

She Said/She Said Podcast With Laura Cox Kaplan

Episode 240

Title: How To build a values-based brand that helps you avoid the comparison trap!

Guest: Mimi Striplin, founder, The Tiny Tassel

SHOW OPEN

Laura Cox Kaplan ([00:06](#)):

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, 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 INTRODUCTION

Laura Cox Kaplan ([01:20](#)):

Hey friend, welcome to the podcast. Question for you. Have you ever fallen into the comparison trap? You know the one where you look around especially on Instagram or social media and you see what others are doing and you start comparing where you are personally and professionally, what you are or aren't doing, and before you know it, you've fallen into a rabbit hole of self-doubt that can literally obliterate your confidence. Does this sound familiar? Well, social media gets much of the blame for this, but in reality, that tendency would probably be there whether Instagram existed or not. It's just that we now have more of a lens and more options to see what others want us to see up close than what we used to. But it's really important to distinguish and differentiate between competition and comparison. Competition is a good thing, especially when it challenges motivates and inspires us, which is what it should do.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([02:28](#)):

And of course, keeping tabs on the competition is important and can give us some great data, but when we let competition drift and become an exercise of comparison that my friend is when we enter the danger zone, and it can be very difficult, tricky and even painful to ultimately navigate our way out. That is why I'm excited to welcome this week's guest because she shares so much great on this topic, including how to know who to listen to. I know you're going to love her and I know you're going to love this conversation. Mimi Striplin is the founder of Charleston, South Carolina based the tiny tassel, this joyful jewelry, accessory and apparel brand is located right on Spring Street

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in the heart of that beautiful city. If you are headed that direction, be sure to stop by and check out the shop and be sure to tell them that you listened to She said, she said podcast.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([03:29](#)):

In addition to showcasing her own designs that started with tassel earrings and have grown to so much more, Mimi also is dedicated to using her influence and her success to showcase and support other founders and other artists. My conversation with Mimi is a continuation of the collaboration series that we have been doing with the Southern CIE over the past few weeks. We've been talking with women who are part of that network of female founders and entrepreneurs and I have been sharing these conversations and they're great advice for building businesses and careers and doing so in a way that creates real influence for themselves, but also influence that they can and do share with others including you. We have talked about brand building with the Queen of embellished accessories and specifically the embellished headband, the wonderful Lilli Sugi. We've talked career sustainability with Franklin West, founder of the fabulous Ashley Miles.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([04:36](#)):

We've talked creativity and innovation with the Uber creative former food and wine editor-in-chief Dana Cowen. We've talked impact investing with the very thoughtful founder of Curate Capital, Carrie Colbert, and we've talked mindset with author and caterer to the Uber elite, the always entertaining and fabulous Mary Giuliani. This week we add to that lineup my conversation with Mimi St. Striplin, where we dig into how you can align your values with your brand and how to learn which voices to listen to as you navigate through competition and build your personal and professional brand. Mimi and I also talk about not only how she got started and built her brand, but the part of the conversation that I think you will especially love relates to how Mimi talks about living her company's core values and using those values as a guide for everything that they do at the tiny tassel from the customer experience to her digital strategy, to maintaining team alignment, and of course that discipline helps her create a distinctive experience for her customer and it enables Mimi to create more influence for herself and it also helps her navigate the competitive landscape. In addition, it is also the secret to navigating and really avoiding the comparison trap. Mimi also talks about her experience working with a business coach and how that can be a really critical element for growing your business. She also shares advice for recharging and learning to work smarter, not harder. I certainly took notes on that part of the conversation. Okay, Friend, here is my conversation with the fabulous founder of the Tiny Tassel, Mimi Striplin.

Laura Cox Kaplan:

Mimi, welcome to She Said, said,

Mimi Striplin ([06:35](#)):

Thank you so much for having me, Laura. So excited to be here with you.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([06:38](#)):

Well, I'm delighted to have you. I've been looking so forward to our conversation because I have watched you grow this incredible company and business of yours over the past couple of years. You've just celebrated your second anniversary, actually the second anniversary of the storefront, I should say, right? Not the second anniversary of the business, but take us back let's talk about the Tiny Tassel and then let's talk about how it started.

Mimi Striplin ([07:07](#)):

Yeah. The Tiny Tassel is this joyful explosion of color and accessories and clothing that we design, and our flagship is here in Charleston, South Carolina, and it's evolved so much over the last eight years. I started back in 2015, I was a year out of college. I'd graduated from the College of Charleston with no clue of what I wanted to do, and I always had this faraway dream of wanting to open a boutique one day. And for some reason I thought, okay, maybe later in life after I have a career, I can circle back and open a boutique. And about a year into my said career, I thought there is so much more to life that I need to do this now, if not now, than when would I ever do this. And so that's where the tiny Tassel began.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([07:59](#)):

What were you doing Mimi? What was the career that you had launched

Mimi Striplin ([08:03](#)):

Into? So I was working in retail management here in Charleston. I was managing a menswear store, very traditional. It was a family-owned business that's been around for years and years, and it was a great experience to learn so much of what we now use and don't use within my company. And so it ended up being sort of a foundational block for me that I didn't even know at the time that I would go back and think back on and appreciate.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([08:33](#)):

Yeah. So let's talk about how you got started. You had launched this career and you started dabbling in jewelry making as I understand it, right? This was basically a side hustle. Talk me through kind of what happened next.

Mimi Striplin ([08:49](#)):

Yes. So I never made jewelry before. I am not the most artistic person. If someone asks me to pick up a pen and draw something, I start to sweat a little bit because that's not how my brain works best. And my sister actually gifted a pair of hot pink tassel earrings, and I share the story all the time because it truly is what sparked the tiny tassel, and she is our C F O. She is so financially responsible and I'm so grateful for her. She's helped us get to where we are today. But I remember I begged her for these hot pink tassel earrings and then got them in the mail and she said, you know, could have made those right. And I don't know if it was that older sister fighting or setting a flame under you, but it just set something off of me and I was like, wow, I could make these.

Mimi Striplin ([09:43](#)):

And so I took to the internet, of course, and I started researching how to make tassel jewelry, and it was something that I just loved and I gravitated towards beautiful Oscar de Lorenza, like \$400 beaded tassel earrings, but of course I was 22, did not have a salary that could afford that style of earring. And so I said, I'll try to make my own version of it. And that's where it all started. And I looked back now to that time of thinking. I didn't even know that I would use my creativity in that way. And for anyone listening who's sitting here thinking I'm not creative or I'm not artistic, it really just takes finding that thing inside of you that you love so much and turning it into a real tangible thing. And you'll be surprised by how creative you are.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([10:35](#)):

Mimi, I love what you just said. I am such a big believer that every person is endowed with some version of creativity. We don't all go and paint pictures. We don't all go and make beautiful tassel earrings. We can use that creativity in all sorts of ways, including related to problem solving. Right? Absolutely. So I love what you just said. That's a beautiful answer. So you launched your business on the internet. You started with an Etsy store, as I understand it, right? Yes. Talk us through what happened next.

Mimi Striplin ([11:08](#)):

Yeah. Etsy was the place to start a business back then, and it was a great resource to get started because there was so much traffic going to their site. There were so many people going to Etsy to find handmade goods and support small businesses, and I did that and I started to attend popups and shows and trunk shows anywhere that anyone invited me to come set up my table and sell. I went and I was still working in retail full-time about five to six days a week. And so on any of my off time or after work hours, I was setting up somewhere popping up, and that's really where the brand started to grow here in Charleston and become recognizable. And there were many years of the hustle and bustle of schlepping the table around setting it up like 90 degrees summer days here in Charleston. And I'll never forget that because I'm so humbled by that. Even last week we

had a couple of popups and I helped to take the table and set up and sell, and it's such a special way to connect with customers, and I'm so glad that that's the route that I took to now to grow to where I am today.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([12:23](#)):

Yeah. Talk about the impact of having that direct customer experience. I mean, even though now that you've grown, you're still doing popups, but you have grown beyond that point where you now have a storefront and you're a bigger business than you were when you first started, but maybe talk about the value of what you learn from that direct customer interaction, kind of how that helps, has helped you think about and grow the business and also evolve and innovate.

Mimi Striplin ([12:52](#)):

Oh my gosh, so much can be learned. I always tell our team, let's listen to our customers, number one, and let's listen to how we're reacting to things or how we're kind of shying away from that interaction. When we're working with a direct customer, whether that's at a pop-up or in our flagship store, there is so much to be learned, whether it's a product that they're asking for or loving, whether it's the sizing of our dresses or the colors of our earrings. It's been such a great, great part of our business to be able to hear from our customers directly and interact with them. And I would say that is one of the most invaluable things that a business owner can really take the time to listen to. And I'm not saying listen to every single thing that an outside person tells you about your business. Because I also went through that phase of a customer would ask me to make this type of tassel necklace. I would make it because I was just in the mindset of I'll make anything that they ask for related to a tassel. At one point, I made tassel curtain hooks, and I would never do that now because that's not our focus, that's not our core product. And so we have to learn to navigate what we're listening to and what we're actually going to implement from that customer feedback or that just outside party feedback.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([14:23](#)):

Yeah, I love that. Can you go maybe a step deeper and give us some advice for how do you know who to listen to? Because I think when you've got lots of inputs that are coming to you and feedback is a great thing, it's a gift. Not all feedback is created equal. So how do you differentiate between the input that you're getting that's like, okay, that's a really great idea, and the input that you're like, oh, thanks so much. But yeah, I think I'll pass.

Mimi Striplin ([14:51](#)):

Yes, a lot of women that I coach struggle with this and bring this issue to me. And I would say first and foremost, does it align with your company values? And if you're listening and you're like, wait, do I have company values? This is a challenge for me to

take five, 10 minutes today. And you probably already have your company values in your mind. It just isn't written down anywhere. And you will be able to work from that for choosing the products that you design and sell, choosing the customer that aligns with your values and brands. And that will then take you to that next step of knowing how to navigate all of those outside voices and determine whether or not that's something that you want to take to heart and implement, or if that's something that you just say, thank you so much for your feedback and you move forward.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([15:42](#)):

Yeah, I mean, that's great advice. Whether you're building a shop and you're selling jewelry and accessories, whether you are launching some of maybe even a service business, that is great advice across all those fronts. Can you give us some advice and perspective on how you nail down what your core values are? I mean, it may seem like an obvious thing, but I think oftentimes people sit down and they say, okay, I'm not quite sure where to start with this exercise. What's your advice for really corralling what those core values are and how many do you need?

Mimi Striplin ([16:17](#)):

I would say don't get, don't overthink it because I struggled with it. I overthought this so much. And I remember it was about a year ago, I was working with a local HR company, and Ashley from their team asked, what are your team values? What are your core values? And I was like, I don't know. And she just challenged me to go and Google core team values. And that then aligned with what our brand values showed, and it was spreading joy, being intentional with the products that we sell, with the service that we give, being able to determine if we are just working from a place of integrity and that comes with the quality of our products, the way that we respond to our customers. And it was all of these things that we were already doing. We just never put names to it. And now we go back to all of those, and it may feel a little cliché, some of them because it's like, okay, honesty, integrity, but it is so important because whether we are building out our next line of products or we're looking to bring someone on an add to our team, we're coming back to these core sets of values to just reassess and say, does that align with it?

Mimi Striplin ([17:39](#)):

And then all of our goals come from that as well. It tells us, is this aligning with our core values and mission? Yes. Then we'll move forward. If it's not, then we understand that this may not be the time for us to move forward with whatever that is. Yeah.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([17:55](#)):

I love something that you said. I love all of that, but I also love something that you said a moment ago which relates to the fact that you also work with aspiring entrepreneurs or entrepreneurs, folks that have launched their businesses are trying to launch their

business. Maybe talk a little bit about that part of your life and why that's an important sort of component to what you're doing, and frankly how you have time to do that too. We should talk about that as well.

Mimi Striplin ([18:22](#)):

Yes. So I have loved being able to share my knowledge, share my expertise, my experience through coaching and consulting, and it's been such an honor to work with other women who are growing their businesses, whether they're just starting out or they're trying to reach seven figures like I was. And it's been really, really fulfilling to share all of this knowledge because I think of myself even a year, 2, 6, 8 years ago, I did not have a source that I could go to say, Hey, this is an issue that I've come up with, or this is something that I'm struggling with and just need a sound piece of advice. I don't need to go to the internet for it. I don't need to go to my friends and family, although they have been very supportive of me over the years, but you just need some other person to guide you and to help you navigate.

Mimi Striplin ([19:19](#)):

And the coaching for me is something that is so special. I offer weekly group coaching through the brim and to see the ideas and the light bulbs go off with the women in my group and to see them actually implement what we work on and see their revenue grow has been tremendous to me to be able to be a part of, to say, wow, I'm able to impact someone in that way. And through my business when I first started, I will be very transparent and say, I just started it to make extra money on the side, and I just thought, this is a really cute, fun way to make some extra money. And I did not even have my goals or my vision set on what it's evolved into today. And going back to what you asked about, how do I have time, I've really invested over the last two years in building a really incredible team, and that's something that I struggled with through I would say the first five years of my business.

Mimi Striplin ([20:20](#)):

I was a solopreneur and it was the control, the fear of bringing someone on and allowing them to know all the parts of the business, allowing them to ask questions and have to be trained and all of that. But I can promise you anyone who's listening, it is so worth it to build your team out to have others that can help and delegate things, to have their ideas, their input. It is just so, so incredible. And when I finally stepped into that next portion of my business, that's when it's like the floodgates opened up for us. Yeah,

Laura Cox Kaplan ([21:03](#)):

I love that. So many things that I want to sort of jump off of, but one before I forget, is the fact that we are having this conversation as part of our collaboration series with The Southern C, but last year when we did this collaboration series, I had the amazing Sally

Holder who you just mentioned, the brim that is her coaching company that you are part of, and you've been, I think, a coachee, coachee, if that's a word. Yes. A coachee of Sally's. She is amazing and phenomenal, but it's a great example of how all of these pieces through The Southern C ultimately fit together. But she was a fabulous guest and has that terrific book. And so maybe advice for how do you know when you need to secure a coach as opposed to having friends or others who are advising you? When do you know or how did you know that you needed to get outside help?

Mimi Striplin ([22:04](#)):

Yeah. One of my only regrets in growing my business is not having a coach sooner. And a big part of that was that I did not know where to look for a coach and what a coach really was, what it meant to have a business coach guiding you and helping you with the strategy and with your vision and clarity. And that's a big part of why I decided to join the Brim as one of their business coaches because I just got so much out of it. My life and my business was changed for the better by participating in coaching, by receiving coaching. And for me as just a woman of color who is young, who is successful, who is here in Charleston and who doesn't see a lot of other business owners that look like me here in my city, I wanted to be able to be a resource for these other women where they could come to me, feel comfortable, feel seen, and grow their businesses because I get the most questions from other women of color asking, how did you do it? How are you able to walk into a room where no one else looks like you, but you show up confidently, you show up authentically, and I want to help other women do that and be able to just grow their businesses while also being true to themselves.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([23:21](#)):

Yeah, that's amazing. You also are really great at showcasing other vendors in your store and really helping to support others get their start. Maybe talk a little bit about that piece of your business as well, and kind of how the, are they official collaborations or you're just carrying those products, or how does that work?

Mimi Striplin ([23:41](#)):

Yeah, it's a little bit of both. And some of these relationships go back to my pop-up days. That was one of the best parts of the pop-ups. Not only interacting with our customers directly, but meeting all of these amazing business owners and vendors at these events. And some of them are my best friends. Some people listening may know that I used to co-own another brick and mortar store, and our business model there was that we rented space to local makers and artists, and it allowed me to really just emerge myself in it and get to know these makers and get to know their stories and share it. And so I've always felt very passionate about that because we can't be successful all by ourselves. If we're successful at the top of the mountain by ourselves and no one else is there, then what fun is that?

Mimi Striplin ([24:32](#)):

And so for me, when I opened my flagship store, I knew immediately that I wanted to have some of these other women and black women, Asian women owned brands in the store represented, because again, we don't see a lot of that here in downtown Charleston. And it's so special when a customer comes in and they pick up a piece, whether it's another handmade earring from our local vendors, BR Design or a Body oil that's made by Motherland Essentials, and they instantly fall in love with it. They want to know the story behind it, and we're able to share that and create lifelong customers for that other brand as well as for ours. And it just sets us apart. It makes us more unique, and it goes back to our core mission of just spreading joy.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([25:21](#)):

Yeah. Oh, that's amazing. You guys are, you're sort of a family business, but not in the traditional sense. You have family members who work for the company, is really a better way to think about that, right? Your mom, your sister. I'm, I'm not sure of it. I think you have other family members as well. Maybe talk a little bit about navigating that. I mean, it can be wonder, a wonderful blessing to work with family, but it can also have its own unique challenges. Maybe talk about navigating that for anyone else who may be listening, who's thinking about launching something and has the gracious help of family members to do so. How do you navigate challenges when they come up?

Mimi Striplin ([26:05](#)):

Yes. I always say small business is not for the faint of heart and small business. Working with your family is definitely not for the faint of heart. It is one of the most special things about the tiny tassel. And a lot of people assume that it is a family business because they get to see my mom designing our clothing, my sister named and helping design the jewelry and serving as our C F O, but it's really a case of my begging over the years of like, mom, will you please please make clothing for my brand? And now she's been doing that for about five years, and it's evolved into such a huge part of our business that we never would've guessed. We thought that everyone would still only focus on the jewelry and the accessories, but the clothing has grown into such a huge part, and my mom served almost as a contractor to our business for years, and she's a full-time employee now.

Mimi Striplin ([27:03](#)):

Our team knows her, our customers know her, and they love her. And my sister, she does not live here in Charleston, so not many people know her, but they know of her. And it's just been really, really cool to have such a supportive family, but also have family members that will check me when I need to check myself, when I need to check my attitude, how I'm responding to them or someone else or how I'm speaking about the business or speaking to myself about the business. If there were any ever times where I

felt like overwhelmed, I knew that I could ask them for help and whether they were here and could physically help package earrings or ship boxes or do post office runs, or whether it was my dad before who used to help us with, we called 'em our quality control expert, and he would help check the quality of our earrings and package them all throughout just the pandemic. And it was really special to have different family members be a part of the brand. Even a cousin of mine, we grew up and we're so close, and they came to work with us last year and it was really incredible to see them blossom and grow within our team and make an impact in my business.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([28:25](#)):

Yeah, that's great. That's really great. Let's talk about growing your business through a good strong digital strategy and what that has looked like for you. I know you guys got some great attention during Covid and he really helped you fully launch. Your business was already launched, but it really kind of shot you to a whole new level. Talk about what happened and maybe talk about some best practices for how the best ways are to showcase your brand on social media and with your digital strategy.

Mimi Striplin ([28:59](#)):

Yeah, I always like to address that during that time in Covid when we received so much media attention and press features, a lot of people who didn't know our brand or who maybe knew us at a distance, they thought, oh, it's an overnight success. And we have to back up from there and say, it was only possible for us to grow and scale so much during that time and use that attention to our benefit because we've been working for years at that time, five years, to grow our digital footprint, to grow all that we were doing strategy wise. And it's like when the attention came, we were ready. We were like, okay, we can handle it. We can do it. And so many businesses unfortunately, are not prepared for that. And so I always say being featured on large news platform can be a blessing and a curse.

Mimi Striplin ([29:54](#)):

We've seen businesses shut down because they can't handle the demand, and I never want to see a business have to shut down their business or stop their business because of that. I want every single business to be ready for that. And having a digital strategy in place for us looked like shooting with our photographer quarterly and monthly at the time to make sure we had really beautiful images that just captured our brand so perfectly. And finding a photographer that can get your vision and can do that, and Serena, who also has attended The Southern C and shot the headshots there, she has been just, we say she's like our fairy godmother when it comes to our photography and our imagery, and we started the business, or I started back on Etsy, and I think that just always instilled in me like, okay, there's always going to be a big digital part here.

Mimi Striplin ([30:53](#)):

And at the time, Instagram was just kind of starting. Not many businesses were there, and I just said, okay, I'll make an Instagram because it's free. It's a way that I can reach people. My friends and family already follow my private account, so I'll make this and beg them to follow and share it with all of their friends. And we have been able to reach so many customers and so many supporters through our social media, through our website, through our email newsletter. And it's been because of consistency, even on the days and the weeks that are so quiet or so much slower with sales, we know that that's not a representation of our business as a whole. We know that what's happening consistently is growing and still moving us to have success and to meet our goals and to beat our goals revenue wise or otherwise. And so sticking with a consistent digital strategy is one of my biggest pieces of advice to any business owner out there.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([31:54](#)):

Any advice for how to do that? Because you're talking about the slow days and those are probably few and far between. More likely you feel like you're drinking from a fire hose and you have a million things going on and you're like, oh yeah, shoot, we've got to also post to Instagram. We've got to make sure that we keep that consistent cadence up. What advice do you have for how you plan that out? How you can stay consistent, especially when things get chaotic.

Mimi Striplin ([32:22](#)):

I would say first, invest in your email newsletter, your newsletter subscribers. That is one thing that you have control over. We don't own any of our social media platforms. We've seen accounts and brands have their pages hacked, have their shut down, and I never want to see a business owner have to go through that. Also, set up your two factor authentication, just a reminder,

Laura Cox Kaplan ([32:46](#)):

Very good advice.

Mimi Striplin ([32:50](#)):

But being able to just be able to reach your customers consistently, have a plan, whether it's you're sitting down for two hours and creating your weeks' content or your weeks emails or social media stories, having templates that are easy to drop in content so that you don't have to spend a lot of time doing that part of it will allow you to create seamless, consistent content to share across the board, and it'll allow you to spend more time where it really matters, which could be looking at your numbers and analytics and really looking at the behaviors of your customers and figuring out the best way to engage with them versus spending tons of time creating really, really, really cute pieces of content, but it's not reaching the right people and giving you the right result. And I say

that from experience because we've been there. We have to kind of reassess our digital strategy every so often because we don't want to continue on the same plane forever and ever because we know that there's so many things that change, whether it's on social media, every day I feel like there's a new feature or new best practices, and it can feel so hard to keep up with the next trend or the next platform. And if you feel like you can invest just consistently into one of those and do it well and reach your customers, then spend your time there.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([34:17](#)):

Yeah, that's good advice. How about investing in, or I guess said another way, what's your advice for having other people support your digital strategy but still staying engaged with it? Because it can be one of those things where I see people outsource their digital strategy, and oftentimes it doesn't, doesn't not always the answer necessarily. So maybe talk about getting the balance right.

Mimi Striplin ([34:45](#)):

Yeah, we have done it different ways over the years. For many years, I was the one who was our marketing team, and it took a lot to bring someone on, and it's not because I didn't want to give that off. I so badly wanted to give that to someone else to do. And it's a big role. It's a big job. And one of the biggest things that helped with the alignment of us, whether it was outsourcing some of it or bringing on a full-time team member to manage our marketing, was to have our clear goals, our clear vision, our clear copy about our brand, our brand voice. And that has been something that's evolved over the years. And so we go back to it. It's a living document, it's a living thing that's ever changing, but having that in place allows it to just be in alignment with what we were doing before, what we want to do now and what we want to do in the future, and being able to have that in place where we even have a document of words and phrases that we don't use, or words and phrases that we do use.

Mimi Striplin ([35:56](#)):

For instance, this month we were celebrating and posting content about International Women's Day as a brand. We are never going to call women girl bosses. And that's something that we just simply have on our list so that anyone who steps in to manage our content or manage our social, they're able to look at these clear guidelines in clear systems and say, okay, this is what we need to do. This is going to stay on brand and this is going to reach their customers.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([36:27](#)):

Yeah, that is such good advice. I love what you just said. It also reminded me of another question. How often do you think as a best practice, should you be pulling those things

out and reviewing them and maybe refining them? Is that once a quarter or twice a year? Once a year? What do you think?

Mimi Striplin ([36:49](#)):

I think it depends on what season your business is in. We have done it twice in the last six months because we've had team changes, but we've also grown and evolved our business in many ways internally that a lot of people don't see externally. And it's been a lot of new systems being put in place because we were now reaching new goals and reaching new levels of our business that just with that just naturally comes changes that happen internally, whether that is looking back at our copy and it's like, oh, wait, do we no longer hand make this style? Do we have someone else hand making it? We need to change all of that. And it's something that now we're working on having one team member who part of her week, she audits all of that on a consistent basis because we have so many product skews, we have so many pieces of content going out into the world that it's something that before I would do it about once a year and looking back, I wish that I would've spent and dedicated more time to that because there was a lot of wasted money and wasted time because I wasn't coming back and refreshing how we spoke to our customers, how we engaged with them, what we were putting out there into the world.

Mimi Striplin ([38:11](#)):

And so I would highly recommend putting it on your calendar once a quarter, whether it's just a brain dump that you do if you're a solopreneur, or whether it's you do that brain dump and have an engaging exercise with your team or with your marketing third party team that you're working with. It's really, really helpful and it just keeps you aligned and it keeps you involved in a way, even if you are not the one who's personally running your social media or writing up your emails that go out.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([38:41](#)):

Yeah, I love that advice. I think it applies whether you're running a business or whether you're looking at your own personal brand and your own sort of professional trajectory. I think that same advice should apply to you personally as you think about your career as well, don't you think? Yeah. Let's talk about recharging and burnout and dealing with the, it can be so easy to just fall under the crush of so much. You've gone from being a solopreneur to running this small business. You now have employees to manage who are helping you, but they still have to be managed. There's a lot on your plate. Maybe talk about how you recharge yourself and how you avoid getting into those situations of burnout in the first place.

Mimi Striplin ([39:37](#)):

Absolutely. It starts with self-awareness. If we are just never looking inward at how is this affecting me, but also taking that outward and saying, okay, I'm burnt out, so I am not showing up as my best self for my team, for my customers, for my family, my friends. If we are so caught up in the day-to-day motions, then we can never take time to get off of that hamster wheel and live a true intentional life. And I did that for so long, and I look back to that time of my life, and it was just a combination of societal pressures and false expectations that I put on myself. Others put on me that I allowed to be there, and I really didn't understand that there was a way to be a small business owner and not be burnt out. I thought it was just the thing.

Mimi Striplin ([40:30](#)):

And we still see it today, and again with the women that I coach, they come to us and they're either on the verge of burnout or they are there and they can't see a way out of it. And that's where coaching, again, comes back to being such a crucial part of business growth and business development because you have someone that says, look, I've been there before and these are the things, these are the tools that have helped me. And for me personally, it's being so self-aware with how I'm spending my time, how I'm treating my body, how I'm treating others. And for me, that looks like every morning I start my day. I am, I'm not a 5:00 AM get up girl, but I get up about seven 30 and I love to start my day slow and I go for a walk that's typically about an hour, and that's something where it's not typically a walk with anyone else.

Mimi Striplin ([41:26](#)):

It's time for just me, whether I'm listening to a podcast or listening to a devotional or music just in silence, I take that time to just get grounded and center myself before I start interacting with my team or recording podcasts or anything else that day and a few other things that I do is create pockets of time that are absolutely in no way related to your business. And there was a point in my life where someone would ask me, what do you do for fun? And I could not name a single thing. It's work, right? I would just say

Laura Cox Kaplan ([42:01](#)):

Work.

Mimi Striplin ([42:02](#)):

And I didn't even know that I was almost wearing that as a badge of honor and thinking that that made me a better business owner by working so hard. And one of the things through business coaching that I love to share is that it's the root of it is not to work harder, it's to truly work smarter. And we hear that over and over and over, but I don't think anyone starts their business so that they can work themselves to death. I think they start their businesses to either leave another career that may have burnt them out or leave a toxic workplace or create something that's truly theirs and that they love and

they feel fulfilled by, and that always gets lost somewhere on the journey of entrepreneurship, and that's something that is so just important to me to share that now, number one, you can have a successful business. Number two, it can be joyful. You can love it. And number three, those two things can happen at the same time. It doesn't have to be one or the other.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([43:09](#)):

Yeah, that's such great advice. What about it can be very easy to compare yourself to others as you're building a business, even once you've built a business, looking around and fixating on what your competition is doing, comparing yourself to the competition. Maybe talk about advice that you have for processing that in the smartest and most useful way as opposed to it becoming something that is really dragging you down.

Mimi Striplin ([43:44](#)):

My very blunt answer is, if you've got time to sit and spiral about someone else's business, I would advise you to take a step back, look at your business and see where you need to spend more time or what you need to prioritize. The days that I find myself just mindlessly scrolling or thinking about, oh my gosh, this business has this, or They're doing this, so we should do this. Those are the times when my priorities are not in check, and that is something that I have to be real with myself, and if you need an accountability partner, ask someone to check you on those days, whether it's your business coach, your best friend, your sister, a team member, and we have gone very, very long at the tiny tassel without worrying about the competition because we truly believe that we are creating something unique.

Mimi Striplin ([44:37](#)):

We are not the only business in the world that sells jewelry and accessories and clothing, but we are the only ones with our story, and it's not even, I mean, it's an incredible story, but it's not even some crazy incredible unicorn of a story. We're not these rocket scientists here at the tiny tassel as much as that would be really cool, but we are just a team of really intentional women who have a vision and who work towards that, who stay focused, who have systems and procedures in place. That's like the not fun part of it, but so crucial to staying focused and staying on task and not allowing all of the outside noise to distract you from why you're really here and what you're really working on.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([45:29](#)):

Yeah. I love that. Maybe one final piece of advice, if there's something that you kind of always tell aspiring entrepreneurs or others, maybe one piece of advice that is your mantra, something you keep coming back to, what might that be? You've already given us some great advice, but I'd love if you want to boil it down to one single thing.

She Said/She Said Podcast With Laura Cox Kaplan

Episode 240

Title: How To build a values-based brand that helps you avoid the comparison trap!

Guest: Mimi Striplin, founder, The Tiny Tassel

Mimi Striplin ([45:54](#)):

Yeah. Lately it's been find the joy. I think we are in such a, or we're just coming out of such a hard few years for everyone personally and business wise and relationship wise, and it can be easy to look to the bad things and to talk about the things that aren't going right in your business, but talk about the things that are going well, whether it's that you connected with an old friend at a conference or you've got a new collaboration coming out. Talk about those things because when we focus on the joyful moments and the joyful parts of our lives and our business, everything gets so much brighter.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([46:37](#)):

Yeah, I love that, Mimi. I mean, this has been such a great conversation. You are such an inspiration. I really appreciate the perspective.

Mimi Striplin ([46:46](#)):

Thank you so much. I enjoyed being here with you today.

EPISODE CLOSE

Laura Cox Kaplan ([46:49](#)):

Thank you, friend. Thanks so much for joining me today. I hope you enjoyed this conversation with Mimi Striplin as much as I did. I especially loved how she talked about brand and values alignment and how leaning into our values and our core actually helps us better navigate not only competition, but even more so the challenging waters of comparison. I also loved her great advice on how to work smarter rather than harder. That is tough advice to follow sometimes, but she makes some really great points, and I thought she was spot on. I'd love to hear what resonated most with you, so be sure to send me a message and let me know. Also, if you enjoyed the episode and you're listening on your phone, be sure to take a screenshot and share it with me on Instagram. Please tag me at Laura Cox Kaplan. Also tag the tiny tassel and The Southern C.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([47:45](#)):

Doing that is a great way to give me some feedback so that I can continue to create content that is valuable to you. Also, if you've missed any part of our collaboration series with The Southern C, be sure to check out those past episodes as well. You will find them wherever you are listening to this podcast. There is so much great advice, and I don't want you to miss a minute. In the meantime, friend, you take care and I'll talk to you again next week.

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