

## The Passionpreneur Experience Podcast Transcript

### The Passionpreneur's Journey ft Tess Ball - Episode 9

#### Host: Bridget Cobb

- Intro: [00:00:05](#) Welcome to The Passionpreneur Experience where I examine the thoughts, energy and strategy a side hustler needs to grow their entrepreneurial dreams all while they work their corporate nine to five day job. I'm your host Bridget carb. Now let's get started.
- Bridget Cobb: [00:00:29](#) Hey guys, welcome back to The Passionpreneur Experience. And today I am so excited to say that I have my very first guest on the show, uh, which has been a long time coming. I know the podcast is only been up for a couple months, but I've been excited about bringing guests on today. I have the pleasure of introducing Tess ball now Tess. Uh, I'm going to give you a little background on her. She, uh, spent years as an award winning designer and digital strategist and worked in advertising agencies across the U S from New York city all the way to Seattle. Uh, and in that high pressured situation, one day she decided to go and check out a yoga class and it just opened up a whole new world for her, which I totally understand because I'm also a yoga lover. Uh, eventually she opened up her own small fitness studio and, and delved into that side of the business. Today she's here to talk to us about her new business, The Heart Driven Business Academy. The Heart Driven Business Academy is a collaborative education hub for small business owners and they are on a mission to help new business owners think systematically and build unshakeable foundations for the businesses of their dreams. Welcome to the show Tess.
- Tess Ball: [00:01:51](#) Thank you so much. I am so thrilled and honored to be your first guest. This is, yeah,
- Bridget Cobb: [00:02:00](#) Pretty exciting. Uh, so Tess before we jump into it, just so you know, guys, I brought Tess on the show because she has such an interesting history, uh, an entrepreneurial journey and we're going to kind of walk through her, her journey and all the variations of it to see what she learned along the way. But before we jump into your past, uh, let's talk a little bit about your future. Tell me a little bit more about The Heart Driven Business Academy.

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- Tess Ball: [00:02:33](#) Yeah. So two years ago I realized that small businesses don't have a really solid education platform to rely on when it comes to problem solving and getting their questions answered and connecting with top notch trusted professionals like lawyers and CPAs and all of those people that you need to get help from when starting a business. Um, there's a big hole and because I like having a lot of projects at all times that I like creating things, I decided to solve that problem. And so I collaborate with lawyers, CPAs, marketing professionals, coaches to develop online curriculum for small business owners so that they have access to a lot of the information that corporations have. Um, during my time in marketing, I get really pissed off that my clients really big brands had all of this access to strategic thinking to legal checks and balances. They have really solid financial teams and just seeing so many small business owners struggle with that stuff. Um, I got really mad and decided to fix it. Nothing like anger to drive us for our road. I love it. You know, a lot of small businesses are like, I'm driven by you changing the world and like helping people get healthier. And I'm like, no, I just really have a lot of rage for our economic situation.
- Tess Ball: [00:04:12](#) People doing great things don't have the support they need. It really bothers me.
- Bridget Cobb: [00:04:18](#) Uh, that's the best. I love that. And we will, we're going to talk more about The Heart Driven Business Academy, uh, towards the end of the podcast. But I really appreciate that background or, or forward ground, if you will, of where you are right now because I have no doubt that your, your journey that you've taken in your entrepreneurial and corporate journey, both, um, really informed how you built, uh, The Heart Driven Business Academy. So let's take a look and if you would walk us through a little bit of, of how you came to now and, and what that looked like from a, your corporate standpoint and your entrepreneurial and where they crossed over.
- Tess Ball: [00:05:04](#) All right. So it's, for me, I think it's important to go like all the way back. Um, I was the little kid on the street corner selling spray painted pine cones to my neighbors around the holidays

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to make a couple extra bucks. And this was in Michigan, so it was like very cold. Um, so from a very early age, I was inspired to be an entrepreneur. Um, now there were many, many twists and turns in the story that came after that. But, um, I've always been a person who likes projects. Um, right. I don't think I'll ever do or not have projects. And so throughout college, throughout the early days of my career when people ask what I, I always answered, well, I'm a project person. Um, and so the ha has taken me into designing. Um, so when I graduated college I became a designer and was in the agency world designing corporate advertising.

Tess Ball: [00:06:19](#)

And the thing that drew me to that was the project based nature of the work. Um, one day I could be working on this event promotion. The next day I could be working on this, you know, sports Jersey type setting. The next day I could be working on digital advertising or a Facebook app or what have you. Um, beautiful amount of variety there. Yeah, it was the only career I think that satisfied that in me. Um, and because I was curious, I was the, I was the new kid on the block and the boom of social media. So, um, around 2008, I think it was, I was handed a, an FBML book and FBML was Facebook markup language. That's back when, um, business pages still had apps. Um, and I was really able to sink my teeth into digital. And because of that, because I was able to make that my project, I very quickly climbed the ranks, um, because I was curious and had that tenacity.

Tess Ball: [00:07:30](#)

Um, it was recognized and I was able to move from my small agency in Tennessee to New York city, um, without knowing anybody, without getting a foot in the door because I knew people, I was able to enter some really awesome agencies and work with some really great brands and it was nice. I think when you find something that you love, that you're good at, that you get recognized for, it's a really lucky and privileged thing.

Bridget Cobb:

And lucky luck is a, sometimes does have something to do with it, but let's not forget merit.

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- Tess Ball: Well thank you. Yeah. And it's kind of a beautiful marriage of the two in a lot of ways. Like you do the work and then you get these awesome lucky opportunities and then because you have the lucky opportunities, you get to sink your teeth into the hard work and then it bounces back and forth and really, yeah, absolutely.
- Tess Ball: [00:08:30](#) Yeah. So that eventually really got to me though because when you start climbing the ranks, um, you end up working for a lot of people or causes or brands that aren't necessarily in alignment with who you are as a person. Um, unfortunately all of that kind of got to my head and I was like, sweet, I'll take the next best, biggest opportunity I want that, you know, \$20,000 a year promotion. Sure I'll do work that isn't soul satisfying. And then eventually paid the price for those decisions. And just was up against a lot of dissatisfaction. Yeah. That's a very typical,
- Bridget Cobb: [00:09:16](#) cool, uh, progression for anybody in a corporate role that has an entrepreneurial spirit. And, you know, I think a lot of people can identify with that and saying, you know, I, I'm in this role, uh, and this is not everybody because again, you know, I like, I love my corporate gig and, uh, I get a lot of satisfaction out of it, but I have had, um, uh, corporate roles in the past where it really wasn't doing it for me and I was missing a lot of that, uh, you know, purpose filled, kind of a drive coming out of my role and, and then, yeah, maybe you have to lean on some other type of motivator, like money, like prestige, um, or even, you know, uh, when in a corporate mindset, you know, you start to get locked down to things like job trajectory and this will lead me to that and bigger accounts and, and bigger brand names. So it makes sense. And it, I think it's quite common. A lot of people would be listening, going, yeah, I do. My corporate job, it doesn't get me out of bed in the morning. I don't click my heels. But there are other motivators there that keep me there. So I'm sure a lot of people uh, can relate to that story.
- Tess Ball: [00:10:34](#) That's so interesting as you were describing that, it's almost like, and I just, I spent some time with my seven year old nephew recently and it's almost like without being focused on the thing that you really love to do, um, like we love to go on adventures.

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We love to go camping like in less, you are immersed in that thing you really love. Anything could distract you. Like, you know, it would be so easy for him to be distracted by your video game or you know, a TV show or a snack or whatever. But like when he's immersed in the experience that he actually really loved to do, there is nothing that can distract you. And I feel like that's so similar to entrepreneurship when you're like, when you're doing the thing you love, it's so easy to get consumed by it when you're doing that, like soulful fulfilling thing. But like, if you're in something that isn't a good fit for your soul, like it's so easy to get distracted by the money and the, like you said, the um, accolades, right? You're searching for something,

- Bridget Cobb: [00:11:44](#) Something to stimulate you and those things can stimulate and can motivate in the short term often, you know, who doesn't love a Pat on the back, you know, who doesn't love to be a part of something big. And so those can be, you know, very helpful motivators in the short term. But when you are trying to link it to long-term satisfaction, long-term passion, uh, those motivators are gonna fall short.
- Tess Ball: [00:12:16](#) Absolutely. And they, and they did for me hardcore, right? Um, uh, it was full stop. Soul isn't satisfied. It was like I hit that end of that pendulum and like rocketed to the other side. Um, quit everything. Started at small fitness studio, um, because I was searching for the next thing.
- Bridget Cobb: [00:12:39](#) You went full like cold Turkey from corporate, uh, entity to small business owner just like that.
- Tess Ball: [00:12:50](#) Well, it wasn't, that process definitely didn't happen quickly. But I think the mindset shift for me happened very quickly. And from the moment I realized how dissatisfied or unsatisfied, I don't even know the word, dissatisfied, unsatisfied, not satisfied. The moment I realized I was fed up with my life, my mind started to attach itself to the next thing. That thing that could potentially be soul satisfying. And from then on it was just a problem to be solved. Um, how do I get there? And that process probably took two years, but once my mind and my gut were settled on moving on, that process could unfold.

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- Bridget Cobb: [00:13:47](#) And that's an interesting point you make. There were a lot of times it is us just getting to the point where we make up our mind and we decide this process is happening. And a lot of that is tied back to, again, that's at a string of, you know, our thoughts affect our actions. And until we believe that that next experience or that next journey is accessible to us and it's available to us, we don't take the actions to move forward. We have to get to that point where we've sunk our teeth into the idea we've committed to it. And that might, that might take the form of committing to yourself. It could be and, and uh, declaring it out loud to others and saying, Hey guys, guess what? I'm opening up my own, my own fitness studio. And you put it out there, it becomes real in your mind and able to take action.
- Bridget Cobb: [00:14:40](#) So there is a lot of work you can do on the front end. I mean, that's how we get to the point where we take action. It's a belief inside of us or the most thought we can have. It might not be, I'm a bad ass small business owner, uh, but it might be, I can own a business. I can own a business right now if I want to, uh, it successful or not, I can own a business. So you get to the most believable thought and that spurs your first point of action. What, and the first action. In your case, it sounds like you're, I mean, you just jumped in, you ha, you know, how do you go from, from clocking in every day at a different company, you know, working for someone. And what's that first, first, you know, few months like where you clock in for yourself that had to be quite a shift in your mind.
- Tess Ball: [00:15:35](#) Yes. So once I had made the decision that like, hi, I want to pursue something else, um, I chose to open myself up to an different job. I knew that the role I was in was very much full time leadership. Like there was a, there was a definite track to it. Um, but because I was in design, I was in marketing. I knew that there were a lot of different options out there that I could pursue if I wanted to. So maybe that's consulting, maybe that's part time. And what I ended up getting, um, without much trialing. And I think that's one of the most beautiful things. Once you can commit to the idea, or at least once I commit to the idea, the next step kinda just appears in this glorious faithful

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way. So I got the opportunity to work in a very similar role to my own for more pay working three days a week.

Tess Ball: [00:16:36](#) So that was a very easy thing to say yes to because what I needed was not a class in small business ownership. What I wasn't, what I needed wasn't a coach. What I needed wasn't like more education. I just needed the space to figure out what it is that I wanted. Um, and that role, being able to work three days a week gave me the space to figure it out. I feel like so many people try to do everything all at once and take on this pressure and a lot of people can do that really well. I admire the folks who can hold it all down, but for me, I needed space and freedom and flexibility and a little bit more autonomy when it comes to feeling out those types of decisions. So, um, that position eventually turned into a three day, a week offsite position. So I got my hour each way travel time back, uh, which opened up even more space in my schedule. And then once I had all of that room, I was able to fill it with the things that I wanted to do personally that were still satisfying.

Bridget Cobb: [00:17:45](#) This is a really interesting transition because a, you know, I think a lot of us would be sitting here going or saying, if I could have my corporate gig right now and reduce it to X number of days a week and maybe that's three, maybe it's two or four, it doesn't matter, then I could get exponentially more done in my business. But I would say most of us are also sitting here thinking, but that will never happen. There's no way that I could hold a corporate gig, make money while holding the and have it be not five days a week. It doesn't exist. And so I love to hear that one, it does exist. And two, it can be a beautiful segue between that cold Turkey. Uh, I was full time corporate. Now I'm full time entrepreneur. Holy hell. I'm not sure if I understand what's going on here. Big change too much. But there is that opportunity for true transition or you know, to kind of ease off one and ramp onto another. So once you went to that, you're on three days a week, corporate schedule and now you've got a new times new days available for your entrepreneurial adventure. Did you really find that there was a difference in productivity?

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- Tess Ball: [00:19:08](#) Absolutely. When you have the space to create, when you have the time to create, when you're able to connect with your community in a more broad schedule, you're able to get a pulse on what you're going to be doing. Because I had more time throughout the week, I was able to get private clients, I was able to teach classes at times I wouldn't have normally been able to teach. And for me what was really, really helpful is I wasn't locked into doing my creative work at times when I'm not creative. Um, I really personally find I'm most creative in the mornings and in the evenings. Um, that midday from like 11 to three is it's just not a creative time for me. Um, because marketing was essentially on autopilot for me. I could do it in my sleep. Um, I plugged that into my less creative times and I saw clients in the mornings and evenings times when I really needed my creative juices to be flowing. When I really needed to have energy to connect, I was able to see clients during those key times during the day.
- Bridget Cobb: [00:20:19](#) Yeah. You know, I love that because it's kinda, it's this opportunity to do a lot of testing with your target market, understand your audience, understand their needs and, and when, uh, your, your skill sets of most in demand. And that must've really, that must have showed you and allowed you to build such a fantastic template for when you went full time entrepreneur with that role because you've got to sample, uh, their true and schedule and build out what that was going to look like. But you still have this, uh, this corporate time, which mentally I imagined for you is giving you a little bit of stability, uh, while you play around with, with building this studio and what it's gonna look like. For sure.
- Tess Ball: [00:21:06](#) I'm so grateful for my corporate jobs. I would, I wouldn't trade it for the world because when you have that foundation to be creative, to play on top of as magic, it really is like, you know, it gives you all of the autonomy and the creativity you want and it also gives you the stability that's necessary to play on. Um, if you didn't have that, you'd kind of run into that scarcity mentality. Like it's hard to pursue the things that really light you up when you're worried about where you're going to eat. You're going to be here, you pay in rent.

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- Bridget Cobb: [00:21:45](#) I also liked that the, yeah, the flexibility of those days. Because if I think about right now in my corporate world, I, I work very predictable hours. You know, let's say that's going to be eight 30 to five 30 in that range, uh, flexing a little bit forwarder or later, earlier or later, depending on the day. And then I need to work my, uh, my own business in and around that mostly. Uh, it's either going to be or it's going to be after. And you're right. That starts to rust my opportunity to test out my audience fully and understand, well, when they, when do they want to engage with me? Maybe they want to engage with me in the middle of the day. Well, when I'm working nine to five every school day, uh, that makes it very difficult for me to learn from my, from my audience during that time. But when you've got, if I'm only working Monday through Wednesday, let's say corporate Thursday for through Friday is full time entrepreneur, that's my time Thursday and Friday.
- Bridget Cobb: [00:22:53](#) I could play all day long between the hours of nine to five and does and learn more from my customer. Uh, and then also use, like you were talking about that, that those kinds of power hours are when you're most on, uh, and really dedicate that time to your, to your side hustle business. And that means your side hustle business for those days gets the best of you. And there may be other days where it doesn't get the best of you because your day job gets the best of you. And it's, it's kind of a, you get to balance that when you've got that, um, part-time corporate gig, part-time entrepreneur gig.
- Tess Ball: [00:23:31](#) Yeah. And I think we often think about productivity in terms of hours, and it's a very common way to structure your day. Like, I'm going to get this done and this many hours and check it off my list. Well, not every hour has the same amount of value. Um, I will tell you right now, my 7:00 AM hour has far more value than my 4:00 PM. Um, it's just night and day. Uh, what I'm able to accomplish in that timeframe. So by shifting your energy toward the hours that work for you. And that doesn't mean that like I highly doubt that everybody's nine to five is their most productive time. So even as a, uh, passionpreneur as a side hustler, look at what's left, um, and figure out where you're

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going to get the most bang for your buck. Is it going to be a weekend? Because after work you're just toasted.

Tess Ball: [00:24:33](#) Like you don't have anything left. Maybe it's going to bed earlier so that you can wake up a little bit earlier and spend just an hour a day writing your blog posts or connecting with your audience or scheduling your social media or what have you. But just because you're limited in that nine to five range, what can you do outside of that? Maybe you're like, by 12 o'clock you're like, yes, this is lunch time. I'm feeling fired up and you want to spend an hour working on your business at lunch. Um, figure out well, and it takes you out of yourself, right? So much of this journey. Um, I'm, I'm sure your audience has heard it like time and time again. Owning a business is the most intense personal development you will ever get ever. Um, and I think it shows up a lot in those types of decisions.

Tess Ball: [00:25:25](#) It's like, okay, in order to maximize my time and my energy, I have to get to know myself. Um, I have to get to know those very automatic, habitual patterns, um, and kind of re-explore re-examine. It's like, who am I as a person? When am I most productive? What do, what do I enjoy doing at what time? What is my rhythm? I totally agree. And I think it's a truly great opportunity. Like how cool is that that you get to look at that for maybe the first time in your entire life since childhood? That's just totally great. So now that you've got your, you're in this phase where you've got your part-time corporate gig going three days a week, you've got your fitness studio up and running. Uh, what, what's the next step? How does it evolve from there? So while I had that part time corporate gig, I was really taking on private clients in my home, in other people's homes. I was renting space from yoga studios and this was all happening in New York city. Um, I was kind of just hodge-podging this side hustle as I could. Um, a few years into that Masha I decided I had enough of New York and it was time

Tess Ball: [00:26:44](#) to move and so moved to Seattle, um, where I decided that I was no longer going to do marketing advertising. It was like a clean break, clean start. I was just going to do fitness, big change that didn't last. It was a big tank and it didn't last very

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long. I had total scarcity mindset up the wazoo. Um, Microsoft windows offered me a strategy job and I was like, sweet, I'll take it. Um, but very quickly realized the error of my ways. I was like, no, don't go back. Um, it's, it's hard to make those clean breaks even if you want to, even if you're ready for it, even if you've planned for it.

Bridget Cobb: [00:27:33](#) Well look, and I think that's a huge, which amount of of uh, uh, mental strife and, and, uh, work that you just went through in about 30 seconds between moving, picking up, moving across company or moving across country, uh, saying I'm going full time entrepreneur doing a one 80, like you said, into that scarcity mindset of Holy moly, no way back to corporate in that moment. Getting into back into corporate and saying, no, no, I, I've, Oh, I'm regressing back to entrepreneurship. I, what was that time like for you? Cause you must've just been settling into your new city and to Seattle and you know, what was that like jumping back and forth into those roles and trying to figure it out?

Tess Ball: [00:28:21](#) It was so messy. It was so not cute. It was everything that I think I tried to avoid my entire life. I was always like the perfectionist. know it all bossy pants, little kid, um, who definitely knows how to make every decision wise. Um, and through that move and with everything going on personally for me, like I struggled, um, quite a bit with mental illness and that's when I really started healing that. Um, and so I think through the chaotic swirl of it all, um, I was blessed with this gift of knowing that it is never linear. You're never making right decisions and you never end up at a destination and just plots you're there. Um, it's always a process. Um, and the process is just, it's never finished. It never stops evolving no matter how much you think you have. It figured out three months from now your life was going to look different than your plan. Um, and it allowed me to have a lot more compassion, a lot more grace for myself, um, because as much as I fooling myself,

Tess Ball: [00:29:42](#) I don't actually have it figured out. I will never have it figured out. And what a gift it is to know that because when you know that you will never have it,

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- Tess Ball: [00:29:52](#) it's liberating. I feel so liberated by the experience of [inaudible] knowing in my soul, I will never have it figured out. What a relief. So I think there's, you know, that's what, that couple of months looked like. It was just a big ugly mess that turned into one of the biggest gifts I've ever been given by the universe or as a human or however you believe things happen. That was one of the most critical beautiful lessons I've ever gotten. And it's allowed me to create really powerful
- Tess Ball: [00:30:29](#) businesses now. Like because I realized that I approached business differently and have had way more success than I think I would have had if I tried to manufacture it all or get all.
- Bridget Cobb: [00:30:42](#) Absolutely. We've got people listening. I've no doubt right now that are thinking I can't, uh, I can't launch my, my side hustle idea until I've got it all figured out or I can't leave corporate until I have my business really nailed down and it's 100% on track. Uh, you know, there, there's a lot of this fear around one way doors and I've gotta have it nailed. I've got to have it perfect before I walk through that door. Cause there is no coming back and I think you are the poster child for it's two way door people. It's a two way door and I can go through and I can come back through again and I can leave it halfway open and I can poke my head in. The reality is I'm learning each time I do it and um, and if I'm resilient and I, if I stick to my plan, each move I make, whether I'm coming in the door or I'm going back out of it again, uh, is going to put me one step closer to my goal, I am going to learn from that.
- Bridget Cobb: [00:31:44](#) I'm going to adjust and I'll use the knowledge from that experience to make my next decision. But as you said before, I'm never going to have it all figured out. I'm never going to be at a place where I'm done, quote unquote. It's always going to be a learning experience. And I hope there's never a point where I get to and, and, uh, whether I'm a full time entrepreneur and now I'm looking to, uh, grow my entrepreneurial business, add a team or, or a higher staff or whatever it is, and think that it's a one way door, you're going to always be taking risks as you grow your business. That's a muscle that is well worth developing. And I love that you've

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been able to approach that with, uh, with the tenacity that you have and, and the humility of saying, okay, I'm going back to my corporate gig and maybe I put that statement out there. I've never again, but I'm going back. So what? And you did, and then you just did it, right? And then you're like, okay, nevermind. Made a mistake there. I'm coming back out. But that, that, you know, there was, you kept going and you, you just owned your decision and you move forward and you made your next step.

Tess Ball:

[00:33:02](#)

Yeah. And I think so many times as entrepreneurs, we wrap our identity up in our entrepreneurial pursuits or as corporate, um, folks, we wrap our identity up in, um, what we're doing for our jobs. And when you leave something, there's this identity shift that can happen. Um, you no longer can hold tight what you've flung to for so long. And for me a lot of that was realizing that my identity wasn't designer or wasn't entrepreneur, wasn't fitness coach, wasn't yoga teacher. Like those things weren't my identity. My identity was I'm a teacher and I'm a creative person. Um, whether I am an art director and I'm teaching people how to design things or I am teaching people how to move their bodies, um, I'm a teacher. And so I think when making those back and forth and all around decisions, it's important to, or at least it's been for me to reflect on why you think there's a one way door as it relates to your identity. Like if I go out of this door, I'm no longer a part of this club, but what clubs do you really belong to? Like, what deep down in your soul do you value that you might miss? Because that is where the two way dourness happen. That's where you get to always come back because it's a part of you.

Bridget Cobb:

[00:34:44](#)

Yeah, absolutely. I so identify with that, you know, and that, uh, I had a short period of time there all felt very long. It was nine months where I was unemployed, uh, when I was coming back from Australia back to the U S and had a hell of a time finding a job. And yeah, I totally lost myself outside of my corporate identity and, uh, and what I really missed, it wasn't necessarily working a corporate job. I missed that powerful interaction with people that I had. I missed. Um, being in the environment where I was, uh, working with people one on one and I was, uh, helping people develop their skills. I was a sales trainer for

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many, many years and that ability to work one on one with another person and watch them grow and achieve new levels, you know, that's what I thrived in and what I missed.

- Bridget Cobb: [00:35:45](#) But I was so used to describing myself as this corporate worker, this corporate entity. I, I'm, yeah, I've always worked in corporate that I was clinging to this very simple description without really paying attention to what was beneath that. And that was the value in the, the, the true skill set that I brought that I was missing. So I think it's very easy for us to fall into these labels, uh, because we've practiced them. You know, if you're out there networking, you know, you could rattle off, Oh yeah, I work for X brand and this is what we do in this our mission statement. And you're part of this larger cause and you hang your hat on that. Um, it's just, it's a, you know, we're, we're used to, to that spiel and, and what we say, and when you lose that, uh, it's amazing how quickly we forget our own skillsets and then what we see, what our values are, what we stand for.
- Bridget Cobb: [00:36:40](#) Uh, I think it's a great practice to get out there and, and you know, take an inventory, take a personal inventory of, of what it is you love, you know, why do you love to do what you do, why you're, what is your corporate gig giving you right now and allowing you to express what's your side hustle, allowing you to express, you know, how do they complement each other? Really interesting exercise. And I agree with you. I think it's easy for us to get tied up and in kind of a more shallow description or identity for ourselves. Yeah. And I think it's, it's one of the last things that a lot of people think and it's one of the last things I thought about and I,
- Tess Ball: [00:37:20](#) I wish I had like done that inventory sooner to realize like, I don't need to introduce myself as test the social media strategist for Jose Quervo. Like, Mmm. Like, no, I'm just, I'm a creative person and I'm a teacher. Um, and even though
- Tess Ball: [00:37:40](#) the side hustle and the day job are two different things, really at the heart of it is me. Um, yes. And at the heart of that for you is, is you, it's expressed in different ways. Sure. But like for people

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doing people things and the sooner we understand that the better easier or the harder it could be.

- Bridget Cobb: [00:38:05](#) All right. So we've gotten to the point where you left New York city, you moved to Seattle and you kind of did this quick flip and flop back to corporate, out of corporate, back to corporate. And you're really trying to find yourself here and, and understand what it is that you want to do. Uh, what happens next?
- Tess Ball: [00:38:26](#) So I worked for several gyms and yoga studios and I'm a part of the gig economy. I'm a couple of different gigs. Um, none of which means super satisfied with, um, but Hey, I'm new. Um, I'm a complete newbie to this whole industry. So, um, get in where I can was kind of the, was the mindset, um, do what I can do to make it happen and learn a ton through that experience. And so after a year or two of that, I start to rent space from one of the yoga studios I was working for. And eventually coalesced that space with her, um, before opening my own space. Um, so very slowly got more and more private clients and made the full transition into studio ownership, um, a few years ago.
- Bridget Cobb: [00:39:36](#) Wow. That's, uh, that, I mean, that's an incredible journey, uh, from going, you know, from dipping your toe in the water from going back and forth, You, I think you've explored every combination and you know, type of business relationship aspect that you could, and you're now kind of, you're in this culmination, if you will, of owning your own studio. It's absolutely amazing.
- Tess Ball: [00:40:40](#) It was so fun and I, and I feel like I got the biggest boon or blessing having come from the corporate world because I was used to working with a legal department, a finance department, a strategist, like I knew how to grow business, um, and realize how much of an education it was, um, in business ownership before I was a business owner and I was like, man, this is great. Um, my studio was at full capacity pretty quickly. Um, I think within the first year, um, I was giving myself a really solid paycheck, which as a trainer, like if you know a trainer, if you are a trainer, you probably know. But like having a solid paycheck at a physical location is not really heard of. Um, nice. I

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was able to, it really unfolded beautifully once I had the space. But then I realized, because you know, when you're on the small business community, a lot of your friends are small business owners. That not everyone had the experience and the education that I did. Um Hmm. And that was unsettling. Um, and as a project person, as a problem solver, as a teacher, um, that was the category for this latest project. Um, I realized after I had scaled that studio, um, [inaudible] that all of the past experiences kind of, it showed me the bigger problem. Like I thought what I was doing was opening a studio, but what I was really doing is opening a business so that I could relate to small business owners and create an education platform.

Bridget Cobb:

[00:41:55](#)

Um, wow. What a journey to get to this major realization. And you're right. I think at that point, you know, you really had touched every aspect, every way you could approach coming to own a small business and what an unbelievable amount of context you would have had by that point. And like you said, once you start getting into, uh, a small business ownership or entrepreneurship, you do start to get to know a lot of other people in that space. So you must have heard some of those same fears and concerns and lack of resources like you had said, coming up again and again in those spaces. So amazing way to put all of that together and have that idea drop for you if that must've been quite incredible.

Tess Ball:

[00:42:46](#)

It's a Testament to like, you never know what you're going to build until you start action actually brings clarity. Um, how'd you ask me 10 years ago if I would have been creating this education platform for small business owner, it'd be, I'd be like, what the hell are you talking about? If you asked me five years ago when I was just starting this fitness thing, I was like, no, I'm going to be a trainer for the rest of my life. Like, but it's through that consistent action and that exploration and not knowing that you actually get clarity.

Bridget Cobb:

[00:43:22](#)

Yes. Yeah. And I just want to repeat that, uh, what you said. Yeah. Taking action gives you clarity. And again, I, you know, I don't know how many times I've heard people say that, you know, as soon as I get my idea nailed down, I'm on it. I'm

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jumping on errors. I just need to make sure that, uh, this is fully thought out before I start. And I think what, sometimes we miss the boat there. If you just start, if you, it doesn't need to be fully fleshed out. If you just start, you will learn where the tweaks are needed. You will learn how to evolve because you will start to get feedback. You will start to understand, uh, what parts you are more passionate about, what parts of you are not as passionate about. And so, uh, so important that you take action regardless of whether that, that, uh, you know, thought is fully developed or not, uh, and nothing will get you, uh, to that fully developed thought faster than building the plane as you fly.

Tess Ball:

[00:44:32](#)

And I think there are two very common myths that stop us from doing that. One, we have this idea that we will know if something is a good idea or a bad idea. There's this myth that like there is a right way and there is a wrong way and that is just a complete load of bullshit. I'm like, full stop. I don't care who you are. Like there is no right answer. There's just the next answer, the best laid plans, right? Um, and number two, we have this myth that we're in it by ourselves and that we in our little lonesome heads have to create the ultimate cynical version of whatever this idea we have is like we have to by ourselves, make sure it's perfect before we present it to the world because we're afraid of getting rejected. We're afraid it's not going to work. But like the only way that that idea is going to develop and work for people is if you share it. The only way to make progress is by putting an idea out there, creating action and working with other people to build it.

Bridget Cobb:

[00:45:53](#)

Not to mention those other people, specifically your potential customers. Those people that need that service, that need that product, they're going to tell you with their, either their words or their, um, purchasing, whether that's hitting the Mark or not. And so you can put an idea out. Uh, you could put two ideas out that are similar and see what type of action each one gets. A, you could put a test or out there and beta test with a small group of people. You can, um, there, there are a lot of different ways that you can start your idea, get it out, get it into the hands of potential customers and then get feedback. Then start to evolve the concept, uh, better than flying blind, basing it all

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on your own bias and uh, and, and then coming and spending all that time in the dark and then airing your product. Uh, why not let the light in as you're building and make more educated decisions.

Tess Ball: [00:47:00](#)

And it doesn't have to be complicated. It can be as simple as a coffee date. I think we, you know, there's, there's value in the minimum viable product getting it out into the market and testing. But like, I think we even that concept is, you know, well we have to get our minimum viable product. And so like, just breaking it way, way down and have a conversation, invite somebody out to coffee. Um, there are so many entrepreneur groups and community groups go on your local, you know, if you're in Seattle, go on your Seattle community women group and you're like, Hey, does anybody want to go up coffee with me? I have this idea and I don't really have anybody to talk to about it. Would anybody be willing to listen to me? And you would be shocked how many people will listen and contribute and help you out and give you more context for this beautiful blow, budding glorious idea of yours.

Bridget Cobb: [00:48:05](#)

Totally, totally agree. Uh, it's amazing the amount of support you can get out there online, um, with, you know, just, just starting, just asking you a question, just throwing something out there to, uh, to an entrepreneurial forum, uh, or, or something. And then yes, if you're able to, to actually get, yeah, I just had a coffee this morning with someone that, um, is also starting their own business and we had a fantastic chat about, you know, what we're working on, what we're thinking about, how we're approaching our concepts. And, uh, it was a fantastic way just just to kick around an idea that, uh, that's not even close to being fully fledged and amazing what comes out of that. I mean, I've got a huge amount of clarity this morning, uh, from speaking with her. So, and that's all around you. I mean, that we met on an, on a online forum, so I highly encourage it.

Tess Ball: [00:49:04](#)

Yes, this is great. I'm so glad that you had a coffee date this morning. I really want to like, ask you more about that, but maybe another time. So if I could share one of the tools that has been super helpful for me in, in asking, in putting yourself out

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there, because I think, you know, at least from what I've experienced, there's a ton of fear and shame of the not having it done or not having it right idea. Um, and so I forget where I heard this. It was probably like, I know it was like at least 10 years ago, um, when I was in advertising that we use the, the concept of having shitty idea time, um, just as a framework, as a space holder to lighten the pressure of having things fleshed out, lay in the pressure of having to be perfect lighting, the pressure of having to even be smart or good.

Tess Ball: [00:50:02](#) Um, so when you run up against a problem, when you run up against an idea and it's not fleshed out, um, and you're talking with somebody and you're a little bit nervous to say, this is what I'm thinking about doing, all you have to do is say like, Hey Bridget, could we have some shitty idea time for a second? And then of course we were like, what is that? That's hilarious. Yes, of course. And then you're like, okay, so I have this shitty idea and here's how it's going to go. I want to create this business and it kind of looks like this and I'm going to create this product and I'm not sure if I should like, I don't know, put it out on social media or like a blog. Like, do you have any shitty ideas for me? And it relieves them from having to have good ideas.

Tess Ball: [00:50:43](#) It relieves you from having to have any good ideas. And when you start to put together all these shitty ideas, you start to, that really is, I use this with my partner all the time. Um, like my, my, my life partner, it's like, well, what should we do this weekend? Well, let's throw out some shitty ideas, baby. Um, and all of a sudden instead of watching queer eye and drinking wine, we're out skiing or rock climbing or doing something less shitty, just creating space. And I think as new business, it's just so important to create this space. As I look back, all of my ideas were shitty and none of them were shitty. Right.

Tess Ball: [00:51:31](#) It was pretty shitty by some people standards and it was fucking amazing by others. Um, but until you put it out there, until you ask your boss, Hey, could I go to three days a week? Like maybe that's a shitty idea, but you don't know. Yes, that's exactly it. You don't know. And allowing yourself the freedom to think it and then to ask it to say it out loud, you know, it's amazing what

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can come out of that and that that's where that, you know, free thinking exercises, you know, throw everything at the wall. Doesn't matter if it sticks or not, just throw it. And, uh, yeah, I think that is a, it's a powerful creative exercise. Um, and I love that. You know, you've got kind of the tongue and cheek shitty idea, a name to it because it does, it just lightens the mood. It's like, Hey man, it's an idea. It's just an idea and you know, something great could come out of it or I could crumple it up and throw it in the bed. It doesn't really matter, but I'm encouraging it to come out. It has permission to come out. I love that. Yeah. You want to leave your corporate job, that's a shitty idea or maybe not. Right? Maybe not. Maybe it's the best idea you ever had.

Bridget Cobb:

Who knows? Oh, I love it. All right, so let's round it out. You've, uh, you've had the studio now in Seattle and where did you go next?

Tess Ball:

[00:52:53](#)

So I very recently, um, about five months ago, moved to bend, Oregon and had to close my studio. Um, and it was probably one of the biggest heartbreaks I have ever experienced as a human. Um, wow. Yes. I was working with 21 beautiful people who I had a really like it's a very intimate relationship you develop with people when you see them every week and you're talking about very personal things like bodies. Um, yes. Yeah. So although I love, um, my new location and I love being a little bit further out from the city, um, man, it was hard, [inaudible] hard. Um, and I think at some point in the next few years I'll probably revisit that, um, and create a similar studio out in bend.

Tess Ball:

[00:54:08](#)

Um, but until then I am side hustling. I have a pretty marketing gang, um, this time working for a small business who I really, really love in the health space. Um, so my soul feels okay about it. Um, I did that check in and my soul was like, okay, not like doing the slimy marketing thing. You can do this. Um, and on the side creating this business education hub, um, because I want more business owners to get started the way I did. Um, I want people to have access to lawyers and CPAs and all of the people that really help you scale. Um, so many times I think new

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business owners, um, jump into creating their LLC and like winging it and there's a lot of room for that. I love winging it. It's great. Um, but I think what separates small businesses that have that same power, the longevity, um, is developing really solid systems and having an understanding of finance, legal, sales, marketing, strategic planning. And so I wanted to offer that, um, because it was a really big blessing to me and I feel like I have a lot of karma to, to pay back or however that works, really bad things for my soul for a really long time. And so now I'm trying to, uh, trying to write the wrongs and use my powers for good. She pegged pennants and we all get to profit. Yeah. It feels right.

- Bridget Cobb: [00:56:04](#) That's correct. I, this is a really powerful resource, um, for I imagine not just the entrepreneur, uh, in a, a sense of solopreneur, but even those, uh, or especially those with teams with a D, you know, people that they've hired on. So whether you've gotten started or you're a little bit more established, I imagine there's going to be resources here that people can take advantage of and, uh, connections that can be made that will help their business.
- Tess Ball: [00:56:42](#) Absolutely. Whether you are, whether you haven't even started your entity yet or your trying to create a more efficient system to manage your intellectual property, or you're, you're good at marketing, but you haven't quite mastered the sales piece or, you know, wherever those holes are, where the gaps are in your foundation, the Heart Driven Business Academy will very lovingly point them out and help you fill them and connect you with really trustworthy, goodhearted people to help with the technical pieces.
- Bridget Cobb: [00:57:18](#) That is awesome. And so I imagine then you, you kind of got you, you have this for you running the business. You have two sides. So you must be, uh, not only looking for people to come in and take advantage of the, of the resources and connections, but, uh, also bringing in the other side, those, those CPAs, those accountants, uh, the, those marketing experts. So you're kind of looking to bring both together.

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- Tess Ball: [00:57:46](#) Absolutely. Um, I think that, well for me, one of the greatest joys in kind of creating this new project is, is looking at all of the things I liked from marketing, from running a small business and combining them. And one of the things I really, really love is collaboration. I thoroughly enjoyed when I had that fitness studio collaborating with physical therapists and um, doctors and chiropractors and massage therapist. I love collaborating. Um, so that my clients also, their clients got the best experience possible. Um, and so I brought a very similar approach to heart driven. I love collaborating with CPAs so that new business owners can get the information they need. Um, so yeah, if there's, I'm going to just play it. If there's anybody listening who wants to collaborate, who has information, small business owners should know, please hit me up. Um, absolutely cause that's one of my dries.
- Bridget Cobb: [00:58:50](#) Oh, fantastic. Well I am, I have to say one of my biggest joys is, uh, finding people like you to talk to and uh, bring on this show because I think there's, I mean your experience, your story and, and what I loved most about your story is your ability to, um, to just go with the circumstance and, and move forward. And uh, and, and kind of that, that humility comes with it. I said before of I'm in corporate, I'm not in corporate, I'm a solopreneur and I'm doing this and now I'm doing this and always being open to that next opportunity and how it falls. So I have no doubt that we'll continue to serve you so well, uh, and, and build the success. I'm very excited about The Heart Driven Business Academy and what that can provide. So yeah, if you are listening right now and you believe that you have a service, um, that would be a value and uh, it could, it could, uh, collaborate with Tess. Please. Uh, we're going to have show notes for this episode and I'm going to link back to all the ways you can contact Tess, um, and get involved. And if you're a business owner, uh, same thing, we'll have a link where you can go to find the resources or I will add a prospective business owners.
- Tess Ball: [01:00:31](#) So there's a guide to starting a business in every state. Um, so if you're thinking about starting a business, thinking about officially setting up your thing, um, start with here because chances are your state's secretary of state website is not going

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to do you justice. So, um, good advice. Just, just a word to the wise, just so that you don't have to suffer through that.

- Bridget Cobb: [01:00:44](#) Nice. We like, we like heads up, we like a little bit of a shortcut, you know, save us from any drama if you know about it, it's free. So. Well thank you so much for uh, those few tips, those little heads up there cause we love the shortcuts as I said. Uh, so it looks like we're running out of time and I hate to end because I, I absolutely love your story. I absolutely love, uh, your flexibility and how it's evolved. Uh, before we end here, is there anything else that you'd like to share with me, share with the listeners before we head out?
- Tess Ball: [01:01:21](#) Well, I was, I was thinking about what I could offer your listeners who that would be the most value and for anybody who's listening, who's feeling stuck, um, or isn't feeling brave enough to ask for the things you want. Um, I would totally be willing to get on a 60 minute zoom call free of charge and have some shitty idea time with you. I know it's not something we, we often practice. So if you're listening and want to have shitty idea time with a, with a pro, um, I would love to share in your ideas. I'd love to help you figure out, um, what the next step might be. So go to [shittyideatime.com/passionpreneur](http://shittyideatime.com/passionpreneur) and if you're like, you know what, I'm not ready for the shitty ideas. You can also find me [@herdrumandbusinessacademy.com](mailto:herdrumandbusinessacademy.com) and on Instagram [@HeartDrivenBusiness](#).
- Bridget Cobb: [01:02:20](#) I love it. So guys, you know I'm going to have a link to that in the show notes and uh, I will get that up for you so you can just click right through to the site. You are crazy if you don't take advantage of this. So get over there, make the appointment and take advantage of this opportunity to really just explore any and all shitty ideas floating around in your head with love and compassion. Now is the time. So if you don't take advantage of this, you are crazy. What's stopping you? Get over there. Well, test, thank you so much for your time today and for jumping out with me as my very, very first guest on the show. Uh, I've just absolutely loved your story.

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- Tess Ball: [01:03:06](#) It's amazing. Thank you so much for today. This has been so fun. Thank you for being willing to have the conversation, um, on this podcast and support people like me who wish they had this podcast 10 years ago.
- Bridget Cobb: [01:03:23](#) Well, we're going to make up for lost time now, so don't you worry. Awesome. All right, and thank you guys for listening in. If you have a guest suggestion, please feel free to reach out to me. You can reach me@bridgetatbridgetcobcoaching.com give me a shout or contact me on the website and I'd love to have a chat with you if you feel like you'd like be on the show or if you have a suggestion, if you know somebody that you think would have a fun on the show. So thanks again and we'll see you back here next time on The Passionpreneur Experience.
- Outro: [01:04:02](#) Are you building your side hustle business all on your own? Well, you don't have to engaging with them. Being accountable to a supportive community will increase your productivity and keep you on track. Join my private Facebook community, The Passionpreneur Experience and connect with likeminded side hustlers just like you. Head to the show notes now for a link to the group and start building the business of your dreams.