Zafira Rajan: You're listening to Business After Baby, a podcast for online business owners who are contemplating nearing or navigating parenthood and wondering how the hell to raise a small human and run a business at the same time. I'm Zafira Rajan, a sensory storyteller, rooted in the west coast of Canada.

Kirsty Fanton: And I'm Kirsty Fanton, a strategist, coach, and copywriter living on the east coast of Australia.

We both became moms in 2021 when our businesses were really hitting their stride. In this series, we talk about everything from how we planned and structured maternity leave, finances, offers, and our return to work, while also navigating new identities, new needs, and very little sleep.

Zafira Rajan: Every episode we share how we approached each phase, what worked, what didn't, and what we spent the most time looking for on Google.

So whether you're planning to be a parent doing some research while pregnant, or you're in the throes of toddler. We hope this helps you feel a little less alone and equips you with the real world intel we wish we'd have. On that note, let's get into the episode.

Kirsty Fanton: Okay, so the thing that Zafira and I are going to dive into today is the whole process that we have both. Gone through by pure chance perhaps of redefining ourselves and our work postpartum, and also after being back in our businesses for a solid few months. And to maybe give this a little bit of context, Zafira and I were just looking through our planning doc for this podcast, which we started months and months ago, and we found a comment from Zafira that is this, I don't know about you, but I felt a completely different person postpartum.

The identity crisis is real. And I replied, oh my God, yes. And to make it even more fun, I want a different life than I did 16 months ago. And Zafira wrote, bahaha same. So we wanted to share that just as a bit of context into I guess how much things really shifted for both of us, not just in our personal lives, but also in our businesses and the way that we wanted those to work with our lives now that we both had little humans in the picture.

So, Zafira, when did you realize or start to realize that your business no longer aligned with the kind of work you really wanted to be doing?

Zafira Rajan: Ooh, yes. This is not so much of a lull moment, but I actually started realizing it the summer I was pregnant, so I had my second and third trimester in the summer, and I actually started taking a creative writing course. That I had had my eye on for a while cause I've been wanting to write a book and you know, I just been leaning more towards the identity of writer versus copywriter. And just being that program and having space to explore that side of my voice was really lighting me up and I was like, cool. This feels interesting. I'm quite curious about this and the direction it could go in.

And obviously then I had baby and I continued to just write for myself in between that time. But coming back to work, you know, I look at. I looked at my website, I looked at my offers, and I was realizing, I was like, you know what? I've actually been slowly retiring each and every one of these things for the last two years, and I'm really left with one thing at the end of the day, and that's it. And my programs, which were also born out of more of what folks are requesting for me versus me wanting to put them outta the world. So, I would say coming back to work a couple months later, things were starting to feel a bit like a slog.

I was looking at what I was representing and not feeling super connected to it. And, yeah, I, I was resisting starting the machine up again and I was like, time to make a new one.

So it felt like a good opportunity to just take pause and reconsider how, you know, life and passion and everything was going to be reconfigured for me.

Kirsty Fanton: Oh wow.

Zafira Rajan: When did you realize that?

Kirsty Fanton: So I feel like my realization was definitely a bit later on. So as I think I've spoken about, in earlier episodes, I did start to shift my business model when I was pregnant so that less of my revenue or less of my earning potential relied on me delivering offers in real time because I thought that, that was the kind of business that would align with my needs and my desires, once I had my baby. Just assuming that, you know, I would like more flexibility and I'd like the ability to take, you know, work shorter days or have more time off or more time to spend with Bob.

So I had made those shifts sort of preemptively. They were definitely helpful I think for my initial return to work because looking back I certainly cannot fathom having been able to come back to work in whatever state I was in at that point in time and dive back into a done four you, one-to-one copywriting services, I think that wouldn't have been successful. So I'm glad that I made that shift. But what I did start to realize after a few months of being back in my business was that the idea of a business model, built primarily, I would say, on scalable offers wasn't sitting quite right with me. The idea of making a lot more money was obviously appealing, but I should also say I definitely was struggling to get my funnels working to that point. My audience growth was, was quite low or almost stagnant, so, it wasn't working as I'd planned.

But I think beyond that, I started realizing that I'd robbed myself in this process of one of the really important, meaning making pieces of my work, which is that connection with other human beings. So I had been doing some coaching services, both ongoing one-to-one coaching and also sort of one-off strategy services, I think for about 18 months, before I went off on maternity leave. But they'd always been sort of backdoor services, so things that, people only heard about, I think via word of mouth. So it was, you know, a very small amount of my time and energy that was going towards those services. But the longer I was back in my business and I did start up that one-to-one coaching again, after I think about four or five months being back from mat leave, the more I just felt called to that side of things because those calls and those

interactions always left me with more energy. And for me, that's always been an indication of a service that is a good fit for where I am right now.

So, you know, I definitely used to get energized by doing, you know, big day rates or big launch projects, but, that's not the case now.

So I too was in a similar space for you just in terms of disconnecting a little bit from that title of copywriter. It took me a while to sort of work out what I wanted that title to be and, and how things would all fit together. But I think that that realization definitely started dawning about three months after I got back into my business post-mat leave.

Zafira Rajan: That is so interesting and yes, I guess the identity crisis is real across the board. You know, I, I think a lot of folks don't, might not know what your original career, but I can't help but think it's kind of a full circle moment, isn't it that it's coaching folks that end up lighting you up now?

Kirsty Fanton: Totally. So yeah, for context, so I started my working life as a, as a therapist. So, I studied psych at uni, did a master's in counseling and psychotherapy, and then went on to work in palliative care. So, you know, for like, I think it was seven years or so, I was. Seeing clients and also teaching, psychology and psychotherapy subjects at a university here in Sydney.

And of course both those things were really rich in that connection piece. Of course, you know, of course they had to be for that work to be successful. So it is, yeah, it's so true. I'm definitely feel like it's almost a full circle moment. It's like, well, not quite full circle cause I don't think I have the, the, the pool to be doing work specifically in palliative care, I guess.

And I love the strategic element of business and coaching and I still do enjoy writing some copy, but yeah, totally. You absolutely right. Like there is an element of that that just is such a nice, like return to self, which is interesting in the context of, you know, navigating a whole new identity. Or at least that's what it felt like, you know, after becoming a mom. And I think that identity piece, like you say is, is true for you too. Is that right?

Zafira Rajan: Yeah, absolutely. I'm still navigating it even now, you know, and I'm also trying to detach myself from engraving anything in stone because I think that's how I've felt before. It's like we have to be these things. And now that we are living a life where literally day to day, second to second, your little being is changing in front of you and you are changing along with it, it has allowed me some access to a little bit more freedom and flexibility with you know, things like titles or, or stuff like offers or whatever, it just, I, I feel like my, my worldview of all of it is less fixed and it's a lot more like Play-Doh.

Kirsty Fanton: Yes.

Zafira Rajan: I just wanna have fun with it and I just want to do the things that are giving me energy, like you mentioned. It's so important, especially because there are many things that will chip away at our energy now.

Kirsty Fanton: So many things.

Zafira Rajan: Yes. I have a very flex identity crisis at the moment.

Kirsty Fanton: I love that. And can I also say, I love so much that your analogy of Play-Doh was also very much like toddler centric.

Zafira Rajan: Right.

Kirsty Fanton: I'm very clever. and I'm curious too, I'm curious too for you, you know, obviously your shift is and has been about moving more into, you know, writing and creative writing and sensory writing and storytelling as opposed to straight up sort of marketing copy. Is there anything of that that is full circle for you? Like is there anything in your history, whether it's just like life in general or you know, your previous work history, where that kind of work was an element you have been drawn to or have spent time on before?

Zafira Rajan: That's such a good question. And you know, I think actually as a child, it's a very full circle moment because I was definitely that kid who was super nerdy in English class and like always won the English prize and always like won reading month. It's like my crowning achievement.

But I also, I got published at a young age. Some of my poetry got published at like the age of 13 in a book, and it was, I remember clearly my teacher saying, okay, this is so good. We have to put it out there. And from that moment on, I always just had the dream of, you know, being able to write for a living, wanting to write books. My parents were super encouraging about me writing. We had a library at home. I've always been surrounded by books and, you know, it has always been a part of my identity. And I think I went on to study English literature and all along the way, my goal was always to tell stories. It's just I ended up falling into copywriting because I was like, oh, I can do this for other people and it can be profitable.

But then I kinda lost access to that creative writer in me that used to do this for fun and really enjoyed it. And I dabbled in journalism for a while, but you know, I haven't revisited this part of me for so long. And it feels, it feels so good to have her back.

Kirsty Fanton: Oh.

And also encourage other people to do the same, you know.

Yes, I have goosebumps. I just, it just makes me so happy on my insides to, to hear you say that. And I'm like, I'm wondering, and this is just a thought I'm having right now, so I may not be able to articulate it very well. But earlier you mentioned that, you know, you had a realization when you were pregnant that you know, your business was kind of a collection of offers that were based more on what other people wanted from you than on what you wanted to offer or to give. And I'm just wondering if there's an element here of like the process of becoming a parent and maybe having to like scrabble to reclaim your identity and time for yourself and your

passions and your interests. Like, do you think that has any influence on this current evolution of your business?

Zafira Rajan: Oh yeah, absolutely. Gosh, I'm like shaking. Right now, actually for real. And I think it's just because what we're choosing to put energy into now has to feel really worth it, you know? And I feel like I have to, what I wanna give to it is my best and I wanna feel excited about it. And that also means I'll stand up really strongly to defend that time or to defend, you know, my space to create.

And I, I was really grateful that I actually took like the last two months of my pregnancy off where, you know, I had nothing businessy to do, but I also didn't have a baby yet. And that was my space to start experimenting and playing creatively and writing more and just, just for the sake of it. Just for fun. And just don't get access to that kinda time anymore.

So, but if I hadn't gone down this route of becoming a parent, I probably would've taken me a lot longer to get here, I think, or to get to this realization. So, yeah, I think it want the things that I want in my life now, I just kind of want them with like a fervor, you know, or just it. They're so much more delicious to me now, but even though there's like fewer things, but I'm gonna do the work to, to claim them.

Whereas before it really felt like I, I don't know, I just had many tabs open and they were great. And you know, I was making other people happy. My business was doing well, but I don't think it was sustainable in the long run. So, yeah, I, I'm, I'm grateful that I've had this chance to recalibrate and becoming a parent has a hundred percent been integral to the process.

Kirsty Fanton: Yes. Oh, I love that. I just wanted to echo that too. Cause I, and I dunno if this is, you know, if you're listening, if you're also a parent and you've had this experience, we'd love to hear about that because I feel like I'm just discovering this idea right now as we speak. But I totally resonate with it and I'm like, yes, I feel like time and energy are such precious scarce resources that I cannot fathom spending them on things that don't matter. And I suspect because we own our own businesses and we can shape them, you know, to support us, not just financially, but you know, in all the other delicious ways that something can, you know, give us life and feed us, and all those wonderful things. Like I suspect having that freedom and having that sort of change in perspective about. How valuable, you know, the time, energy is that you do get to spend just on you what you wanna do. I think that might be something that feeds into these big picture changes. Cause it certainly was for me as well.

Yeah. So I just wanted.

Zafira Rajan: Yeah, absolutely. And like, how lucky are we to have the privilege of our own businesses to be like, oh, we're just gonna shape you like this now. And I am so grateful for that, you know?

So you've kind of hinted a little bit at what you were feeling more drawn towards. So tell us more about like what kind of actual shifts and changes you wanted to start making in your business and kinda where you're at now with them too?

Kirsty Fanton: Yeah, sure. So, it was definitely like the, the primary shift was about, changing the way I work with people. And again, maybe it's not so much changing cause I was actually already doing some of this work. But it was just, like I said, very much like a small arm of my business that you had to know about to be involved in.

So it was more about amplifying that and trying to work through, okay, how can this actually be the core of my services? How the hell am I gonna position myself? Because I suspect it's not like I'm, I've literally, I'm in the process of rewriting my website. I'm on my last page today. It feels so good. It's gonna be out soon. And I'm so excited because I feel like it is actually such a true representation of the work I am and want to be doing so much more of right now. So I'm, I'm really excited about that alignment. It just feels so good. So the, the shift was definitely towards more meaningful one-on-one time with clients, in a capacity that wasn't just copywriting. So I've got to a place where from when my website launches in about a month, all my services are time-based, and all of those services are a mix of coaching strategy and copy, depending on what kind of challenge or opportunity my client is, you know, trying to address or harness, at that time in their business.

So I feel like it's a really beautiful blend of my background in therapy, as well as everything that been a launch copywriter has taught me over the last six or seven years.

So I guess that's sort of the, the big picture shift. And I mean, if it helps, you know, the big headline on my homepage is I help you build a business that supports the life you want and the season you're in. Five better launches, tighter offers, and a distinctly u-shaped way of doing things.

So yeah, that's where things are at at the moment, and it feels really, really good.

But what about you? I feel like, oh, sorry, I jumped on you.

Zafira Rajan: Oh no, I was gonna say now I'm the one happy smiling. That just sounds so you in all the right ways and I can't wait to see it. I'm sure by the time this goes live it'll all be live, so I'll be drooling over it already. But that sounds like such a beautiful culmination of all the things you are just so good at and things that will help people so much.

So I'm so excited about it for you.

Kirsty Fanton: Thank you. I have to say I had, so for context, Zafira, you launched a new website and plant your flag in your new niche. God, it must have been about six weeks ago now. Maybe. Maybe even longer. And I had that same feeling when I saw your website. I was like, oh my God, this just feels like such, just Zafira.

It's beautiful and wonderful. And I would like you to talk us through sort of what that shift was. Give us some more detail. And also could you speak a little bit to like the house, like how did you actually go about making that shift and the process? Because it was like, it feels like a, there are still some similarities, obviously it's still you and you know, you're still serving, I think a similar kind of person, but you know, it still is a distinct shift.

So I would love to hear more about that process if you're open.

Zafira Rajan: Yes, absolutely. So the thing that kicked it off for me is I went through a brand messaging program called Mirror Brand that I had my eye on for a while. It's hosted by, this incredible, brand strategist, creative director called Sarah Ashman. And I knew I'd wanna work with her eventually. I just didn't know when.

And right as I was starting to feel this tension of, oh, I hate everything that is online about me right now, like my website and everything, just doesn't feel like, it just felt like tight jeans. It just didn't feel like a fit anymore. She kind of quietly opened up applications for her next cohort, and this was in May 2022. And it was totally a chaotic time for me lifewise, but I was like, this is what we need to do.

It was a six month program and they knew it would kind of guide me back to my roots, much like, you know, we're talking about who has the writer identity shown up earlier before, and, you know, I, I got to go to all those places with her. And I was just looking at my initial application to that program about, you know, why the heck are you applying? And I think one of the things I had written is, uh, you know, I look at everything I have right now and I see an older version of myself, a necessary version, a successful version. I can keep things going. Still do great. But just doesn't feel a hundred percent true to who I am, and I'm ready to step into Zafira 2.0.

Kirsty Fanton: Oh.

Zafira Rajan: So I was like, okay, we're just, we're going for that next level now. So I went through that program and it was really interesting because it was all about connecting the dots. Between who you were at your core, like as a child of things that were showing up, who you are now and who you are wanna be in the future, and just creating that alignment across the board and along the way it became-- and the idea behind that is that it'll be so much easier to show up when you feel a hundred percent yourself, and that means embodying who you've always been and also if we wanna be without compromising who you're now. And it's actually a very tricky mental process when you

Kirsty Fanton: I was gonna say that's that's a lot.

Zafira Rajan: It's a lot of identities going on.

Um,but at the end it really just came together so beautifully. And you know, one of the core themes that has been so obvious has been my love for the ocean. I live right next to the ocean. We've talked about it on the podcast. I wanted to infuse that into my vibe, into my offers, and I realized I was also drawn to the writer's side just because the audience I was serving had always felt this pressure to be a good writer or write good copy, but they were never writers to begin with when they started their businesses. And now all of a sudden they were expected to just like love this process and do it every day. And I wanted to just rewire the narrative around that a little bit to give them space to write, just for them, to write personally, to write creatively, and still write for their business, write for their content, but to give space to both so that they

could really feel safe showing up and feel like they're not just doing it for their business or because they have to.

And in that program, I, birthed a new membership experience that I decided to beta test, called the Tide pool. And that was just to see if, if this approach to writing in the space I was already serving, had any legs and you know, worked with 15 people over six months after the program wrapped. And that was great. And I was like, okay, you know, this is the validation I needed, that I'm headed in the right direction.

And it felt so good. It felt like it gave me energy, it felt effortless. And, Mirror Brand was so great because it also helped me figure out, you know, my new brand colors. It helped me figure out how to creative direct my own photo shoot. And I could just do all the things I usually would have to like, hire so many people to do in one place. And also learn the system for when I was ready for Zafira 3.0. Cause she's gonna come out eventually too.

Kirsty Fanton: Uh huh.

Zafira Rajan: And it was just, it was so much fun and I, I learned so much. And it really just reminded me of who I am at my core and encouraged me not to forget who I'm striving to be. And that's, that's when I, I sat down and I figured out how I wanted to do the shoot, how I wanted to do the website. I also have parts of me that I've always been really art focused. Like I, I did art all throughout high school and you know, I always like in the back of my head, like, just, I love art. I love going to art galleries. I love going to exhibits, and there's always this part of me that is really drawn to artists. And that's why I, I actually picked up graphic design in my career earlier on. So I was in marketing, not just for messaging, but also for graphic design.

I really have missed using that visual side of my brain. So, tackling my rebrand was also, I took that as a creative challenge and, you know, went, went and picked out the right template, but also just worked through designing everything myself, doing all the colors myself, all the font, all the, the photos, and just trying to like, basically creative direct myself. And it was so much fun.

And here we're now. So it took me a couple months after my brand finished to kinda get the shoot done, get the website up and ready. And as you know now, writing your own copies, it's a whole other Beast.

And, yeah, it was, it was mostly a really fun process. Of course, it's always daunting, but the second it launched, you know, of just like you said saying, oh, it's so you. I didn't expect so many people to have that response, but it was the same thing I was hearing over and over again in a way I've just not really heard before, whenever I've launched, you know, a rebrand or, or something visual. So I knew all that work, all that time put into it was so, so worth it.

Kirsty Fanton: Yes. And it is, it is so impressive that you did everything for your rebrand. Like your site is just so beautiful and your outfits in your photos are just so like on point. So I just cause I love that. Cause I've always thought of you as like a true creative, like obviously you're strategic as well, but I just feel like you are so good at like, experiential creations. And I feel like your website is an experience.

So I just wanted to say like, it's just so beautiful and it just feels so aligned with everything I know about you and also about sort of, you know, where you are at the moment. And I also love that you referenced Zafira 3.0 because, yes, I'm sure we could, I'm sure we could meet like, you know, four or five years from now and our businesses will probably both look different again.

Zafira Rajan: Exactly. And they should, you know, they should. We're continuing to evolve and you know, as the people we're serving are all stick around, like they're evolving too and they need different things as time goes on, you know.

A clear example is like, so I'm launched in, I'm in the middle of launching my, my membership again right now. And it's so fascinating seeing who's joining. So many of them are clients I worked with like two, three years ago and now they like need a space like this. But probably when I first served them and I had, didn't even have this idea, they weren't even, you know, this wouldn't have even been on their radar. This is something that they needed. So yeah, I think it's important to keep evolving with your people too. And yeah, it's just like everyone needs a renovation.

Kirsty Fanton: Totally. Oh, I love that. And sometimes that renovation will be like a major gutting of the house, and other times it will just be like new tapware like.

Zafira Rajan: Yeah, exactly. Exactly.

So tell me a little bit about your process right now. So you, I know you're working on your web copy at the moment, but like, how did you go about, go down like the rabbit hole of okay, gotta change gears, I gotta shift things visually, gotta shift things message-wise. Like what has been the timeline and process around that?

Kirsty Fanton: Yes. Such a good question. So, I feel like, so by the time I realized that I did actually wanna shift things and do it in a public facing way, because I feel like there was also a lag between me kind of realizing that, you know, what worked was no longer lighting me up and therefore what shifts I should be thinking about making and also questioning.

I think because my life had been in a state of flux since having Ollie, you know, are these actually changes that. I feel are gonna be at least semi-permanent. Like, do I want to go all in and, you know, claim this space basically. Is it something I wanna plant my flag in something I wanna invest in time, energy, money, et cetera to actually make that shift public.

So I spent probably like six to eight weeks mulling that over. And for me, like I'm a huge fan of journaling. So there was a lot of time pen on paper. You know, asking myself questions, trying to just get really clear on the answer and once it became clear that, yep, this is something that I just feel so excited about.

And similar to you, like you mentioned, you know, your old website just didn't feel like it fit you anymore. And I definitely felt that. I was like, who is this person? Like my photos are like five years old and also like, you know, what's she talking about? Like this stuff is like, yeah, it's still valid, but you know, I'm not that excited about it anymore.

Like, so totally like having that realization too was also good confirmation to me for me that, you know, it was definitely time. So I ha already had two services up and running successfully that I knew I wanted to promote publicly. So I have my, 75 minute strategy sessions and also my ongoing one-to-one coaching. I also wanted to find a way to do something like my old day rate service because I did feel like the people I serve still do have a need in some cases for copy. And I still love writing copy. Like I find it such a satisfying process.

So I was in the background also. I started trialing, by my day, toddler proof version, which was basically, ideally the same services as I offered for day rate copy. So seven hours of me working through a launch copy for a client in one day. but with a caveat that, you know, we would book a Monday and if it was that Ollie was sick and home from daycare, you know, it might be that I didn't actually get to that copy or that day rate until Thursday.

I trialed, trialed that with a couple of existing clients. It didn't fit anymore. And I realized that was because back, you know, pre-baby, those day rates were so wonderful. Not just because of the work I got to do, but also because they were literally the only work I ever did on those days. So there was a sense of like, once the copy was sent back, once everything was handed over, turning off my laptop, switching off for the day, no more responsibilities. Go have a swim. Go have a drink, like watch some tv, unwind, whatever. Whereas, you know, these days, seven hours is literally like all of my time when Ollie's at daycare. So to go straight from that to then picking up a toddler and then doing, you know, dinnertime, bathtime, bedtime, random dances and singing and like all the things that just didn't have that same reward.

So I landed on a, a half day, which just feels so, so, so, so good. I feel like because I do then it's four hours of my time. and I feel like I get that same ability to like, Just switch off completely after that. Feel like I've had a really productive day and give myself permission to do nothing like, except take care of myself for those few hours then between that wrapping up and me, you know, having Ollie in my care again.

So just to maybe explain a little bit about what Rejigging a service can look like. So anyway, so once I got my three key services sorted, I still felt like something was missing and it was actually, I hosted, co-hosted a co-hosted, co-facilitated, I should say, a business retreat in Mexico in January this year, with Amy Posner, who I do the Business Badassery podcast with.

And honestly, it was getting the feedback from all those wonderful humans, a lot of which was about how good I am at asking questions that like, send them inwards for answers and just prompt all these really valuable, impactful insights that clicked something into place, about a membership model, which is a reflective practice membership that tackles a different topic each month, whether it's something practical like pricing or positioning or something sort of, Less tangible, like self-doubt, for example.

So to me that felt like the missing piece for this new model. So once that happened, I got back from Mexico and I just went like, switched on, started writing my copy, looked around for a website designer, and just booked things in. And then yeah, everything is has fallen into place and I'll submit all my copy at the end of today actually, and then design starts next week. So I

feel like it was like a slower process to begin with. But then once the decision was made and everything felt like it clicked, it was very much all systems go, which is typically how I work. Once I make a decision, I'm very quick to execute. So here we are.

Zafira Rajan: Yes. Oh my gosh, I love that so much. I'm exactly the same. It's once you know, it's just nothing will get in your way and you're like, I'm doing the thing and I'm gonna make it happen. But I also think it's so important how you really trialed a bunch of this in real life first. And, you know, you really wanted to make sure these were the right things for you.

So I just, I admire that so much because you're like, oh, okay, it doesn't fit into this box so well, like, it'll, it'll be this new box and I know there's something missing. So, you know, I'm kind of waiting for, for that. And, you know, doing something brand new like a retreat by the way, which I'm sure is no small feat. And that was your first one you've ever done and it was amazing.

Kirsty Fanton: Oh

Zafira Rajan: Um,From what I can, you know, enviously stalk on social media anyways.

Kirsty Fanton: No, it was. It was such a phenomenal week, honestly. And the work was like so rewarding and beautiful and also felt so easy. So it was, yeah, it was a glorious week, which shall be repaid at some time, I'm sure.

Zafira Rajan: So good. Well, I'm, I'm so excited to see how it all culminates together for you and that membership. Sounds perfect. Kirsty, you are like, you ask better questions than anyone else I know.

Kirsty Fanton: Oh.

Zafira Rajan: And I think it's probably why you're also so good at copywriting, because you get the best stuff out of your clients. So I'm sure that's going to be extremely helpful for so many people.

So yeah, I mean, you faced a couple of challenges along the way, you know, like, oh, it doesn't fit this way, or this isn't quite what I thought. Like emotionally, how is it feeling for you throughout this whole process?

Kirsty Fanton: Hmm. I feel like it's felt really bloody good once it sort of all clicked. But I do feel like there was a little, hmm, emotional, emotional identity kind of struggle earlier on in the process, right? Was it was just, and it really was just letting go of the sole identity business-wise as a copywriter, which I've operated successfully under for what feels like forever.

You know, it's what I've known as, it's how I've made the majority of my revenue over the years. So I think maybe it wasn't an emotional challenge, but more like a mental one maybe, of like giving myself permission to let go of that and not have that, have to be the thing that I led with, in the new form of my business and with my new positioning.

So I think that was probably the key one, but honestly, apart from that, it's all felt good. Which I think is also a confirmation that this is a good shift and the right shift for me to be making at this point in time.

But what about you? Any, any emotional or strategic? I dunno if. Yeah, no. I'm gonna ask you both. I'm like, did you talk about those? But I feel like maybe not. It sounds like it was a relatively smooth ride, but was there anything that was challenging?

Zafira Rajan: You know, I would say the only thing that's been challenging is usually everything I do has been super informed by like, tons of audience research. And this was a little bit different because as an opportunity for me to create the thing first and then see how it fit in with my audience. So it was kind of like the, a bit of a switcheroo and some of it was still obviously, influenced by what they were saying or what, you know, I had to do research as part of the process to mostly just see where other people saw my talents, where they saw where I shined. And that was great, but, I was really protective of what I was creating and just didn't want outside factors to influence like the vision. And that can be really challenging sometimes, especially because you're, you're just not sure how it'll land or you're not sure what people will think. So, yeah, I think usually like doing stuff solely informed by research before I landed, mean people pleasing land. And this time I had to just pull back a little bit and create some balance. And just hope that, you know, what I created really was gonna help, especially since it was in response to everything I'd been observing.

And, I, you know, my website has been live already and there was a, a whole month leading up to that. I will say that I, I definitely did come up against imposter syndrome for a little bit, or I briefly considered being like, oh, is this the right thing? Like, what am I doing? And you know, I just, it wasn't like, it's not even like, it's a huge change from everything I've done before, but, you know, it felt like something that, had just, yeah, it had felt like, I guess a little brand baby that only I've been carrying around for a while. Right. And now I was gonna introduce her to everybody and I didn't know what people would think, so.

Kirsty Fanton: That's that little what everyone thinks. My baby's ugly.

Zafira Rajan: Yeah, exactly. and yeah, it was. It. I was definitely really nervous for sure. But as soon as I pressed publish, it was like, like huge weight lifted off my shoulders and I like, could not give a crap. I was like, Nope, this is me. I love it so much. It's exactly what it wanted to be. And yeah, it was, it was r some highs and lows right before, it, it all came together, but I think that's natural when you're, you're doing something new and exciting, along the way.

And yeah, the second I started, I was like, maybe jobs, like just in case, you know, and it was just in a really like, bad day. My husband, I was, I was like, what do you think of this one at Grammaly? It's like, you're being a ridiculous. I was like, okay. And I quit LinkedIn right away.

Kirsty Fanton: I love that.

Zafira Rajan: so yeah, it's just, yeah, real talk. Like even when you, you think you have it all together sometimes. yeah. So those monsters do crop up once in a while and you gotta smash 'em.

Kirsty Fanton: Uh huh. Totally. Yes. I love that.

And I'm wondering, you know, now that you've like, you know, your shift has been made public and it sounds like things are working and the reception has just been wonderful. And I'm wondering now that you're sort of, I guess you're kind of at the other side, like you're in it, right? You're doing the thing, you're, you're operating in your new business.

Is there any advice that you would give other parents who are maybe in the throes of, or are contemplating making this kind of shift? Like is there anything they could maybe learn from your experience? Any like potholes to avoid or any.

Zafira Rajan: I would say probably the, the key piece of advice I would give them is that becoming a parent is just such an incredible opportunity for you to recalibrate, and we really don't get access to time to slow down, whether it's while you're pregnant or whether it's, you know, taking your time before you're like officially back at work. Even though I know it's not always slowing down and things are crazy. But if that part of you is just really crying out for attention, or is just keeps tapping you on the shoulder, pay attention.

Kirsty Fanton: Mm-hmm.

Zafira Rajan: Look out for the signs because so much of you will have changed throughout the process. So much about your lifestyle will have changed, and if it is within reach, It's such a good opportunity to just refocus, like your goals and how you want to be showing up, how you want to be using your energy and make it work for you in a way that might be even better than it was before.

So yeah, just pay attention to the signs. Pay attention to what you know, all the things they're trying to tell you. They're trying to put you in a different direction and I, I'm so glad I listened because I think I would've ended up here eventually, but much, much further down the road. So I'm glad I got the chance to get here quicker.

Kirsty Fanton: Yes. Oh, and I totally wanna echo that because I feel like. I still feel like there's a pitfall, I think in the online business space that you can, you can get caught up in extrinsic, extrinsic, sorry, extrinsic success metrics. So you know, a business that is profitable, you know, a business that has a wait list, business that, you know, has a growing audience, you know, opportunities that come your way because of the work you've done and the reputation you've built, et cetera.

And I feel like it is so important to also keep checking in with yourself about success metrics that are more intrinsic. So how is your work meaningful? How can you structure your time and your energy to support the life you're in at the moment? You know, how can you create a space and a

container for your work that allows you to do all the other things you wanna be doing with your life, you know, in any given week?

So I feel like while those things might not align with some of the ways you might currently be doing business. It is really important because I don't think it's worth making, you know, hundreds of thousands of dollars if at the end of the day, you're burnt out, you feel out of alignment, you feel like there's no other reward for your work except for the money.

So I would just really encourage anyone who's thinking of making a shift, or who is in the process of making a shift, like what Zafira said, like, you know, check in with yourself and, and do your best to make sure that that shift is in alignment with what will actually serve you.

And also I think know that because our lives are constantly evolving. You know, chances are our businesses will too. You know, that that 3.0 version for both you and I Zafira, I'm sure is out there. Like, I have no doubt we will go through this process again, you know, when our desires and, and our wishes and our wants and the things that light us up shift again.

Zafira Rajan: Yes, absolutely. Preach all of it. And did someone say you were good at asking good questions? those were all great questions.

Kirsty Fanton: Oh. Thank you.

Zafira Rajan: Consider that was just prime Kirsty in action.

And yeah, I think overall what we're definitely trying to say is, you know, if, if it feels like something needs to change, deliberate your next step carefully if you can. And, and do what, what's, what's possible to bring it into alignment, because that could be really special for you.

Whoo. Oh my gosh, what a ride.

Kirsty Fanton: Oh, I know. I feel exhausted talking about it all.

Zafira Rajan: Only mega life changes going on around here. No big deal. Oh my gosh. Okay. Well, shall we move into our final lightning round?

Kirsty Fanton: Let's do it.

Zafira Rajan: Okay. What was your best investment during this period of time?

Kirsty Fanton: Okay, so mine I think is quite an intangible investment. So it's not like money spent, where I think all of my other answers to this question in previous episodes have been about that. It was honestly carving out the time in my limited work week to have space to reflect on my business on the changes I was thinking of making on what felt good on all those sorts of things, because I think without creating that space in that time, I suspect I wouldn't have got the kind of clarity I did, at least not as soon as I did, and I possibly could have sent myself in a direction that wasn't quite aligned.

And it definitely felt like an investment because I think, you know, as we've spoken about when your time is limited, it can feel like a big leap to carve out time for such sort of intangible work. but definitely like that served me so, so, so, so, so, so well when we're talking about everything we shared in this episode.

What about you?

Zafira Rajan: Ooh. Well, first of all, I wanna say, yeah, time is money. So great investment. I love that for you. And, my investment, investment would definitely be Mirror Brand. You know, I, I knew that it would be a significant investment and the fact that it had been on my radar for a while and, and it was just right timing, was, was great.

And I think it, it informed everything that I, I've chosen to put out into the world and it's given me a system I can return to when 3.0 is ready. So that is also very exciting for me.

Kirsty Fanton: Amazing. Honestly, it sounds like such a great program. It's such a solid investment, and you were speaking about it. I was like, ooh, maybe I would've joined it if I'd known it existed back then.

Zafira Rajan: Yes, Sarah is amazing, so I'm, I'm so grateful for her support throughout all of it.

Kirsty Fanton: Oh, so good. All right. What was your biggest regret?

Zafira Rajan: I have to say I don't have any. This feels like the one part of my life where throughout all these podcast episodes where it's like, okay, you know what? Each step was really carefully thought out and deliberate, and I don't regret any of it. I think every decision I made during this time had a reason and a purpose that got me to where it got me, and I'm really happy with the results, so, yay, no regrets.

That's my honest answer.

Kirsty Fanton: So amazing. And I have to say, I also have no regrets, but I was kind of hoping that you would share something and I'd be like, oh, yes, no, I have an answer, but I don't have an answer for this. Cause I, I feel the same. I mean, so far it just feels like everything's been very right, underlined, and just feels very exciting.

So, yeah, I, no regrets.

Zafira Rajan: Exciting. I love this.

Kirsty Fanton: Yeah. Oh.

Zafira Rajan: Okay. What was your most Googled question?

Kirsty Fanton: Okay, so not strictly Google, but Google in terms of searching Pinterest. So I got new photos done, a few weeks ago actually with, oh, she's so amazing. She was part of Brain Camp, last year I think 2022. Julia from Firefly Media, and the photos are so good. I love them.

But I did spend a lot of time, like, searching Pinterest for images that I felt really represented, like the energy and the vibe I wanted my photos to have.

So yeah, I went down all sorts of rabbit holes, like Googling, like I started off on something simple like, I don't know, warm, calm head shots, which didn't give me much. And I just continually like refined, refined that search to build out like an inspiration board. So that was definitely where I spent my most time asking strange search terms.

Zafira Rajan: Oh my God. I'm just thinking about now all the questions, all, all the things I fit into Pinterest too for my shoes, which are so, so funny. So yeah, that, that should probably be like most, yeah, the Pinterest search bar is a whole other can of worms.

Kirsty Fanton: Totally. Did you have a most googled question that wasn't on Pinterest?

Zafira Rajan: Yeah, you know, I actually had two, maybe I'll give two since I didn't have a regret. One of them was Squarespace versus Showit, which, which are two web platforms. I was on Squarespace before and I switched to Showit, which I had been eyeing for a while.

And I was just, it was, took a lot for me to pull the trigger, but I, I did so much research and eventually I was like, nope, this is the right decision for where I wanna go. And, kind of the design flexibility I need, especially if I'm gonna be designing the site myself. So that was one of them.

And then the other one was, the sea temperature in November over here in Gibson's. Cause I was so excited about my photo shoot and we were meant to do it much earlier, but the photographer I booked is also a mom of, twin toddlers actually. And we both had things that kept pushing it out further and further. And part of my photo shoot was meant to incorporate the ocean. We were gonna do a half day at her studio and a half day here on the Sunshine Coast.

And so first there was water temperature in October. I was like, you know what? I can do this. I can do it for like an hour. I, I can be outside. It's totally fine. It's still sunny, and then I was like, okay, water temperature November. And then I was like, we finally all got on the same page for, like, the beginning of December I was like, well, we'll just do that part next summer. She was like, yeah, I was a bit worried that you weren't going to be okay doing that. And like, you know, she's like, I don't want like Goose Temples in shoot. I comfort. I was just obsessing checking the weather and the temperature for a good two months.

Kirsty Fanton: Oh my God. I love that. And I feel like so funny too, cause I feel like you kind of probably knew the answer late November, probably too cold, but you're like, maybe, maybe Google will tell me it's actually not that bad.

Zafira Rajan: Yeah, exactly. I, I do cold plunges all the time. I'll be fine. I'll just walk in in my dress and it'll be beautiful.

Kirsty Fanton: Oh, I love that so much. Oh.

Zafira Rajan: What were your three words to sum everything up?

Kirsty Fanton: Oh, okay. Energy, work, and alignment.

Zafira Rajan: Ooh, nice.

I feel like mine are so similar. This is so weird.

Okay. Mine was creative. Pulsating.

Kirsty Fanton: Oh.

Zafira Rajan: Just cause it felt like everything had like some life that was like brewing and like, it just felt like energy. And then freeing. I just felt so much freedom throughout, once everything came together, which also feels very similar to alignment.

Kirsty Fanton: Oh, I love that. I'm sorry. I chuckled at pulsating because I feel like I've only, I've only ever read that word in like dodgy romance novels.

Zafira Rajan: I know, I know. And I, part of me is regretting saying that now.

Kirsty Fanton: No, I think it's.

Zafira Rajan: Everything just felt like, you know, when you've got like a good beat in your ear and you're just like, your head starts sobbing. That's how we just started to feel once I got into the rhythm of doing all of this, I was like, yeah, I'm in flow now.

Um,So yeah. Maybe I should have said flow.

Kirsty Fanton: No, I'm so glad you said pulsating, because I hope that someone else listening has a dodgy mind like mine, and they're like,

Zafira Rajan: They definitely will. They definitely will.

Kirsty Fanton: Oh, amazing. Well, this is the last of our, like we set the scene for the episode episodes, and if you have listened to our outro in any of the previous episodes, you'll know that the next time we meet we will be doing a Q&A episode that's all about answering your questions. So Zafira, I'll be chatting with you again in about, I don't know, two months or so, and hopefully we have some questions from our listeners that we're excited to jump into and I have, I have no doubt that we will actually.

Zafira Rajan: Yes. I'm so excited for that. And if you've listened to all the episodes up until now, thank you so much and we hope it's been helpful or entertaining, to say the least. And we'll see you back for the Q&A of course.

Kirsty Fanton: We shall.

If you enjoyed this episode, we would love it if you left us a review or gave us a share wherever you hang out online. And if this episode raised some questions for you, you might be excited to know that we're adding a bonus Q&A episode to the season where we'll answer as many of your questions as we can.

Zafira Rajan: If it's about business, babies, and how the two do or don't fit together, we would love to hear it. You can find a link to submit your questions in the show notes, and if you want to stay connected with us, you can find me Zafira at zafirarajan.com and Kirsty at kirstyfanton.com. Finally, if you'd like to buy us a coffee to help fuel and fund more creative projects like this one, there's a link in the show notes for you too.