

## Episode 16- Running a Blog With Your Ex

Lauren 0:01

Welcome to the Launch Your Blog Biz podcast. I'm your host, Lauren McManus. I used to be a full time tax accountant and CPA with a whole lot of limiting beliefs and "I can't's" whenever I thought about starting my own business. Fast forward a few months, and I quit my job after starting and growing my first blog to six figures in just a year. This is my space to share and yours to listen and grow, about how to build and scale your own blogging business and design a life on your terms. Let's get started.

Lauren 0:35

Hey, y'all. Welcome back to the podcast, I have a very different and more personal episode for you today. It's gonna be all about running a blog business with your ex. And well, I have a lot to say on this topic, I couldn't at all tell the story without my ex, Alex Nerney, my business partner. Welcome, Alex.

Alex 0:59

I mean, you could but it'd be a little unfair, right? It'd be a little one sided. You know.

Lauren 1:04

You need to tell your side of the story too, for sure. Well, y'all, it's gonna be an interesting episode for sure. Alex and I, I think we knew that we wanted to tell the story from the very beginning, when we decided to start the podcast, it was like that, it's going to be a story that we have to tell. And we finally have a platform to tell it. In this episode, we want to talk to you about what it was like really, from the beginning, all the way through to the end.

Lauren 1:30

So what it has been like to work with your business partner when you are dating them, and things are happy and great, and all the ups that we had in the beginning. We want to talk through the transition to actually breaking up and what it was like to rebuild the relationship afterwards, all while running our six figure business together.

Alex 1:50

Yeah, it's interesting, because it just feels like finally having a platform to say something. Lauren and I aren't really big Instagram people and we don't like to post our drama and things on there. It felt weird to do it on the YouTube channel, it felt weird to even do a blog post, but it feels like we kind of finally have a platform and our relationship is in a place where we can actually talk about it. So this should be interesting.

Lauren 2:16

Yeah, and full disclaimer, y'all. Another reason that we didn't talk about it from the very beginning when it happened is because we didn't know what kind of impact this breakup was going to have on our business. We were seeing very much as this power team, this power couple, and I'm sure that a lot of people looked at us and thought their life was incredible. They're making all this money, they're traveling the world. They seem like awesome people, you know, I'm sure that we had some kind of picture painted of that.

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Lauren 2:43

The reality was, it was very different from that, there were many glamorous things about our life. But behind the scenes, our relationship was falling apart and we didn't know what kind of impact that was going to have on our business. So we did stay quiet for a long time. I'm just really pumped to be able to, to really share the story. And I know that we have students who are dating their business partners, couples who have started blogs. So I hope that this episode helps y'all to kind of gain an insight into our story and what it looked like for us.

Alex 3:12

Yeah, for sure.

Lauren 3:13

Alright, y'all. So let's start with the beginning, the before. Y'all know that Alex and I met on Tinder and we started the business together, working nights and weekends. After that, we quit our jobs and worked full time. Starting that January that we moved to Seattle, we were working side by side together every single day. I mean, no space because we even ditched our friends. So it was literally just Alex and I all the time.

Alex 3:42

It was close quarter contact. We were both in a house in Seattle, we had recently moved in together, and then we're just like, well, we're gonna go full time with this business. Like you guys know, we quit our jobs and sold all of our things and we moved into a house and away from everybody. So Lauren and I were each other's only contact pretty much with the outside world, for about like six months while we were building things. I mean, like that alone could put a lot of strain on your relationship.

Alex 4:13

But the interesting part is, that it's just the highs and lows of running a business. It just seemed to work out in the sense that when you were feeling down, when things were going wrong, when you're talking about you know, in the last episode of publishing ads and only making 17 cents, you had somebody to commiserate with. But you also had somebody to talk about the journey with and I don't know how else to say it but man, like this is hard and like being able to talk to somebody about that and let out that emotion was such a big thing.

Alex 4:46

You know, as well as the highs. The highs were crazy high, because you're just celebrating with your loved one. You're celebrating with somebody that you truly care about and feel for and so it's just like everything just seems heightened in a way. Do you feel the same way?

Lauren 4:59

Yeah, definitely the highs were higher and the lows were, the lows were not as low, I guess.

Alex 5:05

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Yeah because it didn't feel like you were alone, you felt like you were suffering with somebody, if that makes sense.

Lauren 5:10

Yeah. But it's often a very isolating thing to be doing a blog by yourself. We know it's isolating enough, because there are two of us, but it was something that our friends and family didn't understand. So we weren't able to celebrate those wins, with family and friends all the time, or, you know, even when we did, they didn't quite understand. And they definitely didn't understand the lows, you also don't want to share the lowest with family and friends, because they don't get it and they're gonna then doubt you even more.

Alex 5:36

They already don't believe in you. It's almost like better PR to just not share almost how rough it is at times with them. Because they're such non believers from the get go.

Lauren 5:46

Yeah. But I think that what helped is that we were so passionate about this thing. It really became this hobby that we could do together, so it wasn't like the business took up this big space in our relationship. I mean, it did, but it made us both really happy. We were able to collaborate on it together, I think that that was what really helped us to be able to work side by side without other people and not get sick of each other. You know, because we were both just so pumped about this journey and everything and learning everything together. And yeah, it was just really exciting.

Alex 6:19

We would go out and we'd get drinks and just talk about the future. I think a lot of happiness is feeling love in your presence and having hope in your future. I feel like this business and what we were working on together, created a lot of hope for us. Hope that we would get out, hope that we would succeed. On the weekends, we go out and get some drinks and talk about what ifs. The what ifs and what could be's you know of this. There's a lot of happiness around that.

Alex 6:45

There's a lot of great moments in there, where you're thinking about what this can be. Then because you're thinking about it, you're spending so much time on it. When you get that first one, you get that first \$10 sale, it's such a high, it's such a crazy high, because you're just like, we're doing this thing, and it's not a lot, but to you in the moment, it feels like everything. It feels like your life is gonna change, it feels like happiness is almost around the corner, to speak philosophically.

Lauren 7:10

Yeah, but y'all, it wasn't all sunshine and rainbows. And it definitely wasn't always easy. One thing that Alex and I had to navigate was just the business and the personal relationship, you know, how do we make sure that they don't bleed too much together. And you'll read in books, people say things like, don't talk about business in the bedroom, like that's going to cure

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everything. First of all, we ate, breathed, and lived our business every hour of every day, there was no borrowing it from the bedroom, borrowing it from our dinner time talk. Absolutely not.

Lauren 7:40

We talked about it all the time. Because it made us both really happy. We didn't think that we had to fit inside of anyone's rules about that, you know, relationship be damned. But I will say one thing that we did have to do in order to navigate the personal side, as well as the business side, was that I really had to let Alex be captain. And that was because Alex and I both have a pretty, pretty dominant nature and we do butt heads.

Lauren 8:08

It's something that I've noticed a lot more now that we aren't dating, because I do take charge a lot more now. But back then, I had to let him be captain and I had to be first mate. And we had to do that, because I don't think that our personal relationship would have survived. Someone ultimately had to be the decision maker. And we talked about everything together. And I never would have been okay with that if Alex had been the type of person who just decided what he wanted and didn't listen to my opinion, because he always listened and always took into account what I had to say.

Lauren 8:38

And sometimes we went with what I thought was right. But we did still have to establish those roles, because we would have been fighting constantly and those business arguments would have bled over into our personal relationship because we couldn't really separate the two.

Alex 8:54

Yeah. And it's also almost like foreshadowing into why our relationship ended up not working out. But in the moments that dynamic kind of gets thrown off because Lauren by nature, I would say has a much more dominant personality. I'm sure you guys get the impression, but our team knows it, everybody around her knows it, there's no there's no hiding from Lauren. And I have a very similar nature to me in a different way, but definitely in the same, and when it did come down to that it was like The Clash of the Titans.

Alex 9:25

They were big fights and big just like because it was just two very dominant personalities and also is just, shout out to Lauren, because it was like she did have to in some sense have to turn that off for a little while. Because I think both of us now looking back at it can recognize that one of us had to be in the captain's role, one of us had to be the first mate. And while those roles are very much changed, especially in the sense of Lauren running the business, I just think that at the time with the personal relationship, that's what we had to do to make that work.

Alex 9:59

And I imagine And people who are working with a business partner are starting like that is what it's going to have to be. Because when it comes down to a decision, somebody needs to decide,

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and somebody needs to have the chips fall on them when it doesn't work or when it does. And it's just, I don't know, it's just kind of how it works.

Lauren 10:16

Yeah, and when I let Alex make those decisions, even if it was against what I thought was not right, but right at the time, I had to still have faith in him to make that decision. And if he made the decision, I didn't end up wanting, I had to support that decision no matter what. I think like Alex just said, this is important for any kind of relationship that you have in your business, whether you are working with someone that you're dating, or even just a friend, or any kind of business partner, you have to understand the different personality types that are in this relationship, and learn how to navigate that, because some of these conversations can get emotional, especially when money is at stake.

Lauren 10:54

Money makes people weird. So it's important to understand those rules for sure and that was something that Alex and I had to establish in the very beginning. I don't think that we would have survived without it. It made everything smoother, even when we did argue it was like, "Okay, well, you make the decisions. This is okay, I support you, let's roll with it." And if it didn't work out, then we changed course. That's really how we navigated the beginning. I think that for a long time, I know that we were very happy and we were really enjoying it.

Lauren 11:25

As we became more successful, and time went on, I think that there was a slow transition into which the business did become more important. I think when Alex and I met, we were goodness, 20, 25 or so at the time. So y'all, we were young enough that there was a lot going on in our lives, and we both still had so much more personal growth ahead of us. I mean, we still do in our 30s, but there's even more in your mid 20s. I think that over time, our business kept growing and kept moving forward. And somewhere along the way, our personal relationship, or romantic relationship kind of started stalling out in the beginning. I think one of the biggest warning signs of that was when we did start traveling, we started traveling, and we started moving a lot. You remember that, Alex?

Alex 12:17

Yeah, I think there's this interesting thing that people do, and one of them is a desire for change. It's usually because of an unease with what is, and so what we started to do is we started to travel. And we started to bounce a lot. There was the weird part about it, it was like it just became, we go here, now we go here, and now we do this. One of the funnier things is that we broke four leases during this time. Four separate occasions, we had signed a year lease and couldn't wait long enough to break it.

Lauren 12:51

I think that was over the course of just two years, actually, maybe now maybe three years. But four leases in three years. It's a lot.

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Alex 12:59

It's a lot. It was interesting, because, again, it's almost easy to diagnose the problem once the patient is dead. I know that's a tough analogy for this, but it's true, you can look back and go, hey, what was going on. And a lot of it was like Lauren said, our personal relationship really stopped developing, and our business relationship grew more and more and more. It's almost like having a child, you have so much passion and so much effort into this thing.

Lauren 13:27

And so much at stake.

Alex 13:28

So much is at stake, because our livelihood and everything is on it, that then our personal relationship begins to fall. And one of the symptoms of that was actually this sort of bouncing nature, because we get into fights, and then we would go, "Oh, well, it's where we're living. It's what we're doing. It's where we are." And we forgot to kind of look, maybe even look at the other person or maybe even admit to ourselves that, you know, looking at the other person across the room, that this isn't the right person for the rest of my life.

Alex 13:58

And that's, again, an incredibly difficult thing to do. Whenever business is going so well, whenever you're making a ton of money, whenever you're traveling, whenever you're trying to keep up this appearance to the rest of the world, that everything is hunky dory, and we're doing great over here.

Lauren 14:14

Yeah, I know, I felt like we are so lucky. We are so lucky to have what we have, to have this business, to have relationships together on top of it, to be able to run it together, you will travel the world. And we shared friends, we shared family, we had so much and it was like how could this not work? You know, and so I think it was almost just like this has to work. We were never really unhappy, I think we were just, neither one of us being super true to ourselves and really living our best lives as an individual. It was more about doing that together.

Lauren 14:50

I know one thing looking back on it now, that it still just sticks with me so hard is when Alex and I went to Peru, even these travel trips that look Amazing, they absolutely were amazing. But we were very much our own people when we traveled. And my brother went with us to Peru as well. I still remember, Alex and Dale had just started a YouTube channel and they were filming all of the stuff from our travels and everything became about filming everything. And I remember Alex and Dale hiked up Machu Picchu together to take their footage, and I hiked up Machu Picchu by myself.

Lauren 15:24

I remember just thinking, wow, like, I should have experienced an incredible experience like that with my partner, with someone that I love. It just stuck with me. Again, at that time, Alex wasn't

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to blame, he was so passionate about his drones and photography and all that stuff and learning video and stuff. And that put him on a very different path to starting other businesses as well. So it was just that, that was really important to him.

Lauren 15:53

Really, our lives just began to go down different paths, we wanted different things from our life, and we were becoming different people than we were from meeting each other three years prior. This is kind of the slow roll of things and you know, for a while, we just still weren't quite ready to read the writing on the wall. And it took us longer than probably should have to actually break up

Alex 16:17

Right before that even I mean, the fluctuation between who we were was insane. We were talking at one point, and this is over the course of three years. We were the travel couple bouncing around every month to a new country, a new location, running our business virtually, doing all this stuff. And then I think almost in the same breath of the same year, we have a house, we have a dog, and we are settled into "Yeah, we're gonna stay here in suburbia, where I grew up in Colleyville, Texas." This is just the case of two people trying to fill a hole.

Alex 16:54

The interesting thing about money and freedom is that it kind of gives you an easy way out, to be honest. It gives you an easy way to run from the problems because you can go, "Oh, I just need a new experience. Oh, I need a new thing. Oh, I need a new this or that." And what you forget is that, there's this really famous quote that I really like, "It's like all of man's problems is the inability to sit in a room alone by himself." It just, it sticks with me when I think about this period of time in our lives because we were just running from an obvious problem in our relationship.

Alex 17:29

Obviously we had a few problems, and we just didn't want to face them because of the implications behind those problems. I mean, shit, Lauren at the time is my best friend, her brother is my second best friend, we run a business together, this is how we make all of our money. A breakup, our splitting up, for me at the time, meant literally like erasing everything. It felt like if we broke up or if something happened, that it would be the end of everything that we had built. I would lose my best friend, I would lose both my best friends and I would lose the money and the traveling and the freedom. The implications behind that were so heavy and I think they just weighed on those decisions.

Lauren 18:18

Yeah, it was like going through divorce to be honest. This time it felt like there was a kid, it felt like there was a custody agreement, it felt like there was a lot more at stake and a lot more messiness to navigate through, even though Alex and I of course weren't married. But having that contractual, you know, business agreement in business together, I think is somewhat similar in a way.

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Alex 18:39

Yeah.

Lauren 18:40

And what Alex was saying about it being important to sit in a room alone with yourself, I absolutely think that it's super important to do regularly to make sure that you are good with yourself. But that's definitely not what we did when we broke up. Because Alex started a 50 state road trip around the US. And I hopped on a plane to Berlin, Germany, and started traveling with the Wi Fi tribe again. So I was doing the same thing, but out in the rest of the world, and that was kind of our way of doing something for ourselves and taking time to ourselves. During that period, we didn't talk for a little while. I know, I definitely needed some space, we needed to kind of clear the air for a little bit and figure out what was next for us.

Alex 19:28

Yeah. And before that, to kind of give some context in the breakup, and we won't get into the specifics of the breakup, but we had grown very far apart. I had made a decision selfishly, as well, that led us there. But I think we were both understanding we were on a pretty interesting path. We even at one point floated the idea, even an open relationship because we were just feeling so distant and trying so hard to make this work, to make something that wasn't working work.

Lauren 20:03

Yeah, it was tough. I know I just needed space. I mean, I was devastated. At that point, we had been dating for four years, we had been running our business for three of those four years together, and everything was so entangled together, that it was a mess. It felt messy either way, even though knowing that it was the right thing and that things would be okay. It was just difficult, it was really difficult. And I know that I needed a lot of space personally, before I was ready to talk business, or really talk at all to Alex, I just needed some time to heal in the interim to figure out what was next.

Lauren 20:38

Thankfully, our business was in a place that we could both take a lot of time off, because we set it up that way, we set up to be very passive. So we both took quite a bit of time off. I think at that point, we were both traveling. We talked about once every week or two, maybe even less, at some point, I think we even went like three weeks at a time without talking. And whenever we did, we would just talk about the bare necessities, whatever business decision had to be made, whatever was going on. That's how we did it for the first several months. Then slowly, there was a joke made here and there. Alex was moving on with his life, and I was doing the same and it took some time to get there.

Alex 21:22

I'm just driving city to city. Honestly, we're just on the road just thinking a lot about that and city to city, it gets a little better. Time heals all wounds in a way. And we would talk very sparingly, and then a little more occasionally, a little more occasionally. Like she said, I think it just starts

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with a joke sometimes. Yeah, again, it's just traveling and hopping around for me. I mean, it's not something everybody can do, but it gave me a lot of clarity. It gave me a lot of insight into what was happening. I think sometimes it's really hard to even think when you're stuck in the same environment all the time.

Lauren 22:01

Yeah, and I think another thing that helped us begin to slowly rebuild our relationship was finding other people. And that opened a whole new can of worms that we had to discuss and talk through.

Alex 22:14

Yeah, we did give context to this. We have a very public persona. We're famous to like bloggers, but we're not like, famous, famous. But we're famous enough that if you Google Lauren's name, or you Google my name, the first thing that comes up is a photo of us together, and how much money we make. You don't talk about bringing baggage to the table of any new relationship I would challenge you to find, well, I'm sure there's bigger baggage, but that is pretty far up there. And I believe you started dating, we'll call him, Billy, at the time.

Lauren 22:51

Try not to name names here.

Alex 22:53

Yeah, not to name names, so call them Billy. I just remember, like, we just had all these problems that we didn't know, we'd have dating and talking to other people. But it makes sense with such a public persona.

Lauren 23:05

I think that it was, I know that it was way worse for the people that we were dating than for us, because we knew that we weren't attracted to each other anymore. But I know that my biggest mistake was when I was starting to date again, I was not creating enough space between my business and my personal life. I would schedule calls all the time with Alex, I would be on calls with Alex, when I was sitting next to the person I was dating while we were working, because we're both working remotely.

Lauren 23:36

I think that we hadn't been broken up long enough. And I just should have had more respect for the person I was dating at the time. Now it's just it's not like that, because now it's been three years, and it's just different. But back then it was, I guess soon enough after the breakup. I just think I could have done a lot better with creating more space and more distance between my personal and my business relationships, and really keeping those very separate. And I know you struggle with it a bit too, Alex.

Alex 24:05

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Yeah. I do actually remember one call I had with you where it's like, we didn't really talk about dating other people, but it was kind of like something that we'd occasionally bring up and talk about, because it was almost like, when you have a business that's so close, almost like clearing the air on some things is sometimes helpful. Occasionally there's like a hairy arm in the zoom in the image, and I'm like, "Well, I can definitely see that there's a dude there."

Alex 24:31

You know, she works remotely." So occasionally, there's like some shirtless jacked guy walking behind her screen and I'm like, "I get it, bro. You're huge, right? I understand, it's really cool." But there's a bunch of stuff like that, that you just have to deal with in this whole process. And one of the things was, I traveled around for a good six to eight months, it took me to complete the road trip of all the states, and I got back and I decided to settle down in Austin.

Alex 24:59

Almost immediately upon settling down in Austin, me and this girl just really clicked. And I did not know, because Lauren had already sort of dealt with bringing some baggage of a new person to the table. And then I had no idea what I was in for. But there's this person because it's just like, I love her to death. But then she goes online and looks up, and then there's Lauren's frickin face all the time. She's like, I can't, I can't use the internet, I can't watch your YouTube channel, I can't do any of this stuff, because you have this giant public, profile and persona. It even got to the point where she wanted to FaceTime Lauren, because she just wanted to clear the air. In her mind and it made sense, there's just like, this dark cloud of Lauren looming, in the background of my life, that was just like somebody I dated.

Lauren 25:52

I will haunt you forever.

Alex 25:53

Exactly. I understand now looking back at it, it's the ghost of Lauren McManus, just like floating around. It was very difficult to deal with. And at first, neither of us knew how to deal with it. Now, we've grown a little bit and understand what that baggage does to the relationship and better on being overly helpful with the persons' significant other. Whether being there and talking to them, or whether not being there at all, and understanding the importance of just floating like a jellyfish into the background and being like, I don't exist. Either one of those depending on the partner and depending on what they need, but it has created an incredible amount of difficulty in our personal lives as well.

Lauren 26:46

Yeah, I know, in the beginning, I definitely had an attitude of like, this is my life, you kind of have to deal with that. Now looking back on it, too, I think it was more because I just wasn't ready to date yet, I did need some time to be selfish and to be me. And rather, I should have had an attitude where I made sure that my partner, the person that I was dating at the time, felt very comfortable with my relationship and what that was like, and I didn't do a good job of that. And thankfully, when I started dating my current fiance, it was much later and I had actually had that

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time to really process everything and be myself. Alex has met him and things are good now. But again, it's also been three years now, so it does take time, and it does take some work. We definitely need to be in the right place and with the right mindset to be able to navigate that ourselves, but also for other people.

Alex 27:37

Yeah, for sure. It's like any relationship, everything always needs work. We run this successful business together, we are still passionate about it, and that's what makes Create and Go, Create and Go. People ask a lot of things to me, specifically, about marketing advice. I've noticed this and they always think like, we have some sort of magic email funnel. You know, and like our email funnels are good, don't get me wrong, but they think there's some sort of magic fairy dust and all this and why are they so successful and stuff like that. I would actually say that there is magic fairy dust, but it's the magic fairy dust that has always been Lauren and I's authenticity, of being open, and just being honest, and telling a very real and raw Story.

Alex 28:25

Because what we don't get in massive amounts of traffic to anything, we get insane conversions on all the things that we do. And that mostly is because people feel connected to us and understand that we're real people. Again, it's like, it's been so difficult to tell like the story, but it's kind of nice, in a way of being like, "hey, like, this is what happened. And this is where we're at." It feels very therapeutic in a way just to let it out.

Lauren 28:54

It does, definitely does. Y'all that brings us to the last part of this episode, and that's just rebuilding the relationship. Just so you know, Alex and I aren't always the best of buddies, all the time.

Alex 29:07

Let's go back to the beginning, right when I was talking about Clash of the Titans, it has evolved in a way and especially Lauren has evolved. When Lauren started, I brought a ton of Internet Marketing knowledge to the table and she brought virtually none. What she brought was organization, hunger to succeed, insane drive and work ethic. And over time, she has risen to matching my intensity, and definitely runs the majority of the show, at Create and Go. Where the things that I do are more creative in nature and Lauren more runs and manages the team and is now what I would say is more of the captain.

Alex 29:47

What we often disagree on, are still clashes of Titans where you know there's two very opinionated people, and that's how it goes. But it's sort of the evolution of Create and Go and where it's gone, at this place in time. So because of that though, we're not always the best buddies, there are plenty of months in there where Lauren and I are probably bitching about the other one to the significant other and are just like "Ughh gah, why does she have to be like that? Why does he have to be like that?" But it's much more settled into the business relationship with

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a solid friendship. And yeah, I just, I feel like kind of that's where we're at. And it's not sunshine and roses, you know?

Lauren 30:33

Yeah, actually, right now Alex and I are in another stage of rebuilding our relationship, because just about four months ago, we got into the nastiest fight that we have had since the breakup. I wouldn't say of them all, it wasn't as bad as the breakup, I think, but it was, it was still just a tough situation. And it was over business, it was over a business decision, and a pretty important one, there's definitely quite a bit at stake there. So it was a delicate conversation that needed to be had.

Lauren 31:03

But y'all, the thing is that, at least I've noticed is that, even though it's been three years and we're with other people, and there are zero romantic feelings between us at all, for some reason, I cannot remove the emotion out of the equation when I am having tough discussions with Alex. I think it's because when you've dated someone, and you know someone on that intimate level, you just can't take emotions back out. They're now a family member, it's kind of like arguing with your brother or your sister, you know, it's just different than when you argue with one of your friends, even even a best friend, a family member, it's just different.

Lauren 31:42

They know how to get underneath your skin, they know all of your pressure points, and so whenever we argue now still, or we let's say disagree over how something should be done, or you know, some expectations that are mismatched, it's still kind of tough. And I know now that I get emotional, and I have to just step off it and I get angry very easily. And that's something that we still have to navigate through.

Alex 32:04

Yeah, I think you put it best, it's a family relationship. Where the fighting is different, the fighting is more emotional, you say more things that you would never say to just a coworker, you are more brutal with them, things like that. That's just like this state of where we are at. It's just the state of what we've created, and just sort of the acceptance of, we're still changing people's lives, we're dedicated to Create and Go and making it work. So Lauren and I have to like, I don't know, if you've ever seen that handshake emoji where it's just like, the two hands and just shaking.

Alex 32:44

It feels a lot like that it feels like and again, I just like to say in it how it is it feels like fuck you, fuck you too, and just like a handshake sometimes, because it's just like, hey, we have something to do, we have a job to do, we have something that we care about. We're going to make that happen and our feelings get wrapped up into it, our emotions do and it's not pretty, and it's not sexy all the time. I hope that that impression, I hope that it doesn't ruin an impression that we've given you that we don't love what we do.

## Episode 16- Running a Blog With Your Ex

Alex 33:14

We do love it and love the freedom that it gives us. But at the same time, I would be remiss if we set you up with the expectation that this is, again, sunshine and roses. We fight a lot, and part of that is okay, if we just had a business and no relationship, these fights would not be as they are, but because we had a relationship. That's how they are and that's how it is.

Lauren 33:38

For sure. Well, y'all, let's wrap this up.

Alex 33:41

On a positive note.

Lauren 33:43

Yeah, our relationship is ever evolving. You know, it just is and what remains the most important thing to us, of course, is our business. It's our livelihood, but beyond just that the money that we make, it's what we're passionate about. We still work on it all the time. I know for me, it still takes up the majority of space in my life. So for me that space has to be a happy place. One of the last things I told Alex, when we had a serious conversation about our relationship, I said, I need this space, our business, to be a happy place for me.

Lauren 34:15

I need to make sure that our relationship is in a place where it reflects that, whether that's talking or that's not talking, I just have to be able to be happy and to be able to separate that. So whatever that looks like for you, if you're running a business with a partner, whether it is your romantic partner, your ex, or just a friend or just somebody else, just make sure to take stock of what you really need and understand that there's so much to the dynamic of every relationship and you need to just make sure that you're creating happy harmonic spaces for yourself in your business.

Alex 34:54

Yeah, you gotta you got to care about it. You gotta feel it. It's more than X's and O's out there. You got to feel a certain thing about it and feel passionate about it. Doing this and running this business has been one of the most outstanding things in my life. We're gonna keep this thing going and change some people's lives.

Lauren 35:14

For sure. I think the one other thing that you didn't mention, and I didn't mention it is trust, none of this ever would have been able to happen if Alex and I didn't trust each other on the deepest level. There's never been a question of anyone running off with the business or the money, or anything. Trust and respect and respect, I know, has been questioned at times in certain conversations, but trust has always been there throughout everything and that's been unquestionable. So make sure that you can trust in anyone that you work with on your business. Because without that trust, and ideally respect, you have nothing else.

## Episode 16- Running a Blog With Your Ex

Alex 35:50

So the interesting thing is like in a business like this, and where we're at, there's a lot of chances to be a Virtus, there's a lot of chances to stab the person in the back. And that is so true, is that you have to trust them on a fundamental level. I mean, this is funny that we've broken up. And I don't even often look at the finances, meaning like Lauren is managing all of the money and is in charge of depositing it into the bank accounts that we have. I don't look at it. Because I know I trust her.

Alex 36:19

And I know that she's occasionally like we go through and I, you know, just want to double check things. But you know, she was taking a fat cut, she could take it, but I know she's no, and that's so important. Because again, through a breakup and all this terribleness and not one time, have I ever thought, "Oh, she's gonna take money from me or anything like that." And so, again, such a huge aspect of having a working dynamic.

Lauren 36:42

Well, Alex, thank you so much for sharing the story with me. And thank y'all for listening to, if you made it this far through this long episode, thank you for listening to our story. I hope that it gives you a little bit more insight into what it's been like on the personal side for us and things that we still go through. If you liked this episode, please leave us a review and let us know if you want to see more content like this, more of the personal stuff. I'm still getting more comfortable with sharing that kind of stuff with y'all. So if you enjoyed it, please let me know and we will send more of this kind of content your way.

Alex 37:18

See on the next one, guys.

Lauren 37:22

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