

The Underground Marketer Podcast – Episode 62 – Full Transcript

Introduction 00:00:02 Marketing, explosive growth, and revolutionary secrets that can catapult your business to new heights. You're now listening to The Underground Marketer Podcast with your host Tudor Dumitrescu, the one podcast devoted to showing new businesses how to market themselves for high growth.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:00:26 Welcome to the underground marketer. This is the place where we deliver the real truth about marketing and explore big ideas that can help new businesses thrive and grow into big ones. I'm your host Tudor. And today it's my honor to welcome Yemi Penn, serial entrepreneur, author of *Did You Get The Memo?*, documentary producer, speaker, engineer, mindset coach, and all around fearless thought leader. A lot of nouns to describe you. Yemi, welcome.

Yemi Penn 00:00:55 Thank you so much, Tudor, an absolute pleasure to be here and love your work.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:01:00 Thank you very much. Yemi I appreciate that. I think it would be very interesting for our listeners. If you tell us a little bit about your story at first and how you really got started with entrepreneurship.

Yemi Penn 00:01:12 Firstly, I'd like to say, and this might be my own imposter syndrome. I think we all have a story, so <laugh>, it is not gonna blow anyone away, but the best way is I'm, I'm a British, born Nigerian living in Sydney, Australia mm-hmm <affirmative>. And that in itself should have a story because I obviously don't have a fear of moving around. Um, my parents are Nigerian, which is west African, and we are known to be a very rich oil country. And so there was a lot of wealth in the country. And so we traveled between the UK and Nigeria a lot. Mm-hmm <affirmative> and the reason why I share that is because there is already something quite rich in my heritage for wanting to create a better life mm-hmm <affirmative>. So there's something in there that, that I guess had started because when I eventually relocated to the UK from Nigeria in the early 1990s, I found myself wanting to get a job almost immediately.

Yemi Penn 00:02:09 I mean, I was 12, 13 years old and I remember, I mean, don't get me wrong. By the time we had lost a lot of wealth in Nigeria. Mm-hmm <affirmative> it was my mom with six kids in a two bedroom house. So there was no money there mm-hmm <affirmative> and I just wanted independence. And I remember just wanting to get a job and I didn't know it then I think there was this law of attraction manifestation there because I managed to find this paper round job where I got paid five pounds, 11, and I remember it was a brown packet and that money would be put through the letter box. Oh my gosh, it was like heaven. It was heaven to get there. And that was my first taste. And for me, that was entrepreneurship. That was a 12, 13 year old brain saying, how can I bring money in?

Yemi Penn 00:02:49 Because there was no way I was gonna wait till 16. And that really went on university. I, I was an engineer. And so there were really more guys than there were women in my class. And I joined up with three other guys to start holding events. What we called raves for nightclubs because univers students just went out clubbing. So once again, there was something in there. I loved the idea of creating and I believe that stayed with me cuz even when I was pregnant, I thought, okay, what can I do? And it was teaching fitness in schools and then motherhood did its thing. You know, we'll talk about the memo. But I decided

when I was in my early thirties that I had to either decide to stay on what I will call the rat race, this wheel that is nonsensical in my opinion, mm-hmm <affirmative> um, and I had to get a lot bolder in some of the risks I was taken. And that was when I cracked everything open with setting up four companies so far.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:03:40 Wow. So it's quite a journey there. I basically get from your story that the heritage was really important for you. It was always a driving force in there.

Yemi Penn 00:03:50 Absolutely. And, and it's another reason. So, you know, currently in Sydney, Australia, I do a lot of work. I do a lot of goal setting with, with students and a lot of international students international to Australia. And it's funny because their imposter syndrome seems to come from their heritage. And I say, no, no, no. The deeper, your struggle, the deeper your superpower. I think Mo a lot of us know that, but there are so many that don't and if I can be one voice that remind people, so my heritage, your heritage, there's a lot of superpower behind it. I'm definitely very glad that I am of African descent.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:04:23 That's a very powerful idea because very often what happens is that people have this negative outlook about, as you said about their heritage, who they are and they see themselves as victims, that victim mentality can really, I think, set people back because then they no longer see opportunities. Correct. And all the motivation that they can access is just external. But I think that the most powerful motivation is the one that you can get by digging deep into your own past mm-hmm <affirmative>, which is like personal to you. It's not something general that anybody else has AC can access. It's something that only you can have if you discover it. So can you talk briefly if you always had access to this power of your heritage, or if you had some roadblocks that you had to remove along the way to digs so deep so that you could turn it into a superpower.

Yemi Penn 00:05:14 It's another really great question. I automatically wanted to say no, I didn't always have it. I believe I did while I was young. And while I was in Nigeria, cuz remember that being a black woman or woman of color, wasn't a thing for me until I got to the UK. So in Nigeria I was just me. There was no class as far as I was concerned, but it was only when I got to the UK that this class system, there was some areas where people would respond differently to me. And I think that eroded my confidence because the systems aren't there when you're in a different country and you are deemed a minority, absolutely I'd be lying. If I said it was always there. But what I found is firstly, I surrounded myself in communities. I think I was my inner bigger champion, even though my confidence had been eroded.

Yemi Penn 00:06:03 Sometimes I still remained my champion. It's I never understood the notion of fake it until you make it. Because I think I used to question authenticity with that, but I, I think I now get it. It's like me trying to remind myself of who I was. And over time it's been personal development. It has been, I remember just reading books like rich dad, poor dad think and grow rich, things like that. And then it was just about money. But what was great about these books is they actually spoke about more than just money. And I started tapping into that a lot. I think I may have missed some of the other stuff you said, but it, that was an up and down journey for me. And trust me, I still have it, but it takes me a lot quicker to get out of the imposter syndrome and actually just still go forth with my business and entrepreneurship plans. Mm-hmm

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:06:50 <affirmative> so this personal development, uh, work that you've done and I presume you continue to do, I've done a lot of that myself and I know that it's

really helpful. And what really caught my attention here is that you mentioned that it didn't teach you just about money. That true wealth is about more than just money. Can you tell me a bit more about that? What exactly do you mean by that?

Yemi Penn 00:07:14 This once again, this feels really cliché. It's funny. I get frustrated when I hear people say like Oprah refer to say, you know, it's not about the money we can buy you shoes, but it doesn't buy you happiness. And I used to get so annoyed and say, well, give you the money and I'll tell you if it buys me happiness. So I wanna say that straight money definitely is great. Wealth is great, but let's just talk about wealth. If I've gone through periods, being a single parent, when I started to really increase my wealth like tenfold. And that was crazy for me as a single mum, like that was never my life to have that kind of money. But when I didn't have a partner, there was no one to share that happiness with mm-hmm <affirmative> it was really lonely for me and this isn't to suggest that everybody needs to go and have a partner, but there was something there.

Yemi Penn 00:07:58 So I had to start to see wealth a bit differently and I don't get me wrong for me personally, I needed to experience that level of wealth because I just wanted to, the world has given me the impression that is a big part of living a good life. Mm-hmm <affirmative> um, it helps, but that's just because of how we built the systems. But if I didn't have anyone to share it with whether friends or family or good relationships or authenticity, then what was the point? That's been a big one for me, it's realizing it's more and similarly with health and for anyone that's got children out here with entrepreneurship or responsibilities, not even just children, it's a different ball game because I just now realize that not only am I trying to fulfill my own dreams, it also turns out I've gotta be responsible for other human beings. And it's the most contradictory thing I've ever experienced in my life. And I think wealth also includes, well, how do you nurture yourself and nurture the people you're responsible for at the same time?

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:08:53 Mm-hmm <affirmative> that makes total sense. Can you tell us a little bit about the first moment when you sort of looked back on the success that you had achieved until then? And you were like, wow, I sort of made it in terms of money. Can you tell us a bit about the business that you started at that time and how things progressed to that point?

Yemi Penn 00:09:15 Yeah, it would probably be to be, I think I remember exactly. It was 2019. The sun newspaper in the UK had written from homeless to bringing in over 1.6 million a year. Now that might not be a lot for some people, but my goodness, that was a lot for me. And it's funny because I only realized in that moment when I saw it on paper and I, I mean the article went viral, it went all over the world. It's in Ghana, different places. And what was quite interesting was how many people had comments on it because, and I had a feeling it would, but I didn't realize it would go so like crazy. And it started to make me realize other people still see that making that wealth as a thing. And it gave people hope that you could go from being homeless, being a single parent to actually making that million figure.

Yemi Penn 00:10:08 That was a big moment for me and, and the, the businesses I had at the time, the first business that I opened that really started to increase my wealth was my consultancy. I studied engineering. I was meant to study law. My dad wanted me to be a lawyer, but I wanted to do something different. So I studied engineering and I, I failed that first year, but I kept on going and eventually got a first class. And mm-hmm <affirmative>. I remember when I relocated to Australia, about eight years ago, I noticed there was some people just doing their own thing. A lot of them were men. And I, cause I like watching modeling in business and

entrepreneurship is a really powerful tool. And so I started speaking to them saying, how did you get into this? And when they shared it with me, I listened to them.

Yemi Penn 00:10:48 But I listened more in particular to the things they said that were really hard. Mm-hmm <affirmative> because projection is, is real. People will tell you what's really difficult for them. It doesn't mean it's difficult for you. And because my star sign is TAs, I'm a bull. I usually like to charge towards the difficult things. And so that became my secret source to, okay, well, if it was difficult for them, how can I make it easy for me? And I set my consultancy and that changed everything because I then became the direct person liaison with government clients from there, it opened up a flood gate because then I just, I said, okay, what was the other thing I wanted to do? When I was at university, I wanted to open up a gym, but this gym I wanted was on the other side of the world.

Yemi Penn 00:11:34 And so I started being my own devil's advocate, but saying, well, you can't open a gym on the other side of the world because you live on the other side of the world. And so I just had to figure out who I had to become to make it happen. And I've had some really scary moments, like really scary, but I'm so glad I did it because every time I've done something unreasonable, it has taken me up to, I dunno, three levels higher than where I was before. And as time has gone on and I see more people give me feedback on what they see that I realize, damn, I'm doing some good stuff here.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:12:11 That's awesome. I really love that story. And it really shows the power of persistence and perseverance towards your goals. So I have a question about, because I find it fascinating how you've literally you've started businesses all around the world now. So I wanted to ask you when your consulting business that's engineering related, is that so yes,

Yemi Penn 00:12:35 Yes it is engineering. So yeah.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:12:37 Yeah. And you've worked in engineering before as well, right?

Yemi Penn 00:12:40 Correct. Yes. So about 20 years experience in engineering.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:12:43 Fantastic. The reason I'm asking that is because I'm actually also a graduate in engineering from the UK, but I've never worked in engineering. Yes. I've uh, I've gone to the university of bot. I'm a civil engineer

Yemi Penn 00:12:58 By wow. Good company. Good company.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:13:00 Yeah. Yes. <laugh> but I've never worked as an engineer, but that mindset that you get as an engineer, I found it very useful in business. Yes. And also in marketing, because it really teaches you how to think about things in a way that's very practical and pragmatic because you have to make it work in the real world, not just on paper. So I got a lot out of that myself. I want to move the conversation now slightly because I've watched the mini-documentary series that you have on your website. We're going to link that in the, in the show notes, that's a lot about trauma. And I know that mental health is a really big thing for entrepreneurs, just from my own personal experience and from seeing other people. And it's not often talked about and actually entrepreneurs, if you look at, um, depression rates or anxiety rates, they're about two to three times as big as, as those for the general population. So I think that there is definitely something of high interest there. So can you talk to us about your

experience with this, if you have helped people with this, because I also know that you work as a mindset coach and how can people begin to grapple with their mental health issues as an entrepreneurs?

Yemi Penn 00:14:18 So many things in there. If I go off topic, um, I will stop and ask you to bring me back, but thank you so much for asking cuz as I explained before we got on thi this is a big thing for me. And I'm trying to tell myself that people will be open to this. I believe as an entrepreneurs in particular who are already acting against the grain of society, mm-hmm, <affirmative> really, really need to look at their trauma because not only are you breaking down barriers, borders by creating businesses, especially if you don't have that entrepreneurship spirit in your family line, you need to look at it to ensure your mental health stays as healthy as it can to ensure there's longevity in your business, in your relationships. And that overall, it it's sustainable what you're doing as an entrepreneur. And here's why here's something I'll share with you.

Yemi Penn 00:15:09 When I put my documentary out about 40% of the responses I got were from men who were either millionaires or billionaires. So you can assume that to some extent they are entrepreneurs and here's what was interesting. So another reason why, and I'm, I feel very blessed and being an engineer allows me to kind of possess this really beautiful mix of masculine and feminine energy. So I'm typically able to connect with both, both and all genders, to be honest, not just men, women, but what I found with these men in particular, and that I found fascinating and made me realize how much I was onto something here is that they either experienced the same traumatic event I speak about in there or something else. And what I found, this is my own. I'm now currently doing a PhD. I haven't updated that in my bio mm-hmm <affirmative>, but what I've now found is a common thread.

Yemi Penn 00:16:04 That part of the reason why they, these men in particular, and some women have built businesses that are making ridiculous amounts of money is because they want to get to a position that they are so powerful. Nobody can hurt them. Mm-hmm <affirmative>, I'm not here to judge. They need to do what they need to do. But if we do not look at it at some point, will that isolate you or isolate them so much? Now the men that reached out to me, most of them were in my circle of personal development. So there was a certain level of awareness mm-hmm <affirmative> but there's usually a reason why we're doing what we're doing. I set up my businesses. If I'm to go to the core of it, if I needed to connect it with trauma, I set up my businesses because, oh, and this is where it gets personal.

Yemi Penn 00:16:46 And I really do love being an open book. But when I became a single mom, I got to a position that the father of my daughter wasn't in a position to support as he could previously, financially, I was sad. I was a bit frustrated because then I thought, well, it's all down to me then mm-hmm <affirmative> why is it always gotta be down to me? And little voice came in my head and said, why do you have to rely on somebody else to feed your kids? Yes. Society says that mom and dad should contribute, but what happens when they can't? And I remember telling myself, I'm gonna make so much money. I don't have to wait for anybody to give me stuff. Now. I probably made that vow from a place of hurt and trauma. And there's a possibility I forgot now there's also a risk that I take on too many projects, tutor some far, too many projects that I potentially could get burned out, but I've so buried with that reason, I set up that I've lost it and I actually don't have any direction.

Yemi Penn 00:17:43 And I'm saying we just need to stop for a second and go back to why we are the way we are with our entrepreneurship business. Yes, there'll be some stuff that's

really important. I wanna make a change. But if you are feeling uncomfortable in your entrepreneurship journey, you are feeling burnt out. There is something that is making you push so hard that you are willing to let your body crack and it's got to be looked at not so it can change your trajectory of your business or how successful it is. But just so you can operate from a healthy paradigm. It's what I call cleaning your trauma. And there's the other thing you might find out that lots of your businesses are failing or they're not doing as well as they want, or you can't get that business off. Similarly, there's something else. I mean, I know I'm going on here, but I'm really passionate about this topic, cuz I wanna share what reading think and grow rich again by Napoleon Hill.

Yemi Penn 00:18:35 But I listened to it, but I listened to it with obviously a mature mind and have a few businesses. And he explains sometime in the mid 19 hundreds, there were six fears and I dunno all of them off my head, but one was fear of death, fear of ill, health, fear of criticism, fear of poverty. If you have a fear of poverty, there's a possibility that you just wanna make lots and lots of money. But if you haven't dealt with the fear of poverty and what trauma experience in your life, whether it was the fact that your parents couldn't put food on the table, you saw war torn or you got bullied as a kid because of what you were wearing. Have you worked through it, but really have you worked through it because you can't be operating your business from dirty trauma, it's got to be cleaned and that's not a shame game. That's we wanna see you shining bright as an entrepreneur. So when you say, how can you grappl or how can you work through it? It's by asking those questions and you know, I've already posed so many things that the listeners will already know. And if you haven't already to, I said, oh, why did I do that? Why do I do that? And I'm just saying, just investigate it and make sure you are working from the clean part of that trauma and not the day part.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:19:45 Very interesting. Yemi I gather from here, when I look at it, a lot of people and a lot of entrepreneurs, especially from what I've noticed, they like to do sort of the opposite of what you're saying, which is worry, their trauma and sort of act in spite of it. Mm-hmm <affirmative> sort of try to forget about it and just go on building their businesses, making the money that they want to make. Yeah. So why do you think in the long run that that's bad for them

Yemi Penn 00:20:13 When you bury your trauma, having done it for many years, it, it absolutely serves a purpose. I wanna acknowledge that let's be real. I'm a realist. It serves its purpose. I remember going to a therapist once because it got really bad one day and it, I don't think it had anything to do with this particular trauma, but I felt really low, real, like I felt so low. I thought, oh my gosh, is this what people feel like when they wanna take their lives? And I've never, never, ever, ever had suicidal thoughts. Mm-hmm <affirmative> but it scared me. And so I knew I needed to go see a therapist. And I said to her, when I sat down, I said, look, Vicky, I really like you, but I don't have time for this. I need to just have five sessions because I've got to go feed my kids.

Yemi Penn 00:20:52 I've got to go to work. I need to be able to operate. So I get that. A lot of people are scared to look at their trauma because there's a risk. If it's opened up, they're worried, it won't be closed. I wanna let you know that if you find the right person, um, they will hold the space for you and make sure that you are looked after every session. But the reason why it's important is because it comes back to find you. And if it doesn't find you in this lifetime, it will find you through a son, a daughter, a niece, a sister, a brother. It really does find another way. And I'll give you an example. I've got a 14 year old daughter. She was going through

something really, really difficult. I mean really difficult. And I think near, like, I don't think anybody's, trauma's bigger than the others, but it was very different to what I went through.

Yemi Penn 00:21:39 But here's, what's happened when I realized what she was going through, which was really painful. I did something that I only found out three months later that I did when I was a little girl and I was traumatized through sexual abuse. I disassociated, I completely split from the problem. I found a solution for my daughter, but there was no, there wasn't much empathy or understanding. So when we say, what could it do if you are building something and you plan to pass it onto someone else, you're gonna be passing on the trauma as well. I don't say that as a threat. I say that as it really does, it comes up in one way or another. And so it's important. It's looked at.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:22:25 Absolutely. So here, I think that one thing that I wanted to add to what you've just said and really ask you, is that a lot of people, they tend to think that trauma is limited just to the big stuff, like, you know, sexual abuse, domestic violence and so on, but actually a lot of things, at least in my experience can leave marks on you and have a deep, emotional impact. And it's sort of personal because one person may not be affected at all by the event and another may be profoundly and trauma dramatically affected. So can you speak a bit about that and what your thoughts on that are?

Yemi Penn 00:23:06 Yeah. So in my TEDx talk, I'm, I very cheekily start off by saying my trauma's bigger than yours. And the whole point is to say, I don't believe it is. And having just finished filming my third documentary, which will be out later this year, I ask the therapist and the practitioners and they say, well, you could have two people from the same background, have an accident and respond very differently. And this is part of the stuff we're looking at is really all about how they respond. But the reason why I believe people should not ignore what they went through. And I did an interview a couple of days ago and the gentleman admitted to me and said that he doesn't think anything major happened in his life. But while I was talking a particular incident, a supposed small incident kept on coming up. And so he said, he's gonna investigate it.

Yemi Penn 00:23:55 And that's what we need to do. I wanna give another example in the documentary. I filmed a couple of weeks ago, I had a gentleman who was meant to come and share his story. I had about 20 people share their, their trauma stories and how they're cleaning their trauma. He was meant to talk about his time in Syria when there was war before he got asylum in Australia. And he remembers when bombs would go off and he'd have to run into the bunker with these children, with his parents. And he was, I don't know, about seven years old, but when he came on the day to do the filming, he said, Yemy, can I talk about something else? Because I sometimes only talk about war because it sounds cool. I didn't find that traumatizing. Even though I could see the missiles going up in the air, it wasn't that traumatizing.

Yemi Penn 00:24:38 I wanna talk about the time that I was about three or four years old and I was sleeping in the car seat in Syria. And I woke up and couldn't see my parents. And I started crying and this man heard me crying and he came over and the window was slightly open and he put his hand through and opened the door and I started screaming more, but my parents ran over and he said, I get the feeling. That event is the reason why I get so anxious about being abandoned. I mean, how powerful is that, that he does not see the war as being hugely traumatic for him, but that incident, so don't underestimate anything. I mean, you could have taken a fall as a kid and something was said by your parents that you've internalized. It doesn't mean there's always a perpetrator. Somebody who's done wrong. It might just be that in that

moment, you made a decision to play very small or differently from who you really are. And I'm saying, let's check it regardless of how small it is.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:25:38 Mm-hmm <affirmative> so that's fascinating, really, because people can respond very differently to the same event. So what are your thoughts? Why does one person become traumatized by the event and another doesn't?

Yemi Penn 00:25:53 I believe it's conditioning. I mean, don't get me wrong. I think genes and I'm, I'm definitely not an expert in this field, but with the research I'm doing so far, I believe it's part conditions, environment, and also part DNA went to a show yesterday and it was reiterated. I effectively was in some form of existence in my grandmother's stomach mm-hmm <affirmative> so if my or my grandmother's body, cuz once she was pregnant with my mom, the minute you exist there, you have all your ovaries mm-hmm <affirmative>. So at some point in some form, even if there was just half of me, I was there. Now if my grand mom worked on a cotton fields in the farm, she's got tenacity, she's got resilience. There is something somewhere that I might get on top of that. If I get put in an environment where I am left to with things on my own.

Yemi Penn 00:26:44 So for instance, I got put in board and school in Nigeria, which was quite hard for me. Then I kind of had to learn. I either had to sink swim, and you could have somebody in a completely different field. Who's had a really great life and had everything done for them, but really they haven't had the ability to practice more. And so I think it's environment and those are just really two contrasting things. But I guess the bigger question is, can we change that? So we're able to work through our trauma regardless of our DNA and our environment, because you mentioned depression, which is huge. And if not, it's more now than it ever has been.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:27:19 Right. So you mentioned conditioning there. So what exactly do you mean by conditioning? Is it sort of more the nurture aspect or the nature aspect of the equation or both?

Yemi Penn 00:27:32 It's probably both, but when I say conditioning more, I'm talking about belief systems. If I'm told that everybody does not like black people, I will respond very differently around everybody who is non-black mm-hmm <affirmative> I might either feel angry or whatever. So depending on what you're told, I mean, you know, it you've grown up. You've had family members say things with such authority that there was every possibility you just took it as gospel mm-hmm <affirmative>. And if, depending on, on what religion you follow from being a Christian childhood, one of the major rules and commandments was obey your mother and father. I would pick up conditioning from my mother and father. And then if I went to school nine to three, I got some more conditioning. So I, when I say that it's more about the belief systems, but now I'm beginning to learn. As I grow older that I know less and less each day <laugh> it's frightening.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:28:24 Mm-hmm <affirmative> so, I mean with belief systems, that's very interesting because I think that beliefs are sort of a double edged sword, especially when it comes to entrepreneurship, they can sometimes be both empowering and disempowering. I don't know if you feel exactly what I mean.

Yemi Penn 00:28:42 I believe they can do, but I think this is where it's tricky because I start to go into a different field. I asked a friend, well, a couple of friends a couple of days ago. Is

there empathy in, can empathy be found in business? The reason why that's relevant here with empowering or disempowering belief systems is because we've got to use our soul, our spirit as a navigation system, does it feel right? Do you feel you are honoring somebody? If that was a loved one, who whoever you were doing business with or, or how you're building a business and if that action that value that moral is not, doesn't go, you know, doesn't fit with your soul, then it's probably disempowering and, and you wouldn't wanna do it. But I, I think there's got to be a moral compass to entrepreneurship. Um, and if we know more about the soul and, and the spirit and what's right for humanity, I think we would know, and we wouldn't need to overthink it.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:29:35 Mm-hmm <affirmative>. So you mentioned before about cleaning trauma. So in your experience, at least what are the most effective ways that somebody can go about doing that?

Yemi Penn 00:29:48 I mean, I say in my Ted talk, I try to put it as easily as possible over three steps, but Lord knows, I am, I'm nearly turning 40 and I've probably got off another 40 more years to go. So when I give these three steps, I really don't want to trivialize it because I do think it is lifelong work. Mm-hmm <affirmative> I, I say to clean your trauma, the first thing you wanna do is actually just acknowledge what you went through. It could be whether you've got a strained relationship with your mom, dad, just look into it. Whether that's talk therapy, whether that's doing things like crystal dreaming, if you're into non-traditional like modality, mm-hmm, <affirmative> find something, try things, but just acknowledge. And it could just be to yourself what it is. You went through an incident that you've kind of buried because it's still playing a role in you.

Yemi Penn 00:30:33 And then the next is to awaken, to awaken means you go a step further and start investigating different ways in which you can maybe just investigate further about this trauma. Like I said, whether it's via therapist, you know, whether it's, I don't know, emotional freedom technique, that one's probably the longer journey because it can really unravel a lot of things. I think it's the reason why people start to have identity crisis. I think it's the reason why marriages and relationships end because who we were going in, isn't really who we become once we start to clean our trauma. And so you really wanna awake into different ways of, of, of cleaning it. And the last one for me, which really is what seals our role here on earth, E especially with those of us who are entrepreneurs, is the transformation. And for me, that's about contribution.

Yemi Penn 00:31:19 I also believe that most of our painful moments has a lot to do with our service. You, you know, you find lots of people who might be entrepreneurs and have gone into investment properties and buy in. And even though they do that, a big part might be to make money, to do other stuff. But most of the time you find them doing stuff for charity or wanting to help certain groups to start to build their own portfolio. That's, that's the transformation part of your trauma. So it's acknowledge awaken and transform through contribution. That that for me is the best way to stop cleaning your trauma.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:31:53 Very powerful. So thank you for sharing that. Do you think that there are ways that we can prevent trauma? And here's what I mean by that. So suppose you know that you have something very challenging coming up. Let's say that somebody, for example, has to go to work and they know that they have to go to work and the environment there probably will be traumatic in some respect. Is there any way that we can train a human being or ourselves so that we can be more resilient to trauma?

Yemi Penn 00:32:24 Tudor I'd be lying. If I said I had a straightforward answer for that, it's part of my research. So my PhD is, um, can trauma be transformative, but I'm specifically wanting to look at some indigenous cultures and how they help resolve it. I have this feeling that trauma in the definition that maybe Western society has named it is something we can't avoid. When I took my daughter to see a psychologist. And I say this openly, cuz there should never be any shame attached to it. He was from Iran and he said he started laughing. He said, it's quite funny because according to the definition of depression, we are all depressed. He said, because depression is defined as anybody who is under rule by government. And he, he wasn't trying to be a clown. He was really saying it as if that's what he was taught.

Yemi Penn 00:33:13 I don't know, 30 years earlier. So can we avoid it in the systems in which we are in? I don't think we can. How can we prepare for it? I think first thing is to feel the feels, as I say, I mean, don't get me wrong. My daughter calls me Savage. I have things to do. I don't like sitting in my victim story for long. Yes. I can feel sorry for myself. I think it's important. We don't get toxic and say, oh, just be grateful and happy. I think, feel the feels, but don't sit in a victim story, a victim story. Very rarely I think gets us out of depression. I appreciate why some people need it, but to be in there for too long, I just don't, I don't see that's healthy and we don't get to see you shine. So I think one thing is to acknowledge and feel the feels, but then it's to treat it and heal it. Can we avoid it? I'm not convinced we can.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:34:01 Thank you for that answer. So very realistic there. I want also wanted to ask you a lot of entrepreneurs, especially those who are first starting out, building their first business. A lot of them experienced great fear and uncertainty. Do you have any ways that you found effective to deal with fear in your life? If there, if for example, you have something that you're very afraid of doing. How exactly do you go about overcoming that?

Yemi Penn 00:34:27 So one of my mentors who I did part of his platinum course, which lots of people know is, is Tony Robbins. And he, he used, well, I've heard him say the phrase, take fear for a dance. And I do. And this is how I do it. If you are fearful of something, I say just gift yourself by being in a room for, I don't know, 10, 15 minutes and get comfortable with being uncomfortable. And the way to do that is to ground yourself. It could be listening to certain music or another method of cuz fear is just another form of trauma is a repetitive motion. So it could be just bouncing a ball, bouncing a ball and catching it at the same time or rocking back and forth in your chair. Just very slightly, not a nervous, one more of a soothing one. And while you are doing that, that thing, you are fearful of think of the worst thing that can happen if it happens.

Yemi Penn 00:35:17 So one of my worst fears when I opened up my gym on the other side of the world, is that it fails. And I don't find the balance of \$300 to build it. And everybody thinks I'm a failure and we all knew this was gonna happen. Ye me's never really been successful. I had to say all of it. And when you say it or think it, it takes the sting away, but at least just get it out of your system because when you do, you start to realize, okay, it's not that bad. Then the next question you need to ask yourself, still doing that repetitive, rocking back and forth or bouncing the ball, get comfortable being uncomfortable is who do I need to be to make sure the worst doesn't happen and who do I need to be to be okay with it if the worst happens. And that's how you deal with fear.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:36:08 That's very interesting. What happens if the actual worst is death? Let's say that your goal is to climb the Himalayas. And you're sure that, I mean, being realistic, there is a possibility there that you may never make it back.

Yemi Penn 00:36:23 So absolutely.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:36:24 How do you sort of get the resources to be okay with that? Okay. With the possibility death may be, may happen to you.

Yemi Penn 00:36:33 Beautiful question. Beautiful. So my, I thought my worst fear was death as well, but when you sit down and do the same thing, so do the same process mm-hmm <affirmative> and list what the worst thing could happen if you died, that that's what you do. So you are saying the worst, what's the worst thing that happens if you died the worst. So this, I thought flying was one of my worst fears mm-hmm <affirmative> but I found that, that it wasn't flying. That was my worst fear. It was dying. And I thought, well, why do I think I'm gonna die? Every time I get on a plane. And then I realized that the only reason why I fear is because I then as an engineer, it's like a more likely to have a, a car crashed in yard to have a plane crash. But the difference is the fatality of the plane crashes more mm-hmm <affirmative> but then the real thing was the insecurity.

Yemi Penn 00:37:13 Cuz you mentioned about insecurity at some or uncertainty. The real uncertainty is the fact that I'm not the one flying the plane. So when I'm sitting down bouncing the ball, these are all the things I'm just saying, okay, why is that? Why is that? I'm doing this compassionate inquiry with myself. And then I say, okay, so you have no control over that cause you dunno how to fly a plane. So what really happens if you die? Are they my loved ones? My kids won't know that I love them. I wouldn't have taught them how to believe in themself, positive thinking. And so I told myself, well, why don't you start doing all the things you would want to do in case you were gonna die tomorrow? Mm-hmm <affirmative> and that's why I do because there are only two things we know for sure, unless I don't know Beza or Elon Musk have a secret on a different planet is that we are all gonna die and none of us know when that's gonna happen.

Yemi Penn 00:38:03 Mm-hmm <affirmative> and so therefore figure out what really happens when you die. And what's the worst that would happen and get it going. Now that might not feel someone with warmth and comfort, but right now it's one truth. And one, I think that we need to have more of these conversations with cuz you look at the world, we are living in today. And, and I said to my 14 year old daughter, I said, if I die and I said, I'm not going to I'm here for a long while. Cause I've got worse. But if I just say die tomorrow, who would you wanna live with? Mm-hmm <affirmative> we've got to have those conversations.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:38:36 Mm-hmm <affirmative> I actually admire you on this point because I think that it's important to face the actual reality because a lot of people say, oh, don't think about it. Don't this and that. But I think that those ways of avoidance, because I mean, that's what ultimately it is. I am psychologically healthy. They don't make you stronger psychologically. Yes they do the opposite. Yes. I wanted to now shift the discussion a little bit. So I know that you have your book, did you get the memo and from what I've gathered, I haven't yet acquired it. But from what I've gathered, the book really is about how to not leave a scripted life governed by the rules, really of other people and of society. And that's very interesting to me because to me, entrepreneurship itself is a form of rebellion against society and rebellion against the given order. Yes. You want to create a new order. That's basically what every entrepreneur does. And that's really also the reason why I called my podcast, the underground marketer, because I believe that pretty much every entrepreneur really is in some sort of underground and they're trying to make something happen almost somehow against society

and against the existing rules. So can you tell us a bit more about your book and who exactly that can help and what's the, your main message?

Yemi Penn 00:40:03 Yeah. So the book did you get the memo is firstly it feels like it was a letter to myself and then to my kids because, um, when I felt like I was failing and for me failing was I was a single mom. I had two kids, they had two different dads and I was getting divorced. I felt like a failure and I probably felt like a failure, cuz at some point I may have seen other people, judge people for not being married or being divorced and I may have actually judged them as well. I found that when I started speaking out about it to people I wasn't alone. And I thought, while we following this memo, if it's actually really hard and not everybody can get it, but, or is there a memo? Did you get the memo? You know the memo that mm-hmm <affirmative>, you are born to two, you know, really well adjusted parents, you live in a nice house, you've got some siblings. Um, you get a good education job degree, get married, buy a house, white picket fence, 2.4 kids work, retire, and then you do the cycle and this is pretty much what entrepreneurs are just completely ignoring. They're doing their own thing. Mm-hmm <affirmative> and that was where did you get the memo come from? So I missed the other part of the question. What was the other bit you asked

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:41:15 The other part was who can really benefit out of it and what are the biggest benefits they will experience?

Yemi Penn 00:41:23 Yeah. The people who can benefit from it are people who kind of know they're uncomfortable if you keep on coming. So for instance, if you've changed jobs, lots of times, if you're feeling really uncomfortable in your job, even in relationships. And that could be that you're not actually in a relationship. So if you are just beginning to question some things that you kind of just accepted, but now you're really inquisitive and, but you don't actually quite have the friends or the place to go. Then this definitely is for you. If you are happy with the way the life is and there's nothing wrong with it, it has worked for decades and centuries. But if you are feeling a discomfort that I usually call a betrayal of the soul, you'll know the discomfort, you will hear it in my voice in your body will tell you now then the book is for you.

Yemi Penn 00:42:08 And what it will do is it would just give you a shift in perspective. And if you aren't an entrepreneur, but you want to be, I believe it will make you start a business like tomorrow. And if you're already in business, you'd either become a serial entrepreneur by opening more businesses and or writing your own book. I really, I mean, I'm hoping it becomes the series. Did you get the memo about marriage? Did you get the memo about children? Because Teeter I think some people have been lying. There are so many memos I try to follow and it ain't working.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:42:39 Mm-hmm <affirmative>, that's a fantastic description. We're going to have the link in the, in the show notes so that people can buy it. So one interesting thing that you mentioned not this time, but the previous one you mentioned about the, the perfect life, the white fence, the and so on. And I think that we really have to question if that's actually the ideal, because I think that too much of a good thing can be harmful, especially too much comfort. What I think is the most important thing in a person's life is the capabilities that they build. For example, take yourself. So if you lost everything that you had all the money and so on, so forth, uh, tomorrow you'd probably be able to build it back. Yeah. And the reason you would be able to do that is because you've developed the capability, bad capability is only developed through suffering. Yes. And the modern world, we have this mindset that we have to

avoid suffering as if it's the plague and, uh, live only in comfort. Yes. And I think that that's very wrong. I think that that makes us weaker.

Yemi Penn 00:43:48 Oh my gosh. I'm like, dude, you're just saying everything and I love the rawness and, and we do need it and I, you know, there's compassion there, but it's true. I remember my mom saying something to me that life is about suffering. And I think there is a thin line as to how much I think, you know, definitely boundaries need to be there, but it's all about contrast seriously. How do you know you want more? If you need to have less to have more mm-hmm <affirmative> so when you get upset, what was it? My partner likes to watch UFC fighting. And we were looking at Colin McGregor watching his documentary yesterday and he'd won so many fights that he lost one and the devastation in their faces was unreal. And I get that, but I just thought, but hold up, if you didn't lose that, then you would not find any power or juice to make sure you win the next one.

Yemi Penn 00:44:36 Mm-hmm <affirmative> you don't go to the next level. So I recently had a reading done and it was described brilliantly for me. And he explained that, cuz I really do believe in this. He said, you know, according to your birth chart, Yemi you are here to experience life's full force. And I don't think I'm the only one. I think we are all here. It's just, we have forgotten to experience life's full force means we have to be prepared to experience the dark and the downsides, the sides that we've been told as you only happen to bad people or it's a really bad thing. And now don't get me wrong. When I lost my dad, it was hard. The idea of losing anyone did to me would just potentially cripple me for a couple of days, but that's part of life's full force. I know it now. And so therefore that's part of my resilient strategy. It's in the knowing and it's in there trying to create sense. So I think if you are open to experiencing life's full force and you appreciate that contrast is needed to succeed and therefore in order to succeed, you will need to fail. Then you are exactly where you need to be.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:45:42 That's awesome. So now I will ask you a question that I really ask every guest that I have just because our listeners are always interested. What are your favorite books for really personal development and entrepreneurship? Top five, if you could

Yemi Penn 00:45:59 Top five. My goodness. There definitely won't be that many, not an entrepreneurship. I recently read millionaire mindset. I forget his name. It might be TV, something Ecker. Yeah. And the reason I liked it is because I still struggle with a poor woman mindset. That was really important for me. And it's, it's a short book. I read it often and these all seem to have money in it, but it's actually more about the mind. And I think they just put money in it because we're also hungry for money. It's the only way we're gonna read it. Um, the other one would be millionaire mindset by Napoleon hill. I read that because

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:46:32 Think and grow rich. You mean?

Yemi Penn 00:46:33 Sorry. Think and grow rich. Sorry. Yes. Think and grow rich. Thank you. So it's evening over here. And the minute it gets late, my brain is a lot slower. So thank you. Thinking very rich. The reason why I like that book is because it's very much written from a masculine perspective, which I love, but then my dominant energy is now feminine. And so I know that when I put masculine with feminine, I'm gonna be a powerhouse. So I definitely love that book. Um, success principles by Jack Canfield. Mm-hmm <affirmative> I love that because these, I love principles. It's easy to understand one of these equations that I love the most is, oh gosh, it's late. So am I gonna say this right and events plus your response equals the outcome. Mm-hmm <affirmative>. So if I want the outcome, all my powers in the response and I got that

from success principles. And I think after that, I start to go more into spiritual books. I start to, and for me, spiritual books could be things like I'm currently reading, forgotten his name as well, but it's around the evolution of humanity and how we need to find different ways. So conscious entrepreneurship, conscious business, that takes me to a different paradigm. I think my returns are higher when I tap into a conscious way of doing business. I think I'd struggle with anything else after that.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:47:53 Mm-hmm <affirmative> I think, I mean to that last one, it sounds similar to a new earth by a Carto

Yemi Penn 00:48:00 Yes, yes. Correct. It's around those kind of genres. It is, this is a Gary's universal human. Thank you. That's helped me. Mm-hmm <affirmative> universal human by Gary Zuko, but yes, a new earth is wonderful and the power of now is brilliant as well.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:48:17 Absolutely. I like that genre a lot. Actually. There's also another great one by Michael singer. Who's also an entrepreneur, the tethered soul. I'm not sure if you.

Yemi Penn 00:48:27 I have read untethered soul and surrender

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:48:31 Surrender experiment.

Yemi Penn 00:48:32 Yes. Brilliant books.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:48:34 Indeed. They are great. I like that approach because they sort of teach you to also enjoy the journey as an entrepreneur because too often entrepreneurs are all about the goal. And the goal is very important. I think that it gives you a sense of direction that without a goal you would not have, and also a sense of progress that without a goal you can't have, but I mean, if you're miserable all the way to the goal, you know, the goal is just at the very end, right? Correct. It's just like a small amount of happiness.

Yemi Penn 00:49:06 Correct.

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:49:07 Right. So I was wondering if you have any advice that you would give new entrepreneurs who are listening to us,

Yemi Penn 00:49:16 The advice I'd give is stay connected to why you sell that business and be really honest with yourself. And once you figure out why you did it, like lots of reasons, really honest with yourself, just check and make sure if there is any trauma attached to why you did it. And it's okay if there's trauma, cuz I think we all are all experience it. Just check and see if it's clean. I mean you might wanna say, well, what does that mean? Trust me, you know what it means? You will know if your trauma is clean or dirty. Cause if it's dirty, it's gonna muddy your business. So find out why you are doing it. Be really honest. And then just do a whole sense. Check on if it's a link to trauma and ideally clean. If it's not clean, figure out a way to clean it with some of the steps I've said and have fun, have fun. I opened up a cafe, I bought it in COVID. Um, I wanted to do an ethic purchasing crisis and it's been one of the biggest painful journeys of my life. I'm currently trying to sell it, but it's been my biggest growth spur and I've done a great job on learning from an industry that I actually have no patience or tolerance for as an owner. However, the next business I do after that, I'm so excited and I'm only able to do it because I did that. So find joy, even in the real shitty moments,

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:50:34 Mm-hmm, <affirmative> very inspiring advice. Yemi so thank you very much for coming on today. I don't know if you have any last words for our audience, but I think it's been really inspiring having you on and really raising awareness about the mental health side of things when it comes to business. Because often I think that we speak about the business aspects and the technical aspects and the strategies, how to make it work. But we forget the mental side and that behind every business, in the end we have a human being and the human being has to be right with themselves and they have to be right with what they're doing and if they get that right, the business aspect of things, it's only secondary. If that foundation is right. So I don't know if you have any last words, but please go ahead. If there's anything else you would like to say to our listeners?

Yemi Penn 00:51:26 No, you are your best thing. I think Tara, Tara Burke and BNE brown say that. So just please remember that. There's a reason why you're doing what you're doing and we need you, but thank you so much Tudor for having me on

Tudor Dumitrescu 00:51:37 Thank you as well. Yemi thank you for coming on and for our listeners stay tuned for the next episode and until next time, keep growing your businesses and providing massive value to the world. You are the reason why we're all growing richer. Our freedoms are expanding and we are all living in greater prosperity. Thank you.