

**FRAN HAUSER EPISODE 198 PART 2 OF 2 - she said/she said podcast with Laura Cox Kaplan**  
**TRANSCRIPT**

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**TITLE: How to level-set priorities in your life and career!**

**SHOW OPEN:**

Laura Cox Kaplan:

Building influence is something anyone can learn. It's an investment you can make in yourself and it can hold the keys to achieving your dreams and having the life and impact you want to have. I'm Laura Cox Kaplan. I've learned a lot over three decades about building and sustaining influence and how using it and using it effectively can make a big difference in your life and career. Here on She Said/She Said podcast, we're digging into the different dimensions that help us build and sustain influence. If you thought being an influencer was just for social media, think again. Whether you're starting a business, raising money for a cause, negotiating a promotion, running your household or trying to connect with those who don't share your views, understanding and using the different dimensions of influence will increase your chances of success whatever your goals may be. Listening to She Said/She Said podcast is a smart, efficient investment you can make in you. I'm really glad you're here and I'm excited we're on this journey together.

**EPISODE 198 OPEN:**

Hey friend,

If you have trouble carving out the time to really strategize about your career, your life, or maybe a potential pivot, this conversation is for YOU! This conversation is also for you, if you carve out that time and then aren't entirely sure how to structure it so that you get the biggest return on your investment of TIME.

This is part 2 of my two part conversation with the amazing Fran Hauser. If you missed part 1 in Episode 197, be sure and go back and listen. Fran's perspective on how the quality of 'nice' has been differentiating for her in her incredibly successful career, is well worth a listen. She's not giving a lecture to us about how to behave, rather she's illustrating how just being herself and caring about others has been one of the secrets to her successful career. And it has also been a key to building and sustaining influence in her life and career.

Also in part one - i especially love how Fran talked about laying the groundwork for career pivots. Not waiting until you realize or are forced to make a pivot or reinvent yourself before planning and building important bridges that can help you when you make the shift. I'm going to be talking more about this topic of laying the groundwork in a future episode because it hit such a nerve with me... and I suspect it will resonate with you too.

Before we jump into today's conversation.... Here's a bit of background on Fran --- her career started in finance at my former firm PwC, then onto corporate roles at Coca Cola, Moviefone, aol time warner, then into media -- People, in style, and entertaininet weekly. At the peak of Fran's corporate and media career -- she decided to break out on her own to coach, mentor and invest in female founded companies. To date, she's invested in about 30 of them, including a few whose founders have joined us here at she said/she said podcast .

Fran is also the author of two terrific books "The Myth of hte Nice Girl: Achieving a Career you love w/out becoming a peson you hate." And more recently, "Embrace the Work, Love your career: a guided workbook for realizing your career goals with clarity, intention and confidence."

This workbook, friend, is a great one to take if you have a few solo days this summer -- or can carve out a few chunks of time for yourself during a get away. I think you'll find it well worth the time. And obviously the more time you are able to spend thinking about the questions Fran poses in the book, the more value you're likely to get. I have my own copy of Fran's book already packed in my suitcase and will be working through these questions myself this summer. I know they will spark lots of ideas not only for me, but that I can share with you as well....so stay tuned for that.

Now today in Ep198, part 2 of my conversation with Fran Hauser -- we'll pick up right where we left in episode 197 and dig into the "Embrace the Work, love your career" workbook. We'll talk about the four key areas that Fran says can have an outsized impact on your career, and how to strugcture and manage your priorities accordingly. We also talk a lot about building in time for reflection and why that matters.

Fran and I also talk about why we say yes when we really need to say no. And finally, a key piece of advice for developing a differentiated pitch for yourself or your business. All that and more in today's episode.

As always friend, you'll find additional takeaways, notes, and links to things we talk about in the conversation in the show notes for this episode. Episode 198. The best place to get those show notes is on the she said/she said podcast .com website. There you will also find a full transcript of this conversation -- actually all of our conversations. So be sure to check those things out as well. For now, here is my conversation with the amazing Fran Hauser

## **CONVERSATION [PART 2 OF 2]**

Laura Cox Kaplan:

I would love to pivot and get into more of the meat of the new book, Embrace The Work, Love Your Career. You have structured this book around six key topics. Let's dig into the structure and why you

decided to organize it the way that you did. You've actually touched on a number of different themes already in telling your story, but let's talk about how it's organized.

Fran Hauser:

Yeah. So there are six sections. The first section is called, fall in love with your career. And that section really, it's a lot of reflecting on what's working for you and what's not working for you. What are the parts of your current job that you really enjoy? What are the parts that you dread? What are the parts that you're good at? And what are the parts that you feel really valued for? So it's a lot of exercises with the intention of by the end of this section, being able to really visualize a career that you love, really being able to envision that. And then the second section is designing your career action plan, which will help you actualize that vision. So the career action plan gets really nitty gritty.

This is really where you're coming up with your, I alluded before to this idea of skills, personal brand, connections and value creation at work. Those are the four big areas for me. When I feel like I focused on those areas, it's had an outsized impact on my career. So I encourage women to create one goal in each of those four areas. And again, there's lots of exercises to help you come up with what that goal could be, could look like. Section three, create time and space. Great, you have these goals, but if you don't have the time and the bandwidth and the emotional space to actually work on it, they're never going to get done. So this section's really important. I feel like this could be a book in and of itself, right?

Laura Cox Kaplan:

Absolutely.

Fran Hauser:

This is all about setting boundaries, taking stuff off your to-do list, creating a to-don't list, really getting you laser focused on making sure that you're carving out time to focus on your career action plan. So it's not that you're just heads down doing your work. Right? But you're thinking bigger picture about your career. Section four is know your value. So this is all about feeling self-assured and feeling confident, which we know there's a huge confidence gap between men and women. We've spent a lot of time talking about that and I really want women to feel that they can do this. Section five, build your dream team. You don't need to go through your career journey alone, and the idea of having people in your life that are going to be there for you, whether they're formal mentors, whether they're champions, whether they're your peers, your friends, your colleagues. And then the last section reflect and reset.

I really get into mindfulness and how important mindfulness is, so that you're really going through your career in a way that's very intentional and that you're not just in autopilot mode. And so I really get into like, what are some just mindfulness practices that you can integrate into your day that are very doable? And so at that... and the other thing that I'll say about the structure that I really love is at the end of each section, there's a meditation that you can read, or you can listen to, you just scan the QR code if you want to listen to me reading it. And there's also a coloring break, there's a mandala, and there's just room for drawing and doodling, because I think it's really important when you end a section to pause and reflect versus just jumping into the next section.

Laura Cox Kaplan:

I love that. I love so much of this structure. And one of the things that jumped out at me is that this is a workbook that I think works whether you're trying to level set where you are in this moment or maybe you realize you want to make a pivot or you want to reinvent yourself or you find yourself out of a job and you're trying to figure out what do I do next? Or maybe it's just to get more growth out of the, where you are, you still like what you're doing, but maybe there's more, right? That's how I read this.

Fran Hauser:

Yes. And I'm so glad that you picked up on that because I think for so many of us, it's really easy to focus on the negative and what's not working for me right now in my job and the work that I do. And one of the exercises that I have that I really love and it's been so helpful to me over the years is this exercise where you look at your calendar for the last month, two, three, whatever works for you, and you pick out the meetings or the events or the experiences that put a smile on your face. And then you go deep into each one of those. And you think about what was it about that experience that was so fulfilling? Was it the type of problem that I was solving? Was it the skills that I was using?

Was it the people that I was working with? And what that allows you to do is really laser in on, what are the parts of your job that you enjoy? Because maybe there's a way that you can do more of that. Going back to Time Inc. when I was eight years in to my 10 year stint there, I started getting that itch, and I actually did that exercise. And that's when I realized I really do love the startup piece of my job. I wasn't loving, sometimes when your job gets bigger, it becomes more administrative, and that was the part that I wasn't loving. I felt like I was spending so much time working on budgets and cost containment and decks to present to the board.

And I was in this really negative space. And I remember doing that exercise and realizing, but wait a second, I love meeting the startups. Is there a way that I can do more of that? I ended up talking to my boss about it and we decided that we would create this innovation lab at the company that I would run. And that allowed me to spend more of my time doing the work that I loved. And I had to go through and say like, what can I take off my plate and assign those things to my team, which by the way, they were so happy to take on more. Because those things that I didn't want to do were actually stretches. They were stretch assignments for my team. But it was just such a great exercise for me. And I've done that a few times where, because again, it's so natural to think about what's not working, but if you could just shift that mindset to, okay, what is working and is there a way that I could do more of that?

Laura Cox Kaplan:

Yeah. I'm curious, you put a real premium on reflection at these different points in times, it's a big part of this book. Is that something that you've always done that you did naturally or at what point did you realize this is a thing? Maybe not everybody does it quite this way because, and I think you mentioned this maybe in both books, it's a well known thing that for an awful lot of women, we get really wrapped up in the minutia of our career in a way that sometimes men don't. Again, not true of every single woman every time, but it is generally true that we do tend to put our heads down and do the work and maybe less inclined naturally to take that step back and really reflect. Maybe talk about why you think, why you've done this or when you recognized the need to do that and why it was important.

Fran Hauser:

I believe that I recognized how important reflection is actually when I got my first executive coach. And it was right after I returned to work after my first maternity leave. So this was what, this was 11 years ago.

Fran Hauser:

And I remember I was really struggling because, I don't know, I was feeling very vulnerable because I wanted to show that I could still do it all, even though I had a baby now. And I was struggling with saying yes to everything and the really important things weren't getting done. Going back to your point about, I was getting all the easy things done on my to-do list, but the big strategic rocks were slipping through the cracks. So I decided to hire an executive coach and she was amazing. A lot of what she did with me, a lot of what she did with me was ask questions very much like a therapist. She would ask the right questions and a lot of those questions would lead to reflection. And it got to a point where, I worked with her for years, and it just became a practice. Right? The more you do something, it just became a practice, a muscle that I built that just became a very natural part of my life.

Laura Cox Kaplan:

And you were seeing value from it, right?

Fran Hauser:

I was seeing so much value from it because, when I hired her, what I realized was that I was just, talk about being in autopilot mode. I was just like a machine, just getting stuff done. And I remember sitting with her and really taking a big step back and thinking about, what are the big... where do I want to be spending my time? And I remember drawing an X-axis and a Y-axis, so I call it my Foursquare model, where the four quadrants are me, family, career and world, world being more of the nonprofit work that I do. And I just came up with a couple of really big things in each one of those four areas that I wanted to focus on and structured my day so that I could really be spending 70 to 80% of it in those areas. It's not realistic to say it's going to be 100%, right, because there's always the administrative stuff that we have to do. But I've used, I call it my Foursquare and I've been using it since then. It's been 11 years. I still have it today and it's something that I always refer to.

Laura Cox Kaplan:

I think this is in Myth of the Nice Girl, too, right? Because I know it's in one, maybe in both books, but I know it's in that one.

Fran Hauser:

Yep. There's a whole chapter on it in The Myth of the Nice Girl, and it's just something like, for me, it's really great. Once a quarter, I check in with myself and I'm like, do these still apply? Do I want to change things up? And every week, this is the important part from a discipline perspective, every Friday or over the weekend, I will look at my calendar for the upcoming week and I look at my to-do list because that's where you're spending your time. Right? Calendar and to-do list. So I look at that and I look for alignment with my foursquare. And if there is an alignment, then I change things up, because I'm always about creating time in my calendar. So I might move a meeting out. I might cancel it. I might shorten it. I might delegate it if I feel like, wait a second, you know how sometimes you say yes to things and then you're like, why did I say yes to this?

Laura Cox Kaplan:

All the time.

Fran Hauser:

All the time, I'm like, why is this on my calendar? What was I thinking when I said yes? So I'm very disciplined about that. And I think that's a really important part of it is that constant, weekly check-in, and also I pay attention to, if there's a certain priority that I'm just never getting to, maybe it's not really a priority. And I have to revisit it.

Laura Cox Kaplan:

Yeah. Yeah. It's so interesting because as you're talking about that inclination to say yes to things, there's a couple things at work, right? There's both your voracious curiosity of learning something new, and so when you're a really curious person and you love learning, you may be more inclined to say yes to everything, right? And when you couple that with the nice piece and trying to be helpful to other people, there's a couple of things at play there. Let's talk about pushing back, you've talked a little bit about prioritizing and how you go about doing that. But maybe how you get the balance right. And talk about setting boundaries for yourself and for other people, as it relates to not taking on too much, not saying yes to things that really don't make sense for you.

Fran Hauser:

Yeah. And this is so important and it's a big part of section three in Embrace The Work Of Your Career because I actually did a survey because I wanted to understand why we have such a hard time saying no. And what I learned is that it's really complicated. There were 15 different reasons, from people pleasing, which you just touched on, which is my big thing, to FOMO, to feeling vulnerable, to being addicted to being busy, believe it or not. And just wanting to like, right.

Laura Cox Kaplan:

Oh, that's a big thing.

Fran Hauser:

That addiction. So there's all these reasons. So I always say, step one to this is knowing what is your reason. What is your why for having a hard time saying no and being hyper aware of that so that when you get that request in your inbox and you're about to say, yes, it's like checking in with yourself. Like for me, I literally have to check in with myself and say, wait a second. Am I saying yes just because I feel bad saying no? Or am I saying yes, because this is really like something that's strategic, it's something that's aligned with my priorities. Or maybe it's just something that it's going to bring me joy, something that I want to do? So I have to be very intentional and it's very important that I do that. Sometimes I'll even say, you know what? I don't need to respond to this right now.

Let me think about it and then come back to it. And I always say, when you say, no, you can keep it short and sweet. You don't need to spend three paragraphs explaining why you can't do something. You can start by saying, thank you, thank you for thinking of me, thank you for the invitation. And then, you can just say, look, I'm heads down. I'm heads down writing my book. I'm heads down working on my business. I'm heads down working on this project. So I'm not going to be able to participate, but I wish you all the best. Two lines, two lines. And it's so important because I just think about how I feel, I feel like when I say no, it's like, ugh, I just created all this time for myself and all this space. Right? So it's

one of the most important things that we can do is to protect that. Protect that time and protect that energy because they really are most special and most precious resources.

Laura Cox Kaplan:

Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. I would love for you to talk a little bit about your own personal practice, your own mindfulness practice. I know you're very dedicated to it every day. What does that look like for you?

Fran Hauser:

Yeah, it's really the morning. It's when I wake up, I always wake up like 20 minutes before my kids wake up because I need that time to just get myself ready for the day. And one of the things that I always try to do is just something that will help me to connect with myself. It could be listening to a two minute guided meditation, it might be stretching, it might be doing my gratitude journal. It could look different every day, but it's really important that I'm doing something to connect with myself. And I'm not looking at my phone, first thing. That's a really big deal for me because I know that as soon as I look at my phone, I'm going to start getting all like, oh my gosh, the emails and the texts. So just, it's something that I feel so strongly about, if you could start your day by connecting with yourself, truly feeling grounded, whatever that might look like for you, it's huge.

It puts me in such a good place for the whole day. It just helps me feel more present, more grounded, not as frenzied, not as rushed. The other thing that I always like to say is I really try to build in 10 minutes between Zooms, between meetings just so that I can reset. It doesn't feel good for me when I'm rushing from one meeting right into another. Because I really want to make sure that I'm connecting with people and it's hard to do that when you're doing... Even like now, Laura, we're going to finish up soon and I have 30 minutes before my next meeting. The back to back doesn't work. It just doesn't work. So it's just integrating these little, these are just little things, right, throughout the day.

The other one that I like is when I start a meeting, I always like to spend a minute or two just connecting with the other person and not just jumping into the agenda, but maybe asking them how a certain part of the project is going. If I know that they've been struggling with it, just something to show that you've been listening to them and that you're very aware of what's going on with them at work or in their life. And I think again, when you do that, it makes the rest of the meeting so much more productive versus just jumping into the agenda.

Laura Cox Kaplan:

Yeah, absolutely. I'm going to shift gears a little bit because I'd love to get your thoughts on this. As a piece of this workbook is around knowing your value and part of that can be developing your brand and your personal pitch, you hear a lot of pitches from female founders, these companies that you're working with and advising maybe best practices or some great tips for developing that excellent pitch for yourself. Whether it's your company or yourself or both.

Fran Hauser:

Yeah. I always say, I think it's so compelling when I hear a pitch and the founder starts with their origin story, their why, versus just jumping into the market and the product and the pain point. I want to hear really about, why is the founder personally excited and passionate about this and why are they the right person to be taking this on? And I feel like so often, founders will pitch me and they just skip that

part. They're so focused on the product and the market as opposed to focusing on why they're the perfect person to be taking this on. So that would be my biggest advice.

Laura Cox Kaplan:

That's really great advice. Maybe one final question. If you could go back and talk to 22 year old Fran as she was just launching in her career, what advice would you give her?

Fran Hauser:

I think the biggest advice I would give her is to not put so much emphasis on what you believe others expect of you, but to really create your own expectations for yourself. I think that's something, especially early on in my career, I was always just so worried about what others, what I believed others expected of me in my career in terms of my next move. And I think, it's just really important to believe in yourself and to set your own expectations.

Laura Cox Kaplan:

Yeah. That's great advice. Fran, I loved this conversation. Thank you so much for the time.

Fran Hauser:

Oh, thank you for having me. I really enjoyed it, Laura. Thank you. And thank you for everything that you're doing.

Laura Cox Kaplan:

Thank you. Well, I love both books. The latest one Embrace The Work, Love Your Career is out now, but you need to also pick up the Myth of the Nice Girl, achieving a career you love without becoming a person you hate. They're both terrific. We'll include those links to purchase those in the show notes for the episode. Fran, thank you so much again, really loved it.

Fran Hauser:

Thanks Laura.

## **EPISODE CLOSE**

Hey friend, I hope you enjoyed part 2 of my two-part conversation with Fran Hauser.

A few themes that really jumped out for me --- Fran's four square model, how she thinks about reflection and mindfulness, her thoughts on saying no to things we might feel obligated to say yes to, and then her terrific advice on how to make your pitch stand out. So many great pieces of advice packed in here.

I think my favorite topic from this episode was probably how Fran talks about the power reflection and why it matters as we set a strategy for our career journey. That focus on being strategic is clearly a core value for Fran, along with that important quality we talked so much about in Episode 197 -- how nice has been a differentiating factor for her in her career.

Most of all, friend, I hope you found this investment of Your time with us worthwhile and I would love to hear from you. You can send me a DM on social media. You'll find me @LAuraCoxKaplan on instagram, linked in and facebook. Or, you can use the contact link at she said/she said podcast .com which i've also included in the show notes, along with a full transcript of this episode. You will find full transcripts of all of our she said/she said podcast conversations on our website at shesaidshesaidpodcast.com. I'll talk to you again next week. Until then take care. she said/she said podcast is a weekly production of she said/she said media #