

## Podcast Transcription

### In the Loop – Episode 5

#### “Are Influencers Doing Enough? #RealTalk with Con & Kareena”

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**Kareena:** [00:00:00] Do you think that influencers are doing enough?

**Con:** [00:00:03] I think they're doing well in regard to posting and posting a lot of content but I don't think they're doing enough in terms of the business side of things.

**Kareena:** [00:00:11] Ooooo that is a big statement! Let's hope you can back it up.

**Con:** [00:00:16] I hope so as well.

**Kareena:** [00:00:16] Well let's get straight into the conversation.

**Kareena:** [00:00:26] Hey there Loopers! Welcome to another episode of In The Loop. I'm your host Kareena and today we have Con back with us on the Loop App couch.

**Con:** [00:00:33] Hey guys!

**Kareena:** [00:00:35] We said we will be coming up and joining you every other week so we can talk about things that we would like to discuss in a bit more detail. This week we're talking about influencers and whether they're doing enough.

**Kareena:** [00:00:47] That is the question on our lips. What can they be doing to increase their exposure, get more followers, create a brand and even more revenue streams. So, we're going to be covering all those topics in today's conversation. So, Con, kick us off. The question is "Are influencers doing enough?" and what we mean by this is obviously being an influencer is a sought-after career path. Now kids are growing up wanting to be influencers, which blows my mind. I mean this career didn't even exist before and now it's just so readily accessible to everyone and the opportunity is there to create and grow a social media following across any of the social media platforms that are out there

**Con:** [00:01:27] And there's a lot to choose from. I think they've got so much choice now. Like whatever they're into they always seem to pick one platform and just really want to get a following on it.

**Kareena:** [00:01:34] I mean that's the goal. So, I guess we're just trying to figure out how people can get there and talk about the business end up being the influencer and what is actually involved in becoming a full-time influencer because it's not as easy as I think everyone thinks it is.

**Con:** [00:01:48] Not at all. I think these days because you have so much competition because so many people are trying to be an influencer. It's, it's hard but possible.

**Kareena:** [00:01:57] In saying that, how does someone stand out from the crowd? How does someone actually make it as a full-time influencer? I mean we all look at these people on the platforms whether it's Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, YouTube even as well. And we're wondering will they seem to be doing this full-time they get to spend all their time making videos or making content of some kind and they're getting paid, they're getting to go to cool events, to do really awesome things all the time it's quite a glamorous lifestyle that I think everyone's aspiring to.

**Con:** [00:02:26] Yeah, it's like a modern-day celebrity lifestyle. Yeah, you get to get paid just to create content and you to go to events and exclusive events at that, it's quite the highlight.

**Kareena:** [00:02:35] It is. And that's why people want it. But the problem with that is obviously not everyone can have it unless you're willing to put in the work. That's the main point we want to talk about. The putting in the work part because that's the part that seems to be missed in this whole equation. How much work do you have to do? What kind of work do you have to do? And how do you get there? How do you become a full-time influencer? Now we're talking about people specifically in the fitness health and wellness spaces. So, we'll definitely focus our attention on activities that people aspiring to be those influencers can actually do. And I think we'll probably kick it off with. Con, what do you think a fitness health and wellness influencer should do to actually take this full-time?

**Con:** [00:03:14] I think to take it full-time you have to focus on two things. Obviously, you have to focus on getting your following and increasing it and having more people following what you do and secondly, creating an income from it. And usually one kind of affects the other. So, you might be creating a lot of content trying to get more followers. And trying to really, I guess, connect with those followers but at the same time because trying to be a full-time influencer are you trying to do a lot of promotional activities. But usually when we focus too much on one side and the other side starts falling. So, it's really just finding that middle ground. What's a healthy amount to do in promotional activities? What's a healthy amount in, I guess, just authentic content that they were putting out in the first place to really grow that following.

**Kareena:** [00:04:00] It's all about balance. As an influencer, you will constantly need to delicately balance the amount of content that speaks about you as a person versus is promotional content that earns you an income. Longevity isn't achieved from positioning your profile as a billboard for other brands. It is found in developing your own brand and owning what you do. No matter what stage of your career you're currently in.

**Kareena:** [00:04:21] Alright, to start out, let's talk about micro-influencers. What can they do to start growing their brand and get on that path to becoming a full-time influencer? Where they can quit that day job and actually start working just doing what they do best, which is creating content?

**Con:** [00:04:38] Yes. I think with micro-influencers, especially when they're so small, I mean people they say start becoming a brand and have about 3000 or so people following them. Now at that point, in the grand scheme of things that are still quite small. So, I don't feel like I should be going out and trying to do a lot of promotional activities, trying to do sponsored post, trying to join up with other companies and pushing it that way. I think they should be solely focused on still creating the content and connecting with their fans. In saying that, if they decide to do some promotional activities, maybe a sponsored post is about where they're at the moment and getting paid for that.

**Kareena:** [00:05:17] Offering free product is quite generally the remuneration that micro-influencers get at that stage.

**Con:** [00:05:21] Definitely. And I think where micro-influencers are taking off a lot too, are on those influencer marketing platforms where these big companies are getting say, 10 or 20 micro-influencers for a campaign.

**Kareena:** [00:05:31] Right.

**Con:** [00:05:31] And they're just one of the many. So, for micro-influencers joining those sort of campaigns, I think it's highly beneficial. As long as most of their content is still authentic and not promotional. I think it's alright to slip it in here and there.

**Kareena:** [00:05:44] Even with those marketplaces, I think it's important to note, that for brands looking for people to promote their product through those mediums, they are still looking for that balance between quite a strong following and great looking content. They need to have both.

**Con:** [00:05:59] Yeah definitely. I think whatever they are putting an ad out, I think at its core, great looking content is where it comes from.

**Kareena:** [00:06:04] Absolutely.

**Con:** [00:06:05] If you've got a follower base and the content's just not up to standard, no one would want to use it, nor see it.

**Kareena:** [00:06:11] Okay, so moving on. From the small ones that are, at the moment, focused initially on growing their following, we're moving up a little and getting into influencers that are actually getting approached quite regularly by different brands.

So, what's the next step for people like that in their career towards, again, branching out and making this a full-time gig?

**Con:** [00:06:28] Getting a bit bigger now. Heading to the people that, are say, maybe approaching 20,000 followers. At that point, they will start getting approached by a lot of brands and it's at that point you start defining yourself, I guess, who you are as a person. So, say someone that is a fitness influencer, when they're accepting work maybe not to accept the same type of work. Like maybe not to be representing 10 companies that all do resistance bands but to kind of say well, in the fitness industry, what type of brands make up the fitness industry? And then go from there. So maybe get someone that's activewear, get another brand its equipment and then vitamins or supplements, whatever it may be as long as it aligns with your brand as a person. And it's within that umbrella which you're in. You can start branching out to a few different places.

**Kareena:** [00:07:13] Yeah you do have to watch at that stage too that you're not taking on too many things, even within those product categories because you don't want to dilute your brand. You are the brand at the end of the day. Not all the products that you're pushing so you want to make sure that you just stay consistent and authentic in your messaging there and that will also appeal to other bigger brand and potential larger partnership opportunities later down the track. So just watch that balances as well.

**Con:** [00:07:37] Yeah, I guess in saying that, I mean, what would you consider to many? I have number in my head. What would you consider is too much for an influencer to take on?

**Kareena:** [00:07:46] I think if every second post is a marketing ploy, then that's way too much. Because considering how many people of your audience is actually seeing any one post while the stats are at around 5 percent, if that 5 percent does happen to come across your post and for them it's every post is a marketing post, then that's going to turn someone off super quickly. So, actually I think less is more. That's my personal opinion and that's personally what I like to see in other people's Instagram feeds so, just go by what you feel is right for you. And you'll see, you'll see in the results, you'll see in people's engagement and how that's tracking so make sure you just keep an eye on those details before you continue to get caught up in the momentum that is, you know, sponsored posts and things like that. It's always exciting getting paid for what you do. Always. But! As I said, to keep doing what you're doing if you are looking for longevity in this career path, you need to balance it out. And maybe not take up all those short-term wins. We want to think long-term and what's the long-term strategy for you and your brand.

**Kareena:** [00:08:50] Perception is reality. And there is nothing that demonstrates that more than the lives of social media influencers. A carefully curated profile paints a picture of who you are and what you do. It is completely within your control to design your brand based on how you want it to be perceived. Oftentimes, influencers deviate

from their intended path to embrace other opportunities. However, does this have a detrimental effect on their long-term strategy?

**Con:** [00:09:17] I think you bring up an interesting point, in that, when you're thinking about what to do next. It's really having that strategy around your brand. What can you do to have longevity in yourself as a personal brand? In saying that, I think in my personal opinion, a lot of influencers, they don't actually realize they're personal brand until they're big enough and they're not really thinking in the next 12 months of their brand. They're kind of just thinking "Okay, I'm getting some work in, I'm making money. You know, I put all this effort in so it'll be good to get a return for it" and maybe they get caught up a little bit too much in a sponsored post. Whereas maybe they should go "Okay, let's take a step back, I am a personal brand now. What's going to be good for my brand now and in a year to come?"

**Kareena:** [00:09:58] To be honest, I think that they should start thinking of themselves as personal brands right from the get-go. I don't think enough people realize, like, we are a company that seeks out influencers, that wants to employ influencers to do what we do. And part of our vetting process is obviously, looking at their feeds and their engagement and metrics like that. But having a look and seeing all the past work that they've done, that actually does contribute to our perception of their brand in the present time. So being really conscious of what it is that you're putting out there whether it's a story which people think only lasted 15 seconds but it does last longer, people remember things. So, you want to make sure that whatever you are putting out there, it is in line with a long-term goal.

**Kareena:** [00:10:42] To have a career as an influencer that survived a change of platform comes in recognizing the power of your own brand fields and then leveraging your owned channels to ensure its survival. Owned channels those destinations that you're able to funnel your followers through to, that are controlled by you exclusively, like your own website or email database for example. Having the ability to communicate with your audience outside of the platform of which it's grown, is key to ensuring longevity of your brand.

**Con:** [00:11:12] One of the biggest things too and I think what a lot of people miss is, depending on these platforms has its downsides. Everybody always argues, "Oh no! Instagram changed its algorithm again, I'm getting less engagement, less people commenting, less people are liking, my posts isn't getting seen." That's the fundamental problem. Whereas if you have your own business, you're building up your own list, you have your own customer base, it won't bother you as much.

**Kareena:** [00:11:32] The fundamental flaw even with that way of thinking is that Instagram is going to be around forever and that's just simply not the case. I mean you really need to look back a few years when Facebook was the predominant platform that everyone used. And that shift that's happened culturally and socially to these new

platforms and will happen again means that you're leaving yourself [open] to a huge amount of risk as an influencer if you are not creating your own channels to then leverage later.

**Kareena:** [00:11:59] There are so many opportunities available to influencers for paid work. But what is the right path to go down? That really comes down to you as an influencer and what you want from your career. A bit of forward planning and strategy around building your brand will assist here and we give you a few points to consider before making your next move.

**Kareena:** [00:12:19] As we said we started this conversation saying we don't think they're doing enough, now we're telling people not to do too much! [laughs] But more specifically, what aren't they doing enough of?

**Con:** [00:12:30] I think the question becomes, when they get big enough, is do they want to do work for another company or do they want to start their own business and make their own product? You know it's a very hard question to ask yourself because doing a sponsored post, being an affiliate, promoting somebody else's product, it is quite an easy win. But in saying that, a lot of influencers at that point still have a full-time job. On the other hand, creating your own product and your own business has a lot of benefits too. The first being the upside in income. You can get that passive income going in the background or, at times, not so passive but you can still have a greater potential to make quite a lot of money.

**Kareena:** [00:13:10] As an influencer, developing your personal brand soon becomes your business. Your foray into the world of social media can even be considered an entrepreneurial venture and the mindset that should accompany that, is out of business owner. To take advantage of all the opportunities available to you as an influencer. You need to start thinking like a business person.

**Con:** [00:13:30] As an influencer, you have to have your own product. There comes a time where just promoting for other people is fun but enough is enough and you just have to create your own product because that's where the potential is. For people that then have a large following and have the opportunity to create a business. What do you recommend they do?

**Kareena:** [00:13:46] Well as we said, we touched on having your own product. I think as someone in an influencer space it does deal predominantly online and has a social following. I think it's firstly important to remember that you do have a following and these followers want to learn from you and be associated more with you, which is what the power of influence is in its core. So, I love educational products, products that add more value to their audience, is always highly beneficial. For example, someone in a fitness background, a training program? I mean we've seen eBooks come up through the ranks and completely inundate the industry overall. And while we're trying to move that in a new direction technologically, well an online training program is something



that every influencer should have because they are unique and differentiating factor from any other influencer on the platform. Your followers want to learn from you. So, creating your own product to you give to them, will always work out well I think.

**Con:** [00:14:43] Yeah definitely, I couldn't agree more. If you think of the fundamental reason why these people started getting followed. A lot of the people in the fitness health and wellness space do post a lot of workouts or educational content based around working out or how to work out or how to improve, etc., whatever it may be. A training program is just the extension of that. They've started following you because you're posting these workouts. Why not just add a bit more value and do a whole training program where they can follow it start to finish instead of just a snippet for the day.

**Kareena:** [00:15:11] The other benefits to it are obviously, as an influencer, when you aren't doing a lot of things while wanting to travel and move around a lot, having to be situated in one location is often very difficult. So, it gives you that flexibility being an online platform or an online product. And it's a relatively passive income. I mean who doesn't like doing a little bit of work now for a huge benefit later? I mean that's all you really need to do. It's that initial investment of time and energy to put into creating a product but after that they pretty much run themselves. People can pick it up and purchase it at any time.

**Con:** [00:15:42] Yeah, exactly. And if you think about one of the most successful fitness influencers, Kayla Itsines. She has actually built an empire in such a small amount of time. Launched her e-book in 2014, in 2016, I believe she launched her app and now it was reported only a few months ago, possibly at the start of the year, that she's got the potential to make a hundred-million [dollars] in one year of revenue.

**Kareena:** [00:16:06] That's crazy. All from having her own e-book and then app.

**Kareena:** [00:16:12] She has had a phenomenal amount of success in a short amount of time. I know a lot of fitness influencers aspire to have her career, to be able to do what she does day in and day out.

**Con:** [00:16:23] Definitely. I think, you know, at that point when she realized that she has an influence, people are trusting her. It's just a natural progression. And why not just have an extension and make own my product where they can just follow me further.

**Kareena:** [00:16:34] I see, Kayla, primarily using Instagram but a marketing tool for her own products. And I've got a few influencers that do that as well. They've got their own businesses and eBusinesses outside of Instagram but Instagram definitely helps fuel that traction. It gets them referrals and exposure.

**Con:** [00:16:50] They get the distribution. They have these people seeing them

and like they have the eyes that are focused on them so why not just promote your product to them.

**Kareena:** [00:16:56] Exactly.

**Kareena:** [00:16:59] As the underlying cultural shift continues to move people more online new opportunities for eBusinesses are popping up in fitness health and wellness sectors that simply didn't exist before. As consumers become more familiar and comfortable with digital alternatives, traditional services that once required people to be physically present will move to an online platform. This will offer more convenience and ease to all parties and give rise to new income streams to you, the influencer.

**Con:** [00:17:26] On that, we've touched on that online training programs are really good avenue to go down. What other products can influencers launch?

**Kareena:** [00:17:33] We have been seeing a huge rise in the amount of people starting online coaching businesses. Again, it's got that flexibility for influencers where they can do it from anywhere or anytime. They literally just need a laptop which is fantastic, to be able to communicate with their clients. It is someone from a fitness, again, background who is able to do that. They have the skills already and the skills in creating content and the skills in communicating. It's all things that they've already got at their disposal that they're just leveraging to create a new revenue stream. Again, to be able to facilitate this idea of a lifestyle around their passion. They want to be able to create new income streams to keep doing what they are doing.

**Con:** [00:18:14] Definitely. And I think online coaching is really taken off because we have a bit of a cultural shift. There's a bit of an uproar because a lot of people say, well, online coaching, you don't have that face to face relationship, you don't get to know someone like you used to get to know your personal trainer. If you don't have that relationship, that face to face relationship, then should you really be given person training or online coaching advice? But I think in this day in age, people aren't so fussed on building a relationship or going to meet someone you know asking how their day is. They're running short on time themselves. They have a goal in mind. They want to achieve that goal. And so, they're looking for an answer. If that answer comes from somebody halfway across the world or halfway across Australia, then that's good enough for them.

**Kareena:** [00:18:55] Well I think it's also a very different type of consumer. Someone who needs that kind of one-on-one interaction and feedback because they do get that you know right there when they're present, will always seek that out and they will have to be willing to pay for that kind of service as well. It's just a different type of service. But for most of us who are getting all our information from apps anyway or YouTube, we're using multiple different mediums that don't have that personal interaction. Online coaching is like that one step closer where it's so customized because you can still get customized programs and you still have that communication with a trainer who are able to support you emotionally and through the training exercises and nutritional



programs that they offer, without being physically present. There's no geographical constraints for someone wanting to start this business. You could literally coach anyone from anywhere in the world.

**Con:** [00:19:44] Yeah, it's fantastic.

**Kareena:** [00:19:46] For people with a global audience, like they do have on Instagram or any other social media platform, that means that they can actually help their followers. So, Con, what do you think about online coaching?

**Con:** [00:19:57] Yeah, I mean, what you were saying was all correct right. The main thing about it is online coaching is fairly high ticket item right. They're paying a couple hundred dollars. Sometimes it's like a monthly price, they're paying that monthly. And for that reason, that person is only really going to give up that much money and that much time and dedicate such a long period of time, like they're dedicating six, eight, twelve weeks to you and your program. They're only really going to do that if they're quite sure that you're going to get them to that end goal.

**Kareena:** [00:20:24] So, for instance, influencers tend to use things like eBooks and online training programs of sorts, as a stepping stone to their online coaching program. It helps consumers become familiar with their products and their brand before they make that larger investment basically of their time and their money into another product.

**Con:** [00:20:41] Obviously smaller price, they can get a taste, see their workout, see their training style, get a feel who they are and then once they're happy with it, finally go into the online coaching to take the training even further.

**Kareena:** [00:20:53] The beauty of digital products is that they're generally low cost to produce distribute and maintain. Influencers at any stage of their career can launch an online training program or online coaching business because all it takes is a few purchases to have a positive return on investment. These products help build brand and enhance the credibility of influencers within their specific field. Influencers are also able to complement their digital offerings with physical products. So, we delve into that a little further.

**Con:** [00:21:24] So they're a couple of online products that we've spoken about. What about the influencers that are aspiring to have their own physical products? I mean, we've seen quite a few come out with their own activewear lines. People have also launched their own physical books, equipment. I've seen a lot of booty bands, branded booty bands and even food. So, working to create protein bars and mixes like that. So, what's your thoughts on the physical products for influencers?

**Con:** [00:21:50] Yeah, the physical products physical products are great! Physical

products are just a lot more work. So, physical products, people usually go two ways. First way, obviously doing it themselves. Starting from scratch doing absolutely everything themselves. And the second way they get into it is co-branding with more established companies. When you want to co-brand with another company, not that easy to do. Usually [you] have quite a large following only because that brand is taking on quite a large investment and a large risk with you. So, if you can run with another company and you have a big influence, really cool. On the other hand, if you do want to do it yourself, you can go into, as Kareena said, you can have your own activewear, you can have your own equipment. Everyone kind of does do booty bands but...

**Kareena:** [00:22:35] That is simply because they're cheap to produce.

**Con:** [00:22:38] Cheap to distribute. And they usually go hand-in-hand with somebody's guide. Usually somebody makes a guide that involves them, and then, you know has a cross-sell so they're selling two product lines.

**Kareena:** [00:22:48] And again, that is a business in itself. So that entrepreneurial mindset towards this new venture is what you will need to succeed but you have to be ultimately really passionate about whatever you're going to launch. If you're going to do an activewear line, make that everything. That should be where your Instagram is leading, where your other social platforms are leading. The reason that you're growing your following essentially. So, you need to be aware of that and make sure that ultimately that's the business that you want to be in to because that will take on a life of its own.

**Con:** [00:23:18] Yeah definitely. If you are going to step into something new, you take a gradual approach.

**Kareena:** [00:23:23] It all does lead into itself though. I mean, from what we've seen influencers are pretty smart about their strategy. They stay within their own product lines, that make sense to their brand, whether it's fitness health or wellness. And they expand upon their brand with new products which is perfectly fine. It's just, as we said, you want to make sure that, if you're just starting out, you start with something a bit more manageable, something that you still have quite a bit of control over. So, you want to make sure that whatever you're doing for your brand truly represents you.

**Con:** [00:23:51] Yes exactly. So yes, making your own physical products. If you're going to do it, start with just one thing at a time. In our last interview with Sarah, she had some really good advice which was "focus on the next thing you need to do to get the product further down the line. Just one task."

**Kareena:** [00:24:07] So how do you choose what to focus on next? There are so many things that you could be doing and want to be doing but there's only so much time in a day. So where do you start?

**Con:** [00:24:18] Now, the question is, do you focus your energy on one and do it really well? Or do you diversify and have multiple product lines? Take it from there Kareena

**Kareena:** [00:24:28] My approach is always to start with one. Get a really good handle on that before you then start diversifying only because it's just attention. I mean once you start one thing, if you're splitting your attention between 20 different projects, things are going to fall down and they will fail. So why put yourself in that position? Just start with one. Focus on it. Get it to a point we are quite comfortable, where you can then split your attention to something else. I know a lot of influencers that we've talked to and interviewed have done just that. They've started with their online training program and then they work their way up to an online coaching and then even events, running their own events which is a huge step up. But each of those steps have been increments that have helped them get to that next stage. You do have complete control over your brand and you have the opportunity to create these products. I love starting with a eProducts for smaller type influencers because they have the ability to take it and run with it. It's their baby, basically. So, they can take those opportunities and start building their brand that way.

**Con:** [00:25:33] So we covered a lot of activities of what influencers can be doing to grow the brand and grow the income. We started with the eProducts. eBooks used to saturate the market and now online training programs. On top of that they can also have their own online coaching business, customized approach, customized to every need and it's a high-ticket product. And that aside, if they don't want to go online route, they can always make physical products whether that be co-branding with another company and getting your own label that way or making your own product, whether that be activewear or equipment. And keep in mind that you can focus on one, get that right and once that's in motion, then you can progress to the next thing and have multiple products.

**Kareena:** [00:26:12] There are more activities that you can do to create your brand and increase your exposure, your revenue and have that lifestyle as a full-time fitness, health a wellness influencer.

**Kareena:** [00:26:23] That brings us to the end of this episode of In the Loop. Thank you so much for joining us this week. Next week we'll be back with an interview with a fitness influencer who has multiple businesses of her own. I'm very excited to get stuck into that conversation. If you liked this episode of "In the Loop", make sure you subscribe to our podcast and feel free to leave a comment. We always love hearing your feedback. So, tune in to learn more about the business end of being an influencer and we'll catch you then.