become a magnet to attract more and more of the people that feel you, that are on that level, that vibrate at your frequency. Everything is just energy. We’re all energy, that’s science. And so really embodying your unique energy and making no apologies for it.

Rachel Rodgers: That’s right.

Jessica Zweig: You’re not supposed to be everything to everyone. You’re going to be nothing to no one if you try.

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Rachel Rodgers: Exactly. I remember two years ago in the online space, as we were having, or maybe it was a couple of years before that. I feel like it might even have been pre-Trump but there was a lot of conversation for a few years around should you share your politics if you're a business owner? And I love that that conversation is now pretty much mute, just like, bitch, if you're not sure of your politics, we know what your politics are. We can tell by the silence of what your politics are.

Jessica Zweig: That's the truth, that's so true. Now I'm thinking about it I'm like, yeah, know what you stand for, know what you stand for, know what you, because you don't say anything. You don't say anything.

Rachel Rodgers: Yes, exactly. And so it's like people want to buy from companies when they share values. So it's like you have to share your values. You have to put it out there. I'm like, "Yeah, you all hate Trump, what about Reagan, are you all ready to talk about him? Because he was trash too actually, let's discuss." You know what I mean?

Jessica Zweig: Totally.

Rachel Rodgers: You all, I'm ready for this conversation. So it's like, I'm just like, "No, if you don't like it, don't fucking like it. You get what you get because I'm not going to pretend to be somebody else." I just can't be happy that way, so fuck it, if you don't like me you don't like me. It's all good. Find somebody else who can teach you.

Jessica Zweig: I mean, girl, I love this. You're such a case study in this, look at the content you put out last year and I mean the video that went viral, we were talking about that at the top of the show. I took a huge stand for Black Lives Matter as a business owner. And I had people unsubscribe.

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I had people send me hate mail. I also had a ton of people send me gratitude and thank you and was able to really enrich my relationships with a lot of amazing people.

And by the way, hired, you know, 40% of my staff is people of color because we took a stand as a business online that we were in alignment with that. And people felt safe applying to my company.

Rachel Rodgers: Yes. Isn't that such an honor?

Jessica Zweig: You have no idea.

Rachel Rodgers: It means the world to me when I have people who are everything, any person of color, queer identities, differently abled identities, chronic illnesses that people have. And they feel comfortable, this is a space where I can work and thrive. And I'm just like; it just makes me want to cry. It makes me so happy to be able to provide that workspace. We were looking for that workspace at one point in our lives and it didn't exist or we couldn't find it.

Jessica Zweig: Yeah, I know, I know.

Rachel Rodgers: So, it's so beautiful.

Jessica Zweig: And vice versa girl, I mean everything about your platform is just so the right side of history. And it is and I want to be on the right side of history too. And you have to walk the talk. And I was just having this conversation the other day. I have a friend who had 600, 700 people unfollow her because she spoke the inauguration. And she was so in

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alignment with everything that it was about. And she lost 600, 700 people, she wasn't even mad about it. She was like, "I don't know, not my people."

Rachel Rodgers: Yeah, thank you, I cleaned my list, great.

Jessica Zweig: Exactly. And this goes for anything and everything that you stand for, the values. And really put them out there, you will attract the right team. You will attract the right clients. You will attract the right friends. It's just such a beautiful, beautiful example and lesson.

Rachel Rodgers: Yes, I totally agree and I hope to see more people making bold statements and really sharing who they are and their truth. And we want to know the real you. And some of us might be like, "Okay, that's not for me." Cool, that's okay. There's other people out there who are for you. And the beauty of the internet is that you can find them now. They don't have to be in your neighborhood. You can find the people in the corners of the internet that connect with you and that are into whatever you're into.

Jessica Zweig: It's so true. It's an exciting time to be alive, it wasn't a couple of decades ago, now it is, you can connect with human beings across the planet Earth and call them your community. It's pretty incredible actually.

Rachel Rodgers: Exactly. I just waded into the equestrian world and found all these horse people. And I'm like, "Okay cool, well, I'm one of you all now."

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Jessica Zweig: I saw, I'm obsessed with your ranch and I followed you on that account. I'm into horses too. I don't know shit about them but I'm like, "Go on Rachel." I mean it, I'm just so happy for you.

Rachel Rodgers: I mean I get unfollows too though because some people are like, "I don't want to keep hearing about your horses. Can you shut up? They're cute, we saw them. We're over it." And I'm like, "You're just going to get pictures of these horses every day so if you don't like it that's fine, just unfollow."

Jessica Zweig: It's awesome. It's awesome.

Rachel Rodgers: Okay, so let's talk about pandemic pivots for a second, like many business owners you had to pivot your business due to Covid-19, so did I. Prior to the pandemic you were offering an in-person experience where people came and met with you and spent the day with you face-to-face. And obviously suddenly poof, that's gone. And that was your flagship offer. So suddenly nobody's meeting face-to-face, tell me what happened, how did you adjust your services to make it work?

Jessica Zweig: Well, so first of all I freaked out. And then I dug deep and figured it out. So let yourself process the fear and then get to work. So our flagship product is a program called The Thought Leader Day where it is a nine to five session with me and my team in a workshop setting where you come into our conference room. We play your favorite music. We get yellow flowers. We order in your favorite food. We get your coffee. We whiteboard, it's a beautiful in person creative mess that I created a few years ago to kind of flip the agency model on its head.

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I really thought the client should be a part of this discovery and building it with us. And then they go away for...

Rachel Rodgers: I love that so much, yes, disrupt it.

Jessica Zweig: Yes, I really did. I was like, "I hate agencies. Why am I an agency? Agencies are boring, and dry, and the clients are so un-empowered and disempowered." And I love people. I love experiential experiences, workshops, masterminds, retreats, those are the things that have really up-leveled me. So why not create a product and a model that really turns the agency on its head and lets the client in behind the scenes. And we co-create this with them for eight hours. And then that's it, they go off and we build out the platform.

So this had been humming, we had popped. This thing was being sold left and right. I had clients flying in from Canada, and Costa Rica and all over the city. I'm based in Chicago, so people were flying in every week. It was amazing. And then the pandemic hit, and I couldn't do that, clearly. And so what we did is we gathered as a team and we were like, "Okay, we're going to make this a Zoom experience. Well, how do we not subtract the actual value of this? How do we keep it as magical as it used to be?"

So we created an itinerary, nine to five, created different Zoom rooms and really constructed the flow. Now, what we did do, and this is important. So the typical program is \$15,000, that's how much it costs. I was like, "Let's just charge 7500. Let's just see if people will pay for that." Because it is different, it's not the same. And I don't want to charge same, same. So we tested it and within a month we sold a bunch of them. And my sales coach once told me that, "If you sell your product really, really fast, it's time to raise your prices."

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Rachel Rodgers: 100%, I have said that many times. I agree completely. It should give them pause and then they say, “Yes, that’s how you know you’re at the right price.” If they’re jumping at it too fast you’re like, “I need to raise my prices.”

Jessica Zweig: [Inaudible] Yes. So I made that move and then the market clearly validated for me that it was just as valuable. And so it’s still 15,000. We brought it back up. And we are now able to do them with people in Japan for real. We have clients across the world. And so it’s really opened up the aperture in fact of who we can serve and how our business runs. And my team is incredible and we’ve all really adapted to virtual work. And so the Thought Leader Day is a virtual product now almost completely and I’m so grateful for it.

Rachel Rodgers: Yeah. I mean I feel the same. I miss in person retreats for sure. But it’s made things more accessible actually for more people to take advantage of the opportunity, even the cost. If it’s a \$15,000 investment and you don’t also have to book travel and things like that, take time away, maybe book people to take care of your kids while you’re gone, all of that. It’s like some people, travel is really hard on them or it’s too far or whatever. And it just opens up the world so I agree. It’s like you’ve got to look on the bright side and look, how is this creating opportunity for me?

As much as it sucks, where is the opportunity? And how can I take advantage of it and really continue to serve? And you’ll come up with creative solutions. So I love that, it’s so good. Okay, so let’s talk about your new book. It’s called *Be: A No-Bullsh*t Guide to Increasing Your Self Worth and Net Worth* by Simply Being Yourself. Obsessed, love it. Comes out February 16th, 2021, my birthday. Yay. And so this is a book where you talk about the power of authenticity. And one thing you discuss in the book is embracing your shit.

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You say all the stuff you think you need to hide, that's actually you're most important resource. Oh my God, I could not agree more. Can you give me an example of a client who was hiding and how this was hurting their business? Or maybe an example from your own life, tell us a story about how this works.

Jessica Zweig: Yeah. I mean we forget that no matter how successful someone is, if they're the CEO, or they're a millionaire, or they're really well known in the world of whatever, the internet or whatnot that they're just people. We're all just human beings and we're kind of fucked up, [inaudible], okay.

So the more you bring that to the table, and again the internet isn't a place to be cathartic, like someone told me a long time ago, "With rare exception, don't process your drama on the internet." Do the work, process your feelings and then come on and share something that is of value for the people on the other side.

And so I really want to encourage people to remember when I bring more of my true self to my brand, that's actually embracing your shit, is the first chapter of my book. It's a personal branding book. I'm going to teach you step-by-step how to architect a strategy, a message, social, PR, a platform. But it starts with embracing all of who you are.

And I actually did have a client. She was the former CMO of Harley Davidson. And had worked her way up the corporate ladder and was by the time she was in her late 40s, absolutely miserable and hit burnout epidemic experience. And just ended up walking away from this high-profile career, working for one of the most iconic brands in the world at the top and it wasn't authentic to her.

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And she ended up leaving, her name is Shelley Paxton, and she wrote a book called Soulbbatical and she is now building a whole business around this platform of bringing career wellness and soul connection to executives. And has really lit herself on fire in the most proverbial beautiful way of she's found her purpose and her passion. But she had to be willing to come clean about how unhappy she was, how dark it was, how unhealthy she was. She had issues with alcohol. She was not taking care of her body. She talked about all of that stuff.

And was then able to relate to her client who is also her, Shelley, in a different version that would...

Rachel Rodgers: Right.

Jessica Zweig: Right? Because she was willing to embrace her shit and put it out into the world as part of her business, and her model, and her message. So I have a lot of clients like that. I think you have to come to the point in your career and your life when you do this work, when you read my book and go on this path to be willing to be vulnerable, to be willing to be that real. And when you do, I mean you know, girl, the sky's the beginning. You start to attract more of your right people, and you feel in alignment, you feel on purpose.

Rachel Rodgers: Absolutely. Yes, I mean I love that so much. And what we were talking about before we hit record, that video that I did last year. That was me in my most raw, most emotional, most angry. I fucking hate crying in front of other people. I don't cry in front of my husband if I can avoid it. I do not like to cry with an audience. I like to cry alone, thank you very much. So just that was not what I was planning exactly to say, not exactly what I was planning, I was not planning for that video to go viral.

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And it's just like when you get to that most raw place that is actually what brings in your people. The closer you can get to your own truth, the more you can peel back the onion, and I'm not saying share all your business. There is more to my life that is nobody's business and I'm not sharing it, sorry. But the part that you are willing to share, when you are willing to get very real, I mean that's what brings the people in, that's what attracts them to your work because then they can relate to that.

You're not having a unique human experience where no one else has experienced what you're experiencing. There are literally millions in the world who are having the exact same experience as you, who feel the exact same way you feel in this moment. And when you come with your truth they're like, "Fuck, yes, thank you, somebody's saying it and I'm not alone." And that's what draws people to you. So it's so important, I agree with you. Your shit, that's the power, that's where the money is at, is in your bag of shit.

Jessica Zweig: Yes, it is girl, there's gold, there's gold in there, it's worth something.

Rachel Rodgers: Yes, exactly, so good, so good. Okay, so let's switch to a fun question. What's something that makes you feel like a million bucks? Is there a beauty routine or a favorite workout, or fancy goat milk soap, which is one of my things. What is one of those things that just makes you feel amazing every day?

Jessica Zweig: I am obsessed with my lash extensions, so I'm not going to lie about that, all day, I'm addicted.

Rachel Rodgers: I love it.

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Jessica Zweig: They're a little wispy today. I have an appointment tonight so they're going to be much better in a few hours. But I love this. So I really respond to scents and I love essential oils and candles. And I'm a huge fan of the brand, Diptyque, which is...

Rachel Rodgers: Oh my God, yes, it's just absolute luxury, it's so good.

Jessica Zweig: It's like ridiculous, it's like \$60 for this teeny tiny little candle that lasts for just a couple of weeks. And I love the roses one, I think roses, the smell of roses, just really loving, and heartwarming, and very queen like. And I love their roses candle. And if I really want to feel like a million dollars in my little condo in Chicago, I light those candles. And they do, they make me feel abundant for sure.

Rachel Rodgers: Isn't it amazing what a \$60 candle can do for you?

Jessica Zweig: Yeah, incredible. It's magical.

Rachel Rodgers: You wind up creating a whole ritual around it, I'm going to light my candle and then I'm going to sit here in the dark with just the candle flickering. Or I'm going to read my book or whatever.

Jessica Zweig: I do all that, Rachel quite literally what you just described, it's exactly the ritual.

Rachel Rodgers: Exactly. It's like you make it a special thing. I have fancy coffee that I have, I order from San Francisco. I have it AeroPressed and then I sit in the morning and I'm just enjoying my perfect cup of coffee. It's just those little luxuries that don't even cost that much, fucking make you feel like a million-dollar badass. And then you're like, okay, who wants

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some of this today? Then you're ready to slay your day. So something like that is so incredibly important. So go buy a Diptyque \$60 candle or whatever the equivalent is for you all. But those candles are pretty fantastic.

Jessica Zweig: They're really good, they're so good.

Rachel Rodgers: Okay, so final question, fill in the blank, before I die I will.

Jessica Zweig: I will have a house in Costa Rica that I built, and I will have lots and lots of extra money to give back to animals. And have shelters and my legacy will be to give back in that way. And maybe I'll have a little shelter next to my house in Costa Rica with lots of dogs. That's what I will do before I die. I actually would love to end my career and life as a philanthropist versus an entrepreneur, and really be able to really leave a legacy with my money. And my passion is animals. The marine biologist, full circle.

Rachel Rodgers: Yes, full circle. Yes, I was going to say exactly that. I love that so much. That's beautiful and that sounds amazing. And I totally trust that you're going to have that beautiful property by the beach in Costa Rica. And you're going to be there with your fancy candles and you're going to be like, "I did that shit, I did that."

Jessica Zweig: Yes, I did, I did.

Rachel Rodgers: And it's so true, when you are as an entrepreneur building and you're figuring out complex problems every day, human problems. And then you solve that problem, and the business is making great money and stable, and you build a team and they're running it. Then

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it's like I can take this skill and this money, and I could go solve other problems in the world. And I think that that is such a natural path, it makes so much sense.

And that is – this is really like I think one of the reasons why so many women want to build wealth is not only for themselves but also for the world. And I really do think that more women making money is truly going to make the world a better place.

Jessica Zweig: I just got the chills, I cannot agree with you more wholeheartedly, girl. And I love that I'm on that journey with you to remind women of that and to give them the tools, and empowerment and the remembrance of that power inside of them. And that is really kind of the whole point, is to see the world a better – when women have money women have power. And when women have power this world will be a better place. So I love this, this was so lovely.

Rachel Rodgers: Thank you Jessica for such a beautiful conversation. Everybody go out and buy Jessica's new book, Be, what a great title, Be.

Jessica Zweig: And yours. Thank you. Thank you.

Rachel Rodgers: It's called Be: A No-Bullsh*t Guide to Increasing Your Self Worth and Net Worth by Simply Being Yourself. Go order it now, it's amazing. And where else can people find you if they want to connect with you?

Jessica Zweig: I'm really active on Instagram, Jessica Zweig, just my name. You can find me at jessicazweig.com. And if you want to learn more about SimplyBe, you can go to simplybeagency.com.

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Rachel Rodgers: I love it so much. We will link everything up in the show notes. Thank you so much for being here. This was awesome.

Jessica Zweig: Rachel, this was a blast. Thank you for having me. You're amazing.

What a beautiful conversation. One of my main takeaways from that conversation was just that reminder to be ourselves, to be 100% fully our authentic selves and to just like that bag of shit, that messiness, that stuff that's in your past, those challenges that you've experienced in life, you are not alone in that. And there are so many more people who will relate to you if you'd be willing to share some of those things that you might feel a little bit vulnerable about.

I'm not saying share all your personal business, hell no, there are absolutely things that are off limits. But those things that you feel comfortable sharing, share your story, share your truth, share your values, be honest with the world. And I think you will see that so many more people will get attracted to your message and what you have to share with the world. And it will create a bigger platform for you. So I love that so much.

You all go support Jessica and go buy her book, *Be: A No-Bullsh*t Guide to Increasing Your Self Worth and Net Worth by Simply Being Yourself*. Go be you and go get that coin.