

*SHE SAID/SHE SAID PODCAST WITH LAURA COX KAPLAN*

*EPISODE 284: From graphic artist to fashion designer: how to use joy as a transferable skill*

*Guest: Emily McCarthy*

*She Said/She Said Podcast + The Southern C Collaboration Series*

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

Hi, I'm Laura Cox Kaplan. Welcome to She Said, she Said Podcast. Here on this podcast, we talk about the building blocks and the micro habits that help us create real and lasting influence. What do I mean by that? Well, we're talking about the kind of influence that helps you achieve your goals and whatever it is in life that you want to accomplish, but perhaps most importantly, it's the type of influence that helps you create real impact, and that enables you to truly thrive.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([00:45](#)):

Hey, friend, welcome to episode 284 of She Said, she Said Podcast. This is the latest episode in our She Said She Said podcast, the Southern C Collaboration Series. I don't know about you, but I have loved this series so much and all of the great takeaways and interesting thoughts that ultimately emerge in these chats. Oftentimes things that I'm not even sort of thinking about in advance, which is so incredibly fun for me, and I hope it's fun for you too. I would love to know what is resonating most with you and any themes that have jumped out at you that you really are sort of taking to heart. Today's conversation is sure to spark lots of joy and great inspiration, not to mention some great perspective about the vision behind one of Savannah Georgia's must Visit Shopping destinations. I am joined by Emily McCarthy, who is the creative visionary behind her namesake company, Emily McCarthy.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([01:50](#)):

Now, if the brand is new to you, you are in for such a treat friend, and you must add the Emily McCarthy shop to your list of stops the next time you are in Savannah, Georgia, because it is fantastic. Joy is really at the heart of all that Emily creates. In this conversation. We talk about how her design aesthetic, she actually started in graphic design, how her design aesthetic, which includes lots of color and interesting design elements, how it became one of the powerful transferable skills in ultimately developing her fashion line. We talk about how she has continued to evolve and to grow her business, but always with a focus on how to reflect her brand in all that she does, and particularly how her brand extends not only to the customer experience, which you will no doubt experience when you visit her, but also in the culture that she fosters on her team.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([02:54](#)):

There's a lot to really love about this. Now, one of the elements of the conversation that I found particularly helpful, and I think you will too, relates to copycats, unfortunately, <laugh>. It's funny because literally just a couple of days ago I was having a conversation with another creative female entrepreneur about this very topic. It can be frustrating and so maddening when you're dealing with something like this. Now, in reality, you can protect your brand and your designs, but you probably can't go after every single bad actor. If you're a small business or an emerging business, it's very, very hard to track down every copycat that's out there, and that's why I found the advice that Emily shares in this episode. Really helpful and just a great way to kind of think about this experience. Emily and I also talk about how she fuels her creativity as well as the challenge of balancing work and family, something that all working moms contend with. No matter what your career or your your chosen line of work may be, it's just a fact. It's something that we have to learn how to do, and oftentimes the most important thing is to operate with real intention. And I think Emily shares great perspective on this point. Now, be sure to

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follow both Emily and myself on Instagram as well as the Southern C for some additional photos from the conversation today. For now though, here is episode 284, my conversation with the incredibly thoughtful and incredibly joyful Emily McCarthy. Enjoy.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([04:45](#)):

Emily, welcome to She Said. She said,

Emily McCarthy ([04:48](#)):

Thank you so much for having me today. Was such a delight to meet you at Southern C, and so this is a really fun conversation we get to have.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([04:56](#)):

Well, I loved it as well, and I'm just, I'm thrilled to have you here and to have you as part of this collaboration series with the Southern C. They are an organization that is near and dear to my heart, and I know you feel the same way, same way. Way before we jump into all of that though, I would love Emily for you to tell me about how you started your brand and just a little bit about your background.

Emily McCarthy ([05:24](#)):

So I started really as an artist, went to school for graphic design and photography. Dabbled in the stationary and gift industry for a few years, and finally kind of creatively went my own direction and started an online store after, you know, having that brave conversation with my husband that I thought I could do this on my own. And we can get into that a little bit more in depth Yeah. About that journey. But launch the online store through blogs and a little bit of social media at that point because that was a, was about 12 years ago. Started it in my home, moved it to a little cottage close by because we needed more space for fulfilling orders. And at that time it was focused on stationary and entertaining products, all personalized. We moved out of the house into the little cottage and then just a couple of short years later needed to expand again into our current retail location. Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative>. So we've been there for about eight years and about five

Laura Cox Kaplan ([06:35](#)):

Years. And you're in Savannah? Yes. You're in Savannah, Georgia.

Emily McCarthy ([06:37](#)):

Savannah. And I've been here for about 18 years. I'm born and raised just northwest of Atlanta, so always been in Georgia, went to school in Georgia at a small college La Grange. So it's, you know, I love being in the south and about five years ago we decided to start our clothing line, taking the signature prints that I spend so much time designing and you know, exploring different avenues with colors and prints and wanted to try it in a different industry. And that is now a huge part of our business, and we've pivoted over the years to adjust to that growth. Taking away some things that we started with to allow room to really grow that part of the business. And now in June we will be opening and moving into our next

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location which I think will be our forever home. It allows us the room we need to fulfill all the needs of our business creatively through warehousing offices and a new retail store. So, so that's us today.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([07:49](#)):

So there are a number of things that I know make your brand particularly unique and one of your, I don't know if this is your official tagline, but it's certainly something that I think of when I think about the Emily McCarthy brand, and that is living joyfully. It's a very unique and very specific aesthetic. Maybe talk a little bit about was, was it, was that always the case? Kind of how did that, how did that grow and evolve?

Emily McCarthy ([08:16](#)):

Oh, many things that we do creatively in the brand all come from meaning. There's always a deeper meaning to a print that we design. There's hidden elements within the design, and it's something I really love doing. And I even did that back in my branding days of, you know, more graphic design, heavy career, always hiding little meaningful things. So my middle name is Joy, and when it came to explaining the aesthetic of our brand and our mission, it really just made sense. It, it very much is at my core. Other than just being my middle name, it's something I really try to instill in our products, in our lifestyle, in my employees, in my culture, in my business. And it's also part of our give back campaign that we, you know, partner with the local organization every year to give a portion of proceeds from our business back to that to really kind of feed that back to our community.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([09:19](#)):

Yeah,

Emily McCarthy ([09:20](#)):

I was just gonna add that it's also now our daughter's middle name too, so it was something we could kind of pass down. Oh,

Laura Cox Kaplan ([09:27](#)):

I'd love for you to give us maybe a couple of examples of how you work to instill this sort of concept in your employees and in your interactions. And I assume it probably also conveys to the customer experience and how you think about that. Maybe talk a little bit about, about sort of how you bring that to life.

Emily McCarthy ([09:48](#)):

I think it's how I lead my employees. I, my natural personality is to just not take things too seriously to, you know, there's moments in business and especially the growth pains that we've had the last couple years that we could let things really bog us down and really get stuck in it. But I very much believe in like, coming up with a solution. Let's laugh about a mistake that we did and learn from it and just not let it weigh us down and just keep going. And I like to remain very connected with my employees. I never wanna have this like management style where I seem unapproachable or, you know, unaccessible to

every single one of my employees, whether they are on our retail team or on the warehouse team. I want to make sure everyone can come to me and feels comfortable to, you know, speak with me about anything or I want everyone laughing and taking those moments of like, struggle and turning them into a positive. And I can say that our culture is very fun, but when we need to get down and really hustle and work, everyone's in it. I'm in there pulling orders and just we make it fun. And I, that's the kind of environment that I wanna work on. Of course, I never feel like I'm going to work. It, it for me, it's my second home and I think a lot of my employees feel the same way.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([11:17](#)):

Yeah, that's absolutely lovely. I'd love for you to go back a bit and sort of take us through as you were thinking about the possibility of maybe starting your own business and beginning to, to design for yourself as opposed to designing for other people and kind of making that leap. Was that difficult? Was there a moment that you had where you were like, okay, enough of this, I really wanted, I really wanna do this on my own? Or sort of what was it that motivated you to actually branch out on, on your own and do this yourself?

Emily McCarthy ([11:49](#)):

I think that many artists can share those thoughts when you are designing for other businesses and other leaders. I was able to instill my own creativity in the job that I was doing, but something I would be really excited about and proud of wasn't always what was selected in the final, you know, approval process. So sometimes I would feel a little bit I guess a little like not as excited about the final project Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative> as I wanted to be. And I always felt like sometimes it got a little diluted from like, my purpose and what I did. So as I had that job, I, that's when I started doing freelance on the side, and that really fulfilled me creatively to be able to do what I wanted to do and second fold, like seeing that come to life and seeing how customers embraced that and then saw that side of the business growing, that our customers believed in what I was doing and really embraced what I was trying to do. And I didn't feel inhibited by someone else holding me back from that vision that I had. And that vision has been what's carried us through today. Just sticking with my gut and doing what I feel is right for our brand and not letting too many like, outside opinions or perspectives, like to really dilute that. So I learned that lesson in my previous job to not let you know outside voices kind of affect the end result.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([13:19](#)):

Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative>. Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative>. Where does that sort of ability to evaluate, I think this can be a really, really hard topic of knowing when to push back, when to say no, like how, you know, sort of the whole decision making process right. And when to sort of go with what a client is, is, you know, suggesting or recommending when you're like, Ooh, I really, this is just not right. Talk a little bit about your own decision making process. What's your kind of guiding light or vision, if you will, for kind of making decisions in your business you know, selecting clients to work with, that kind of thing?

Emily McCarthy ([13:58](#)):

I will say it's been a learning experience for me. I was an artist. I didn't go to school for business management, or I was never really a manager of a lot of employees. So looking back even five years ago,

the way that I'm managing things and making decisions looks totally different and I've just had to learn along the way. And also through experts, like through people at Southern C and through all the discussions that we have there, I just always have little takeaway nuggets of things that I can implement in my business. And I think just gaining confidence. Yeah, I think at first you're like, I don't really know what I'm doing, but I'm just gonna keep doing it day after day and learn something new every day. And when I have made a mistake, like what can I learn from that so that it, you know, impacts the next time I'm, I'm making a decision.

Emily McCarthy ([14:53](#)):

And I think I, I just have gained a lot of confidence and I think I've built a really good team. I think now people really wanna work for the business and, and really skilled people with experience, wanna work for the business. And I, I feel like for many years you were just trying to find people to do all the things that needed to be done, but yet you really didn't even know what needed to be done. So we were all just kind of in it, figuring it out together. And now we've kind of shifted to having more structure. I think structure has been a huge part of our language over the past year, taking the sort of jumbled up creative mess that we had and like learning how to put everyone in a specific role and position and streamlining processes. And that makes decisions easier because, you know, when employee comes to me with a, you know, a conflict or they're trying to make a decision or they're not really sure how to handle that or which route to go, I'm always kind of pushing it back on them asking, well, what, what do you think that we should do?

Emily McCarthy ([15:58](#)):

And kind of learning that, like teaching them to work through it with me and then coming to that conclusion together, and then them hopefully walking away with the confidence to do that on their own next time without feeling like they're unsure of themselves. So every day there's decisions, it's, you know, currently it was like, do we need this big new space? Am I gonna buy this big piece of property? This is the scariest thing ever that I've ever done. And or it's the color of a zipper on a jacket that we're doing for next fall, or it's that I'm gonna, you know, give this employee this day off. Or, you know, do we put this item on sale? I mean, every day is filled with decisions, small or big, and so you just almost become numb to it, you know, I think there's certain, certain personalities that making decisions all day would just be almost numbing because it's so overwhelming. Yeah. But I didn't start out this way. It was a very gradual thing. Like, and hiring my first employee was a big decision. Now hiring someone is like, I just don't even think about it. This is what we need, found the right person, we're moving on. So you get, you get used to it and you get more comfortable with the decision making. And so when it comes to the really big decisions, those are the more challenging ones. But I feel like you've been put in that place to be better prepared for it.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([17:22](#)):

Yeah. There's so, so much of what you said that really that I love and it's such great advice for any kind of business or anybody who's thinking about launching something else. And I especially love what you just said about really engaging your employees and having them, it gives them ownership when you're asking them for their opinion and you're involving them in the decision making process. Right. You're, you are

still the person who's the founder, your name is still on the door at the same time. They feel more invested in the process when you're asking them for their point of view and they're sharing that and you're really collaborating together. I think that's really a beautiful thing. Was there a particular, or maybe any specific advice that you would give to somebody who might find themselves maybe where you were at the very beginning as you were just thinking about launching something that has grown into this great, wonderful brand, but at the time, and you didn't know exactly where it was gonna go, or I'm sure you had a vision for it, right. But it's hard to know kind of what that looks like several years down the road. But if you're sort of sitting where she's sitting, was there a particular piece of advice that you would give her for maybe that stage of kind of thinking about building a business and growing it?

Emily McCarthy ([18:38](#)):

For me, and I'm sure this would apply to other creatives I had in order to do creatively what I really wanted to do, I also had to do those projects and take on those clients that I wasn't so passionate about in order to fund the part that I really wanted to do. And I was able to start my business without getting a loan or going into debt because I did a lot of things on the side quietly that helped kind of fund the mission. And I know that doesn't really apply to every type of entrepreneur who's trying to start a business. But, you know, not starting with a lot of debt would be my biggest piece of advice. Figuring out how to, you know, fund, I would do logos, I would do different kinds of design that I really didn't need. You don't have to advertise that you're doing that if it's not in alignment of what you're doing for your long-term goal.

Emily McCarthy ([19:32](#)):

But there were a lot of things I did to help Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative> get to that point there. You know, when I, when I opened up the retail store, that was not where our money was. Our money was in the design part of our business. And the design part of our business really helped fund the store for quite a while to really get it off the ground. And then when I started the clothing line, the store was doing great. We were still doing design work, and that's what helped paid for the clothing line. And I, I didn't have to take out a loan for the clothing line. I started small. And so now at the end of the road, the clothing line is our bread and butter, but I didn't have to take out a huge loan to get there because I took baby steps to help kind of fund along the way.

Emily McCarthy ([20:15](#)):

Yeah. So that, that would be my piece of advice. I guess figuring out how to apply that to the structure that you're in, you know, maybe start it on the side and when you get to the point that your full-time job is really preventing the growth of your business that you wanna do, then kind of look at yourself financially and see when you can take that risk or maybe start your own business and still have something part time on the side to kind of help you get there. And I think at some point you just know you have to shut one door Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative> in order to really fully open the next door. And I think you'll know your gut is gonna tell you, and it is scary. And if it was, if it wasn't scary <laugh>, I would be a little concerned. Like, but you do, you know, you wanna push through and it is so rewarding. Yeah.



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Laura Cox Kaplan ([21:01](#)):

Yeah. That's absolutely amazing. At what point, Emily did you start to worry about, and maybe you did right off the bat, but, you know, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery until it turns into something where someone, another business, a competitor, is maybe taking your intellectual property and using it as their own. And this is, I think, a really big factor factor for creatives, for content developers, really for anyone. At what point did that become an area where you really focused on making sure that you were protecting your intellectual property and your design property?

Emily McCarthy ([21:38](#)):

It's definitely a struggle that we have, especially in the fashion industry. I design all the prints that you see on the clothing. So if I see our artwork on an another website of a company that doesn't really even seem legit, which is what I'm dealing with right now, you know, it creates so many problems of our stores that have our clothing and them contacting this, if you've seen this, and there's not really anything that we can do about it. And it's disheartening because we have put so much time and energy and love into the print design and into the styles that we have. But I've learned that you just have to keep pushing ahead and staying ahead of it. That, you know, it's almost, it's almost inevitable that it'll happen. But one takeaway that I have from Southern C this past year was that no one can imitate your brand experience.

Emily McCarthy ([22:36](#)):

It's true. Like our customers are buying pieces from us because they know the quality, they know the story behind the print, they know the story behind me and the brand, and they want to feel a part of that brand, and they're not gonna get that experience by buying an imitation piece somewhere else. And, you know, I have to know that that's okay, that, that, you know, is happening. But we try to stay ahead. We have a new print every single month. We have new styles every single month. We just try to stay ahead of it. And in as far as intellectual property goes, it gets really tricky when it comes to print design and like fashion design. You know, someone only has to change something about the print by only, I think, 15% in order to be able to use it. So the prints, it, it gets really hairy and it's, it's very expensive and tricky to try to trademark all of the prints.

Emily McCarthy ([23:34](#)):

As an artist, you have a general protection over the work that you create, but like I said, it can, it can be adjusted ever so slightly and, you know, taken from there. So you do try to stay ahead of it, you know, as far as copyright and trademark goes, we try to protect our business assets, you know, our logo, our name. Those are really important things to protect. We designed a product that we saw in the store that we protected the name of that. But otherwise just try to stay ahead of it and try to, you know, instill your brand experience Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative> in your customers, and they will believe in you and wanna be a part of that story.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([24:15](#)):

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Yeah. How do you sort of think about, you know, the idea of constantly innovating, but still staying consistent with your aesthetic, with your brand, with the experience that the customer's having, kind of, how do you, how do you strike that balance?

Emily McCarthy ([24:34](#)):

It is a balance because we have styles that are tried and true that people love, that we can never not do because it, it is a part of our assortment and part of what the strength in our business. But creatively, I'm like, oh, but I really wanna try this new style. And I, you know, I, I always have a, a handful of new styles in each collection, and sometimes they don't resonate because they're too new. There's not a buying history there. It's a new fit. And so sometimes it takes a few collections for new styles to get off the ground. Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative>. But the customer's always gonna go back to the original. They love it. It was their first piece. They know how it fits, and it's, it is a struggle. So we try to do those. And a good example is our poppy top.

Emily McCarthy ([25:20](#)):

It's our bestselling style. It, it's been around since the very beginning. It has a standup collar, a roman sleeve, and it's just easy. Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative>, what I've learned to do now is take what works about that top and we designed a second top that's still a part of the same family, but it has a zipper at the collar. And then we turned it into a dress, and then we turned it into a calf, Dan, and now it's a maxi dress, and now it's a romper. So we've built a whole family around that poppy top mm-Hmm. <Affirmative>, because it allowed me to insert variety in our collection and also still feed that customer that is a trout and true poppy customer. Yeah. And then fabrics, I mean, I didn't go to school for fashion. I did, you know, work in fashion in a little bit in high school and into college, and so I was privy to what that world was about, but I had no idea about fabric, contents, and trims and button details. And it's a, a challenge that has been really welcomed at this point in my career to learn a completely different medium as an artist to learn how different fabric straight and what is breathable and what customers love. And that's really fun to think about how different can I make this top? Like, what's a fabric that we haven't used before? We're doing some, so for holiday, we haven't done silk yet. We're even have some faux fur in sequin. So, and

Laura Cox Kaplan ([26:46](#)):

You have this, this, this pleather, I mean, it's not leather, it's really more pleather. This is one of my favorite, favorite top. I mean, you, you guys listening, can't actually see us, but I'll, I'll post a picture of it, but this is my favorite Emily McCarthy top and it's a pleather and it's with puff sleeves, but I would never think about using this fabric with this top, but it's fabulous. Mm-Hmm,

Emily McCarthy ([27:09](#)):

<Affirmative>. Yeah. And it's, it's about just, you know, we'll, we'll think about a fabric like that, like how would this apply? And so we order a sample, we make sure that's right. And it's always something that's a little bit different in the unexpected.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([27:22](#)):



Yeah. Yeah. So interesting. Okay. We've talked, you've mentioned the creative process many, many times in, in this conversation. And it is the, the, the process that someone goes through to create and sort of what creativity means to them is literally one of my favorite topics. Because it doesn't matter whether you are a designer, whether you are a lawyer, a banker, a podcaster, or whatever, like creativity is something that is so absolutely vitally important, I think, to every single person. But I'd love for you to share how do you charge and, and sort of boost your creativity, especially in those times when you're like, Ugh, I just, you know, I can't, I have no good idea. I have no new ideas. Like, what do you do during those moments? Where does your creativity come from?

Emily McCarthy ([28:10](#)):

It's funny you say that. My husband, he is not so much a creative individual. He's, you know, more in the construction world, totally different uhhuh. So he has a hard time understanding what's really going on in my head. Like, where do these ideas come from? And he said to me one day, I just like, how are you gonna keep coming up with new things? Like, don't you think you're gonna run out of ideas? And I'm like, if anything like my team has to like rein me in. They're like, you have too many ideas. Like, the assortment is too big. I'm always like, Laken is my right hand girl, you know, honor production team <laugh>. And sometimes she has to be my no person to say, okay, we gotta, we gotta cut back five styles. Like, the assortment is too big, but I'm like, but I really wanted that one dress and that one fabric.

Emily McCarthy ([28:54](#)):

And, you know, I, so it's the, it's quite the opposite. And I think any creative would agree because you constantly are looking around and you are not even planning to get the inspiration, but it just hits you everywhere. It could be, you know, me outside and seeing the design of fencing at making a really unique shape. Or it could be the shape, obviously of like a leaf and the way that that turns into a repeat. You know, travel, architecture, interior design, I'm very, very much inspired by, and I'm always looking at beautiful rooms that designers create because there's always something that sparks an idea. The color combination, the trim on the sofa, you know, there it could be anything. And there it always just sparks an idea that turn might get me to another place, but it, it definitely planted the seed to get me there.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([29:52](#)):

Yeah. It's so interesting to me, sort of where, just where the ideas come from. And you said something interesting, the, you know, it's how you see it, right? And knowing that what you're seeing, you're sort of capturing and you're holding it and you're deploying it in this really interesting way and retooling it as a fabric or a design or, you know, all these sorts of things. It is absolutely fascinating, always looking for interesting reading material because the, the creative process is, is about problem solving, you know? And so depending upon what problem you're trying to solve, like it can be that tool that helps you unlock your problem solving ability, whatever it is that you're working on. So I, I find the whole topic really, really interesting.

Emily McCarthy ([30:37](#)):

It, it's a fun world to be in and you can't really turn it off. This is really funny, but I <laugh> I know it's really not what I should be thinking about, but I've convinced myself that there must be some meaning

behind it. But anytime I go to church with my family, mm-Hmm, <affirmative> I like end up with the best ideas coming to fruition in my head. And I don't know whether it's because I'm, I'm sitting and I'm still, and I'm in the moment and I'm trying to be present that my mind sort of see, like, I'll even look at the, the someone sitting in front of me, this print on her dress, and I start dissecting the dress and what made that print work or, or the color, you know, I was looking at the coloring of the marble on in the church and what a beautiful, like, blush pink it was and how it's mixed with this slate gray. I, my mind just wonders all the time. And it, again, not what I'm supposed to be at church for, but I, I often am like, well, God gave me this gift. Maybe he's using this moment to really give me some great ideas. And some of my best ideas have, have come from that moment.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([31:41](#)):

I love that. I absolutely love that. So we've talked, we've talked a lot about sort of balance in, in other respects, but I'd love for you to talk about that, that age old question that we all get. If you are a mom and you've got kids and you're running a business, you're working, you're doing all the things, it is a real challenge to make time and space for all the things that you need to be making time and space for. And I know this morning you have a sick child. You're actually joining me from your living room. I, it's a, it's a phenomenon. I understand all too well, and I know my listener does too, but maybe talk a little bit about advice and perspective around balancing that you've got two kids that are, that are reasonably small sort of tweens I think, if I'm not mistaken. Yeah.

Emily McCarthy ([32:30](#)):

Yes. So our son is 12 and he is very active, does a year-round competitive sport. He's a swimmer. So if any other swim parents out there know that, that season never ends and he chooses to play some school sports on top of that. So he's active. Our daughter is eight and she is now entering into the competitive dance world. So that's a new world that we are navigating. And so it does take a lot of balance and I also wanna be really present for those activities and for my children. And I, the reason why I structured the business and my team the way that I did is that no matter what, every day at three o'clock, I wanted to be the one picking my children up from school, and I wanted to be done with my workday. Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative>, my workday does start very early.

Emily McCarthy ([33:22](#)):

I'm there before the team because I am dropping off my kids at school. And so that's my quiet time to kind of focus on some special projects before the team arrives. And then we work, work, work. I leave right at three. Everyone knows it. It's to the point now where, you know, Laken who sits next to me is like, oh, it's almost three. Like, she even has a sphere of me like, it's your day's ended, you know, you have to get going. And so I pick my children up and I'm present for them in each of their sports and involved with both of their organizations and helping with the team because I'm really passionate about that too, and about feeling balanced. I have found mentally I have to have breaks from the decision making, from answering the questions, from being present in both places. And it is a struggle there, especially in fashion.

Emily McCarthy ([34:12](#)):

A lot of things are going on in the evenings because that's when our factories are open and operating. And so sometimes that does require my attention, the evenings to answer a quick question here or there. But we have a great production team and I'm very thankful for the team that we've built because it, you know, they're all very respectful of me needing that time away from the business in order to be my best self and be able to serve them as best as I can. And you just have to take care of yourself. And I, I go ebb and flow for when I'm doing that better at times. Not right now. I'm not doing a great job at, you know, trying to exercise. I know that is like a core of what makes me feel better. And I've just been in the season lately where that hasn't come to fruition.

Emily McCarthy ([34:59](#)):

But getting plenty of sleep, like I'm in bed at nine 30 every night, you know, unless it's a crazy evening, but getting a, a good night's rest and, and feeling balanced is so important. And, you know, learning that it, there are seasons of this life of running a business and having two busy kids that the times of seeing my girlfriends as much as I would like is, you know, a little on the low side right now, but that's okay. And they're all in the same place. And I know there's gonna be a season when that'll be, you know, a bigger part of our day-to-day lives again when our children get older. So I, and I think taking time off when you can, like, we have a family vacation this summer and I look forward to that, where we can really give our children undivided attention. My husband also owns his own business, so between the both of us, we all need that as a family. So

Laura Cox Kaplan ([35:53](#)):

Yeah. And just being really, I, I, I hear you saying, you know, being really intentional with your time. Like, you may not be able to see your girlfriends, you know, once a week or even once a month, but if you, you know, make, make the intention or set the intention to see them and have, you know, a girl trip once a year or twice a year, you know, where you really have maybe a full weekend or, you know, 24 full hours where you spend time together, like that can also help you really refuel your tank and get that, that balance as well. Mm-Hmm, <affirmative>.

Emily McCarthy ([36:24](#)):

And same for marriage. You know, it's, it's crazy. We're just in this together every day, this, you know, rat race, which is very fun. But, you know, my husband and I, he was like, there's gotta be a weekend. We can get away. And there, there really wasn't <laugh> like for a few months with sports. We also like refused to miss anything regarding our kids' activities, especially not to go do something like personally, we, we would, we would just paint us to miss it and not be present. So, you know, we were able to get away for 24 hours just locally not that far away from here. So we didn't have to spend a lot of time travel, but just 24 hours of just us two with no, you know, responsibilities that we can just relax and take care of ourselves and feed our marriage. I mean, that's even just great. Mm-Hmm, <affirmative>. So it doesn't always have to be a big vacation, even just, you know, like today I am working from home today, but even that feels like a reset, you know, it's just, it's nice to have a change of environment even just for one day.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([37:24](#)):

*SHE SAID/SHE SAID PODCAST WITH LAURA COX KAPLAN*

*EPISODE 284: From graphic artist to fashion designer: how to use joy as a transferable skill*

*Guest: Emily McCarthy*

*She Said/She Said Podcast + The Southern C Collaboration Series*

Yeah. So what can we expect from Emily McCarthy over the next few months, years? Anything big coming up for you guys?

Emily McCarthy ([37:32](#)):

Yes, definitely our new facility, our new headquarters. So we will be moving hopefully by the end of June, we'll see how things pan out. But we are moving to a 14,000 square foot new location that have our expanded retail all offices for all of our teams fulfillment center and warehouse. And we are just so excited to really move to a space where we can you know, fit the needs of the business that we have now and kind of catch up to the growth that we've had for the last couple years. And it's even gonna have a little wine bar in there for all of our customers. So I'm personally really excited about that part of the retail experience and being able to go back to having events and popups and welcoming other creatives to come for customers to see. We really haven't been able to do that in the last couple of years. Just, you know, through Covid it got a little tricky. And then just not having the space. So we're excited to be back with our community and have, you know, all of our guests come into town and, and share, you know, their businesses with our customers and be able to have a place for our community to come together as well.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([38:44](#)):

Yeah, I love that. So for, for anyone listening who's in Savannah visiting Savannah, be sure and check out Emily McCarthy. It is well worth the trip. And Emily, I have so enjoyed this conversation. Thank you for spending time with me and for being part of the Southern C. We, we all really appreciate it.

Emily McCarthy ([39:04](#)):

Well, thank you so much for having me,

Laura Cox Kaplan ([39:08](#)):

Friend. Thanks so much for joining me today. I don't know about you, but I felt such a major creative boost just talking to Emily, and I hope that the same was true for you. As I talk about in this episode, creativity and ways of fostering it is so incredibly important for problem solving, no matter what your career may be. But also it's important for sparking joy. I would love to know how you think about this concept. As you can tell from listening to the episode, I am really passionate about the topic, but I'd love to know what your favorite way is for sparking and fueling your creativity. You can send your feedback and your thoughts my way. You'll find a link in the show notes, but you can also message me on Instagram, or you can leave a few thoughts in a review of this episode. I would be really, really grateful for any of the feedback that you wanna share. Until next week, friend, you take care and on behalf of the Southern C, and she said, she said media, thanks for making this little investment in you. I'll talk to you next week. Take care.