

Paula: Hello, and welcome to the Cosmic Business Salon, where we are talking about how you can build your ethical and equitable spiritually aligned and financially successful business so you can bankroll the change you want to see in the world. I am Paula Crossfield, your host, Vedic Astrologer & Business Coach, and I'm here with Merel Kriegsman, who is a woman's wealth advocate dedicated to helping you become the wealthiest woman in your lineage. A former cleaning lady turned self-made millionaire. She believes that the most powerful thing we can do for our children is become unapologetic female leaders who fearlessly demand what they're worth and get it. Her insights based on helping a thousand plus women step into self-funded wealth have been featured on CBS News, ABC News, and in publications like Forbes Fast Company and Good Housekeeping. You can spot her in the wild on her organic farm in Canada, reading erotic novels in a 1920s lace dress, and rubber boots. It's quite an intro. Welcome, Merel.

Merel: I'm so happy to be here. I'm excited.

Paula: So I wanted to bring you on because you have this incredible ability to navigate all the ups and downs of entrepreneurship, and we know that they always are happening. We always, there is gonna be moments where there are challenges in our life, even in our business, and we have to like rise to the occasion. So I really wanted to talk to you about that. So maybe you can speak a little bit about what you draw on so that you can continue to deliver at an excellent level and take care of yourself.

Merel: Yeah. So I was just sharing before we started the interview. I have four family members and they're all sick right now including my 3-year-old who, because of the pandemic and I like doing a lot of sheltering in place. This is her first ever cold or flu, whatever it is that she has. So she's like pointing at her throat, going like, mommy, like, what's going on, she is just very upset. She kept me up all night. I've just been wiping bums and noses and right doing all the things that you do as a mother of three little kids going through something for the last couple of days. I even got my period this morning, yet here I am you know, it's like life, life is full, right and I think even more so since the start of the pandemic, right a few years ago and everything that unfolded because of that, right. I mentor a lot of people whose partner, for example, lost a job or they are realizing things about their relationships while they're, you know, spending so much time together and they have decided that they actually want a divorce and right, so there's like so much big life stuff going on besides like the small life stuff that, you know, a lot of the people that I work with and including myself as well it's sort of like you need to just get to a place where you can chuckle at the never ending buffet of sandwiches that you get into and go like, okay, so this is what we're working with it's not gonna, right, there's no sort of like end in sight. So how do I make the best of simply what is right and find the beauty within that and the poetry within that and then of course, really right, like deeply, for example I just looked out of my window right now. The sun is rising. I mean, very snowy, very icy Saskatchewan in Canada. It is glorious, right. I look out of my window and I see just these beautiful like pinks and purples and jewel tones, like, absolutely stunning, right, so like, those sort of micro moments become the things that I allow myself. I'm in such a place of like receivership, which is really a muscle that I had to sort of train and train and train. I am fueled by that moment, even though I feel my voice going and even though I have my period and even though I didn't sleep and even though, right, it's just that clicks in it sort of like, it allows me to click into a mood that is really beautiful and that has exquisite presence and that allows me to still show up for like a ton of visibility stuff that I'm doing today. This interview is just one of them. I'm on a panel this afternoon, you know, so that's part of it, so right, really mood setting and knowing how to find that place within myself and within my body where I'm like, okay, right. I can do this, I can ground myself, let's go and really also, you know, just being in full acceptance instead of resistance to what's happening right now in my life, right, like, I just wrote yesterday I was saying like, you know, one of the kindest thing that I have ever done for myself is changing or re-imagining my story around the circumstances that I need to do my best

work, right, it's like you have to be able to let go of those expectations and sort of things you tell yourself and now, you know instead of sort of feeling I need like a full day off to go really deep and right, I'm working on my body of work right now, I'm naming things, I'm making big global decisions about our brand. Instead of saying like, I need white space, I need time off, I need like to be, be go into my cocoon and, you know, focus for three days like, well, I'm not gonna get it. It's like it's not in the cards, so maybe I'll find like the next big idea for my next big program or whatever it is that I want to create, like underneath a baby bear that lies behind the couch while I'm, you know, cleaning and decluttering while I'm taking care of my kids who are all sick, right, so the moment you shift that you, you realize that there's an entire sort of world of ideas and input and inspiration just below the surface of the mundane right and that becomes then the rich fabric from which you draw, right and it also feels like divesting from perfectionism a little bit, like yeah. Just making a decision that it's okay to move forward even if you don't know fully yet what it's gonna look like, but just to, to move forward and it's okay to, you know, iterate your way there and kind of figure things out as you go because if you're just trying to do it exactly in the right circumstances, those will never come along and so yeah you may never, ever do anything. Yeah, exactly. What I often say is that I have replaced my plan, right with practices, like the plan will always be interrupted. The plan will always like go to, right, for various reasons. For me it's often has to do with the fact that we're on the farm, right. When it's harvest time, or right because I have three little kids like if they need me, I'm not gonna say, well, I'm sorry, but you know, it's not gonna happen, right, that's not how motherhood works. So I've replaced the plan with practices and what that means is that at the end of the day, I ask myself have I been in practice, right, my sales practice, my practice around reclaiming my authority and working on sort of like making a name for myself. Have I been in my visibility practice and some days that's a no, right and that's okay, but the practice, have I been in practice is much softer and much more holistic than did I get the thing done on my to-do list, right. I always talk about like, you know, externally driven versus internally sourced, right, so externally driven is like, I have this plan, it's on a page I'm gonna cross off like when I've done the things, which sometimes feels like medicine, right, I won't lie. Sometimes I love a little list but most days I'm gonna fail the list, right and at one point I had submit to myself, well, I'm consistently failing my lists and my plans, maybe the plan is failing me, maybe she is not fit, right and so I've replaced them with practices. We should talk about the lot I call them the edges or the edge of visibility, the edge of authority, the edge of creativity. As long as I'm playing on that edge and the edge for me is not like pushing into my next level it's more like dancing, you know, at that place where our sort of visible reality goes into, right the spirit realm or the realm beyond the veil where, you know, all the ideas live and all the inspiration lives like the ways in which we can accomplish what it is that we desire right. In ways that we don't even realize exist, right, so that's where I love to play and I play. I have my practices and then the plan becomes secondary.

Paula:

I love that. It's funny because I was just thinking about intentions versus goals, and it's very similar to what you're saying. We can knock goals that are directed, they're put, they're sort of like the arrow. They're pointing in the direction we want to go.

Merel: Yeah.

Paula: But then the how we get there matters. It really matters.

Merel: Yeah.

Paula: Cause it's not incidental. It's not like we're just gonna plow our way forward and that really relates to, you know, this, the idea of the summit is really to talk about How we get there, the qualities of how we get there.

Merel: Exactly.

Paula: So one thing I love that you taught me is like when you do something, it doesn't go right. Okay can you forgive yourself open a can of instant forgiveness. I think you wrote something about this recently too, like That idea. It just, it's so funny, I even use it with my clients now because when they get into the Israeli tense places and I say like, let's, let's open a can of forget. They just, they laugh, right. It just, it brings a smile on their face.

Merel: Well, I think, I think too, right, there's a choice we have in that moment when we often forget that there is a moment in which we have a choice, right, before we go into like self-flagellation that, you know, is taught right in society. It's like if you do something wrong, you beat yourself up. It's like, no, actually you have a choice. You can go and beat yourself up or you can choose to like do some instant forgiveness, right and then sure you need to right do your personal development work and your healing work, which is sort of like the healthy meals, but sometimes, right you're on the road, you're in the middle of something and you just need to stop at a fast food restaurant because you're completely right without, and that's sort of like what instant forgiveness is it's like the emergency stash sort of idea and that's honestly like, those are the kinds of practices that allow me to not lose a ton of like capacity and energy and time and money and stuff on being in that place of I wish I was somewhere else, I wish I was maybe different than I am, right all of that is a very expensive place to hang out, right?

Paula: Right.

Merel: As a business owner, right like, it, it can cost you a lot of resources and capacity. So it's just saying no to that, realizing we have a choice. Yeah. I do the same when, for example, I go through a day, I often go through my day where I'm like, wow, it's like 3 o'clock. I don't think I got anything done. I've just been reading my erotic novels I've just been, I don't know, I just didn't quite gel. Then I'm like, you know, what is the most leverage, like power move that I can make that replaces what could have been a day of busy work because I felt I had to right just do something in spite of not feeling that like I didn't want to actually do anything and I'm like, okay, well I'm gonna read this last half hour of my day. I'm gonna pitch to BBC or I'm gonna write follow-up with clients who are really excited to actually work with me. Stuff like that. So you, you really sort of the way I would describe it is an acknowledgement that one action done with, you know exquisite presence and love right equals days and days of just plowing through right as you said because you really have to right. Once you realize that then your whole idea of how hard do I have to work in order to receive what I would love to receive starts to shift. Yeah.

Paula: I love that and it just flows so nicely into the other piece that I really wanted to talk to you about, which is confidence. You know, you're a performer. It's kind of natural for you to be on a stage and it feels like that's what we're doing sometimes when we're Yeah.

Merel: Yeah, absolutely.

Paula: Because we have to be visible and we have to be advocates for our brand and everything, but yeah. So what, what would you say to someone about developing confidence as you're stepping into your next level as an entrepreneur and what you draw onto to help with that?

Merel: So for me, it's really the key to that lies within those practices, right. When you regularly cycle through, for example, right, like the core practice that I personally have around integrity or creativity and identity, right, which is really about like, who am I, who am I not, who am I attracting, who am I repelling, right, making really conscious choices, right and then not just choosing it but acting on it and not acting on it because you have it on a list, but acting on it because you're working on getting it into your body what that feels like, for example, right claiming your authority every single day, right, write something in a post, you know, when, for example right you're in that practice of claiming your authority, right every single day, which I don't even know if that's the right term, right, but sort of like credibility, authority who you are, your ideas, your thought leadership, you are in practice that actually creates confidence, right your being in practice with the always refining and shaping of your identity, which is also like, you know, branding is an extension of that, right and you're really consciously shaping it, like from how you name things in your business to like, you know, the, the experiences to rate what is in your welcome sequence to right and you're really consciously creating that, again, that creates confidence, right, because now you have a clear sense of who you are and who you're not, right and, and when you allow yourself to really be in, for example, creativity, right. I had a whole awakening around this over the last few weeks. I had a very, you know, difficult relationship with my grandfather who was an artist. He really taught me a lot of right things around art so my artistic self somehow was always a little bit tethered to him and his existence. So when he passed all of a sudden I was like feeling this wild like just wave of creativity come forth and I've been creating these beautiful murals in my home and I've been embroidering these gorgeous like tapestries and I decided that instead of, you know, just creating content the way that everybody does I was going to write poetry and then recite and turning into reels, right, stuff like that. Like really giving myself creative license to be so myself right, so uniquely me, and then the experiencing the joy and the nourishment from that, right, like, so being in my creative practice again, confidence, right. It all leads to confidence. That's sort of like the inevitable side effect of, of being in those practices. Yeah. Same with money.

Paula: Being in those practices, it brings us more confidence and then the confidence allows us to be more ourselves.

Merel: Yeah exactly. It builds, I mean, the question, and you know this, right, like, it's, I act myself every morning, like if I had 10 times the courage that I really feel I have right now what would I say, what would I post, who would I reach out to, who would I approach as my peer instead of, you know, hey, I'm a fan girl right, like and usually we know the answers, right and when you ask yourself questions in those different sort of practices that I've described, right, then you are sort of in your in your edge right and you keep just like gently expanding basically like the range of who you are within that realm and like I said that creates confidence, right. There is also the whole sort of integrity piece around that, right. When we don't get done what we set out to do, and when we are not who we really know we are, right. That deteriorates confidence, right. So for example, so many people are so unclear on their identity, right and how to, how to frame that identity in a way that instantly speaks to people, right and then they might not get the traction that they want in business, right because they haven't done that messaging work and that niching work and that positioning work and so what you get is sort of like a lack of results within which then translates into a deteriorating of your confidence and really, right. You have some choices to make in that realm of identity that would change everything, right that would be like your most leveraged work. That would be your power move.

Paula: Right yeah, so another thing that you do so well is you really express your truth through your business.

Merel: Yeah.

Paula: And like, kind of unapologetic, kind of, you know, fierce, you say things you know that are true for you, and also you're so good at storytelling and bringing that like a feeling when we are reading those truths. So can you talk a little bit about like how that confidence then translates into being able to say things that are so true.

Merel: Yeah

Paula: In your business and then also what impact that has, like being candid?

Merel: Yeah. So I think this is always like a great moment to say that, it's almost like it comes to me really naturally, but also not at all. It's like both things are true at the same time, which by the way, I think is true for most of, like, everything in life, right, but there's also this at the same time, like true at the same time, all the interesting things. Exactly, so what I would say to that is that you know, I've gone through some experiences in my life including overcoming an almost lethal food disorder in my teens embracing my queerness, right, like some really profound moments of okay, this is who I am, right and, and if I don't accept that I'm just not gonna live, or worse, I'm gonna my life half lived, right. There's this beautiful show it's called Strictly Ballroom and one of the characters, he has like a Spanish background and I don't know what the saying is in Spanish, but you know, basically it says, when you live in fear you live your life have lived, right and that to me is an extremely painful concept, an extremely true concept as well, right. So I've never wanted that for myself. I've always really craved to, to live a full life and so at moments, right, like specific times in my life I was at a crossroads where it was like, okay, either I'm gonna own the truth about myself or right like a half-life lived and I didn't want that. So I've always gone like when I see that fork in the road, I always choose the side of like, you know, truth and truth telling, truth, you know, being really truthful also towards myself and my own, like how I speak to myself and the truth that I own within myself, right like I admit the truth to myself and then also wanting to do that towards the outside world as well. Again, that is necessary for me to feel in integrity and that being in integrity builds them confidence over time, right. So it's also something absolutely just like gorgeous to behold, when you create content like that, what happens, right. It's just, it's very intimate, it's very real. When I think of the replies that I get to my email newsletter, right. People are truly opening up, right, they see my truth and there is a desire to be truthful with themselves, with me, with the outside world on a whole new level for the person who sees that, right. It's an invitation into deeper levels of integrity, of, into deeper levels of honesty, which again, right like that level of honesty is, is allows you to then make good decisions right, because now you're like clear, like, okay, this is who I'm not, this is who I am.

This is where I don't belong. This is where I do belong. This is what I want, this is what I not right like that ability to discern, you can only do from like the solid ground of speaking the truth, right, so the community that is built around that concept of being willing to not just face but embrace the full range of our human experience that's where transformation happens. That's where magic happens. That's very right like also shifts in our charts can take place, right in our karma and that is to me one of the most beautiful things in life like, that's why we're here, right. So it's magical to me yeah.

Paula: Yeah and I think the, you know, the modern business can embrace our full selves. You know, I think business in the past was really about hiding parts of ourselves to become marketable and now actually the market has responded very strongly to our stories, to our humanity, to, you know, creating things with integrity that we're putting out there

Merel: Yeah.

Paula: Yeah. It's very powerful.

Merel: Yeah, it is and also it feels solid, you know, I think when you're trying to hide parts of yourself, right, whether that's in your personal life or in business life and by the way, we all do, right. We all do this. We all have secrets, we all have layers. We all have, but the more.

Paula: And that's okay too.

Merel: Yeah and that's okay. Yeah, exactly right but the more, the more truthful you can become, even, even if it's first and foremost, like in the sanity of your own world I think the more money you can make, honestly, right in a way that doesn't backfire right and because in essence, I feel that, you know, this feeling of having to hide is actually very violent to our being, right. When I think of the time in my life where I hadn't come out yet that was really hard, right. That was really difficult When I think about, right the time in my life where I struggled with passive suicidal ideation and I didn't feel that I could talk about like why that was actually a thing, right and why I was struggling so hard. It's very lonely. It's very compartmentalizing, it's very sort of, you know, extractionary in the sense that you're just milking those parts of yourself that you feel deserve love for the sake of business, for the sake of money making and those other parts of yourself you've basically deemed unworthy or right not worthy of being seen and and that's fine to some extent, right, not fine as in fine, it's fine, but it's like you can function within that for some time until, right somebody pokes in some into some of your shadows, right. There is some kind of like conflict or misunderstanding or right whatever happens and then all of a sudden you realize like, oh, actually those parts of myself that I wasn't able to love are now like screaming and agony, right and I have to go tend to those parts of myself for me to feel whole and for me to feel an integrity and feel for me to feel, feel a sense of vitality and ability to go through my business life and my life in general with feeling of having capacity to deal with, you know, the never ending the faith sandwiches, but also the good things, right. Like you need capacity for that as well, right, like the wins the breakthroughs yeah, exactly.

Paula: Being able to receive so like all the things we're talking about, it feels like to me, you know, being able to express yourself, your truth and be your authentic self coming from a place of confidence and then how we move through difficult things and don't let that stop us from success or from showing up to eat those karma sandwiches to me, these are like the ingredients in the pot to make money yes. Would you agree with me?

Merel: Yeah

Paula: In order to make money you have to kind of be able to do these things very, very skillfully because it will get hard. You will have to step into your confidence body again and again and then being truthful and being honest that's what the market wants. That's what people want. That's what, you know people who are in your field are wanting?

Merel: Yeah and then I think you know, it's not like, well, if you don't have confidence then you know, too, too bad for you, then you're not gonna make money because you're lacking an ingredient like in your big cauldron, right, that's not how it works. The confidence comes from, you know, for example, you might wake up one morning and say, well, I am not confident today, so I'm going to customize my day in such a way that I don't have to be confident today and I can just, you know, just like truthfully

acknowledge what's actually so, and what you're working with and then cooking with the ingredients that, that are available that day right and it's almost like having to confidence you can improvise with what you've got instead of eyeing what you don't have that day right.

Paula: I love that because what we're not talking about is like shaming you into feeling bad if you're struggling with any of these things. It's just like, these are the, the places that I know within myself, I'm always longing to grow because I know how impactful they can be and this is where, for me, business becomes a spiritual practice because it's allowing me to see where I am lacking confidence and, you know, whoa, okay, interesting. I'm stepping in in this next level and some old stuff is coming up and then it becomes of practice to transmute that. You know what I mean and yeah and it's all a process and there are times where we're gonna have to, you know, like you said, kind of create the circumstances that work for us in that moment again, like when things are hard. I have had a hard couple of months too in my you know, family life and different things going on yeah and so I've had to customize my business and really focus in on the things that were the most important to be focused on yeah and like, let the other stuff fall away and ask for help and do all the things you have to do in those moments.

Merel: Absolutely right and this is where entrepreneurship truthfully is about creativity, right. It's like, okay, so this is what we're working with, right. We lost four close family members since the early summer. My grandma is in the hospital I have a parent that's struggling with addiction. It's just like so much, but you know, the question is like, okay, how can I be exquisitely present to that because when you can offer exquisite presence to also, for example, your pain, right those are the moments that deeply inspire me to write poetry that then calls in like, you know, 20, 30, 50 new write potential clients because they're going through the same thing, right. It doesn't have to all be right derived like your inspiration, our ideas, our creations don't have to all derived from something that's pretty or joyful or like, you know, quote unquote high vibes. It's like all the vibes we want all the vibes, just like the whole thing.

Paula: We want all the vibes yes. Thank you for this conversation. This has been so fun and I know you have a free gift available for folks, so can you tell us a little bit about it?

Merel: Yeah, so one of the things that I'm deeply committed to in my business is transparency. It's always the best way that I've learnt from my mentors you know, you can like go through modules and stuff on like things that they teach, which is wonderful, but there's something really magic magical about just being able to have a look behind the scenes. So what I do is I every single day I record an episode in my secret podcast. It's my diary right of how I do the things and how I think about the things and how I shifted my perception and how I tried out a certain strategy and how it's working or how it's not working. It's called Wealth Whispers and normally it costs money and all of you get it for free with a code. So we're gonna provide you with that code and you can you can opt in and then, then you get access to literally tons and tons and tons of short snippet episodes or super digestible like three to five minute chunks and have fun with that and then keep following my journey and just be in my world.

Paula: Thank you so much. So if you enjoyed this talk, please share it by sharing the link cosmicbusinesssalon.com and make sure you sign up for the upgrade, which allows you to keep lifetime access to these talks as well as get a free integration call with me, where we will talk about what we learned in this talk as well as in the summit in general and you can ask me questions. A hundred percent of the profits are going to Soul Fire Farm, which supports indigenous and black farmers. So what are you waiting for? The link is on this page. Also, please join us at the Cosmic Business Salon Facebook group, and you'll also be able to find that on this page there are gonna be live discussions there and every day

you'll have the chance to win prizes. So please get on over there and join me and thank you again, Merel for being here.

Merel: My pleasure.