062: Transform Your Cash-Eating Business Monster to a Money-Making Machine

With Connie Vanderzanden

Kelly Lawson 00:00

Well, my friends, it's me. And it's been an entire month, what was going to be a week away from podcasting turned into two weeks and quickly became a month. If you missed me, I'm so grateful for your patience. If you didn't miss me, or you didn't even notice, I want you to realize that that's even more reason for you to turn inward and look at your own life and where you may be need to take some time away from working and realize that it's not that big of a deal. If people don't miss you, that's even more, the better. And this is your permission slip to rest, and to let go of the grip, that hustle culture may have taken on you. And after the last year and a half that we've had, I think more than ever, you deserve a break. And you deserve life balance. So I am grateful that you're still here with me. I am grateful for the month away. I really needed it. And I'm really excited to dive into today's topic is all about money. So money is always an uncomfortable topic. I mean, people don't joyously chit chat about taxes and financial planning at the dinner table. Right. I think it's safe to say that most entrepreneurs just want to do the work, but many of us are guilty of putting financial planning on the back burner. We all know that we need to get cozy with our business finances, but just seem to get stuck and continue with our bad money habits. Well, today's guest Connie Vander zanden is on a mission to help entrepreneurs live lifestyles they desire by learning the simple steps, structure and discipline to create and save money. With 34 years of accounting and bookkeeping experience, a variety of industry knowledge and her own real life business growth journey since 2001. Connie developed the going beyond revenue cash handling system focused on cash flow planning that creates profitable and sustainable businesses. Connie is here to help you get on track and turn your cash eating business into a self sustaining machine that actually pays you. So are you ready to dive back into the workshop weekly podcast? I know I am.

Intro Voice 02:44

You're listening to the workshop weekly podcast The show where no dream is too big and no topic is too small. Around here. We believe that taking imperfect action rules. So we're creating space for you to dive in and fast track your success one workshop at a time. Now refill your coffee cup, grab your notebook and get ready to join in on your weekly training. Listen to meaningful conversation and learn from industry experts. here's your host, Kelly Lawson.

Kelly Lawson 03:13

Hello, Connie, welcome to the show. I am so excited to chat with you today about money. How are you? I'm great. And I'm excited to be here. Thank you for having me. I'm excited to have you. So let's start by talking about you a little bit. What brings you to the profession of finances?

Connie Vanderzanden 03:32

Well, it's it wasn't planned. It was by default. I originally chose a career that I was somewhat good at numbers always came easy to me in school. And my math teacher hated the fact that I chose that route. But it was always supposed to be short term. And then we had about with infertility, my husband and I and I just kind of stayed in it. And I got into public accounting, which kind of like, there were some aha moments, I was like seeing the full picture of what small businesses were doing and how it led to their tax return. But again, I still wasn't I wasn't really enjoying it. But I really got the opportunity to work one on one with business owners. And at the time, this was in the 90s we I would go out to clients and sit across the table from them and talk to them about numbers and help them with their bookkeeping. And I was like I really like this piece of it. I'm going to build a business on that. And then that for over 19 years now but the reality also was I I still didn't really love what I did. I love the interaction with the business owners. But I even as a bookkeeper with 34 years of experience in the accounting industry hate to do my own numbers. And so my business had to fail a bit. I had to have a rock bottom moment for me to actually be doing what I do now. Because without that rock bottom moment of creating a lot of debt, I would not be mentoring Businesses at this point in showing them how I got from that point to where I am today. I'm still in recovery from my debt, and still working on that relationship. But all the things I've learned over the last 34 years were key. But it really was me having my business, growing it without a plan and then failing. That really put me on the path where I'm at today.

Kelly Lawson 05:21

Yeah, so I'm sure that many people listening are probably relating to what your experience was. And after having had 19 years of experience with other entrepreneurs, I'm sure that there are mistakes that stand out for you. Why don't we talk a little bit about those, what are some common mistakes that you see people making that that puts them in a bad position financially, or that, you know, sets them up for not success?

Connie Vanderzanden 05:47

Yeah. The first one often is commingling personal and business money. And there's a couple of reasons. First off was the, the tracking of it, it gets to be a little difficult when you are but it's the easiest, every business owner tends to do it, they decide they want to be in business, they start with their personal account, and they fund the business that way. But at a point, when you get to there, open your own business accounts give it the energetic support, like saying, My business is for real, I want this to be an actual thing, I'm going to give it its own structure. And by creating its own bank account, then you can treat it treat the money, like it's for the business and then pay yourself and stuff. So that's the first thing is like separate this personal in the business. And the second is, don't be afraid of your tax Pro. And getting that that advice. A lot of us think it's you know, we have to pay for it, that type of advice, and you do. But if you have a really good relationship, and if you don't have one, you know, not all tax pros give advice, find a new one that will but get in that type of relationship, because a good tax Pro is really going to help partner with you to make sure that your business on is on good footing. And you're using the numbers in a way that makes sense as you grow. Those are two things.

Kelly Lawson 07:06

Those are both fantastic pieces of advice, because they're both mistakes that I made. So as you were saying, and I was like I'm sure that there's people listening, that are mixing their personal finances, with their business finances, and also probably working with an accountant who's not necessarily giving them that advice, but merely providing the service like, you know that at this time of year. And so I think those are fantastic piece of advice. But I'd love to ask you, if you could reflect a little bit on your own business, when you found yourself in a tough place. Was there a specific turning point where you realize that things were headed in a bad direction? Is there something that listener that like a mistake that you've made personally, that listeners could learn from?

Connie Vanderzanden 07:51

When I went to go grow my business, so I went from solopreneur office to commercial space with a team of four. And there was no plan, I created no plan, I'm very good at flying by the seat of my pants when it comes to my own numbers. But for some reason, I didn't want to look at the reality. And so then that's how I got into debt is that I kept throwing debt at the the growth and I grew it based on what I thought other people would need and want not what the business could handle. So I think when people are looking to grow their businesses to like pause, and be really intentional with how you want to grow. And sometimes debt is a good option for that. But know that going into it don't get into it six years later and look back at like I did, and I had 50,000 in debt and hadn't paid myself for six years. Those are the pieces where businesses can't often cannot recover from. So if you could just pause moment, create that plan and get an accountability or a partner or a business coach or somebody else to help you with the numbers like because not all of us are wanting to be in the details. We want to talk about it. We're very we have the ideas as entrepreneurs, we're very excited about our ideas. So sometimes you've got to bring in a number focus person to help get those numbers in a spreadsheet so that you can use them, which is what I do now is I help the clients figure out their big dream translated into a number format so that we can have their accounting team work with those numbers. If you can find that and get that support. That would be the great but creative plan.

Kelly Lawson 09:26

Yeah, I really appreciate your honesty there. Because I know Well, first of all, as entrepreneurs, we generally don't get into it because we love numbers. So that's a really amazing point. But secondly, I think that there's a lot of shame that comes with not being good at managing your finances, especially as an entrepreneur. And shame can be a really isolating place to be it's often a place where people stop asking for help and stop admitting or don't admit in the first place that they that they don't know something or that they're struggling and I think that's a really A terrible place to be. And, you know, I'll speak for myself, I often just assume that everybody else gets it and that I don't. And you know, I should be embarrassed by it. So I think to have somebody who's a money expert to come on, like to come out and say, Look, I didn't make a plan, I was just kind of flying by the seat of my pants. And here's where I landed. So I really appreciate your honesty there. And I think listeners will too. So thank you for that. You're welcome. And I think the first thing that people need to do is just get out from behind the shame. And you know, if it's something that they're struggling with, ask questions and get help. So I think that's an amazing way to kick this episode off. With that, let's kind of dig into some of the good stuff. So Connie, you help people transform their cash, eating business monsters, into money making machines, and that sounds mighty appealing. So do you want to talk a little bit about how you help entrepreneurs do that?

Connie Vanderzanden 10:54

Sure. Yeah. Well, a lot of it is what I learned in my own journey, right. So the key part is, wherever you're at, again, we have to know our numbers our numbers are. And it's funny, because in school, we learned that numbers were either good or bad, you either were you either got an A on your math test, or you or you flunked it. And it's unfortunate that it's unfortunate that we were taught that money, and numbers had to be so black and white about it. But they are just numbers, and we put so much emotional attachment to it. This is why we stopped looking at our numbers. And we feel you know, we're either good or bad when it comes to it. But they really are just numbers there like the how we keep score in any sports. It we use the numbers for it and same thing for our business. So how can we get to the point where we can use the numbers and being powered by them, but know that they're just keeping score for us so that we have ways to make choices and make changes if we need to. So you got to know your numbers. So get getting them out, somehow, in some format. And if you're if they're just starting out, it could be paper, you don't have to use a fancy dancy accounting tool. I like QuickBooks, but I've been born and raised on QuickBooks since it was dos. So that's natural for me. And it's natural for more accounting professionals, there's so many out there, but use something that you that you like that you're going to be in there and using on a regular basis or get a little support for that area. So once we know our numbers, then I want you to sit down and dream. What would you like numbers and money to be? What would you like the business to be. And this is the part where businesses might need a little help business owners might need a little help in translating what their dream is into numbers and actions. So if you don't, if you've never grown a business, you might want to get a mentor, or a tax pro to sit down and help you put those numbers and match it with that dream. So if you want to grow your team, or if you want to get commercial space, what does that look like? And what would those expenses look like? When you're doing that don't forget to look at what your household needs are, and what your business needs are. And that's the other piece a lot of businesses fail at or missed, the misstep they do when they get started. They don't actually claim how much their household needs the business to support them. How much does it have to do you need to get paid to be able to live the life that you need to take care of your family so that you show up as the best you and your business. So make sure to include both of those.

Kelly Lawson 13:29

So at the most basic level, when you say know your numbers, what that really means is know how much money you need to pay your personal bills. at the most basic level, I'm assuming like not shoe shopping, but you know, your mortgage and your power bill, as well as your business expenses. Is that right?

Connie Vanderzanden 13:47

That's correct. Yeah.

Kelly Lawson 13:48

Okay,

Connie Vanderzanden 13:48

It goes into the third step, which is creating an intentional plan. So we have a worksheet on our website that has just two basics. So you have your like your bare minimum and what you'd like to grow into. But I also like this, this concept of good, better best, and especially with COVID, we've learned that we've had to have several different options for business and money planning. So the next thing is creating that intentional plan of what do you need bare minimum to get by? And what will you grow into and what's you know, maybe a third step of what you'd like to eventually achieve or so as money comes in or your your situation adjusts pivots, you can add back in those expenses or add expenses as as the money grows.

Kelly Lawson 14:34

Okay, so good, better and best is like good is the one where you're cutting expenses.

Connie Vanderzanden 14:40

Yeah, you might have to cut some expenses, especially as people as businesses are coming out of COVID. They may have less income coming in. So what do you need bare minimum to get the business open? And then better would be so money's coming in now. What can we add back in? And then best would be, you know, your best To 2019 revenue or better, and this is the ideal business you'd like to create. And so for someone who's creating their best plan, I have to assume that there's probably a little growth built into that. So what do you think is a reasonable, I don't know, percentage or expectation around growth year over year, it really depends on the entrepreneur and the industry. So I don't do a lot with products. And again, what products in a storefront, their growth is going to be probably smaller, because it all depends on word of mouth and advertising, and getting people to find them. And so they're going to devote a lot to advertising and getting found. And maybe they'll be measuring that by how many customers come in a service based or a coaching consulting firm. Those are the types I deal with the most really, if depends on the entrepreneur, if the entrepreneur has a string of very strong vision of what they want to create, they can see growth as high as 200%, if they've, if they're willing to do it, and they have the bandwidth to do it. But most growth is usually 10 to 15%. At tops, because we have to remember we're coming out of COVID. And not all of us are resilient enough to keep pushing forward. So look at your bandwidth. I think that's as as important as the numbers, a lot of businesses don't take the time to look at their calendar, what how many days are they going to take off for vacation or downtime for recovery, I had a client I worked with who was wanted to write a book, she also was trying to bring on a new operations manager and had new product that she was creating and putting out there as downloadable type of products and membership programs. That's a lot to do in a year. And when we took the calendar and actually blocked out her time she was so she was the main person doing the sales, there were big blocks of time throughout the year that she couldn't do any sales. And so we had to relook at her bandwidth of how it was going to support her ultimate goal. And so a few things had to adjust for it. So make sure that you are going to have the time to devote to if you want a big revenue goal to create this big growth for your business, make sure that you have the bandwidth to do that. And make sure that you have enough downtime plan so that you are constantly taking care of yourself, you have rest, because you don't want to be burned out by the time you reach your goal and not even enjoy it.

Kelly Lawson 17:27

I have to say I appreciate that this is a holistic approach to money mindset, right? It's not just about the numbers. It's really about your well being and your capacity and the role that you play. And if you're like I love that you brought up if you're looking at growth, well, how are you going to get there? And do you have the capacity to get there? I love that. So the another thing that you talk about is cash handling system. Do you want to talk a little bit about that?

Connie Vanderzanden 17:53

Yeah, this is and this is a key thing that I learned at my rock bottom moment was that I wasn't being intentional with my words, actions and resources. So I wasn't as money I was spending money faster than it was coming in. And so that's how I got into that debt problem. And so I had to create a system and it's based on the book profit first by Mike mccalla wits, I'm a profit first professional have been since 2018. And Mike's book has a great backbone for the system. I don't think the book goes far enough to talk about the mindset that gets in the way and our natural spending habits. But I do agree with this one thing is that we need to like create a pause in the system. So instead of spending all the money, before it even comes in, how can you bring money in, celebrate it, and then intentionally make choices of how you use that money based on the plan you created. And the step before that. That's the key part of that cash handling system is creating a cash reserve so that the business feel supported that savings account, and that you're intentionally paying yourself because that's the other the fourth problem that businesses make is they treat their business like a bank, they constantly are pulling money in and out, they don't really ever know how much they're getting paid. And so a cash handling system will help do that. And then it creates a smaller pot for expenses. Yeah, and I have to say it must reduce stress as well, because rather than scrambling to generate the income to cover money that you've already committed, you're bringing the money in and then you're committing it. So I mean, that just makes a lot of sense. You also talk about nurturing your relationship with money. Yeah, that could be a whole episode. But it's it's we weren't taught most of us weren't taught. I have talked to a few entrepreneurs where their parents instilled in them of value or relationship with money and appreciation of it. But a lot of times we were taught that money is bad. And so how can you change that mindset around it and show that because money is just a tool, a tool for us to make a difference in the world around us to provide for our life and our family. And to provide to the community for the people that may work on our team. So how can you create that, and one is to celebrate Money, Money loves a good celebration. So do a dance, sing a song. And the cash handling system helps do that. But then again, intentionally give it a job and a job title, the cash handling system provides that tell money, what you want it to do, how you how you want it to support you, and then use it because it's all about flow, we can't just hold on to it and hoard it, we need to push it back out into the economy, push it back out into the community, and then it will flow back to us. And so it's about creating that relationship, like any strong relationship that you have, money needs to have the same thing. So you need to pay attention to it, you need to show some gratitude, you need to set the boundaries for it. So it's an odd concept. A lot of people don't talk about it that way. But I find it very joyful to think about it.

Kelly Lawson 20:56

Yeah, well, if anything, it would address avoidant behavior around money and force you to have a relationship with it, like you said, talk about it and not, you know, not avoid having a difficult conversation with money. But I love that you said give money or your system, a job title, can you talk a little bit more about that, maybe give an example of what you mean by that?

Connie Vanderzanden 21:17

Sure. Um, so a couple examples. One is, you can create an owner's pay account or an owner's wealth account in your business. And so as money comes in, maybe you aren't, maybe you want to contribute to your pension or you want to buy yourself health insurance, you can put it in that. And that is just for your wealth and your well being. The other one is a profit savings account. So that is a lot of people don't understand the concept of profit or, or depending on where you are in business, your interpretation of profit might be different. But profit really is a set percentage of every dollar you receive or that you bill that you're keeping for the benefit of the company and for the entrepreneur. And so by having that account, like you're telling the business, you're telling me, you're here to give me that cash cushion, you're here to support our long term goals. And then other people like for personal side, you probably already have a vacation account, you might have a new car account. So it's kind of similar to the same things where we create smaller savings account with specific purposes. And then if the money's not needed for that purpose, it can be re put back into the business for other things, a tax account is is a prime one is you've put savings account money in there. And if at the end of the year, you don't need it, then you can reallocate it to different things.

Advertisement 22:39

So you bought a fancy camera, or you're thinking about buying one, because it's clear to you that there is no shortage of beautiful moments or things in your life that you'd like to capture beautifully. But the record scratches because all the dials and buttons and settings are standing between you and your life in stunning photos. Well, my friend, I have just the fix the ultimate photography starter kit. This free resource includes a recommended equipment list, Quick Start checklist, and a beginner's guide to creating natural poses and candid moments. To give you the confidence, you need to dust off that fancy camera and start documenting your moments so they can last forever. The ultimate photography starter kit is completely free, and it has everything you need to get started. So grab yours today at Kelly lawson.ca slash starter kit. That's Kelly lawson.ca slash starter kit. And I can't wait to see your framers in nice girl.

Kelly Lawson 23:47

So you have some quick action steps for listeners. And I'm all about the quick actions because they're small and easy. And something that is easy for people who are listening to go away from this episode and do for themselves. So do you want to talk a little bit about those?

Connie Vanderzanden 24:03

Sure. The quick action step is is the cash handling system. And when I started this 98% of what was coming in was already spent. And when I was given this model, I was like you want me to save money? I mean, I'm not even paying myself, what do you what do you mean save money. But there's something magical about creating a cash cushion for your business. And it's actually something a lot of tax pros don't recommend. I remember working in tax and CPAs were telling their businesses to spend as much money as they could at the end of the year. Well, that actually sets businesses up for failing because now they've got decreased cash flow and that could take up to a quarter to three months for them to recover from. By creating a cash reserve. You're creating a foundational piece for your business to lean into. And so the quick action step is simply to open a savings account. At your bank choose one that's no fee. And then for give it a job title. So what do you want this account to to do? profit savings? Or do you want it to save for a specific thing, a lot of people can use profit savings to hire a new team member. And then transfer anything from half a percent to 2%. and a half percent, I know may not sound like very much, but it's not how much you're going to save over the next 90 days is that you're just creating a habit around, intentionally putting money aside. And then daily, weekly or monthly, however, often you update your bookkeeping, I hope that you're doing it at least a couple times a month, I do my weekly because I need to give it that focus. Put that percentage aside into savings and don't touch it, just leave it there. Let the magic happen. Again, you're training yourself not to spend every dollar that you receive. And then after the 90 days, you're going to get a reward. And we're going to split half of it half of it's going to stay in the business and half of it will go back to you as the business owner. And my first time I didn't have enough for a massage. But I had something for massage.

Kelly Lawson 26:12

Yeah, I mean, I saving something is better than saving nothing. And I can definitely appreciate that getting into the habit of doing it is probably a heavy left at first. But what like you said that you did this in your business even when you weren't like even when you were running a deficit. So that begs the question like how do people continue to do this, if especially during COVID times they find their business running a deficit. And it just feels counterintuitive to put money into a savings account when technically there isn't any money to be saved?

Connie Vanderzanden 26:45

Yeah. And that's what's part of what I went through as well. But it's, it's magical to start creating a cash reserve that's there to support you, it was my plan B for months and months. It's like, Okay, if I can't, if I don't have enough, this month, I'm going to tap the savings. And I never did I just let it grow and let it grow. And then it gets to a point where you know, there's a certain dollar amount that will be there. And you're just like, Oh, I can I can breathe, I see that I have resources. And that that's the magic piece there is that we start to breathe when we can start seeing that money is sticking around. The part when we're in debt. And when we're running at a deficit like I was and like businesses may be doing during COVID is that all we see is lack. all we see is there's not enough clients or customers or people coming in to buy our services, and there's not enough revenue making it. Now that may be if you hadn't prayed your intentional plan, there, it's going to be a point where you might have to make a hard decision about closing or revamping or making a pivot. But when we're always thinking about lack, that's all we see. And that's all we all we create. And what we create or focus on is what we create. So the more we can focus on what we are savings, then we're seeing opportunities, we're seeing more abundance, we're seeing more possibilities, and our eyes actually go from looking down to up. And so we're actually able to think a little bit clearer, we have more space for dreaming, we have more space for opportunities to walk in the door. And so it's not much half a percent really isn't that much to set aside. And you can you can build it after things get back to the better or best part of your plan.

Kelly Lawson 28:29

And as someone who's probably been doing this for 19 years, or I'm gonna go ahead and guess since that's how long it's been since you've been in this industry. What what happens with that with that money, you say that, you know, half of it can come back to you as the business owner, but what about the other half just sits there or

Connie Vanderzanden 28:46

Yeah, the other half just sits in the business and grows. And so I've had clients, there's every client has a different set number, I have one client where 50,000 is her setpoint other clients have different amounts, sometimes it's three months worth of expenses. And once it grows to that, and you're like, dude, I'm really I'm we have the money here. If something went south, we have enough money to pay our team for 90 days until we can make another decision. And some people have used it instead of building 90 days, they've used it to help pay down the debt, which again, gives them more room to breathe. If you don't have a lot of debt on your shoulders, you have a lot more opportunities to use money in a different way. One client though, built her built it to three months of expenses. And then they built us another account for growth specific. And so that way they knew when they had enough money to hire a new team member or they had money to buy equipment. So it gives them specific purposes and you don't ever have to go back to to the bank to the credit cards, you can actually replace that process of getting money with you being your own bank and you making your own decisions about how to use it.

Kelly Lawson 29:55

Yeah, I mean it sounds it sounds lovely. So what do you say to clients when You know, I'm assuming that at times it can become tempting to spend it on something that, you know, might not be necessary or puts them back at square one. So what do you say to folks who might be a little tempted to spend it?

Connie Vanderzanden 30:13

This is when we have to actually take a little hard look at our own money mindset. And knowing a little bit more about how we personally interact with money as I'm a spender. And spending gives me endorphins, and makes me very happy. And so I have to, I have to set some rules for myself. And so when clients come to me that are natural spenders like me, because I'm going to draw clients that are very similar. I tried to put a 4824 to 48 hour notice, like you make a decision. Let's wait, can we wait one week? Can we push that off to next quarter? Can we because you know, again, if entrepreneurs have a big vision, and they have a lot of emotional attachment to it? I never I rarely tell them no, you can't spend that. I'm not their mom. But when I am going to offer is, that's great. That's an added expense, what are we going to create? Or what are you going to sell to help finance that? And so what so I have a client in New York who's looking to open a new practice in New Jersey. And so we are talking about how we're going to get there. And we have already talked about how we might use debt to do that, and how we're going to repay that debt as that practice opens. So this is where I am. I don't think debt is horrible. I think as long as we go into debt with an open mind, we can use that for growth, and make sure that there's a repayment plan on the other side. Yeah. So it's just look at your money mindset. Look at what stops you around that. And you might have to work with a mindset coach around that, or at least having an accountability partner to work out that with your plan.

Kelly Lawson 31:51

Yeah. And I think like you said, waiting 24 or 48 hours is a really solid piece of advice. Because chances are, if at the end of that 48 hours, you don't care about the thing anymore, then probably, you know, it's an opportunity to not drain your account. I know I've done that myself. And it was something that really kind of came from listening to Professor Scott Galloway say that the true definition of wealth is spending less than you generate. And so it's all relative, right? So, you know, maybe, you know, maybe you're earning a minimum wage, but if you're spending less, and you've got a bit of a profit, well, that's actually the definition of wealth. And I almost bought a new car last year, or wait, now it was before COVID. So a couple of years ago, and I did that I waited, because it was, you know, it's emotional. It's exciting, and, and all of the things and I waited 48 hours, and I thought, you know, it's actually not going to change a lot about my lifestyle, I drive an old car that's paid for, but it gets me to where I need to go. And so I didn't buy the car. And I think, you know, this is probably what you're referring to when you're saying like work on your money mindset. Because as soon as you add an expense, well, then you've added the need to work that much harder. And so I think, you know, it kind of brings us back to making really intentional decisions with how we're allocating our money.

Connie Vanderzanden 33:17

Yeah, because a lot of entrepreneurs do a lot of personal development to or we think I knew there was a part of my business where I thought somebody else had all the answers. And so I was investing a lot into programs and things, things, just a lot of things. Those with you, if you want to invest in yourself, make sure that you have the bandwidth to actually do the things as well. So not just waiting 24 or 48 hours looking at at the requirements of whatever's going to happen. So even like with your car, you would be paying on it or you would make five years of payments that says, you know, you are being intentional with your words and actions and resources was one of the keys, right? So you're saying that, yes, I want to pay on this car for five years? Yes, I'm willing to make that investment in those choices. So again, with with other things, how you're spending, you're spending your money, are you willing to make sure that you're going to put those into action, rather than just making us an expense.

Kelly Lawson 34:13

Yeah, and I think to COVID has caused a lot of us to turn our attention a little bit toward like the capital's capitalist system that we live in. And when I really thought about the fancy car, I realized, I don't you know, I think that I'm just influenced by you know, marketing, right? Like that's, you know, that this is something that I need to have, but when I really reflected about it, I realized that I didn't need to have it and so I don't know I think I'd like to bring the old car back. The old car vibes back you know, it's fine if your car is old and paid for if it gets you where you need to go. And you know, I made a decision that as long as it's not costing me more than a new car would, then there's really no need to replace it. So driving a paid for car is just as sexy as driving. A really nice car, everybody.

Connie Vanderzanden 35:02

And what would be even sexier is if you created a little savings account that of that payment that you were saving, or at least maybe half or a portion of it and putting it into a savings account. So when your car was at that point where it needed to be replaced, you might have the money to actually pay for a car in cash will be exciting.

Kelly Lawson 35:22

It would be exciting, like think about a life with not having a car payment for the rest of time and just continuing to put that money in your own bank account. I love this, I think we need to create a paid for car movement. Connie, I know you've had a piece of send off advice for listeners. And before you do that, I will make sure that I link all of the ways to get in touch with you in the show notes. Because I know that a really important part of this process is to get in touch with you for next steps and to really help listeners understand your cash handling system. So I'll make sure that I link all of that in the show notes so that they can reach out to you and find you on the internet. But what is your piece of send off advice that you have for listeners.

Connie Vanderzanden 36:07

So my send off advice is that profit cushion. That was the piece that I was missing? Again, I came from public accounting, where CPAs were telling people to spend all their money before the end of the year to get as much tax deduction as possible. And I watched and watched businesses for years struggle and struggle the first quarter, I mean, I would have successful corporations not be able to pay their owners because there was no cash to do so. So the key part of this is to pause and create a system in your business where your savings, a little bit of money, half a percent to up to 5% or 15% if you're more successful business, but something that creates a cash cushion so that you don't have to be dependent on a bank loan, you don't have to be dependent on credit card or pay those outrageous interest rates that you have can actually physically see how money is supporting you and your business. That is some of the magic most magical stuff i can i can tell people to do. And you won't be able to really trust that feeling until you do it yourself. There's just something magical about creating a cash reserve that you know that your business can lean into, like all my clients did during COVID that can lean into if you want to do some growth for your business that you have choice is the key piece. So that's the one thing I would like people to do more of.

Kelly Lawson 37:31

Yeah, I mean, that's a really solid piece of advice. And I think too, like as soon as you're kind of cutting and paying more attention to those expenses in your business, and maybe not making those emotional decisions around money. Think try to flip it on its head a little bit too. And think of it like getting a raise. I know, that just came into my mind because it was a conversation that I had with someone about not buying that new car. And by not buying that new car. It's like I just gave myself a $20,000 raise when you think of all the expenses that go into owning and maintaining and gassing and all of those things. So, so yeah, think of it like that. When you're not adding those expenses to your life. And you're putting it into an account as that cash cushion. It's like giving yourself a bit of a raise. Or maybe someday you can give yourself a bit of a raise.

Connie Vanderzanden 38:16

Yeah, yeah, it's, it's magic.

Kelly Lawson 38:19

It's magic. Connie, thank you so much for coming on the show today and being so open and honest about money and money mindset. I think it's a really important conversation to have. And I think as entrepreneurs, we need to be more open about it in general. So I appreciate you and all of your honesty and thank you again, so very much.

Connie Vanderzanden 38:39

Thank you, Kelly. This was lovely. Thanks.

Kelly Lawson 38:42

Connie's honesty is so refreshing. I love that she reminds us that money isn't good or bad, but it's simply a tool for us to make a difference in the world. We need to let go of the shame around not being great with finances, especially when we have people like her around to help guide us with expert advice and actions that we can implement in our lives. Starting today. understanding our cash flow is so important to a successful and sustainable business. And Connie provided us with a ton of resources to help get there. Be sure to check out her socials for all the goodies. And thank you again so much for joining me for yet another episode of the workshop weekly podcast. I definitely missed you. It's good to be back. Until next week, my friend.

Intro Voice 39:37

Thanks for listening to the workshop weekly podcast The show where no dream is too big and no topic is too small. If you like our show and want to know more, check out www dot the workshop weekly comm or leave a review on iTunes and we'll see you next week for another action packed episode you workshop warrior you