

Podcast Transcript

In the Loop – Episode 21

“How to Live an Authentic and Connected Life.”

Interview with Emma Maidment

Emma: [00:00:00] You know I say on my Instagram that I'm sharing ways to live an authentic connected life. And that's kind of my underlying driving force of like I'm the test dummy, I'm doing all the things and whether it be good or bad of how I'm doing it, as an example of like there is another way to live. And you can design your own lifestyle and you can be really clear on what that looks like and what your boundaries are and what your needs and wants and desires and all those things are to fill up that life that you ultimately want to live.

Kareena: [00:00:27] That's Emma Maidment sharing what it means to live and authentic connected life. Tune in to hear the whole interview on this episode of In the Loop. Hey there Loopers and welcome to another episode of In the Loop where we chat about the business end of being an influencer. I'm your host Kareena and today we're chatting with yoga teacher and entrepreneur Emma Maidment. Now Emma is a qualified communications and marketing professional, writer and public speaker that has brought her incredible experience from the world's tech mecca Silicon Valley all the way back to Malvern. She's co-founded several companies including Mindful Morning Collective, Ritual Retreats and the soon to be launching Mindful Business Academy. Her unique ability in combining her love of yoga philosophies with marketing practices to create these mission driven businesses and share her knowledge with the health and wellness community is just one of the reasons that she's been so successful. So, tune in as we chat with the self-professed free spirited, hot scented entrepreneurial thinker that's on a mission to create her own lifestyle and inspire others to do the same. So, Emma, I'd love to jump straight in. Obviously, you come from a background of yoga and meditation but also branding and marketing. And you have come together to marry those two into a number of businesses. So, I do want to hear all about that but from the start I'd love to hear how you got into yoga in the first place.

Emma: [00:02:02] Great question. So, my professional background is in PR and Marketing. I studied a Bachelor of Communications, worked in PR for many years, so that's kind of where that started. And the yoga stuff actually started when I was at school purely because there was an option at sport to just go to the gym instead of having to run around and play team sports and it's like right, I can go to the gym and just talk to my friends. This is a great result. I don't have to exercise. How things have changed. I went there and they had a yoga class and I was like oh yeah that sounds like I can stretch. That sounds fun. And so, I started going to these classes when I was 16 and I was like there was something about it that just drew me in and I thought there's something, I don't know. I feel good when I do this and so it's something that I kind of dated on and off for a little while. I was going through high school, I'd go to a

class maybe once or twice a week just because I liked how it made me feel and I never really went to much deeper than that until I was at uni. And then when I was at uni I got really really sick, a bit of a long-winded story, but had some parasites that went undiagnosed and they just wreaked havoc on my whole system where my hair fell out like all this crazy stuff happened.

Kareena: [00:03:15] Geez.

Emma: [00:03:16] Yeah it was intense. So I was finishing my degree at that time and I was going to yoga classes every day by that stage and that was the only thing keeping me sane and keeping me connected to this intuitive voice that was like there's something going on here, people are starting to just think you're crazy, but it's connected to this trip that I did and it just connected me to that intuitive space. And then further investigated, different specialists, different naturopaths, found out the parasites, got rid of them. Seven years later I've completely rebuilt my gut. So that was a whole other health journey.

Kareena: [00:03:49] That's a long process.

Emma: [00:03:50] It's a long time. I ate a croissant the other day for the first time in seven years and I didn't get sick.

Kareena: [00:03:55] Aw that's incredible, congratulations.

Emma: [00:03:55] I know amazing. So that's kind of when yoga, for most people in the health and wellness space is that point of hitting a rock bottom and yoga and meditation being that kind of saving grace. And so, it really was that for me and then it continued to be that. I never thought it would be anything more than just something that I loved doing. Every day I would go to yoga and then I was working full-time, had my dream job, was travelling the world working in PR climbing the ladder very quickly and getting up at like 4:30 in the morning to go to yoga before work and just was so into yoga and wellness and it was in this environment that wasn't really supporting that. So, whilst there was a lot of career opportunities and it was in that startup world, I was going to the Silicon Valley and seeing all that world and it was exciting from the kind of entrepreneur within me, but I just wasn't connected to the work. And so, it was kind of over time that I realized I was actually more passionate about yoga and wellness and I'd started a blog at the time and it just kind of really unfolded naturally and then I just thought I'm going to go do my yoga teacher training. Use my holiday pay. I'm like, I'm getting paid to do a teacher training. This was a great result.

Kareena: [00:05:08] Upskilling if you would.

Emma: [00:05:09] Yeah totally. And just thought I'll just do it because I want to learn more. I had no intention of teaching and then loved it. Came back and my workplace was like you should teach people in the office and I'm like sure, why not. Started doing it, loved it and just it's kind of went from there that I ended up leaving my job and taking a one-way ticket to Paris of all places and lived overseas for about two years freelancing, teaching, that's where it all kind of began.

Kareena: [00:05:36] One-way ticket is pretty brave.

Emma: [00:05:38] One-way ticket was brave. It was like a came back from San Francisco incredibly exhausted from a work trip, incredibly jet lagged and went "oh I can't do this anymore I'm booking a one-way ticket in six months time." And then like woke up the next day and went "oh, what have I done. I'm going overseas in six months. Oh God, what does that look like." And just had this feeling of trust, this is what you need to do, do it.

Kareena: [00:06:01] And then you went?

Emma: [00:06:02] Then I went.

Kareena: [00:06:02] Emma made the move to work remotely from Paris and recounts a story of how she got her first ever client.

Emma: [00:06:11] So, I was at that point where I really wanted to work as a consultant, and I was really interested in health and wellness, so I'd started with a blog. I had a blog about all my food allergies and the whole journey of the parasite and all that kind of stuff. And I'd learned a lot from that because I had the background in marketing and PR. This is kind of when blogging was really starting to become a thing so I learned how to use WordPress and just would literally be at work with one computer on work stuff and the other one opened on my blog and just being like I'll just quickly update that.

Kareena: [00:06:40] I love that, so many entrepreneurs start that way.

Emma: [00:06:42] Just this little passion project and I started to meet a lot of people in the health and wellness space. This is before Matcha Maiden, this was before the big boom. So, there was a guy that was running a cold pressed juice company and he was kind of one of the first ones in Melbourne and I just randomly met him. You know PR, you're pretty good at networking. So, I just kind of went in, got chatting, and long story short ended up writing blogs for him while I was travelling. So, he's paying me like practically nothing to write these blogs and he's uploading them on his website and I'm like "dude, the photos are like this big, it's ugly. You pulled it off Google, who's going to read this. Why are you paying me if no one's like what. I sort of just was thinking I probably could help this guy but there was a lot of self-doubt. I was like "I'm too young, who's going to listen to me as a consultant. I don't have 10 years experience, what do I know." I ended up living in Berlin and fell into the tech startup world again because I was pretty well-known in that space for the company that I'd worked for was a bit of a success story and so they were like, you worked for them, great, you're hired. And so, came home every day from that job crying, total mess. I was like this is so not what I want to do. I want to be in health and wellness. Why am I back in the tech world? I couldn't see the bridge. I remember sitting in this juice cafe with a friend it was snowing outside and like drinking an acai going still counts. I wouldn't do that now I'd have a ginger soup or something. She said to me what do you really want to do. And I just said to her, I'm like, what I really want to do is lots of things. I want to be a yoga teacher. I

want to be able to run retreats and things like that, but I also want to consult and help people with their business because I feel like that's what I'm good at. She's like, so why don't you just do that. I'm like, "oh I'm too young" and all the excuses came up. And I thought, you know what, why don't I. So, I went home and just emailed this guy that I've been writing for, and was like, hey dude no offense, your website sucks and mine's really good, so I could probably help you. And he was like "cool, how much do you charge? Write me a proposal. And I just literally Googled "how to write proposal."

Kareena: [00:08:41] Yes, thank goodness for Google.

Emma: [00:08:42] Made it pretty on Canva, thank goodness for Canva because I suck at InDesign or anything like that. Made it pretty, sent it over and he was like cool great. And that was my first client.

Kareena: [00:08:51] Oh, amazing!

Emma: [00:08:51] And we worked together for about three years and I ended up taking his business. It turned out. So what kind of unfolded from that as I got to know him and got to see his soul a little bit more was that he actually really didn't like people and he hated running a bricks and mortar business. He actually became through what I'd been teaching him marketing wise, he became really passionate about marketing. So, we transitioned the business to a completely online model, and he sold the store and now he actually has a job as a marketing consultant and runs his online business.

Kareena: [00:09:20] So much happier I imagine.

Emma: [00:09:22] So much happier. And I just thought oh, okay, there's two things at play here. There's obviously me stepping into my power and recognizing that I have something to offer. But also recognizing that when someone's living out of alignment, you're not happy, things aren't working, there's no flow. So, when you find that passion and that purpose everything just begins to align and then boom off you go and now, he's like happy and doing his thing and ultimately discovered what he wanted to do. And so that's how I started to see that because I always had saw the yoga and the wellness stuff and marketing as very separate and that's how I started to say like hang on, I can apply yoga philosophies of meditating and learning to understand yourself and going a bit deeper to the way in which you run our business and why we run our businesses. And that can then come through in a marketing strategy and comms approach. That's sort of how that started, and I started to go actually there's synergy. These aren't two separate things and they don't have to be this is one aspect of me and this is the other aspect, it's like, this is all one thing.

Kareena: [00:10:22] It's beautiful that you brought it together. Emma talks about how she discovered a way to combine her love of Yoga with her passion and knowledge in marketing. But we were curious to find out whether she had ever felt that there was a conflict between the two.

Emma: [00:10:38] I've come across a lot of people that have that. So, I started running mindful marketing workshops a couple of years ago and I wanted to run workshops

for people, but I couldn't think of a good name. And so, I was running them as on one on ones and I was just calling them mindful marketing sessions and I'm like when I come up with a better name then I'll launch it as a public workshop. And that went back and forth for ages. I got so in my head about the name and was like "oh my gosh, people know what mindfulness is, people know what marketing is, just call it mindful marketing. Did that. People gravitated towards it. But also, within that I attracted a lot of people like a lot of yoga teachers that were really resistant to this. This is a few years ago when e-mails lists and that kind of stuff was really on trend. And they were just like "oh I don't feel comfortable emailing people and I don't want to be salesman." So, because I speak yoga, I can show them how to use marketing to their advantage. But in a way that's really authentic to them. So, like you don't have to send a flash sale 25% off my yoga course if that's not who you are and that's not how you're communicating with your audience. So, I would find ways to tailor marketing practices to these individuals to make it something that wasn't so terrifying and that they could actually go I see the value in this because marketing is really just how you show up in the world. How are you presenting what you have to offer?

Kareena: [00:11:53] Yeah, how you're communicating.

Emma: [00:11:57] I can help them see how it became more synergistic in that way and then they would start to see results and that's kind of how mindful marketing became a thing.

Kareena: [00:12:07] One of your many businesses.

Emma: [00:12:07] One of my many businesses.

Kareena: [00:12:07] Mindful Marketing workshops are designed to help people connect with their why and build their businesses from a holistic perspective. We find out more about Emma's why and how this business came to be.

Emma: [00:12:22] So I've been out on my own for four and a half years almost five and was getting to a point where I was working with clients and I was reaching maximum load where I had to start hiring people to help me and I got to a point where I was like I don't want to run an agency. My whole PR career goal was to never work in an agency because I hated agency work and I was like I don't want to do that. And so that was all I was doing for the first few years of my career was avoiding agency work. Trying to work in-house and that worked in my favour.

Kareena: [00:12:52] They are two different worlds from everyone from a marketing background.

Emma: [00:12:53] They are very different worlds, very different worlds. If you've ever worked in PR & Marketing, Devil Wears Prada is definitely a thing. So anyway, not all agencies are bad there are some really good ones of course. So, I got to that point and I thought, actually, I don't want to do this. I don't want a physical space. I don't want to manage staff. I don't want an office. I don't want to be a marketing person. I am more passionate about speaking and all that kind of thing. So, I scaled back and thought,

okay, how can I do a one to many approaches and so then I started running Mindful Marketing workshops. And then a friend of mine who's in digital marketing, he has a digital marketing agency, came and did one of the workshops. I was actually a bit intimidated, I was like, oh, he knows all the things, like he's coming to do my workshop, like oh. And he loved it and was like I loved that. You need to be getting this out there more. This needs to be an online course. I need to get this out to people. And I was like, I know dude but like, I'm one person, I've got a million other projects, I'm tired. Yes, I see the potential but also, I've been doing this for years and to be honest I'm a bit over it and I'm sick of doing it by myself. I need that inspiration of someone else. And so, he was like, hey, why don't we partner up. And so that's where the Mindful Business Academy was born.

Kareena: [00:14:05] With so many great business ideas, Mindful Business Academy is presently in the works and looks to be launching very soon. Emma gives us an update on this latest business venture of hers.

Emma: [00:14:16] They're in the process of refining the coursework and filming and doing all that sort of stuff but that'll be an online offering. The pairing works really well because he specializes in digital marketing and Facebook ads and all that stuff which I can do, but like pwoah, kill me now. I'm done running Instagram and doing all the things for other people. Whereas he loves it, that's his vibe, that's his thing. Whereas what I'm passionate about is like what's your vision, what's your value, what's your why. How is that coming through in the way you're communicating. What's your self-care practice as an entrepreneur. The more lifestyle side of things but also getting clear on who are you and how is that coming through in the way in which you're offering your business to the world. So, it's kind of like a dream partnership in that all the things he likes to do, I don't, and vice versa. We're putting that together and it'll start as one course. And then from that there's opportunities to bring lots of different masterminds and things into it. But where we saw the gap was that there was so many yoga teachers and practitioners, like naturopaths and massage therapists and things. So, they've finished their degree and just have no idea about marketing and kind of scared about it but don't have a budget to go and employ an agency or freelancer to help them. So, they're online going "oh, this online course isn't super relevant to me but I'm kind of learning and I'm not sure," whereas we're like this is for people in the health and wellness space whether you're a practitioner or a yoga teacher. It's personal branding, it's all that kind of stuff. That's the intention behind it. It's very early stages of it but it feels really good to have a partner and collaboration is one of my core values.

Kareena: [00:15:53] Emma is a huge fan of collaborating with others. We find out why Emma opts to work with other individuals on many of her projects instead of going out on her own.

Emma: [00:16:03] So I think freelancing for such a long time being a one woman show, you get to that point where you're just sitting in a cafe on your own and you might be working with a client but it's a different relationship with a client than being able to just bounce ideas and collaborate with someone. I like to do an exercise of just getting really clear on my values, my personal values, and how that's translating into my business and one of my big ones is community and collaboration. Kind of a similar

thing to me. I love this, I always say that community over competition or collaboration over competition. Either way you can put it and I just think that when you have two or more brains in a room there's just you have complementary skill sets. There's an opportunity to make something a lot bigger and to grow something a lot faster. And I just like being with people.

Kareena: [00:16:49] Yeah, you're a people person.

Emma: [00:16:51] I'm an extrovert massively. I don't want to just sit in my house by myself with my laptop. So, it served me really well for you know, I travelled around the world just freelancing and sitting in a cafe for two hours doing some work with the client you know traveling around Croatia or wherever I was. So, it was perfect for that time in my life but where I'm at now it's like, no, I want to support and uplift other people and to be supported myself. To be able to find people that are really great fits that I can learn from and that I can teach things to and that we can co-create something that's like a little baby, grateful and nurtured rather than like half nurturing this and half nurturing that and feeling really stretched.

Kareena: [00:17:29] So how do you evaluate who would be a good person to collaborate with?

Emma: [00:17:33] It's kind of like dating. Values are the big one. If there a shared value individually and a shared want of the same lifestyle. Because if someone is like my big picture is to have an office and stay in Melbourne for the next 10 years I'd be like, umm, dunno if that's really my vibe. Whereas when someone's like no, I've got more fluidity and I want to be able to travel and not be location dependent. I'm like cool, yep, we're aligned. And then getting really clear on who are they as a person, what do they value, what do they want out of life and then what's their vision for the business. And you just know straight away when you're talking to someone and there's that feeling of connection between you. You're like yeah, I'm picking up what you're putting down. And then it takes time. Like say Sean Anderson, who I'm collaborating on Mindful Business Academy, I've known him for six-seven years and just kind of mutual friends. We kind of became friends, we were never like besties, and just something over the last couple of years just kept bringing us closer and we both had this feeling that we're going to work together on something one day, but we don't know what that is yet. We're not going to push it and it just, like I said, he came to the workshop and it happened so organically. He actually came over because he's like I need to help you mastermind this. You need to make this a thing and by the end of it we were business partners.

Kareena: [00:18:50] That's cool.

Emma: [00:18:51] As we're writing down his mind, we're doing this thing with each other and I'm like oh, this is pretty clear that this is a two-person job, you should be the other person.

Kareena: [00:18:59] That's beautiful, really organic.

Emma: [00:19:03] And I basically handed all my clients over to him and was like I don't

want to do this anymore. You've got an agency, you look after them.

Kareena: [00:19:10] There's an inherent trust in that too.

Emma: [00:19:12] Yeah there's a lot of trust and that's a big part of any relationship. It's really feeling like you trust the other person and that they have your interest but also the business's interest at heart because you can get burned, particularly working with friends and mixing friends or family is another one and I've learnt the hard way to have things really clearly in writing. So, setting up things like having a contract and just being really clear on what's your role, what's my role. Yeah, because otherwise you get in a little bit too deep and then it's a bit like, were you going to do that. Did you just say that in the moment of busyness? Were you actually listening? What am I doing? Who's actually paying for this. So being really clear on these are our responsibilities, these are our roles for this three-month period. I like to do everything in three months and then pivot. Re-evaluate and go cool where we at, what did we get done. Are you actually liking doing that, do we need to outsource it? And then going forth again.

Kareena: [00:20:07] Three months is a very interesting timeline. Why three months and not six or twelve?

Emma: [00:20:11] I love three. It's my favourite number. Spiritually there's a lot of stuff that happens in threes. So, I've always been very attracted to it. But I think within a start up because my background was working in tech startup and seeing how quick and agile you have to be able to reiterate on things and seeing what happens when you set a twelve month marketing plan and become so hellbent on executing that that you stop looking at the results and stop looking at, oh hang on a second, we're pushing this message but no one's getting it and it's not working. So, I think if you're able to take that step back and go cool, three goals, three months, where did we get to and then re-evaluate and move on. And you don't have to do a full-on re-evaluation four-hour session. It might just be a quick check in and be like, yeah, we're on track. We need to keep doing this or we set our goals way too high and we maybe need to lower expectations or whatever it is. But I think that three-month period in a startup business is kind of gold in the sense of because everything's moving so fast and all it takes is one opportunity or one phone call and then your whole direction shifts.

Kareena: [00:21:14] It's true, yeah.

Emma: [00:21:15] So if you're able to stay really agile within that, you know, you continually innovate. What the greatest need is of that time.

Kareena: [00:21:23] That could be personally as well/.

Emma: [00:21:24] Personal life, like that's a big thing for me in business. And what I always. any client I've ever worked with, any business partner I ever had, I'm like, cool, so what's your ideal day like from a lifestyle point of view. Because I think some people, they're like, cool, I have this goal and I'm just going to work my ass off, which is great. Sometimes you cannot avoid the hustle. This last week for example, I've been hustling hard cause I know I'm going away. So, there's a bit of a push but I know that that's not

what I like my general weeks to be like. So, there's that kind of awareness of okay, what's the lifestyle element. And I like to be able to go a little slower in the morning or this, that, the other. And so, making sure that when I'm setting goals from a business point of view, they're actually achievable without compromising my health.

Kareena: [00:22:10] Emma discusses the importance of lifestyle considerations in the building and running of her businesses. But I know from personal experience that this is almost completely neglected by most entrepreneurs. Everyone is focused on the hustle with their first priority being the business and getting to that point where you feel comfortable enough to take lifestyle into consideration. So, we discuss the importance of looking after yourself as you work to build your company.

Emma: [00:22:34] Well for me because I lost my health, I think when you've lost your health like I was so sick I couldn't eat anything, I was a mess. And so, when you get to that point, you don't want to go back to it. Particularly when you've come so far and spent all the money on all the naturopaths and done all the work, you're like, I'm not going back there. So, you see that okay stress plays a massive massive impact on everything kind of health related. And so, it's like, okay, well what are the things that I'm doing to mitigate that. And it's an inevitable part of life. There're always things that create stressful encounters. And how you are meeting that, you know, how you are meeting that demand from a place of feeling really full and capable within yourself. So, for me meditation is my kind of daily non-negotiable. And that's a way of just you know, twice a day, 20 minutes. For me it's so restorative. On every level it's amazing. And I've been doing that for quite a few years now. But I think the important thing is that looking at it from a preventative point of view. So not pushing yourself to the point where all of a sudden you then completely burn out. And I know so many entrepreneurial friends that have got adrenal fatigue, thyroid problems, all these kinds of things. And I think if you just have that awareness and go, okay, where is my edge, what's the point that I get to where I'm like, oh, you're running on five hours sleep a night, you need to slow down a little bit. But awareness is the key. I stuff it up all the time. I'll push a little too hard and then I'll be like, uh, I got a bit sick, okay. Immune systems a bit low. Let's reiterate and then try and plan out my week the next week so that there's more space and time for going and having a sauna or resting or doing something that's kind of more self-care related.

Kareena: [00:24:18] What about the guilt that so many entrepreneurs feel when they're taking time out for themselves when they know they could be working on their businesses. How do you manage that?

Emma: [00:24:26] When you are your business everything stops and starts with you. So, if you go down in a blaze of exhausted glory, the whole thing goes down with you. It's like the whole ship has sunk. So, I really try and reinforce that to people. Like right now you're feeling amazing, you're drinking all the matcha and you're having a great time, but if you keep pushing and you keep doing these crazy long hours and not giving yourself any rest, you might have more stamina than somebody else and be able to do it for six months as opposed to three but burnout is inevitable. So that's where having things that are manageable like meditation. Anyone can find 20 minutes

out of the day to sit on the couch or in a chair or wherever they are. So, it's kind of going, how we are integrating self-care practices into your everyday rather than pushing yourself to exhaustion and going on a whole day at the spa. Yeah that's a great maybe like once a quarter treat. But on a daily basis, how are you actually taking care of yourself. Are you having a morning routine? Are you eating well? Are you meditating or doing yoga or going to the gym or whatever your outlet is? And making sure that's a part of your actual routine. Particularly with entrepreneurs because we are doing, my days never look the same. Going here and going there and doing this thing and so you think you can get really scattered and that's why my Google calendar is super scheduled of like this is Em time. This is meditation time.

Kareena: [00:25:44] So you schedule Em time?

Emma: [00:25:46] I schedule Em time. That was a game changer. Because what I was doing is, I was teaching two yoga classes in the morning, coming home, jumping on my laptop doing all the business stuff and then going and teaching private at night or something like that. And so, feeling like but I'm doing what I love and it's amazing. and never feeling like I wanted a holiday from that. But then getting to the point of going there's actual no time in that for me to just reflect. And I think that time of whether you're just like I just need to watch you know binge watch Netflix and chill for two hours or I'm going to go for a walk and not do anything that's like work related and just be out of nature. That's when the creative ideas. You know I'm walking on the beach listening to a podcast I'm like boom, idea, amazing. But if I'm just in it, in it, in it, the creative juices aren't flowing as well. So, it's got to be a really integrative practice for me and as someone that's a recovering Type-A with a lot of stamina and the ability to kind of survive on not much sleep, I need to be really mindful of it. So that's why I schedule it. So, it's like, hmm, nup, you can't have a meeting at that time because you have not given yourself your hour or two hours as a little break.

Kareena: [00:26:58] That's great. You'd also have to be very disciplined I imagine to not just skim over that.

Emma: [00:27:03] And I do it sometimes. I'm like, I can only meet that person on that day. But getting clear on like, these are the days that I can have meetings, these are the days that I may be teaching a lot of classes so I'm not going to have a solid three-hour laptop time in between because that then becomes a huge workday. Well my brain's you know in a few different directions and there's people and there's all the things. So it's going cool, it's teaching day, read a book in between the class and then you know just sort of getting clear on what my schedule looks like but knowing that it's so fluid and that I travel so much as well and then that shifts the whole schedule and that's where those daily routines keep me really grounded.

Kareena: [00:27:40] As we've heard throughout our chat so far, Emma is also a yoga teacher. Teaching both group classes and private clients. We ask Emma how it is that she found herself sharing the practice when originally, she simply intended just to further her own education.

Emma: [00:27:56] I just, I loved it. I remember the first class that I taught on my teacher

training and I stood up in front of, I did it in Byron Bay, and there was like 30 random people in the room that come to do these community classes. And I just had this feeling of like feeling like, oh, this is where I'm supposed to be. It felt like there was just something moving through me that was kind of really powerful and I'm like, oh, there's something in this. And sometimes I'll say things in a class and I'm like I've no idea where that came from. That just came out of my mouth and you're like okay, there's something, there's a flow state that really happens for me when I'm teaching and that energy of other people and I think the other thing is seeing the transformation as a teacher you can only ever share your practice and yoga and meditation has had a life changing effect over my life. So, I'm like, well, I actually really want to share that in a way that's accessible to people and that's not too airy fairy but with enough of the spiritual side of things that it shows people there's a little bit more than just touching your toes. Finding that balance and I just love it so much. I never feel like, I can sometimes push and take on a little bit too much teaching and I never really feel depleted.

Kareena: [00:29:08] That's great.

Emma: [00:29:08] I just love it. I feel full seeing people's experience of meeting themselves and knowing that like, it's not nothing really to do with me, it's just the practice is really powerful. And when you go into that place like I was running two retreats in Bali this year and we were doing pretty much eight hours of yoga a day.

Kareena: [00:29:26] Wow that's a lot.

Emma: [00:29:27] And the transformation for people is amazing. All I'm doing is just sharing a practice that's been around for you know ever but seeing that impact on people is just really like there's something in this as a vessel of self-discovery and understanding.

Kareena: [00:29:43] As someone so passionate about the practice we learned how Yoga has positively impacted Emma's life overall.

Emma: [00:29:50] It showed me, I think, a deeper experience of who and what I was beyond the ideas of you know I have to fit into this mould. I'm going to be a career person or I'm going to be this and all that attachment that I had with that storyline that was playing out of being super ambitious. Doing really well in my HSC, I grew up in New South Wales so a different schooling system, and then getting into this degree and then chasing the career and just following this this kind of storyline that I told myself was what I needed for success and realizing like pretty early on, I'm lucky that I was young, that this is kind of empty and there's got to be more. And so, yoga and meditation as a practice has just taught me that there's so much more going on, there's so much more at play and how to connect back into myself and to truly listen to that intuitive space and that's what it's really strengthened is just always listening. And I forget, we always forget, and then you're like, uh, I've been reminded again. Thanks nature. You're continually on that path of just going deeper and unravelling all these ideas and realizing I'm telling myself this story and I'm following and playing out this storyline but it's not really me.

Kareena: [00:31:02] Whose story was that do you think? Is it all the people that you've been surrounded with?

Emma: [00:01:07] Well not really because my parents were never kind of pushy of do this, that, the other. It was totally my own thing based on I grew up in a very small town just out of Newcastle in New South Wales and always was you know chasing this Sex and the City lifestyle. Loving that idea of being this career woman and me having this fierce independence that just wanted to do everything on my own, didn't need help from anyone. I remember my parents when it was time to buy my first car I was like, no, I'm buying it myself. I'm getting a job. I don't want to owe anyone anything. And I just had this real fierce independence within me and just wanted to be successful. I hadn't really stopped and thought like what does success look like.

Kareena: [00:31:46] What does it look like to you.

Emma: [00:31:47] Well it definitely doesn't look like having all the moneys and you know that's nice and money definitely brings freedom to be able to do things but I think success is actually finding contentment and happiness and being really at peace in each moment to just see what's playing out and go cool it's all good. Everything that's happening is perfect. And if I get out of my own way and just come back into that flow, come back into that connection, then everything around me is just perfect as it should be. And I think success is having connected relationships. It's having people around you so that you're experiencing love and without taking this down a very esoteric path, coming back to that idea of everyone being love and everything's this experience of love. Having that reflected back at you from the people that are around you is amazing. And that's what keeps me in Melbourne is that I've just got such a network here of people that there's just such an abundance and flow of love and support through that I just feel like I'm so supported in anything that I do and I feel free within that and that's what makes me feel successful and that I'm able to do what I love and express myself and somehow I pay the bills that way.

Kareena: [00:33:02] Emma's desire to connect with people has seen her nurture and develop a very strong and loyal community. A community that often comes together at the Mindful Morning Collective events that are held each month at the beautiful Greenfields venue in Albert Park Melbourne. There everyone gets to practice yoga, meditate and enjoy live music and delicious food while having the opportunity to meet and connect with each other. Emma tells us more.

Emma: [00:33:26] Mindful it's kind of become my word. One of my friends calls me, M is for Mindful Maidment.

Kareena: [00:33:30] I love that. Trademark that.

Emma: [00:33:30] It's pretty good. Someone else said that I EMpower them. That's also really good. How have I never thought of that in my whole life.

Kareena: [00:33:42] Use that, haha.

Emma: [00:33:42] Mindful Morning Collective, yes. So, that started by accident. My business partner in that Simon Digby who's one of the owners of Greenfields Albert Park this beautiful venue. When they were first opening, we were just sitting down. We kind of met through a random mutual friend and he was really perplexed by me. He was like, "what do you do?" Like how do you pay rent? You do all these things like what. He was just really and he's a really good business man. But he's got a lot of businesses and has an extensive background in hospitality and that kind of stuff. And so, we just kind of got chatting and he was like I want to bring some wellness into Greenfields, but you know obviously we're not a yoga studio but he's a meditator, he's really passionate. His wife does all these, she's like a wellness queen. And so, he's been around it through her and has learned all these practices. She's a yoga teacher as well. And so, he's like how do we bring in yoga. And I'm like well you could just do like an event or something and just call it like a mindful morning. Get out some yoga mats, teach a class, have some food. Maybe like get a musician, make it a bit different cause he is a DJ by background. Bring in a music element. He's like I love that. I'm like really? It's like so obvious. He's like, that's a great idea. We're going to do it. I'm like, okay, sure. So, we just did it as part of a launch just because and people loved it. It was such a success. And people saw all the photos on Instagram, and they were like what is this. Because the space is stunning. It is so open and beautiful and it's just perfect. It's so conducive to class and then being able to chill out afterwards and actually stay and be a community. And we just kind of were like, oh, let's do another one. And so again it happened by accident. We were like we'll do another Mindful Morning. We had no website, no nothing. We just calling it Mindful Mornings presented by Emma and Greenfields. It was very like grey area like what is this. We just kept rolling them out. They kept selling out. So, we did that for a year, and we were like, okay, there's something in this. And then that's when this year we've started the Mindful Morning Collective and that's where we've kind of formalized our business relationship. We've ran a couple of off sites. We've had people that hire us privately to go and run Mindful Mornings for their staff or for the event or whatever as well as still offering our events every month. And that just it's a beautiful lesson to me in intention because when I sat down and we did the first one I was like, what do I want to offer here. I don't want this to just be some Instagram friendly brunch. I'm like, what do I want? And what I wanted to do was give people a deeper experience of the practice of yoga and meditation and a deeper experience of themselves as a by-product but without making it seem like, oh, I have to go into this yoga class and it's gonna be a kind of hippie and a bit scary and I'm not sure. So, I really set the intention of working with yoga teachers and musicians that vibrationally are very much on that path and can read a room and understand we're not just picking random buskers off the street. A lot of the musicians we work with are yoga teachers or work in sound healing or something like that. So vibrationally they're bringing an intention into the space and then the yoga teacher that we work with as well, I'm very particular about who we partner up, and the meditation as well. So yes, people see this beautiful event and they're like cool I'm just gonna go do yoga, that's really on trend and I'm going to get food that's great. Then they actually practice yoga for a full hour and meditate for 20 minutes without even really realizing and then by the end of it they're all like peace, love and rainbows. And I always say give someone a hug at the end. Everyone's hugging and they stay around. I didn't have to actively do anything. There was no facilitation of trying to get people to stay and make

a new friend, it just happened. And yeah, we get some people that travel. One woman travels from the Dandenong Ranges. She leaves home at four o'clock in the morning comes by herself because she's like this is the only event, I feel comfortable going to alone because I always know I'll meet someone.

Kareena: [00:37:36] Oh that's nice. That's really nice.

Emma [00:37:36] And it's like how? Because there's no agenda. We're not here to launch a product. We're not here to business network. We're just here to experience a morning of connection. And so, we honestly get to the point where we're like you gotta leave guys I got somewhere else to be. People are just making friends and there's a community that's naturally formed around that of people that come every month and they see the same person. And so, we kind of get 50-50. We have like that hardcore group that's like coming pretty much every month and then we get the people that see it online and go that looks fine, I want to go, and then they come. It's one of those situations where you're like this wasn't written down as like this is the goal and we must reach this, that, the other. It was just like this is my intention behind the event, let's see what happens. We're working on our plans of offering bigger and better events and more experiences and working with different people. But it's again, its value based. So, it's all about collaboration. It's not just me. It's always what teachers are we collaborating with, how are we supporting them in what they want to offer. So, it's always a community collaboration approach to every event that we do. It's not just the Mindful Morning team are doing this. Because the other intention behind it was how are we uplifting the community and us as not a yoga studio. There's no competition. We're not competing with the studio because we run one class a month. So, we want to bring them in, and cross pollinate our communities. You give your students an opportunity to come in and hang out with you and have a breakfast and share a different experience as opposed to being in the studio and then you know we bring our community and who may also live right next door to your studio and have never heard of it. That's a very much how can we support and uplift the community rather than just how can we run an event every month. There's a lot of intention behind it.

Kareena: [00:39:21] The intention is an important facet of every one of Emma's businesses. Given the wonderfully entrepreneurial person that she is. We have one more venture that we're keen to learn more about and that is Ritual Retreats. These Bali based experiences enable Emma to continue sharing her passion for yoga and enable enthusiasts and professionals alike to come together and become immersed in the practice. Hear more about why Emma set out to create these experiences.

Emma: [00:39:48] So Ritual Retreats come out of my love of rituals. I co-founded it with a friend of mine and both of us have been on the yoga path for such a long time and there's so many ancient practices within yoga that adjust. Like just from a morning routine point of view like simple stuff like tongue scraping and this that and the other to the meditation to everything. So, we wanted to give people an opportunity to just actually go beyond the confines of a one-hour class and there's only so much you can get through. In one hour, it's in out. Some of the classes that I teach are 45 minutes. People are just, I want to get in, I want to get out. Which is great, they're exposed to it.

They've had their movement awesome. But retreats are an immersive experience. And we run our retreats a little bit more like an immersion. So, it's less of a, like yes there's a pool that you can chill by but we're actually offering, not making, it's not compulsory, but like here's some journaling questions, here's some philosophy, here's some things to reflect on to go a little deeper. They're run very much like a ritual. So, the intention behind them is to help people establish daily rituals. To be exposed to a wide variety of them and then go I'm going to take this one back with me because those rituals I think are what keeps us grounded and connected and healthy in a lot of ways. And so, when you're exposed to a bunch of them you can be like cool, these are the ones that I liked, and you know yoga was intended to be a home practice. So, giving people those tools to feel like they can roll out a mat at home and connect and breathe and move and know what they're doing as opposed to like I'm reliant on a class. Classes are great, amazing, but actually having your own practice is what takes it, well for me as well what took it next level was having that home practice and being able to do things on your own as a self-guided kind of thing. You're like, okay, yep this is this is really powerful. So yeah, the intention behind that is to expose people to these kinds of rituals and go cool, here's what's on the menu, what do you want to take home with you. And just support them on that journey and expose them to the practice of yoga beyond just a one-hour class.

Kareena: [00:41:49] Well it's about making those incremental changes that impact your whole life really. Which sounds like those retreats do for people which is great.

Emma: [00:41:56] And when you take yourself out of your life and go into, we run them in this beautiful centre literally in the middle of the forest in the Ubud rice patties. You're just in this abundance of greenery. It's like a ten-minute walk into the actual like hotel. It's crazy. It's just our group. It's really isolated but the town is five minutes away. So, if you want to go and shop and be in the world, cool, go do that in your free time. If you just want to sit by the pool and reflect and write and do whatever, do that. So, there's an option for people. You're not stuck here.

Kareena: [00:42:30] Yeah, not locked in.

Emma: [00:42:31] Not locked in. Do whatever you want, it's your retreat. But this is what's on offer. And yeah what we noticed was that everyone came to every session. Everyone wants to be a part of the actual program. We work up through the chakras as well. So, we explain each day, it's a seven-day retreats, there's seven main chakras, it's a whole other story. But we work up from the base to the crown. And so, there's different postures, there's different philosophy, there's different mantra and meditations that go with each of those energetic centres. So, then people are a little bit more educated of like, oh, actually this feels out of alignment. What does that mean. They can then explore that on their own as well. It's a deeper understanding of what all that stuff is basically.

Kareena: [00:43:14] As you can hear Emma does a lot. And the insight that we're always seeking to get from individuals like Emma is how. How does she do it all?

Emma: [00:43:23] Learnt a lot of lessons over the years of doing all the things at once. Now it's just getting really clear on priorities and my schedule. So, what I would do like last year for example, I was away so much that it was not sustainable. I was away and so this was falling away and that wasn't getting nurtured and all the things. So now it's like creating and having a team around me, having partners. So, I have a partner in pretty much all the ventures that I do and that enables me to have a shared workload. That enables me to have an accountability-buddy that's like, hey, you said you're going to do that thing and you haven't done it yet. That to do list of getting really clear on priorities and also knowing that I need the self-time in that I need the time with friends and in relationships and all that needs to also be a factor. So just kind of going all right, like I've learned over the years of being able to look at a list and go what's actually has to be done today and what is just me wanting to do all the things and could technically be pushed back. And I think particularly in the entrepreneurial world is that I got an email I have to reply, straight away. I have replied, it's been three hours, they'll think I'm dead. They've seen that I've seen it. Oh no. And I'm in shock. I'm a shocker in the sense of like some people write to me through Instagram, if you can't mark it as unread, I'm like oh sorry I forgot about this and I'm like please remind me like send me the follow up "hey, just checking in," because I don't see it then I'm really sorry but I'll try and make a note of that. I'll write them down reply to blah blah blah blah blah. Then it takes it out of my must do this, must do this, it's on a piece of paper and I know that on Tuesday when I've got that three-hour gap that I'm gonna be at this cafe just doing some work I'll get back to X Y Z person. So, being really organized is the key because if you're not you end up everywhere. That definitely can happen to me. I have and because I know myself, I know those tendencies to just be like I'm going to do all the things at once and then, oh, when was I going to sleep. How am I going to actually have time to prepare that or drive to this or whatever? So, going okay, let's be a little bit more structured in what is my week look like we don't actually have to be what are my priorities what am I getting done. What could be moved to next week? What's a non-negotiable that has to be done this week? Time management.

Kareena: [00:45:45] We delve into the highs and lows of running your own business or in Emma's case, multiple businesses. We start by asking her, what's the biggest lesson that she's learned so far?

Emma: [00:45:56] My big lesson was don't do it alone.

Kareena: [00:45:58] Okay. Yeah. That's a great one.

Emma: [00:46:00] Having that support. I realized that my tendency is to want to wear every hat and then there's just some things I'm not good at. I absolutely hate math and finances and all that stuff and I'm just like "Ahh, money comes and goes, whatever." And so, like Simon for example, very good at like, when I first met him, he's like, "How are you eating?" And I'm like, "I'm mostly organic." He's like, "No! How are you managing?" And I was like, "It's kind of like, it just kind of works out." He's like, "Oh my God." So, he's like, "This is how you use spreadsheets," and like "This is how you do a proper budget." And I'm like, "Yeah I know that stuff," like I know how to do it, I just don't want to. Yeah this is why you need to do it. Okay. And so, looking at those areas and going what do I need to outsource. So, I have an accountant that does all that stuff

so I'm not like, oh no, I haven't paid tax in three years. Oh, she's sorting that. She knows what to do. Looking at what are your strengths and what are your weaknesses or what do you like doing and what do you not like doing. And also, for me going my health has got to be a priority. And it's always that thing that for the first couple of years I would push aside and just push through and be like, no, I've got to get this done, got to get this done. And then actually coming back going what's really important. And setting boundaries with yourself and particularly like when I was working with clients, I would get like all these clients emailing me at 11:00 at night. It's like, well hang on a second, if you actually retrace the behaviour, you were replying to their emails originally at midnight. So, you've set an expectation that you were online and it's appropriate to email you at twelve o'clock. So, then I'll go, okay, well no, what's the boundaries. I keep business hours when it's client work. So, I will write the email, even if I had written it at midnight, but I wouldn't send it until the next day.

Kareena: [00:47:42] Okay, good point, I like that one.

Emma: [00:47:43] Those kinds of things. I would get so annoyed like this person called me ten times. Oh well I haven't set the boundary of what it looks like to work with me. What are the expectations. And now that I'm not doing client work as much and transitioning into just having business partners it's that same thing of what are our boundaries and expectations. Like, hey look, Sunday's I don't like to have a lot of screen time unless it's really important, don't text me or whatever it is. Or being really clear like rather than just calling, send a little text, "hey do you have 10 minutes to have a quick chat about this today, what time would work for you?" So, there's that kind of just checking in with the other person and I do that in relationships as well. You think about those times where you walk into the house and you're sitting there doing work or something and you're in the middle of something and your partner walks in like "oh my God! My day like blah blah blah blah." And then you're just instantly annoyed at them because you're like, "Oh dude can't you see that I'm working," but like they can't see it. They're in their own world. So, having that little bit of communication of like, "hey, I'd really love to tell you about my day. Do you have 10 minutes?" And then being like "let me finish this email then you have my attention." So, it's the same thing that I've really learned of how to collaborate with people is realizing like it's not all about you. Not everyone's on your schedule and doing all your things. They also have their own multiple projects and things. So, checking in and being like "hey, can we chat about this or can we schedule a time to talk" rather than just being like now, now, now, everything now ugh, I got really overwhelmed. Taking that time to just take a step back. That's my big lesson in life. All the time is taking a step back and just let things play out a little bit and not everything has to be done yesterday and that's that again recovering type-a.

Kareena: [00:49:15] Yes, I totally understand.

Emma: [00:49:17] Because I don't want to lie, you can't just be a total fairy in business. You can't just be like it's all good it will get done, because it won't. You have to have some grit and you have to actually get in there and pull up your sleeves and do the work. But it's that constant of finding that balance of going these are the times when I really need to nurture this project and lean in, but I know at the end of that time period I'll have a little break away from it. Or this week I'm pushing a lot, but I've scheduled a

Sunday off or whatever. So just constantly reintegrating the balance.

Kareena: [00:49:48] So we can spoke about the challenges, what have been the highlights of owning your own businesses?

Emma: [00:49:49] Oh, so many. I get to travel the world. Having a life where what I do for work doesn't actually feel like work. And I have never actually call teaching yoga work, I always call it "I'm going to teach." I've noticed that having that shift in language has been a big like, I think work has so much negative connotations of "I hate work. I hate Monday." And the more that you tell yourself that stuff the more that you don't like it. And so, for me it's like if you don't like something change it. So, there's been so many moments and I tend to just kind of go onto the next thing. I'm like cool that was great, next. And actually, stopping and reflecting and going no you actually came really far in what you just did was actually amazing. My partner actually said to me after the last Mindful Mornings, I was like cool, the next one's going to be this. He's like I think you need to realize you just had 70 people in a room. This is amazing what you've built. He's doing a similar project and he's like it's really hard. I did not realize how hard it was to do an event like this. There's a lot involved. And I'm like yeah you know whatever. He's like, no, don't downplay it, like what you're doing is actually awesome. And so, I try and have those little moments of going, wow, I'm actually really proud of myself. I actually did what I said I was going to do, and it worked. Yay. Same with the retreats like having those couple of days afterwards to be like, oh, we just did two back-to-back retreats and that worked, awesome! Those little moments of wins and like I just became a Lululemon Ambassador.

Kareena: [00:51:17] You did, yes.

Emma: [00:51:20] Actually celebrating like that's an amazing honour to be recognized. So rather than just be like cool, when's the next thing. Actually, take a moment and just celebrate those little wins. You know I remember teaching at Wanderlust last year and being up on the stage with all these people and just having that pinch yourself moment of like this is amazing. This is really cool what I get to do, and I think that I need to appreciate that a little bit more and appreciate myself for the work that goes into it because as partners always do, my partner reflects back to me. He's like, "hey, you work really hard. You do all these things, but you just think it's normal because you've been doing it such a long time." And so taking that time and I actually found a journal that I'd written about five or six years ago of where I wanted to go with my career and I was like I did all those things I'd written like I want to do this one, do this one, do this and why I wanted to do them. And I was like, oh, wow, actually everything on that list has become possible.

Kareena: [00:52:18] That's crazy.

Emma: [00:52:19] And I really feel like you know I say on my Instagram that I'm sharing ways to live an authentic connected life. And that's kind of my underlying driving force of like I'm the test dummy. I'm doing all the things and whether it be good or bad of how I'm doing it but as an example of like there is another way to live and you can design your own lifestyle and you can be really clear on what that looks like and what

your boundaries are and what your needs and wants and desires and all those things are to fill up that life that you ultimately want to live. It looks different for everyone. Some people thrive in a nine to five office vibe.

Kareena: [00:52:53] They do, absolutely.

Emma: [00:52:54] There's nothing wrong with that. Awesome, great, there's some great workplaces out there. You don't have to quit your job but what I encourage people to do is just know yourself. Know what lights you up and know what makes you feel in flow and follow that charm.

Kareena: [00:53:09] Knowing herself and then following her flow has opened Emma up to several opportunities. One of the more recent ones being an ambassadorship with a prominent Yoga apparel brand Lululemon. So, we find out just how Emma came to represent this incredible brand.

Emma: [00:53:24] So how they kind of work which is really interesting is they kind of like suss you out. I've been collaborating with them for a number of years in the sense of they'll support me with events they'll donate product, or they dress me for everything. I've just kind of built relationships. And that's what I really love about Lululemon is that they are very much relationship driven and I kind of actually never really expected to be an ambassador like I had seen people that were ambassadors and I'd be like, oh, that would be really cool. But was just kind of like, you know what, I've got a great relationship with them, they support me, I've got a lot of great relationships with a lot of different businesses like sure. And then when they asked me, I was just like, "Oh my god, amazing. But I realized I'd built a relationship with the store manager, with the girls in this in the store that come to the events and they're just so genuine and so supportive that there was no agenda. It wasn't like, I'm just going to be best friends with all these people, and they'll make me an ambassador. I was like I just really liked them. They were genuinely so supportive of the community particularly with Mindful Mornings, they were like, cool, how can we get involved, how can we share it, how do we get people there.

Kareena: [00:54:30] That's great.

Emma: [00:54:30] I'm like cool you guys are awesome. Let's collaborate together.

Kareena: [00:54:34] Is your IG account important to them?

Emma: [00:54:36] When you're an ambassador for them it's very much a community minded thing. So, it's not so much like, oh, you've got X amount of followers, we want you to wear our clothes and get in the photo shoot and da da da. They're more looking at what are you doing within the local community and what impact do you have on a local level. Now coming on for a two-year ambassadorship program I'm like, "yes, we get to do even bigger and better things." But a lot of other opportunities that I've had have come from Instagram.

Kareena: [00:55:03] Emma has amassed a highly engaged following on

Instagram and shares the role of the platform in everything that she is working towards.

Emma: [00:55:11] It's funny Instagram for a lot of years was something I never had for myself. I'd barely use it. I was running client's Instagram. So, I was like I'm on their Instagram all day posting juices. I don't want to do my own. And then I realized, I had this moment where I was doing all this work for all my other clients and raising their profiles and a lot of them were in the health and wellness space and I was like, I know all these journalists, I've known them for years. I've been pitching articles and I love writing. Why aren't I writing? Oh, what do you want to do? It was like that reiteration of going I really wanted to be a consultant and do that and then going I'm done with this phase in my life. I'm stepping into my own power of actually becoming the face of what I'm doing. I didn't have a website for like three years. I just hid behind all my clients and there was such word of mouth between the industry.

Kareena: [00:55:56] Which is great.

Emma: [00:55:56] Which is great but there was never a website of like work with Em on this and so then I thought I probably should build a website and then just realized I have all these connections and I know how to use Instagram so should do that for yourself. Really started investing in it probably maybe like a year and a half ago now is when I really started being like, okay, let's grow my five hundred followers into something and see where that can go. I applied the tools that I teach other people which is content pillars and that kind of stuff. But for my personal Instagram, like my business accounts I'll follow the content pillars and that kind of thing, but with my personal stuff it's more like what do I feel like sharing in that moment. Always asking myself how I am adding value rather than just like here is me doing a really pretty shape and I think I look great in this photo. So, I'm just going to put it up there and put a little smiley face. I'm like what's the value add? Why am I sharing this? What's behind it. What message, because I have a platform to share with people, what do I want to say? There'll be some weeks I just break my own rules and I won't post because I'm not really feeling charmed to say anything of value and I don't want to just say something for the sake of it.

Kareena: [00:57:04] Yeah, yeah, that's very interesting.

Emma: [00:57:05] Whereas on the business pages your kind of have more like content pillars and it's a business so you can speak as the business and even though it's you. It's not relevant to what's happening in my life right away. Whereas on Instagram I try and be more like, this is who I am, and this is what I'm working with and here's my thoughts for this philosophy point or this is what I'm doing this week or whatever it is. But I don't like to post just because I haven't posted in a week, probably should post. I wait for it to flow and I'm like, cool, yep, that's what I want to do.

Kareena: [00:57:34] That's really interesting.

Emma: [00:57:35] And I think having that authenticity being one of my pillars and one of my values and just kind of going, okay, well what's authentic to share. If I have it

within me to feel strong enough to be really authentic and vulnerable and to just share what's happening, chances are it's going to connect with someone else. I learned that lesson sharing a story. So, I write for Body+Soul and I learned that lesson sharing a story about a hormone imbalance that I had that led to really bad acne. My skin was like covered, I was a mess. If you google my name, you'll find this. And I just felt this calling. The only reason I had before photos was because I had taken them to show my naturopath at the time. Every time she saw me, I was covered in makeup. So, I never intended for anyone to see these photos. They are ugly. They're not well lit. It's really bad. And I just found them one day. A lot of friends would put their friends on to me and be like, oh, you should talk to Em, she had a similar story and cured it naturally. I realized that there is a lot of power in sharing and storytelling is such a big way of how we learn through the generations.

Kareena: [00:58:45] Absolutely.

Emma: [00:58:45] I felt that call. I was like I'm going to share this. So, I wrote to my editor like I want to share this story. She's like "Oh my God, yes." Can you take after photos with no makeup on? I was like, sure. So, I was in Berlin on a holiday at the time visiting, I'd gone back. I just like got out my laptop because I'd taken them originally on my iPhoto thing on the photo booth. Just turned it on and went okay, don't overthink it. Don't try and pose, just take the same angles. A little bit less like bad pose you know. Just take it take it take it, put it together, send it, don't overthink it. Did that, sent it off. It went live while I was asleep. Woke up in the morning to a phone call from the Daily Mail and they were like "we want to run your story." And then boom, it blew up. So, it was in Yahoo France. It's in all these Asian countries. It's in all these different languages. And so, then I had all these people writing to my Instagram being like I just saw your story. You know I thought there was no hope. What do I do? I was like, okay, wow. There's actually a lot of power if you're willing to share something that you've actually worked on and worked through and gotten to that place. I was sharing in the article. I used to look in the mirror and be like I hate what I see, this is horrible. And getting to a point where you can start to love yourself through that and then see ways to actually heal yourself beyond just the western medicine approach. But the work that that takes to do that and so sharing that and being kind of like brave maybe in reflection of kind of going because I look at those photos now sometimes and I'm like, oh, now I'm like the acne girl on Instagram. Why did I do that. But seeing the impact that it had on other people of just sharing my story, making them feel like it was okay to share theirs. And so that's what I really try to bring through Instagram. It's an interesting world. Instagram there's a lot of fakeness in it and a lot of smoke and mirrors and like I'm part of that. I post beautifully edited photos of yoga and there's sometimes that you know you get a lot of like well this is not yoga and a lot like you know what if it's making people ask a deeper question, then great. If it gets them to go to a class great, I don't mind. If you're half naked on Instagram doing yoga pose you know and it's getting it out there and making it more mainstream and more acceptable to go to a class, then great. People can figure out what it actually is if they want to go deeper.

Kareena: [00:61:06] Authenticity is one of Emma's strongest personal values and we would also say one that represents her brand. We ask Emma if she's conscious of the brand that she's developing and what her main message is.

What does she stand for?

Emma: [00:61:20] Yeah, it's a really interesting question and it's something that I'm really good at working with people on but that I also look to friends who work in the space to help me on. It's really when you're looking at yourself you can get really in your own head and you're like I don't want to be that person. I did this photo shoot with this amazing photographer Britt James, @_in_the_flow_ on Instagram. And she saw in me this like beautiful divine feminine. And before that I was posting a lot of like really fun, I'll be at the beach doing yoga and it was like really blues and brights and colourful and I was always smiling and I'm like that's totally my brand. But as I was getting older, I was transitioning more into feeling more like a woman and wanting to express that side of myself and to talk with a little bit more depth rather than just like it's all great. Being like, no, I want to talk about the grit, and I want to talk about the hard stuff as well. Did this photo shoot with her and she sent me back the photos and I was like I've never seen myself like that. Like wow. She really highlighted my curves and she really captured this femininity that was really raw but soft and beautiful and I was like I'd never seen it like that. I was like wow. And that really shifted the direction of my Instagram because suddenly I'd posted that, and it inspired me to say something that wasn't really relevant with the photo of me being like *makes funny face*. That's definitely me. I'm still a very smiley, light, fun, joy person. But there is that depth that I wanted to bring through. That photo shoot really actually made me sit back and go, oh yeah right, okay, what am I offering. And now when I work with a photographer, I'm like cool. I was in Bali and a friend of mine, an amazing photographer Emilio, we were talking a lot and the theme of the shoot just kind of became reflection because I'd lived in Bali as well and I was like, oh, it's full circle, I'm back here and reflecting on past relationships and this, that and the other. And then it just so happened that we did a whole shoot where somehow, we ended up with water doing a bunch of reflective things. So just actually looking at it more as from an artistic point of view of what am I trying to communicate rather than just like let me just get my foot and stick it up which is fun. You know I still do that.

Kareena: [00:63:31] Yeah, yeah.

Emma: [00:63:31] But when I'm working with a photographer, I'm like okay, what's the story that I'm trying to tell of where I'm at in my life. There isn't like a super conscious, okay, my goal is to do this so I must position myself in this way. It's a regular check in of like what I am working on at the moment and trying to be as honest as I can within that journey of evolution into whatever is happening. And yeah, I've got goals of things like I'd love to write a book one day. I'd love to do different things but it's just kind of going, cool, all that stuff's just going to play out naturally. If you just stay connected and authentic to what's the greatest need of the time. What's right in front of you and what do you want to say right now knowing where you kind of want to go but not having that I have to post these in order to get there. Whereas with the business stuff it's very clear to be like our goal is to build this up. So, we need to do this this and this. Whereas with my own stuff it's like, no, I really consciously wanted it to be just a reflection of who I am in that moment and what I'm working with. And if you scroll back, you'll see that there is that real like super fun lightness blues and whites and then it starts to go into like, oh yeah, she's been going through some stuff and working on

this, that and the other. And the photos shift and there's now that balance of the lightness and the fun, happy, smiley, acro-yoga photos and then something that's got a little bit more darkness into it and I'm sharing something that I'm working on at the time. And so just using it kind of like a writing platform and just expressing because I don't blog anymore. So, I'm like, cool, these are my thoughts.

Kareena: [00:65:05] Another message that is shared through all of Emma's communications is the desire for everyone to live an authentic connected life. We find out exactly what this means and how she encourages people to do just that.

Emma: [00:65:17] So that's why I say in my profile like how to live an authentic connected life. What does that look like? When you're authentically connected to who you are beyond the attachment to "I'm a model. I'm a this. I'm a that." I work with a lot of girls in this influencer space. I go to all these events. I see them all the time. There's always that kind of like I've got this platform but how am I bringing substance to it. What am I doing?

Kareena: [00:65:40] Yeah, what's the message.

Emma: [00:65:41] And it can get really lost in just images. Instagram is a beautiful platform for looking at pretty images. I think it's really important to look at things for what they are. It's never going to be anything other than a visual platform that you can share. Yeah videos and things but it's visual so of course you need a nice photo. You know, whereas people, they kind of resist it. And I'm like, if you're going to be on it, accept it for what it is and work within its boundaries and its expectations and what it's offering, rather than trying to have this, "I'm going to fight the wheel." It's like, accept it for what it is and then bring your own authenticity to that. And so, what I really want people to see is like, okay, what does it look like to be authentically connected to who you are and how does that play out. And some people that I've spoken to in the past are like but you do so many different things and so they think that I must just be super scattered. And like, oh you do too many things, you should just do one thing. From a marketing point of view, I totally get that. It's really easy to have a super niche market and just target that person, but that's not who I am. So, I can be that in each different business and that can have its own target market and whatnot. But for me it's like well who I am is fluid and is always evolving and changing and there's many different aspects and things that I like to do in different times that light me up and make me a complete human. And so, what does that look like in all those different areas of life. From a work point of view to a relationship point of view to living arrangement to all sorts of different things. So, I think what I want people to connect with and what my intention is that there's authenticity and there's a lot of heart. Like I always say in my yoga classes about living heart forward. And I feel like what I'm trying to do, this is my intention, is like this is what it looks like to live heart forward and to try and lead with love and it's sometimes terrifying and scary and it's sometimes beautiful and joyful. But this is what I'm doing, I've made that choice, and my arms behind my back, like from the heart I'm living and let's just see what happens. That's a kind of confronting place to be at in times but also a place that for me feels the most connected.

Kareena: [00:67:44] As we're nearing the end of our interview with Emma. We wanted to know if she had any final words of wisdom to offer you, our Loopers.

Emma: [00:67:52] Meditate.

Kareena: [00:67:56] Good one.

Emma: [00:67:57] Definitely a big one. And there's so much neuroscience research into the benefits of meditation from a productivity, creativity point of view. But find a practice that works for you and just at least give it a try. Then the longer form of that is invest in your health and wellness because when you are your business, the moment you go down, the whole ship goes down with you. And so, if you are the most creative, innovative, smart, business savvy, money savvy person, like you only get so far, and your body can't keep up. There's only so much coffee that you can drink in the day before you have a jittery heart attack and that's what happens to so many entrepreneurs. Burnout is real.

Kareena: [00:68:37] Yep.

Emma: [00:68:37] So actually going, okay, what am I routines that I'm looking after my health and wellness. And for some people it's a boxing class. You don't have to do yoga. It might be going for a beach walk, it might be a boxing class. But for me the big one has been meditation as a practice of unlocking oodles of creativity and inspiration from within. And then having a practice of something that connects you back to yourself. But then also really nurturing your health and wellness and self-care like at such an on-trend term, like have a self-care day. But seriously if particularly as an entrepreneur when you're trying to fill up everyone else's cup and be everything to everyone you just deplete yourself and you end up losing yourself within that and then that's when you have this big existential crisis of like what did I actually do with the last five years of my life. And so, if you can stay connected, which I use meditation to stay connected, but also look after yourself and look at what are the things I need to do to thrive. When you're thriving, your business is thriving because it's an extension of you and you're like, I feel really good, I'm not just like on my sixth coffee and pushing through. It's like, nup, I'm good. I've had whatever I need to eat today to make me feel good and I'm ready to go and I'm feeling rested and empowered rather than depleted. Look after yourself, meditate, self-care. And look to other people who've burnt out as an example and go, okay, I don't want to do that. I think we kind of assume, it's like, you're an entrepreneur, you have to hit that burn out point, it's part of the deal. It doesn't have to be. You can make your life whatever you want it to be. Life by design could be anything for you. So, get really clear what that is and then embody it.

Kareena: [00:70:13] Well that brings us to the interview, thank you so much for joining us on the Loop App couch.

Emma: [00:70:18] Of course, thanks for having me. Love your couch.

Kareena: [00:70:20] And that brings us to the end of that interview Loopers. Thank you so much for joining us. If you'd like to continue following Emma's

journey and learning more about her businesses, all the links are included in our show so be sure to check them out. As always, we'd love to hear your thoughts. So, leave us a star rating or review with your feedback so we can get you more of the stuff that you love learning about. And share your favourite part of the episode by giving us a shout out on Instagram and tag @loop.app so we can have a look. We'll be back again next week with a new episode of In the Loop where we chat about the business end of being an influence. Catch you then!