

Podcast Transcript
In the Loop – Episode 20
“You’re Only in Competition with Yourself.”
Interview with Melinda Wood

Melinda: [00:00:00] You’re in competition with yourself and you’ve bettered yourself from where you were the week before and knowing that you’re reaching new goals and just know that you are strong, you are capable, you’ve been working hard, you can do this and just don’t compare yourself to others and you’re not competing against anyone else but yourself and where you were yesterday.

Kareena: [00:00:15] That’s Melinda Wood: fitness influencer, lifting enthusiast and mum of two sharing her fitness journey on the latest episode of In the Loop. Hey there Loopers and welcome to another episode of In the Loop where we chat to you about the business end of being an influencer. I’m your host Kareena and today we’re chatting with fitness influencer Melinda Wood. Melinda is a wonderful mother of two adorable little girls that started sharing her fitness journey through Instagram and garnered the attention of thousands. We find out where this passion for fitness originated, how she discovered her love of lifting and how she’s balancing motherhood, her fitness regime and the growth of her Instagram account. Tune in now to hear the whole story.

Melinda: [00:01:09] Thank you so much for having me.

Kareena: [00:01:10] Thanks for coming in. We really did coordinate our outfits today.

Melinda: [00:01:13] We did, we did. We must’ve known, haha.

Kareena: [00:01:16] Both Melinda and I came in wearing a powder pink top and blue jeans. Yep the photos will be great. Well thank you for coming in, I mean other than your outfit, I’d obviously love to talk about your fitness account on Instagram. You have built such a considerable following on there.

Melinda: [00:01:37] Yes, which is a bit bizarre still to this day to be honest.

Kareena: [00:01:41] Well you have an incredible following and community that you’ve fostered on there around your lifestyle and we will get into that. But before we get into your Instagram, I’d love to hear about how you started in fitness. Where did this passion come from?

Melinda: [00:01:56] So, fitness has always been quite a big part of my life. So, growing up I played basketball. My dad was a very good basketball and a very high-level coach. And so, it naturally was going to be a part of our family. Basketball was pretty

much our whole family. So, I played pretty much nearly six days a week. Growing up I played it at quite a high level and just I loved it. It was everything.

Kareena: [00:02:19] Did your dad coach you?

Melinda: [00:02:21] He did, yes. So sometimes that was good and sometimes it did not go so well. But he was a very good coach. I was very lucky in hindsight to have him. So, I grew up playing basketball. I always loved fitness and it's always been a big part of my life but never was into weight or gym or that kind of thing. It was just always basketball. I stopped playing basketball eventually. I got to an age where I worked and had a career and working full time.

Kareena: [00:02:48] So you never wanted to take basketball to a professional level?

Melinda: [00:02:51] I played at a semi-professional level. So, I did get paid a little bit to play. There's the WNBL which the National League and I played in the league below that which is called the ABA, so it was the ABA it's probably changed now. So that was we played against interstate teams and flew on the weekend and things like that. It was a semi-professional level, but you obviously had to work full time. I never quite had the skill to get to that next level or the height. Damn it my mum she's small I miss out on height. So, I went as far as I could I suppose with it but didn't quite get to that next level.

Kareena: [00:03:26] What's it like even playing semi-professionally? I imagine it's what a lot of people even aspire to. I mean to be able to travel and do what you love in basketball. What was that experience like?

Melinda: [00:03:35] It was great. I loved it. You know you have to put in a lot of work with training. Especially once I finished university and started working full time. Then you're still going to training sessions at night time after that. And then on the weekends travelling to Sydney to play two games, travel home, straight back into work. Like it's hard.

Kareena: [00:03:55] Exhausting I'd imagine.

Melinda: [00:03:55] Yeah it was tiring, but it was great. Most of my best friends are from basketball because I spent so much time obviously in that space. But it was a great time. Yeah. I loved it. It takes a lot of work.

Kareena: [00:04:09] Well speaking of the work, what was a typical training day like for you?

Melinda: [00:04:14] We would just generally train for about a two-hour session and we do that a couple of days a week and then I would play on the weekends usually one or two games. When you get to that next level, they would do sort of weight training sessions and things like that but at the level I was at that wasn't part of it. But I did sort

of do other exercise on the other days like runs and things like that.

Kareena: [00:04:36] The hours spent on court were coming to an end as Melinda moved away from basketball and began working full time. So, to keep up her fitness she joined the gym and like most newcomers was met with a few challenges.

Melinda: [00:04:50] Yes, I kind of honestly felt a little bit lost. So, I stopped playing basketball and because I'd still always been quite fit all my life I would just try and go for runs, go to the gym. I joined a gym and I felt a bit lost there. I honestly didn't know what I was doing. I found gyms quite intimidating because I would see these big guys there and all huddled around the big squat machines and things that I would never dare go near a squat rack.

Kareena: [00:05:12] Yeah, that's what a lot of woman feel like.

Melinda: [00:05:17] I completely can relate and understand where they are coming from because I was terrified. So, I would go into the gym, head down, go straight to the cardio machines, I'd kind of do 10 minutes on each of the different machines like the elliptical, the treadmill, the bike. Do a little bit of ab work in the women's only section and then make my way out. And that would be the extent.

Kareena: [00:05:32] It's what you felt comfortable with.

Melinda: [00:05:32] Yeah, exactly. I would do that and go for the odd occasional run and that would sort of be the extent of it. But I can't say that I enjoyed that all to be honest. Kind of became like a bit of a chore. I didn't enjoy it like I enjoyed basketball. Basketball for me was like you doing exercise without even realizing your exercising. I love it. Whereas the gym it was like, uh, gotta go there and go on the machine today. That kind of thing. So, I did that for a while I suppose. I did a few group fitness classes like spin classes or the odd body attack.

Kareena: [00:06:11] Yep. Did you prefer that?

Melinda: [00:06:13] They're okay. I know some people love them. Yeah, they're okay. They weren't really my thing. It was not something I could continue doing forever and ever. I wouldn't mind it occasionally but yeah.

Kareena: [00:06:23] Do you think you found your thing now?

Melinda: [00:06:25] Definitely, yeah. Finally. Took a bit of like trial and error. Yes, I've definitely found my thing. Finally, I'm delving into like weights. Weight lifting for me is something I just really enjoy. I really enjoy the challenge. I love that you have set goals of like you know beating your previous weights say the week before or two weeks before. It's such a great feeling to know that you're in competition with yourself and you've bettered yourself from where you were the week before and knowing that you're reaching your goals. Yes, I really, really enjoy it.

Kareena: [00:06:56] It's great that you're comparing yourself to you. It's your constant improvement not you against someone else.

Melinda: [00:07:02] And that's sort of a message that I really want to try and put out there with my Instagram, I guess. Don't compare yourself to others and you're not competing against anyone else but yourself and where you were yesterday.

Kareena: [00:07:12] You're in competition with yourself. This is the mindset that Melinda leverages to improve her performance every time she picks up a barbell. We find out how important it is to have the right mindset when tackling your goals.

Melinda: [00:07:27] I think mindset is huge. I think especially with weights and when you get into heavy lifting weights self-doubt can really play a big part. If you walk up to that squat rack and you're thinking I'm not going to be able to do this, then you're probably not gonna be able to do this. So, you have to really believe in yourself. You have to just know that you are strong, you are capable, you've been working hard, you can do this and just try as much as you can, as hard as you can, I guess. Then you always surprise yourself with what you can achieve. Definitely yeah. It's definitely something I would say before I get to that squat rack. I go, "okay, you can do this." Because sometimes I feel, like with my coach now that I'm now working with. He's worked really hard with progressive overload which means basically each week you want to be able to add either a rep or add weights so either one or the other. Either way it means that you're doing something extra, an extra load than the week before and every week I sit there and go "oh my god, like there's no way I could beat this next week." And then you get up to the whatever machine or the weights that you're doing and sure enough whether it's not the weight that you've increased, if you do that extra rep it's just like such a great feeling to go "okay, I did do it." I think the more you do that, it's sort of like a muscle in your mind to that you go "okay, I've done that, I can keep doing this, like it is possible.

Kareena: [00:08:40] Those small improvements each and every day is one of the aspects that Melinda loves about weight training. We asked her how she got started and how she balanced her newfound gym routine with caring for her young family.

Melinda: [00:08:52] I guess I started weights a little unconventionally whereas I started them at home. I think I felt a bit more comfortable doing it at home in my lounge room. I'm sure a lot of women can relate to that too. Working out in front of other people when you feel like you don't know what you're doing can be quite intimidating. You're worried that people are gonna look at you and think "oh, what's this girl doing here wasting space in the gym kind of thing." So, I started at home. I actually came across a program by Kayla Itsines which is a home workout program. It's generally like lot of weights and it's some kind of plyometric training, a little cardio element there and you use lighter weights. So, I started doing that at home with my kids. So, I started that after my second baby. I felt a little bit lost. I felt quite a bit unfit. I wasn't really doing any

exercise at that point. Two kids under the age 2 I was very overwhelmed.

Kareena: [00:09:41] Yes, I can only imagine.

Melinda: [00:09:42] So I stumbled across that program and its 28 minutes workout. This is achievable, I can do this at home. 28 minutes, surely, I can keep my kids somewhat occupied in this time which that was a challenge in itself. I started doing that in my lounge room and that sort of started me to fall in love with weights. I started seeing my body change from it. I think women, we always have this perception. Okay, what is your goals. I want to tone up. That was me too. I wanted to tone up, but I would go to the gym and use cardio machines and I wasn't really seeing the results. Whereas as soon as I started getting into a little bit of weights, all of a sudden I really started seeing those results in my body and that really motivated me to keep going and then it just made me start to fall in love with weights and then I would get them a little bit heavier and a little bit heavier. And then after doing her program, I probably did it consistently for about two years.

Kareena: [00:10:33] That's a pretty long time to stick with a program.

Melinda: [00:10:35] It just fitted into my life really well. It's such a great program for mums because you can do it from home, it's not too long, you can do it with kids around. My kids would join in and do burpees with me.

Kareena: [00:10:46] I've seen a couple of videos, they're so cute!

Melinda: [00:10:48] They love it. I swear my eldest she's like stronger than me. I've got a little chin up bar at home and she'll get up there on a pull up and she'll just pump out 5 pullups like it's nothing. They got these little one and a half kilo dumbbells that they use themselves and they join in. Yeah, it's very cute.

Kareena: [00:11:04] It's adorable.

Melinda: [00:11:09] So then I guess I got to a point where I wanted to delve into some more heavy lifting and more traditional weight training rather than like the sort of plyometric that that program had. That's when I decided to delve into the scary world of joining a gym. My kids started sleeping through the night which made it a bit more achievable to get to the gym in the morning before my husband went to work. When I was still night feeding and things like that just getting out of bed in the morning was like not gonna happen.

Kareena: [00:11:37] Fair enough. I was going to ask how you balanced it all.

Melinda: [00:11:38] Yeah, different stages, I think. I think it depends on the stage that you are at. So, that's how I balanced it. Now that they are sleeping well, I get up in the morning and I go before my husband leaves for work and before my kids are awake. Then it doesn't cut into family time and my time with them.

Kareena: [00:11:55] So what time are you waking up these days?

Melinda: [00:11:56] 4:40.

Kareena: [00:11:58] It's still dark then.

Melinda: [00:12:00] Yeah, it's still dark when I'm leaving to go home. It is very heavy. I'm constantly tired.

Melinda: [00:12:09] But at the same time it does energize me, and I know that if I don't exercise, I actually feel more sluggish and tired. I'm tired by the end of the day and I'm definitely in bed by 9:30 most nights like a nanna but I've always been more of a morning person than a night person and that's what works well with me and my family.

Kareena: [00:12:29] Having progressed beyond home weight workouts, Melinda was ready to take her training to the next level and so found a coach. Listen in to hear how this support helped Melinda achieve her weightlifting goals.

Melinda: [00:12:43] So there's a great website called bodybuilding.com, you probably would've heard of it, and they have free programs there that you can just print off and download. So that was really great. I used a lot of those to start off with. And then I've done a few different programs over time, different weightlifting programs. I'd sort of repeat them and find different ones and do those sorts of on my own. So, it's really, really been until now. So up until then I've always tried to just do it on my own doing different programs. So only recently that I've decided to take it to the next level and hire a coach to whoop my butt.

Kareena: [00:13:19] So what is that coach doing for you now?

Melinda: [00:13:21] So I train with him once a week and then the other sessions I'll do on my own at the gym. I really wanted to see him first just to make sure that my form is really good. With increasing the weights heavier and heavier you're obviously at risk of more injury if you aren't doing things properly. So, that was my number one reason, was wanting to have someone to look over my form and make sure I'm doing things properly and I'm not going to injure myself. But he writes out my programs for me which I'll do different phases. And he also sets out my macros. Macronutrients and calories so he'll set those to coincide with my training and the goals that I want to achieve. So, until seeing a coach I've never counted calories or macros.

Kareena: [00:14:02] How are you finding because I imagine when you cook, you cook for the whole family. For a lot of women and mums out there they have to balance that, how you do it?

Melinda: [00:14:10] So I thought it was going to be a lot harder than it is. My coach is quite sensible and that when I sat down and talked to him, he asked me to do you cook the one meal for everyone. Generally, I do. If there's something like say we're having like a curry that's a bit of spice my kids tend to not like the spice, so they'll have rice

and some plain chicken and vegetable like I'll adapt it. A similar meal but just adapted. I said I'm happy to cook separate if we need to and he said no, no I don't want you to like I want you to be able to cook same things. So, he's very sensible with that and I think that is a huge key when you're looking for a coach you want to find someone that is aware of your life and is quite sensible about making things as simple as possible. So, I don't have a set meal plan where it's like this day you're cooking this kind of thing. He just sits out like a guideline. So, for example, a lunch you want a protein and he'll set the number of grams, some carbs that kind of thing. And then I can kind of either follow that to a tee or adapt a recipe around it. So generally, I'll just cook something that the family is all going to like and then I'll just make sure that mine is measured out accordingly. Does that kind of make sense?

Kareena: [00:15:15] That does make sense.

Melinda: [00:15:16] Yes. So basically, I'm still cooking the same meals for everybody I just set up certain things. My husband obviously needs more food than me. He is a tradesperson and his job is very intensive labouring and so he eats a lot. So, he obviously needs more substance and more food than generally I would eat, although I am catching up with him.

Kareena: [00:15:36] Oh, very impressive.

Melinda: [00:15:36] So I do adapt a few things but we generally all eat together and eat the same things.

Kareena: [00:15:43] How did you go about looking for a coach and finding one?

Melinda: [00:15:45] Yeah, so I was quite lucky that I was recommended to him by another friend which is another Instagram a friend of mine and she is seeing him as well. She started seeing him about six weeks before me and she just was telling me how much she was enjoying it, how happy she was, how sensible he was. I obviously looked at his like Instagram and Facebook and he has a lot of videos online where he would explain certain situations and he prepares like women and men for comps as well. And I'd just liked his sensible approach to it all that it doesn't have to be as hard as some people make it. It shouldn't be so hard.

Kareena: [00:16:24] Yep. Well the more barriers you have the less likely people are to do it.

Melinda: [00:16:26] Exactly, and then I think there's a lot of people that when they come out from comps, they're so like almost tormented by it that they never want to do it again and his approach is that it shouldn't be that way. You should enjoy the experience it shouldn't be so mentally hard that you just are scarred for life. So, I really liked his approach, his sensible approach to it all. And my friend is obviously loving it and enjoying it. And so, I decided to dive in and see him. So, I think that's probably the key when you're looking for Coach it's good to look for one who does prepare people for comps. Not necessarily meaning that you want to do one yourself but if they do

that, they generally quite experienced and know what they're doing. He's competed himself before, so you know that he's doing what he's put himself through as well.

Kareena: [00:17:13] Perfect, practicing what you preach.

Melinda: [00:17:13] Exactly, yeah.

Kareena: [00:17:17] As Melinda mentioned one of her Instagram friends referred her to her current coach and she also reviewed his Instagram before hiring. Melinda herself has a prominent Instagram page, so we find out more about how she started and why.

Melinda: [00:17:32] So I started my Instagram in that period when I started doing the Kayla Itsines' program from home. Basically, my reason for starting it was I just wanted to one interact and meet other women doing the same program and I wanted to be able to hold myself accountable. I never imagined it to be what it has become today. And to be honest in the beginning I was like so scared of anyone ever finding my account. It was just my secret little thing. I just didn't want it to be out there. I was at home, I was on maternity leave and sometimes I think as a new mum as well you can feel a little bit secluded. I have great friends and family and everything but when you're at home all day every day, you know you can get a little bit, yes secluded I guess is the word. So, I wanted to start that just to be able to interact with some other women doing the same program. They would hold meet ups like once a month, I'm not sure if they still do, I think they still do. And so, I decided to jump in and go to one of the meet ups which was really terrifying. This is after probably having my account for a couple of months and I started interacting and chatting with other women that were doing the same program. And it was just great. It was great to like just you know they were going through the same thing that you were, and you were like "oh my gosh, I just died from that." And they were like "me too, well done for getting it done!" And we would cheer each other on, and it was just such great support.

Melinda: [00:18:50] It did hold you accountable. You'd look at them and you'd go okay, they all just killed their workout today, no excuses, I have to get this done and you would do it. And we supported each other and cheered each other on. And that was really great. And so, I went along to my first ever meet up and you're turning up and you're like I didn't know any of these people. And like one of my now best friends, I remember her that day she just ran straight up to me and my Instagram didn't used to be Melinda Wood so when I started it, I had it as @myfithealthylife because I wanted it to be like semi anonymous even though it did show my face. I was like, no one will ever see it. No one will ever find me. And so, it was just really funny when you then turn up at this meet up and people are like "my fi thealthy life, I'm blahblahblah." And you know it's this other random name and I'm like this is bizarre, but yeah, and now they've become some of my best friends. I just went to the hen's party with the girl that I was talking about that ran up to me that day and I'm going to her wedding in a couple of weeks like we see each other a lot and they've become some of my best friends.

Kareena: [00:19:51] That's a beautiful thing that's come out of something that's a

digital platform into the real world.

Melinda: [00:19:54] Yeah, exactly.

Kareena: [00:19:57] Gaining friends is one of the many perks of sharing her journey. And so, we find out exactly what it is about Melinda's story that followers and friends alike are connecting with most.

Melinda: [00:20:07] I still find it bizarre to be honest that anyone even wants to follow along with my journey. I'm just an ordinary mum but I think in a way that is what people connect with. You know I am an ordinary mum. Fitness isn't my full-time job where I get paid to work out every day. I still have two pre-school children. I work. I have a husband. I have a normal household to run. You're just a normal person who still works hard and gets it done, I guess. And I guess that's what I think people connect with. And I think that I'm quite honest about that things aren't always perfect and I'm honest about that my eating might not always be completely spot on or that I'm trying or that you have slip ups or you know whatever it is.

Kareena: [00:20:53] You're human.

Melinda: [00:20:53] Yeah, exactly. I think that it's all normal and I think that's what people connect with.

Kareena: [00:20:58] What out of your content have you found to have the biggest reaction?

Melinda: [00:21:01] Probably my food diary tends to be a big one. I think food is an area that a lot of people get quite overwhelmed with. I think there is so much different advice and information out there in different diets and different this and that and people can get so overwhelmed and overcomplicate things.

Kareena: [00:21:17] Well it's hard to know what's right and what's wrong.

Melinda: [00:21:17] Definitely, definitely, it really is. There're so many different messages out there and thinking of ideas of gosh what can I make that's you know. So, I think people probably find that quite helpful. Looking at the food, I try to keep my meals because I am busy and have a million things going on, so they are always quite simple things to cook. Things that are quick, easy, simple.

Kareena: [00:21:40] That you can find in the supermarket.

Melinda: [00:21:40] Yeah, it doesn't have to be one hundred million superfoods, exotic, I don't know something from the Forest of Narnia. So, I think that people connect with that and find those quite helpful. And then I guess transformation post where you kind of speak about your journey. Those always seem to connect with people quite well because they can relate and see where you come from. And I think that my page and showing my journey just shows that you can still make some time. Carve out a little bit

of time in the day for yourself and do something for you and fill your own cup to then be out to fill everybody else's.

Kareena: [00:22:14] Which is so important.

Melinda: [00:22:14] I know that making that little bit of time for myself and having that one hour of like me time and working on myself it just makes me a better mum, a happier person.

Kareena: [00:22:25] Melinda's content has gotten the attention of numerous brands. However, the companies that she chooses to align with need to follow these simple rules.

Melinda: [00:22:35] I'm a little bit picky with who I will work with. I want to work with brands that represent my message and things that I already use myself and that I love and then I'm happy to like that I would be sharing anyway. I like working with brands that have a message behind them. So, there's a really gorgeous brand that I love, and I work with a lot called Real Active Movement. They make these beautiful gorgeous drink bottles like nice big drink bottles and towels and stuff, but they actually give back 10 percent of their profits to mental health charities.

Kareena: [00:23:05] Oh, great.

Melinda: [00:23:06] Just such a great message behind them and I love supporting brands like that that have a good message and want to give back to the community as well.

Kareena: [00:23:14] We've been lucky enough to hear of all the great perks of Melinda's social media journey, but it doesn't come without a few challenges of its own.

Melinda: [00:23:23] I guess the pressure, sometimes it's the pressure that I will imaginarily put on myself. That my caption needs to be good enough or my photo needs to be good. Like I don't have a professional photographer that follows me around so I feel like oh that photo is terrible, but it is like the best I could do it. I feel like I put that pressure on myself of it being up to a certain standard I suppose.

Kareena: [00:23:48] Outside of thinking about the practicalities of maintaining a well performing Instagram profile, Melinda also considers the responsibility that she bears with the messages that she's sharing.

Melinda: [00:24:00] I do feel a huge responsibility with the weight of my words that I use. I think body image is such a huge thing that a lot of women are struggling with. I'm very aware with the weight of my words, there is somebody behind their phone reading my words, looking at my pictures and I never want anything that I say or write to make someone feel bad about themselves. And I think you have a huge responsibility when you have such a big following to be considerate of the message

that you're putting out there. I think about my children and you know them growing up and what they are going to be seeing and I want them to as well, if they were reading it how would they feel. And I want the message that I'm putting out there to be a good one and a positive one and to make people feel good about themselves and positive.

Kareena: [00:24:45] So in saying that you've been so conscious about what you're putting out there, have you ever received any negative comments or feedback?

Melinda: [00:24:51] I've been quite lucky in that I feel like I haven't received too many negative comments. There is always going to be the odd one. I don't think I really necessarily have had many negative comments about things that I've written. But it will be things like you might post a transformation photo and there's the people that are like "oh you were better before" and those sorts of comments. Which they don't really understand the message behind the caption which is that I feel so much stronger, I feel more energetic, I wasn't looking after myself then, I wasn't eating well. So, you may think that that appearance is better before but how I feel on the inside is a million times better now. And then just not really getting the message across from my caption, maybe they haven't read it. I forgot about that, there was one time I did an interview for the Daily Mail. I shouldn't have gone on to read the comments because they're never good with the Daily Mail. Oh gosh, there was some awful messages about you know just you are being just obsessed yourself, why don't you go and look after your children. Just negative things like that. Those can hit hard.

Kareena: [00:25:51] Well it's overly judgemental.

Melinda: [00:25:51] Yes, exactly. So, it's kind of I think some judging you by appearance. It's just you being obsessed with your looks but it's not really that message behind it. But community wise I've been very lucky in that the Instagram community is so supportive. I've made just people I would consider are like some of my closest friends but from all around the world and there's some that if they were to come over from London I would happily "come stay in my house," because I feel like our friendship is like we speak a lot outside of Instagram as well. Yeah, I've been very lucky to have such amazing support from all my friends all over the world.

Kareena: [00:26:32] It's beautiful.

Melinda: [00:26:33] And it is funny. I think a lot of people, like my friends that aren't in Instagram, and my husband as well, like find it bizarre like what do you mean you meet up with someone that you met on the Internet. It's such a strange concept to everybody, I think. I completely understand how it can be. So yeah, it's a funny one. My Instagram friends get it, they understand it.

Kareena: [00:26:57] Having successfully built a following that has provided numerous opportunities, we find out what's in store next for Melinda.

Melinda: [00:27:04] Up until now I haven't really considered at all that much, which I

probably should have, But I would love to eventually have a career in health and fitness which is something that I'm so passionate about. It would be would amazing. And I do have this platform that obviously gives me a good leg up that I really have the opportunity to try and go forth and do something with it. To be honest, day-to-day life with two kids under school age, I just feel like I haven't had that mental capacity yet to be able to really like think too much about it and try to implement anything. Next year my oldest starts school so I'll start having a small amount, like four hours once a week, where I'll have time to myself. So maybe then I'll start to consider something and try and look into avenues of what I could hopefully do with it.

Kareena: [00:27:52] How about some last words of advice for our aspiring health and fitness influencers.

Melinda: [00:27:55] Think about what you like and what your interests are. Stay true to yourself. Don't try to be anything that you're not and don't compare yourself to others. Put forth the message that you want to put forth and then just stay true to yourself and just be you.

Kareena: [00:28:10] Yes, you do you. That's one of my favourite sayings. Well thank you so much for joining us on the Loop App couch.

Melinda: [00:28:20] Thanks for having me! It was great to come.

Kareena: [00:28:21] And that brings us to the end of our interview Loopers. Thank you so much for joining us and a big thank you to Melinda for taking the time to chat with us and share her story. If you want to continue learning about Melinda's journey you can find the link to her Instagram included in our show description, so be sure to check it out. As always, we'd love to know what you thought of this latest episode, so please leave a rating or review and let us know what your feedback is. We also don't want you to miss out on any future episodes with your favourite influencers. So, subscribe to our podcast and get notified every time we release a new episode. Tune in again next week for a new episode of In the Loop where we chat about the business end of being an influencer. Catch you then!