

# Ep #1: Humble Beginnings, Hard Things, and the Habit of Joy



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Kaneisha Grayson**

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## Ep #1: Humble Beginnings, Hard Things, and the Habit of Joy

Hey, hey, hey. You are listening to Scale Your Joy with Kaneisha Grayson, episode one. What! What!

Welcome to Scale Your Joy, the only podcast that teaches high achievers with heart how to craft a life and build a business focused on freedom, joy, self-expression, and social impact. I'm your host Kaneisha Grayson, a Harvard Business School and Harvard Kennedy School grad, author, essayist, and self-made entrepreneur. I did it and you can do it too. Let's get started.

Hey everybody, welcome. Thanks for joining. I'm really excited about this first episode of Scale Your Joy. It has been a lot of work to put this together and bring this to you. But it's also been a lot of fun, and a project that has been on my heart for years at this point. And we are finally here together. And I'm so happy that we are getting started. Before we jump into the full episode, I want to start with a listener spotlight for you all.

Now, the podcast just started. So, at the very beginning, the first few episodes, all the listener spotlights are going to be of people that I know. Because I am going to record a few of the episodes upfront, so that you all have a few episodes you can binge as it's launching. But then, after those first few episodes are out, you will start hearing listener spotlights from me from all of you, people from all over the world.

So our first listener spotlight is of Ari. Ari is an amazing person that I've known for a few years. She went to Tufts University, and she's a Black woman like me. And she is also the writing center coach for my company, The Art of Applying. And she's also a very cool, full-time freelancer. And Ari is the type of person that I totally imagine when I'm speaking and making this podcast, and just the type of person that I know this podcast will help and that will really enjoy what I have to share.

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So Ari says, "I'm so excited you're launching a podcast Kaneisha. The theme is great, and I'd love to help you in any way I can. I really admire your career, so I'm really excited to learn from you."

Thank you, Ari. That is very sweet. I love to hear from you and I know those of you who are listening are like, "I don't know Ari, and I also may not even know Kaneisha. And so who is this Kaneisha? And what the heck is Scale Your Joy? What does that even mean? And why should I listen to this podcast?"

Well, you know, one thing I want you to know is that I am sitting in my home office in sunny Austin, Texas where I'm from and where I live. And I just got back from the dog park with my dog Zadie. She's so cute, I got her during the pandemic in April and we've been together since then. And we're still feeling each other out. We love each other very much, but we're still really getting used to each other.

And right now, she's real mad at me because I have put her in her crate so that she cannot run around the house making all the noise in the world while I record this first podcast episode for you.

More things about me, besides the fact that I have an awesome rescue dog named Zadie is that I am an entrepreneur. I've been an entrepreneur for over 11 years. So a long, long time. And I'm really passionate about helping people achieve their dreams.

And for the past 11 years my team and I have been helping people achieve their dreams, in terms of getting into their dream grad schools and getting as much money as possible to pay for it. And really doing that without them having to go into tremendous debt, or without them having to defer their dreams for years and years.

And as a part of that journey, I have learned a lot about myself, about what I value, about starting a business, growing a business, scaling back a business, scaling up a business, and excited to share all of that with you.

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A little short, condensed version of my entrepreneurship story while I'm at Harvard for graduate school. And I was there for three years because I was getting two master's degrees. A Master's of Public Administration from Harvard Kennedy School of Government, as well as a Master's of Business Administration from Harvard Business School.

And since I was there for three years, that means that I had the opportunity to complete two separate summer internships. So, one after my first year of graduate school and one after my second year of graduate school. And I chose to intern for very, very extraordinarily large corporations for both of my internships.

So, my first one was a policy internship at a very large pharmaceutical company. And then my second internship, the summer after my second year of graduate school was for, at the time, the largest food company in the world. I don't know if they still are. And so the first one I was doing public policy for the pharmaceutical company. And then the second summer I was doing brand management and marketing for the company.

And I thought, you know, "I'm on this path, I have my two Harvard degrees I'm going to get. I'm going to get that corporate ladder life and make that money." And I really thought I wanted that. And after those two summer internships, it did not take me long at all to realize that corporate life was not for me.

I didn't fit in, I didn't like having meetings all day, I didn't like sitting at my desk and not seeing the sun most of the day. It just wasn't for me. And I became very certain that I wanted to be an entrepreneur.

On a future episode, I'll definitely have an interview with a good friend of mine, very, very close friend of mine named Laura Roder who really encouraged me to launch out on my own and start my own business. So I decided to do that.

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And so, in 2009 during the summer before my last year of graduate school, I decided to be an entrepreneur. And the first place I was going to start was with helping people get into grad school.

And I remember I was very naive. I was very strategic in some ways, and very naive in other ways. I was very strategic in that I spent my last year of graduate school taking coursework, both at Harvard Business School and Harvard Kennedy School that I felt would really help me with being an entrepreneur.

And I really think I did an amazing job of picking courses. And we can talk about exactly what courses I took in a future episode, for those of you who are thinking about going to grad school or already in grad school, and want to know, “Well, what courses did Kaneisha take?” And I just did a great job of picking courses. So that was strategic.

I was also strategic in the fact that I applied for some money from Harvard Business School to start my business. This is back in 2009, this is the height of the economic crisis, and starting a business is the last thing anyone wants to do. But it's the first thing I want to do. And Harvard Business School had some money set aside for graduates who were going to start a business right out of school.

So that was another strategic thing I did, is I wrote a business plan, submitted it to Harvard Business School, and they gave me \$10,000 to start my business. So that was awesome.

Places where I was super-duper naive, was how much money that I would make in year one, year two, year three as an entrepreneur. I just had these extraordinary goals, which are lovely, but I really lacked guidance and direction. I remember, when I was planning out my year one of my business, at this point I do have a name for the business, and it's still the name today. The Art of Applying is the name of my admissions consulting business.

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I thought, “Okay, no problem, I'm going to aim for a million dollars year one. Totally, I'll make a million dollars.” And let me just tell you, I did not make a million dollars in year one. I made about \$30,000 in year one. And you better believe that while I was really excited about making money in my business, that was nowhere near the amount of money that I expected or hoped to make.

Other things that were really hard for me about being a full-time entrepreneur was I really didn't like working alone. I worked from home long before, you know, since 2010. So long before remote work was the normal worldwide movement that it is now. This is before Zoom even existed. And so I was working at home, working alone, and it was very isolating, very lonely. I also didn't like the uncertainty in my income, how much money will I make? Will I make any money? Will I run out of money?

Speaking of money, it was really not great to watch myself making, you know, 30K in a year. While, you know, knowing that if I went to go work at a corporation, I could make 130K, 150, 200, whatever. And so just feeling like I was falling behind.

Other things I didn't like was, you know, looking around purchasing courses on how to run an online business and not even knowing if it would work. While also feeling a lot of shame and like sadness about the fact that I have a Harvard MBA. Why don't I know how to run this business? Why should I have to pay someone to tell me how to run this business? I should know, I went to Harvard. How have other people figured this out, even though they didn't go to Harvard?

And then another pain point for me is I was like, “Where are all the people who look like m being successful, working for themselves, running their own business.” There were, you know, a lot of people, I was seeing mostly white people. Very young, white people usually, and very slim, good looking, it was very clear type of person. And I'm like, “Where are all the people of color? And also, where all the people who have gotten, you know, fancy graduate degrees? Am I the only person out here?”

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And I wasn't the only person. And I'm not the only person of color with a fancy graduate degree who has an online business. But it was very hard and very lonely in those early days. And I didn't have people who I felt looked like me to look up to and to turn to for guidance. I did eventually figure out how to make money in my business. And I did.

So, I ended up being able to pay off \$150,000 in student loans in 2017. So that's just six and a half years after I graduated from grad school. And I also made a million dollars in 2018 in my business, in The Art of Applying. And so that's a huge triumph.

But I was exhausted. I was on a treadmill of achievement and over achievement. I was on a treadmill of earning money in my business and spending it just as fast as I was earning it. And I really found that I wasn't any more happy than I was when I was making the 30K. I still often felt very stressed out, confused, lonely, you know, resentful of the hours I was working and the output I was getting for that effort. I had, you know, Mo Money, Mo Problems, that's what I had.

So, I became super motivated to figure out how to have a thriving business, a delicious lifestyle, and be able to make the world a better place while still making great money. And on this podcast, I'm going to tell you stories about my journey, as well as teach you what I've learned along the way. You don't have to make the same mistakes that I did.

You don't have to spend the years and years, the decade that I've spent, learning these lessons making mistakes. You will make mistakes, maybe different mistakes than I did, maybe some of the same mistakes. But you can definitely take some shortcuts to success based on my experiences and the experiences of the people that I'm going to bring on here. My friends, my colleagues, to talk about crafting a life that you love and a business that serves your ideal lifestyle and your values.

Other things to know about me is that I come from humble beginnings. Both of my parents grew up in Florida as migrant farm workers. And I grew up in Dove Springs in Austin, Texas, which is still a low-income neighborhood.

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And it is, I'd say 85% Spanish speaking and Mexican American. I went to public school all the way through high school. Public Title One schools where most students were on free lunch. And while I was growing up, my neighborhood had the highest teen pregnancy rate in the nation.

So those are some details about my humble beginnings. Another thing to know about me is I really value formal education. Making this podcast with a particular person in mind. And that person is very frequently from a marginalized group. So they're a person of color, or they're a queer person, or perhaps you're neurodiverse, maybe you have ADHD, and or dyslexia. Or maybe you're all of those things.

And that's the kind of, I call us the wildlings and the wildcards, that's who I have in mind when making this podcast. The wildcard who either has gotten a prestigious undergraduate or graduate degree, or who wants to. But who also wants to balance out that achievers kind of never-ending drive with a serious commitment to joy, to freedom, to self-expression, to social impact. And that person that I have in mind, they value formal education like I do.

So this is not the podcast, like you might see on Instagram or hear in other podcasts where they're like, "Don't go to college. College is a waste of money. Don't go to grad school. That's just for people who aren't ready to take risks out in the 'real' world."

The person that is listening to this podcast that I have in mind, let me know if I have you right, you definitely went to college and graduated. And you probably have one or more graduate degrees. And you are competitive out there in the work world. You are not searching for jobs in a desperate way like, "No one will hire me." You have choices, and one of the choices you want available to you is the freedom and flexibility to live anywhere, work anywhere, to use that amazing formal education that you have worked so hard for, so that it's working for you to help you have the life that you really want.



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And another thing to know about me is that I have been through hard things. It can be really easy to look at someone like me and be like, “Oh, Kaneisha, you know, she's always cracking jokes. And she's got those fancy Harvard degrees, and her million-dollar business, and her whole team of people helping her and working for her. Like, surely she had a trust fund growing up and things like that.” I did not have a trust fund. I didn't even know what a trust fund was, probably until grad school. I have been through hard things.

I have been through hard things. So, some hard things I've been through, I have lost multiple extended family members to AIDS, murder via gun violence and domestic violence on both sides of my family. I lost my first love of my life to suicide. I lost my mom three years ago, when she was just 57. I got a divorce in 2018, and I never saw him again. I lost my best friend, Leah Walter, in April of the pandemic, when she passed away at just the age of 35. I had 22 tumors removed from my body just this past August. They were not cancerous, very grateful for that. But that was a major, major surgery. Well, major revelation to even learn that my body was riddled with tumors, and also a major surgery to get them out.

And so this is not a podcast about being happy all the time. This is not a podcast about pretending horrible things don't happen in life. This is not what I'm here for. This is a podcast about being able to be fully present to the reality of the world, the realities of our life, and still to be able to choose joy, and to have the freedom, the money, the time, and the autonomy, to set up our life in such a way that we, not just experience joy at random times but we can get clear on what gives us joy and then scale up those things. And scale your joy. That's what I'm here for.

So, those are just a few of the really hard things that I've been through. I've also lived all over the US and the world. I've lived in Austin, Los Angeles, Boston, New York. I've lived in Cuba, Ghana, and most recently I lived in Spain. And so I consider myself a global citizen. And I love to travel.

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Lastly, I am committed to progressive and social justice values. I believe it is really important for historically marginalized people to generate wealth and have the freedom to detach from oppressive systems. And so those are some things about me so that you know who Kaneisha Grayson is, what does she mean by scale your joy? Is this a person who aligns with my values? Those are some of my values.

And I really found a very deep desire to share what I have experienced and share what I have learned, especially as things started to get better and better in my life and in my business. I'd say, you know, I've been in business at this point for 11 years. And I would say around year nine is when I really started to find my groove in life and find my groove in business.

And what I mean by that is just having more free time, more peace of mind, having more adventures. I just spent four months, well actually it wasn't actually just. I just spent the last year of my life sheltering in place. But before that I was living in Barcelona, Spain for four months.

I had never even been to Spain. But I got curious went there for two weeks, I had an amazing time and packed up my life and moved there and continued to run my business.

My groove looks like having more support. I have an amazing team that is helping put together this podcast. I have an amazing team that keeps everything running at The Art of Applying. An amazing team of consultants that work one on one and provide group coaching to our clients at The Art of Applying.

My groove looks like more love. I'm very happily in a relationship after my divorce. So, I got divorced in August 2018. I spent a year single, just really focusing on myself. And then I spent a year, let's call it very committedly dating. Meaning I was very committed to meeting a lot of people. I went on 45 first dates in 12 months. And then I met my now boyfriend, and we are

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so in love and so happy. And that doesn't mean it's not without its ups and downs. I have a lot of relationship anxiety from time to time, which we'll talk about as well.

And my groove also looks like more money. In 2020, I took home double what I made in 2018. Even though 2018 was the year my business made a million dollars. And 2020 was the year that my business made about \$580,000. And so what does it look like to scale a business up to a million dollars, and then to mindfully scale it back while still increasing your income? Those are the types of things I'm excited to talk about on this podcast.

Another great example of getting into my groove is that right now in The Art of Applying, we are having our biggest January ever. So you're listening to this podcast in February or early March. But I am recording this podcast on January 26th. So January hasn't even finished and my team has already brought in over \$100,000 in revenue already for the month. With more money expected on the way in the next four to five days. And so that's really, really exciting.

And I share that, yes to brag, because I think it's really important that women, people of color, first generation people, and other people from marginalized groups, that we brag and we acknowledge our accomplishments. But I also share that to help you understand that I have had lots of ups and downs in my life and my business, and that I am in a place right now of tremendous joy. And it is not by accident, it's very intentional. And I look forward to sharing that journey with you.

So, as you can tell, I'm really passionate about scaling. And I'm really passionate about joy. And so we've brought them together in this podcast as Scale Your Joy, and I look forward to helping you scale your joy.

So enough about me, you're going to learn a lot more about my story, a lot more about my personal experiences, my academic experiences, my professional experiences in future episodes. But let's talk about you and what you might be experiencing.

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So, you know, I imagine that you got the fancy degree, maybe you got that fancy undergrad degree from Tufts University like Ari, who I gave the listener shout out to earlier. Or maybe you have already gone the full way. Like you've got your MBA from University of Michigan, and you even have the fancy corporate job. And it just looks like "Hey, I just graduated a year ago, two years ago, or maybe just graduated in May, I did it. I got the fancy undergrad. I got the fancy graduate degree. And I got the fancy job."

But there's this creeping feeling that's coming in, where you're kind of like, "Wait, is this it? Is this what I worked so hard for?" And you're just kind of wondering what comes next. And you're also wondering if you are actually putting your time, talents, education and attention to the place that matters most to you. A feeling that a lot of my clients have when I talk to them about why they want to go to grad school.

And also, a feeling that a lot of the consultants on my team who work for me, they have. They're very diverse, they are super smart, super accomplished, and have outstanding jobs. A sentiment I hear sometimes, and often from them is, "Hey, I really like my job and I'm really grateful for my job and for my career, and my emerging career. But I also have this feeling inside, that I'm spending a lot of my time and talents making a rich corporation richer, or making really wealthy people really wealthy." Or, "I'm working with really high net worth individuals managing their assets, and I never work with a person of color, and that breaks my heart." So that's another feeling you might be having.

Another thing you might be going through is that you're starting to have the glimmer of, "You know what? I do want to start my own business or have a side hustle. I want to establish a personal brand on an online platform, and I want to get paid to be me somehow." And so you've done some googling, you follow some influencers and entrepreneurs on Instagram, you've even read 4-Hour Work Week. And you've maybe even signed up for a course.

But you haven't quite gotten all those pieces to fit together to actually successfully starting and growing your business. You're consuming a lot of

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information, but you're not really moving from input to output, from learning to action. And you're an action-oriented person, so that's a very uncomfortable place to be.

Another thought you might be having is you're just not sure who to believe, or what to believe when you are watching people make 10s and 1000s of dollars or millions of dollars on social media. And a part of you also thinks, and you might be a little bit embarrassed about this thought. But you might be thinking, "Why should I listen to these people when I have an MBA from a highly ranked school, and they only have a bachelor's degree? Or maybe they didn't even go to college at all? Like, why should I listen to them? And can I even trust that what they're saying is true."

So, you might be embarrassed for thinking that, but just between me and you, you know, you might be thinking that like, "Hey, I worked really hard to get my policy degree from Harvard, or to get my law degree, right, from Yale, or to get my MBA at Wharton. And now I'm listening to some person who has like 70,000 followers on Instagram and says that they can help me make money online, but I just don't know if I can believe it." And so you're just really feeling a lack of trust between you and the people putting themselves out there saying, "Oh, yes, I can teach you how to start a business or grow your business."

Another thing that you might be feeling is that you have really enjoyed having the freedom to work remotely during this time of shelter in place. Maybe you have left where you usually live and moved to a warmer state. Or maybe you still are in your home city, and in your same apartment, but you're able to just have a lot more flexibility in your workday. Take a short walk in the middle of the day, cuddle with your dog between meetings. Just a different lifestyle, have more time autonomy and more flexibility. And that taste has made you want a lot more time freedom and autonomy over your freedom of where you work and live.

And you're also starting to think, "Wait a minute, this is a great job. But I only get like two to four weeks of vacation a year. I'm gonna need more

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time than that to travel, go to weddings, have my own wedding.” You know? So that's another thing you may be thinking.

Another thing that I can imagine you're thinking is that you see some of your friends or classmates actually putting themselves out there saying, “You know what? I'm starting a business; I'm going to be helping people with personal fitness.” Or, “I'm going to be a stylist.” Or, “I'm gonna help people figure out where to go next in their career.” But you don't resonate with the way that they're putting themselves out there.

You're looking at them like “Wait, if that's what it takes, I don't think I want to have my own business.” Or, “Why does she have to do that? Why does she have to say that? I'm so tired of looking at her posts on LinkedIn. And that is not even the appropriate forum for those posts.” And you're just feeling this tension between wanting to be more visible, but also wanting to be visible in a way that yes, gets you clients, but doesn't erode your reputation with your classmates, your work mates, and the people in your network.

And just really feeling that absence of guidance around how do I let people know that I have a business and I have things for sale without looking super salesy or like making myself... Let's say without eroding my personal brand online. On LinkedIn or even in my all section WhatsApp group or whatnot.

And I am just here to tell you that you can totally let people know you're open for business. And you can maintain and grow your reputation with your network and with your colleagues. And that it's very important to maintain your network and maintain and cultivate relationships.

And then lastly, maybe you actually have an established business. This is another type of person that I imagine will love this podcast. Is you actually have an established business, but it's sucking the life out of you. It demands all your energy, all your time, and all your money. You are at the service of your business versus your business being at the service of you,

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your values, and your ideal lifestyle. Your business may be growing, but it just feels absolutely unmanageable.

Or it might actually feel manageable, but it's stagnant and lacking zest. You're starting to wonder why you started the business in the first place. And just looking around and feeling like you should have more to show for the blood, sweat, tears, and years you have poured into your business so far.

And I want you to know that if you resonate with some of the things I just said, or many of the things, or all the things that you are in the right place. Scale Your Joy is for you. And I'm excited for us to get into your life and get into your business. Also get into my life and get into my business. My personal business and my business business, and see how we can identify what gives us joy and scale that up. While we also identify what's working in my business, in other people's businesses, and scale that up as well.

And I also want to let you know that let's say you don't want to start a business at all, or you don't even want a side hustle. You love your job and you just want to hear Kaneisha tell stories and give advice, you are very welcome to be here too. I have lots of stories to share, lots of advice to give. It's not going to be all business, business, business. We're going to talk quite a bit about entrepreneurship. But the bigger point of all this talking about entrepreneurship is to get at joy, right? And using entrepreneurship as a tool and a playground for increasing and exploring our joy.

All right, so I want to tell you about why my approach to life and business is different than most, if not all of the people that you may be listening to on other podcasts or seeing online. And the first thing I want to say, and I think is very, very important to say is that entrepreneurship is neutral. Being an entrepreneur, having a business, starting a business, growing a business does not make me or you or anyone else better than someone who has a job.

Entrepreneurship is not a virtue. Entrepreneurship is not some heavenly ideal to strive for. It is neutral. You can run a business and run your whole

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business and the life into the ground. You can run a business and it be an engine of inspiration and abundance in your life. But entrepreneurship in and of itself, as a practice, as a lifestyle, as a career, as an identity is actually neutral.

So, that's the first thing, is this is not a podcast where we are going to talk about entrepreneurship as if we are better because we have businesses than people who choose not to have businesses. That's not what I'm here for.

Also, and on a related topic, entrepreneurship is not a binary concept nor a binary journey. If anything, let's think of entrepreneurship as a spectrum. There is, on the far end of the spectrum, the person who has a full-time job, does only what they're told, and clocks in, clocks out. You know, comes in right at nine o'clock and clocks out right at 5pm. And they do not think about their job after hours. Nor do they engage in any sort of entrepreneurial activities after work. It is all just walking the dog, working out, cooking dinner, Netflix. Which actually sounds lovely to me. That's the far end of the spectrum.

And then let's say about a quarter of the way up on the spectrum, or to the right on the spectrum, is the person who has a job and approaches their job in an entrepreneurial manner. So, this is going to be somebody who poses ideas to their managers, who, whether they are the actual leader of a team is able to emerge as a peer mentor or a peer leader. Who goes about their official work duties in an innovative, problem solving way where they take a lot of ownership. So that's sometimes called an intrapreneur as well with an I.

Let's say about halfway up the scale, we have the person who has a job and the person who has a side hustle that actually brings in money. And so that's where I think a lot of you will decide that's where I want to be. I want to keep my corporate job, and I want to have a business on the side that brings in money so that I feel a great sense of self determination. And like, I am never beholden to any corporation to have a steady flow of income.



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And then let's say about three quarters up the scale, I'm going to call that the entrepreneur who takes on side gigs sometimes to supplement their income. So you mostly support yourself through your business. But sometimes you'll dip in and take a job for a few months, or for a few hours a week or a month to supplement your income. And I definitely did that off and on for the first three years of my business. And I would usually choose teaching and tutoring to bring in some supplemental income on the side of my business.

And then let's say on the far right then we would have the person who's like my full income, and that's where I am, my full income comes from my entrepreneurial activities. So I do not want you thinking that it's either or. I'm going to be an entrepreneur or I'm going to have a job. It doesn't work like that. You may be an entrepreneur who decides to pick up some gigs on the side occasionally. You may be a person who decides I want to stay in my career, but I also want to earn income on the side.

Anywhere you are on that spectrum is totally fine with me. You are not better, more interesting, or more worthy for being an entrepreneur. It's not a I'm an entrepreneur or I'm not, it's how entrepreneurial are you? What type of entrepreneur do you want to be?

Another very important principle is you do not need to be chosen in order to be an entrepreneur. You choose yourself and you decide, "I am an entrepreneur." Same with I'm a writer, I'm also a writer. I can't believe I forgot to tell you all that.

I am also a writer. I love writing, I write essays. I also have written a book called *Be Your Own Boyfriend*, and I'm going to read some excerpts from the book in the future. I know in the intro it says I'm an indie author and an essayist, and I am, but I'm also like, "How did it take me so long to mention that I am a writer?" So anyway, you do not need to be chosen in order to be an entrepreneur. You don't need to be chosen in order to be a writer. An entrepreneur engages in entrepreneurial activities, a writer writes.

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So, this is my affirmation to you that you can start a business without investors. Those are the types of businesses I will be focusing on for the most part. Sometimes they're called a lifestyle business, or an online business. It doesn't mean that a lifestyle business or an online business can't have investors, but they usually don't need them and don't have them. So usually, the founder of those kind of companies, owns 100% of the shares, which is the case with The Art of Applying and me.

Another thing that makes me different is that I teach and believe that entrepreneurialism and creativity are not innate qualities. They are habits and practices. So far, I can imagine that many of your habits, and choices, and practices in your life and in your career have been oriented around achievement, like mine were. And oriented around this idea of proving yourself.

I don't know what happened to us, but so many of us who are first generation college grads or first-generation professionals, which is what I am, first generation in my family to get a professional degree. We have this deep need that drives us to prove ourselves, and prove that we're smart, and prove that we're worthy and capable.

And what we're going to be working together, I'm going to work on it myself, you're going to work on it yourself, and we're going to work on it together, reorienting our thoughts, and our habits, and our choices, in our life and in our entrepreneurial life towards cultivating joy.

And now let's talk about joy. Another thing that makes me different, that really makes up my philosophy, is that joy is not the same as happiness. To keep it simple, let's think of happiness as a positive feeling I have after something happens. So it's an external circumstance. Something happens and then I feel happy. Joy is a feeling that I choose. When I intentionally find the gift or the lesson in the experiences of my life. It is the sparkle I feel inside when my life is in line with my core values. Joy is not a fast moving, ever changing emotion. It is a deep abiding way of being.

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Another note on joy is that here at Scale Your Joy, as entrepreneurs, as lifestyle designers, we are here to maximize joy. Now, for those of you who have studied business in undergrad or in graduate school, you know that businesses are usually set up to maximize shareholder value. And those of us who identify as overachievers or perfectionists, we often make choices that are about maximizing external validation. Making our parents, or our grandparents, or our teachers, professors, boss at work, getting their validation.

And in a way, all of the choices that we've made in our academic and professional career, or at least most of them, and many of the choices that we've made in our personal life, are really about that desire to feel worthy, smart, proven, like we've made it. But the reason why we want to feel worthy, smart, proven, or like we've made it is that we think that it'll help us feel better.

But we can stop taking the long way around, doing all these treadmill of overachievement actions, and actually just get clear on what actually brings us joy. And then set up our thoughts and our daily lives so that we have the space, time, the money, because money is important, and the mindset to actually acknowledge what brings us joy, and experience that joy, and then scale that joy.

Lastly, what makes me different is that I'm a teacher at heart. And I love to teach using stories, strategies, and frameworks. So as I already mentioned, I'm a writer, so I love stories. In my business, The Art of Applying, we help people from all over the world craft their compelling, cohesive, and concise essays. Which is their personal story, their academic story, their professional story. So I am a storyteller, I'm going to tell lots of stories. And I also am going to teach you strategies. So I'm a very strategic thinker. That is one of my top 10 Clifton strengths is strategic. And then also I'm going to teach using frameworks.

As you know, I have two master's degrees from Harvard. Harvard loves teaching via stories using the case method. Harvard also loves teaching via

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frameworks. Those of us who studied business, we know things like the four Ps or Porter's five forces and other frameworks.

Frameworks are very crucial to taking what could seem like complex strategies or complex concepts and making them very simple and easy to remember so that you can use them when you're having to make dozens or hundreds of decisions in a day. Or when you're in a high-pressure situation it gives you a foundation on which you can make decisions.

We don't overly rely on frameworks and strategies to the detriment of our intuition, but we combine them with that to feel really confident and capable as leaders, decision makers, entrepreneurs, and people in charge of our lives.

And so I'm going to be teaching using strategies, stories, and frameworks. Frameworks I learned in grad school, frameworks that I've learned from teachers I've had since grad school, and then also frameworks that I've created. I love to create frameworks; I've been doing it for a long time.

And so I'll be teaching using stories, strategies, and frameworks versus throwing a litany of complex and ever-changing tactics your way because it's really hard to remember a bunch of different tactics and very easy to rely on a core set of frameworks, a core library of stories and strategies for being successful in crafting a life and business that works for you instead of you working for it.

So, to recap, joy is a habit you can learn. And we're going to use entrepreneurship, and we're going to use our daily lives as our case study for cultivating joy, while understanding that joy is an inside job. We're not going to cultivate joy by making more, and more, and more, and more money or getting more, and more, and more attention, or landing on the Forbes 40 under 40 list. I hope that those wonderful things happen for you, but we don't do those things in order to cultivate joy.

We take a joy first approach to our lives and to the way we run businesses. And we are going to operate off of the idea that with the right perspective

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we can decide to feel at peace and in joy no matter what is happening. And it's not about turning our backs on all the injustice, tragedy, heartbreak, and sadness that there is in the world. But about being able to take such exquisite care of our bodies, our minds, our money, our dreams, that our cups are overflowing with energy to turn that energy outward to help heal the world.

And so this has been the first episode of Scale Your Joy with Kaneisha Grayson. I hope that you enjoyed it. I hope that you maybe learned something. If you did enjoy it, it would be awesome if you could share this episode with somebody that you think might enjoy it or might enjoy the show. And I want to give you a heads up that in the beginning of this podcasting journey I'm going to be giving away things, so I am very excited.

We are going to be doing a giveaway of audiobooks and or e-books. It's a Scale Your Joy book bundle. And we are doing it as an audio book or e-book so that anyone anywhere in the world can win. And I'm going to have more details about how to enter for that giveaway in the outro of this podcast. But in short you want to leave a review, a written review on Apple Podcasts. And then send us an email so that we can put you in the running for the scale your joy book bundle giveaway.

And just know that every review that you write really helps other people discover the podcast and take the time to listen in. So thanks for listening to episode one of Scale Your Joy with Kaneisha Grayson. This is the beginning of a beautiful future together.

To celebrate the launch of the show I'm giving away a Scale Your Joy audiobook e-book bundle. These are five hand-picked books that I have read and I love. They're about life, joy, and entrepreneurship and five lucky listeners will be chosen to win.

The way you enter is you subscribe, rate, and review Scale Your Joy on Apple Podcasts. It doesn't have to be a five-star review, although I sure hope you're loving the show. I want your honest feedback so I can create an amazing show that provides tons of value. Visit

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scaleyourjoy.com/welcome to learn more about the contest and how to enter.

I'll be announcing the winners on the show in episode 11.