

Ep #23: 5 Habits that Will Change Your Life



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With Your Host

Brooke Keeling

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Welcome to *Love Your Living*, a podcast for ambitious women who choose to have it all. Learn how to achieve the massive success you've been dreaming of in your business and your personal life. Here's your host, multiple six-figure business owner and a life stylist, Brooke Keeling.

Hello, everyone, and welcome to the *Love Your Living* podcast, where we get real in talking about life and big goals and ambition and the reality of it. So today, I am going to be sharing with you guys the five habits that I have created in my own life that have literally changed my life.

Now, the reason that I'm talking about this is because I, oftentimes, get the question, how do you do what you do? Or, even questions from people that have known me for a really long time asking me how I figured it out, because the life that I'm living today is not the life that I was living 15 years ago.

So, for example, I used to be very overweight. I was about 60 pounds heavier than what I am now. I struggled for years on my weight and my self-esteem and I was constantly following different fad diets and trying new things and it was just this vicious cycle of fad diets.

And so people that knew me during that time – and looking at me now, you know, I've had a baby, I'm in the best shape of my life – they wonder how did you figure this out, what happened? What changed? What did you do? Because I've maintained the weight that I'm at for several years. I'm no longer on that vicious cycle.

And so for me, I think okay, how did I figure this out? How did it really change? And it really comes down to the habits that I've implemented into my life. And what I want you to know before I get into this is that it takes time to create habits. There's a lot of different statistics and studies and opinion on how long it takes to make lasting change in your life; anywhere from 30 days to 90 days.

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I would have to say, I'm more on that 90-day page. I think it takes time in order for you to really truly make lasting change in certain areas of your life, whether it be your weight or diet, whether it be an exercise routine, whether it be making sales calls. Whatever it is, it takes time to create those habits. And so to get to that point where it's just instinct, it's just part of who you are.

So like I said, I have not always lived the life that I live today. So what are these habits? What are these habits that have taken me from a girl that gives plasma to make her rent or a girl that is 60 pounds overweight to maintaining the best shape of her life after having a baby? What are these things that I've implemented?

So habit number one – the first thing that has literally changed my life is my morning routine. Now, my morning routine consists of waking up at 5:30, 5:45, getting a workout in – I have a workout class at either five o' clock or 5:30 in the morning, depending on what day it is. And from there, I have a little bit of quiet time.

And my nanny gets to my house at 7am and my day starts. Now, 4:30, that's early, okay. I used to think, like, oh my gosh, these people are crazy when I would hear hours like that or I don't even know how you do it, I'm not that morning person. And then, I started just making myself do it. And it's hard. It's especially hard in the winter months in Wisconsin when it's dark and cold and you don't want to get out of bed.

It's really hard, but what I can tell you is that it's a night and day difference from when I wake up and I start my day like that versus I hit the snooze button, I sleep for an extra hour because I just need that extra hour and then I dive into my day kind of feeling a little discombobulated. And why it's so powerful is that it allows me to get my mind in the space that it needs to be in. It allows me to release the things that I no longer need.

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Exercise, for me, is such a powerful tool for stress and anxiety and it's also a really powerful tool for finding clarity and getting incredible ideas. So when I get my workout in first thing in the morning, I'm on fire. Like, I am ready to set the world on fire. I feel more energized; far more energized than if I slept a little longer in the morning. It's literally a night and day difference and it is so worth it.

However, I still fall off the wagon. Like, I have weeks where I don't wake up early. I have weeks where I'm working really late in the evening, like tonight I happen to be working. It's 11pm and I'm recording a podcast. Now, I'm not proud of that, however, sometimes I fall off of my routine.

And in the past, it's been a lot harder for me to get back into the swing of things, but now, I'm so addicted to that feeling and that outcome that even if my alarm goes off and I'm like, oh my god, I can't do it today, I get my ass out of bed.

So there's some different tools that you can use. There's mindset work that you can use, just acknowledging that you feel a certain way. There's sheer willpower and, like, get your fucking ass out of bed. But once you start to really allow yourself to get attached to the outcome, that's when you're going to see those lasting results.

So morning routine has been incredibly powerful. I'm not saying that you need to get up at 4:30am, that's just what my schedule is and I happen to really love it because it's quiet. My phone is not ringing yet, my email is not going off, my team is usually not working, they don't need anything. No one needs anything from me in that time, so it's so powerful to just be, to sit and just be and not worry about who's trying to get a hold of me, what email needs to be answered, you know, all of those different things that go on throughout the day.

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So morning routine has been my number one. And like I said, getting up at 4:30am, it might not be for everyone. There's a lot of creatives that work through the night and so their days and nights are totally flip-flopped. They work until 6am and then they sleep through the day.

So whatever that morning is, however you're starting your day, I've found a lot of power in starting my day early. I'm also in sales and so part of that habit also is getting in and doing your prospecting first thing in the morning. So there's a lot of different pieces of that that have been really good for me and have provided an incredible outcome. But if you're someone that works until three o'clock in the morning, you're not going to be getting up at 4:30.

But just know, you can still implement this whole concept of, I'm going to wake up in the morning, I'm going to get myself moving, I'm going to get some exercise, maybe you read, maybe you do some journaling, maybe you do yoga. I always also do a meditation. So I do my workout, I have some quiet time, I do my meditation, I do my gratitude. So I have this whole routine in the morning that sets me up.

I have my day visualized, I have my goals visualized, I have everything setting me up for success in my day. So morning routine is number one. That's the number one habit that has changed my life and my business.

Number two – I'm in sales, I'm in real estate sales and it's pretty common, if you ask any realtor – I was just having a conversation with an agent that I worked with on a transaction and I was hearing him talk about how he's fielding phone calls at 11pm and he's worked for three weeks straight and he hasn't taken a vacation in two years and that's just the life of a realtor. We're always here, we're always stuck here.

And I'm thinking, that's a bunch of bullshit. I don't care what industry that you're in, treat your business like your business. Now, we all have a bazillion things to do. Our to-do lists are always crazy long. I, again, am the

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one sitting here at 11pm and I'm recording a podcast, but guess what – I am going away for an entire week on an incredible retreat next week, so I have to do some of these things that just kind of balances itself out. But normally, my business hours are 7am until 4pm.

From 4pm until whenever my husband gets home, that's my time with my baby. It's one on one time with my baby and if I need to jump on in the evening or if I have an evening appointment every once in a while, then I kind of rotate here and there. But set business hours, actual business hours for yourself. And when you set those expectations for yourself, what you need to be able to do is articulate that with your clients and your customers and your team, whomever it is that you work with.

So if you're in a business like real estate, which the whole thought around it is that real estate never stops, the sales industry never stops. Set expectations of when you're going to be available and when you're not going to be available. It's within any service-based business or sales industry, you have to set expectations. And if you just set those expectations, you can create whatever schedule you want to create.

So think about what you want to have in your life and what's going to support you and your happiness and having an actual life, and then fit your business into your life. Work is backwards versus trying to fit your life into your business. So business hours have been really powerful for me. Again, I'm in real estate sales, so that's one that is kind of a non-traditional – we don't have business hours. I've made business hours for myself and my business continues to grow every single year, so it can be done.

Number three – the third habit that I have gotten to be a mother effing boss at is time-blocking. And if you know me, if you work with me, if you're married to me, you probably don't like that sometimes because I am so freaking time-blocked that if I'm working on something, I will not acknowledge you. I will not text you back. I will not answer your phone call.

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I am very, very, very time-blocked and I think it's so important when we have so many different pieces and distractions and constant dings and got-a-minutes and text messages and emails and Facebook Messenger and all these different things; I shut that shit down. I'm in my business, I'm working on my business.

So every single morning, if I'm really following my schedule, I do not open up my email until 10am. So I have my full day planned out. I do not look at my email; I do not answer any phone calls or text messages until 10am. I want to get my most important tasks done and time-blocked out.

Now, that's on an average day. If I have projects that I'm working on, I, again, set the expectation with the people that need to be in communication with me that I will not be available from this time to this time. So my day is time-blocked. It's time-blocked with key important tasks that I need to be doing that's going to move my business forward. It's time-blocked with all my dollar-productive activities.

How I'm making money in the business is time-blocked so that I'm not constantly just reacting. You're in action mode versus reaction mode. It's so important. So time-blocking has been something that I probably started really using about four years ago, and since then, literally, like I said, if you are in business with me, if you are married to me, it pisses you off sometimes because I am extremely time-blocked during the week.

And not to mention, I had to get really time-blocked once I had my daughter, my work hours were much shorter. So rather than, you know, starting my day off and being able to say, you know, I have until 6pm or I can take appointments until this or I can finish this up, I'll work on this tonight, I am extremely protective around the time I have with my daughter.

I want to be an incredible business owner and have success in my business and be able to support the people that I have in business with me,

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but I also will not trade that time of being a mom with my daughter. And so, when I'm off work hours, I'm a mom. I'm present. Everything is shut down when I am with my daughter. That's very, very important to me. And so I had to learn how to shorten up my days and become even more efficient with the things that I needed to be doing every day.

And it's almost a blessing in disguise because I really do feel like if you just journaled for a week what your day looked like – not actually setting up a schedule at the beginning of the day but actually journaling what your day looked like and what you were doing at certain points of the day, I bet you would find so much wasted time of going out to lunch or, I'm going to swing by Target quick, or I need to flip over the laundry if you're working from home or I'm just going to jump on my email.

Shut your emails down. Time-block your time. Work on the things that are going to move your business forward and just be mindful of that and see where you have extra time in your day. I guarantee you, you will find so much more time if you had to set very strict parameters around your business hours. No number three, that was time-blocking.

Number four – the fourth habit that I have become slightly obsessed with is education and growth. I love to learn and I also think that it's extremely important for me to constantly be learning and growing and how to become better at all of the things that I'm doing; become a better leader, become a smarter business owner, become smarter with my financials as I grow and I scale, learn different strategies to implement, how to scale different avenues of my business. All of these things, it just doesn't pop out of thin air.

You need to be constantly in this place of, what can I learn, how do I become better? And so it's not just working in your business, it's also taking that time out to work on your business. Work on you and work on your business. And I am so obsessed with personal development and growth

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and literally just that alone has scaled my business probably – I can't even put a percentage on it, but I would not be where I am at today if I was not consistently going to conferences, traveling to be in mastermind groups, learning different techniques, going and seeing other top producers in other markets, implementing new ideas.

Like, I would not be where I am at today if I did not take the time to work on myself and to work on my business versus always just the 24/7 grind working in your business. So number four is education and growth, always be learning. That's something that has just become part of my life. It's just a habit in my life.

What I think is so ironic about this looking back is I hated school. What I think is so crazy and ironic about this is that I hated school, I was an awful test taker, I struggled and now, I am obsessed. Like, I have to remind myself to check out. At one point in my career, I literally was coached to do nothing but watch Netflix. I just needed to check out, no more business books, no more strategy.

And what I've come to find now is it's a balance for me. Like, I really enjoy learning. I really enjoy growth. I enjoy learning about business. It's something that I'm extremely passionate about and so it's easy for me to read, pick up a book and implement different tools into my business. It's easy for me to invest the money that I invest into going and spending – you know, Tony Robbins for example – spending 10 days in a freaking ice box listening to these concepts that he's teaching for a 14 hour day. It's absolutely insane but I love it and I've become obsessed with it and it has changed my life. So number four, growth and education, always be learning.

Number five – number five is something that I have boycotted out of my life for a long time. I've had to also learn this one and that is pleasure and self-care. Now, when I first started in my business, I started working with real

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estate specific coaches when I started in my real estate business. And they taught a lot on the strategies and systems and things that you needed to put in place in order to see success in a business when you're at all different levels.

And what a lot of those programs did not teach was this element of life, of having fun and play, and so after a few years, I got totally burnt out and I had to figure out, like, okay, cool, I'm seeing all of this success in my business and I like to learn and grow, but I got burnt out. I just got burnt out on everything.

And when you're in that space, it's not as exciting to learn, it's not as exciting to work on new things in your business because you're just, like, oh my gosh, this is just another task. This is just something more that I have to do. It's not like a creative project or a new endeavor that you're taking on or a new goal that you're setting. It's just another to-do.

And I didn't like where I was at and so then I switched over into a different style of coaching, which was more life coaching and on the concept of really finding happiness in your life. Like, there's so many statistics on how checking out of your business, so that time out, playtime, allowing yourself to have laughter and fun and love is statistically proven to give you more creative ideas.

It's within your brain stimulations that you're getting these different messages that are coming through, and oftentimes, what people say is, I'm working on this massive project and I've been working day and night for the last month and I just can't seem to come to whatever the outcome is. Or whatever it is that they're working on, they just can't quite come to the conclusion or just get it.

And then, all of a sudden, they take some time out to go and do something stupid like go play kickball with their friends or go on a camping trip with

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their family. I mean, those aren't stupid things, but things that you're like, oh my gosh, I don't have time for that.

And miraculously, what happens is they find the answers to the solutions. They find new creative ideas and different ways of looking at something and it's really, really powerful. And again, I fought this for probably three years, and I don't even want to say I fought it because when I initially was like, self-care, you want me to go and treat myself like my best client? Like, how I would treat that person, okay, what do I need to go buy myself?

It's like buying yourself a gift or whatever, it's not about buying stuff, it's about an experience. So it's more about, you know, rather than saying, I deserve this, I'm going to go buy myself that watch that I've been really eyeing up or I deserve something nice so I'm going to go buy myself some flowers. Flowers might work if they really make you feel that great, but it's more about what really makes you happy.

And it's been a lot easier for me to really check out and tune out since having my daughter because I really do try to be so present when I have my time with her because I know time goes so fast and I'm just not willing to sacrifice my time with her. And so with that, going on bike rides and going to the park, going to the pool for a day, whatever that may be, it totally allows me to check out of my business and when I come back to my business, I feel so refreshed.

So I'm going to give you a really great example because I just experienced this on a whole other level after practicing this concept for several years. So recently, I went on a trip to Montana and it was kind of a last-minute trip. I wanted to reconnect with a friend and we wanted to do some hiking. And it was nearing the end of the summer, so we were near Glacier National Park.

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They closed down the mountain roads and the paths for hiking trails towards the end of the summer, and so we needed to book this trip before the end of the summer, but I had a lot of travel before and a lot of travel after and this was during a time when we'd just started working on some big projects.

And so it was just me and my husband going for the weekend. We flew out Monday and I was thinking, okay – before I left, I was like, alright well I have this weekend that we are going to be away without Reese, without the baby. I'm going to work on some of these creative projects while I'm away.

I have a program that I wanted to get through that I had purchased on some of the things that I was working on, so it was a digital course that I was learning from. I had a book that I wanted to read. I had a speech outline that I needed to proof and edit and I set this expectation for myself that this was going to kind of be a work trip.

I also set the expectation with my team before I left that they could still get a hold of me. I said, you know, I'm going to be available. Unless I'm on a hike or something, I'm going to be available. So whatever you need from me, just send it my way.

This was literally one of the biggest mistakes that I've made in the most recent endeavors that I've had with traveling. And this is why; what I expected myself to get while I was away on a vacation trying to be present with my husband and reconnect with a friend was not fair to put on myself. And so the entire time that I was there, every morning, I woke up and I thought, okay, I'm going to go grab a coffee and then I can work for an hour or a couple of hours before my husband wakes up.

And then he would wake up and he'd be like, oh, I'll go grab coffee with you, and then I'm like, shit I've got to get through this or how do I get through what I need to get through? And then it's like, oh why don't we go

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on a hike or why don't we go and do some of this. And it's like, okay, well maybe I can work on this this afternoon. And then it's just this cycle.

And so it's putting this pressure on me. I'm tied to my emails. I'm trying to send things back to my team, answer things, and then also I'm feeling really crappy about myself because I'm not doing the work that I told myself I was going to do while I was away.

And so the trip came to an end. That entire time, I had a lot of work on my mind and I was leaving with the to-do list that I had left home with and feeling extremely defeated. And rather than coming back, rather than saying, you know what, I'm going to take three days out of my business, check out, really embrace everything, I won't be available. And coming back feeling this incredible high and so refreshed because I allowed myself to just check out, I came back feeling exhausted, feeling extremely overwhelmed and having a lot of anxiety around all of the things that I did not get done.

And it's literally a night and day difference with the expectations that you set for yourself. And so I would have been in such a better place. I would have been on fire again when I got back if I had just allowed myself to check out of my business. So pleasure and self-care.

Self-care, you can put so much underneath that. I already talked about how working out is such a must in my life. I think we all could be on anti-depressants and anxiety medicine in today's world. It's a fast pace and there's medicine for everything. I myself could also be on them, but I'm not. I choose to find other outlets to release what I need to release and I get that it's not the same for everybody, but working out, running, if I have a lot of overwhelm built up, I might go for two runs during the day.

I might check out midafternoon and say, I just need to go run. There's been many days over the summer where I'm like, you know what? I'm going to

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go and run seven miles, and I just crank it out and I feel incredible after I am done. It's such a release.

So that's self-care, for me, for one, a big part of it, and also really nourishing my body the way that I know I need to be nourished. So I always say, you are what you eat. And again, this goes right back to how I feel every day. I can tell now if I eat a massive breakfast, as I often do on a weekend – I have my cheat days as well.

But if I am starting out and I have a crazy busy day and really important meetings and whatever, big projects on my plate for the day and I go and say I'm going to go eat two donuts and drink a bunch of coffee, I'm in a coma. I am not energized, I am not feeling on my A-game. I want to go take a nap.

And so when I am really in my prime, I am consistent with my morning routines, waking up, setting my day up right, getting my exercise in, getting my meditation in, getting in my quiet time, my journaling, all of that, whatever your morning routine is, that has literally changed my life. Setting my business hours, number two, sticking to my business hours.

Number three – time-blocking, being so strict about what is allowed in my day and sticking to my time-blocking. And number four – education, growth, making time to work on your business, not just always being in your business. Number five – pleasure and self-care, when you're taking care of yourself, when you're giving yourself time for fun and play and checking out, rest and reset, you will see such a difference in your life. I know I have.

So those are my top five things that have changed my life that I feel like are just within me. And even if I fall off the wagon, I get right back on because it's literally an addiction to what that outcome is. So I hope that helps. And again, I just want you to know, it has taken me years of practice, years of

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self-discipline and doing these things, making them a non-negotiable for myself to create this habit in my life.

So it really comes down to, how bad do you want something? Because, like with anything else, you have to do the work upfront. You have to be able to hold yourself accountable. Maybe you get yourself an accountability partner. But whatever you want in your life, whatever you want to create in your life, you can do it. It's your choice, but you have to stick with it. You have to create a habit and just notice, notice how you feel and notice how it impacts your life and your day to day because that's when it's going to start to change from a, I have to do this, like oh my gosh I have to do this, to, I want to do this.

And remember, it takes time to create habits. So stick with it, find yourself an accountability partner. If you guys have any questions on today's episode, always feel free to reach out. I hope that you can take a couple of these, maybe just one, and implement it into your own life. Tell me how you're doing with it, where you're struggling, where you could use some help and some insight.

I am more than happy to share with you what it has meant for me on my journey and how I've implemented different things. So I hope you all have an incredible week. As mentioned previously, I do have some resources going out to all my real estate people that kind of ties right into this topic. So if you're in real estate, and honestly, if you're in sales, you can benefit from this too.

We are running a challenge in a couple of weeks. It starts September 24th, 5 Days of Boldness, how to find more clients and make more money and end 2018 strong. So if you have any interest in that, join us. It's a free challenge. You can check out the link in the show notes to get yourself signed up and I'm excited to create some new habits with all my people in there. So have an awesome week. We'll see y'all next week.

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Thanks for showing up and listening to this week's episode of *Love Your Living*. If you're ready to create a business and life you love, or simply take your already pretty incredible life to the next level, head over to loveyourlivingonline.com/balance to download our five-step guide creating more balance in your life.