

Gen Y Shift Series

A Conversation with Alexis Scramberg

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Ben: Good evening, everybody. Welcome back to the Gen Y Shift Series. This is Ben with you again as always. I hope you're having a beautiful morning, afternoon, or evening wherever you are in the world right now. I'm very excited for our next hour and our guest, Alexis Scramberg, who I'm very excited about. We met just a few weeks ago and had a nice phone conversation and excited to share what she's up to with all of you.

So let me jump in with a quick intro for Alexis. She's a magna cum laude graduate of University of Pennsylvania Law School, is now a personal development writer, speaker, and media personality, who has been called the self-help voice of her generation. She's at work on her first book which is called Borrowed Wisdom, and contributes personal essays to publications including Forbes.com and Cosmopolitan magazine.

She also blogs with Huffington Post, and writes an advice column in a San Francisco J Weekly paper. Alexis also makes regular appearances on local and national radio including NPR, and is a speaker and workshop leader nationally. And she's also just about to hit our TV screens, and she'll be appearing on a new show on the Oprah Winfrey Network.

Well, Alexis, that is a mouthful. Congratulations to all that, and now welcome.

Alexis: Thank you, Ben. I'm glad to be here with you.

Ben: Awesome, awesome. Well, yeah, after talking with you on the phone a few weeks ago, I just really appreciate your story and where you're coming from and that, I think, you're such a great representation of our generation and what we're all going through. So I'd love to just have you share a bit about your story now going from being a lawyer to what you're doing now.

Alexis: Yeah, I'd be happy to. So I graduated from law school, and I didn't want to be a lawyer, and I basically completely freaked out. For all intents and purposes, I had a meltdown. I knew what I didn't want to do, but I didn't know what I did want to do with myself, and so I ended up throwing myself into the world of personal development. I read every self-help

book I could get my hands on and enrolled on every teleseminar and webinar related to finding and creating a meaningful life.

I knew that law and law practice was just not going to work for me, and I just couldn't figure out what would. So I went full in, and I figured out a lot about what it means to kind of live more fully and be fulfilled and make choices with intention and spend my days deliberately. So I started writing about it and sharing what I was learning with my friends. I realized that it was me, the 20 something, and all kind of women in mid-life crises in all of my teleseminars and webinars and workshops. I had a lot of good stuff to share with my people or with people our age.

So when I started writing about it, it was really resonating with people, and it was information that they weren't really getting. So that kind of organically unfolded for me, this whole kind of personal development career, so it was the impetus for the book that I'm writing, Borrowed Wisdom, for more articles, for my participation in a TV show and on radio. It's been super fun, and I feel really good about it. I basically get to spend all day every day talking and thinking about things that I care about, and that's what this is all about, so I'm trying to walk my talk.

Ben: Love that. I'm curious, going back in your story, something big shifts in you as soon as you started really seeing what it was to be a lawyer. I'm wondering what it was that kind of drew you to wanting to go into law in the first place and then what was it that kind of became disillusioned and was born in you as you came out of it?

Alexis: Oh, yeah, that's a great question. I really went as a default. I went because I didn't know what I wanted to do when I graduated from college, and everyone told me you can do anything with a law degree. And what I ended up finding was that, yes, you can do anything with a law degree, but you don't necessarily have the qualifications for it with your law degree.

So, yeah, I really went as a default because I wasn't clear then. I was very uncertain, and it was this option that would give me three more years to continue to try and figure it out. And in law school, I pretty much knew this isn't for me, this isn't going to work, but I decided to stick it out. And when I graduated, I think a lot of people where -- no, I know a lot of people were shocked at my decision. It didn't make any sense to anyone that I'd spent that much time, energy, and money getting a license and a very fancy professional degree that I wasn't planning on using.

I think my meltdown was a result of the fact that I wasn't clear yet, that I could be confident about making a decision not to do what wasn't right for me and to kind of follow my instinct on that, and I think so many people follow through on things and commit to things that aren't working for them just because they think they should, and I initially was quite ashamed to tell people I wasn't following through on it. And now I'm so proud of that decision, and it's funny because the people that I thought were judging me are now jealous of me.

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Ben: I love that. Yeah, it's so beautiful. I feel like so -- like it's such an important thing that our generation is going through as we are kind of really stepping into our callings at younger and younger ages. It's going through this sort of shedding of our identities and shedding of what success is meant to us at a younger age because it's still hard and it's still incredibly traumatic at times or it feels like a life crisis, but it does feel a lot easier to do it now than it would be when you're 40 or 50 and much more disillusioned.

Alexis: Yeah.

Ben: Yeah. What just comes to my mind as I say that is this idea of success and it does feel like in some ways you've redefined what success would be for you as so many of us need to that really step into what we're here to do. I'm what your relationship to success throughout this process.

Alexis: Yeah, absolutely. I've been speaking around the country on this topic on defining success on your own terms because I think -- especially for people our age, we all had this expectation of where we would be right now and what our lives would look like, and our reality is not matching that expectation. I think looking forward, the same will be true.

When I was in law school and before law school, my idea of success was this kind of fancy job. So this fancy degree and a great job that held kind of this good -- this prestige, and I imagined myself wearing high heels and in fancy suits and powerful and making a ton of money and driving a Mercedes. I just had this image in my head of what success would look like for me, and I was going after it.

I think we all have an idea of what success traditionally looks like in our head. But the problem is we all have this idea of what it looks like, but we haven't thought about what it feels like. So when I had a chance to work in a law firm, I had the degree, and I had the law job, and so I'm now

living this reality that I have thought of in my head for a while of success, and it felt awful. I couldn't have felt worse. I was depressed and crying and drained, and I felt like my least creative, most frustrated upset self, and I think I successfully forget to really consider what that success would feel like.

So we're all chasing after things that wouldn't necessarily fulfill us, and so once you're living that version of success, you realize it's not so great after all. So when you redefine it for yourself, when you figure out, okay, what would success really look like for you? What would it really feel like for you, and then start crafting your life and your decisions intentionally around making that happen, you end up living a lot more happily and you'll find that everything just -- your life starts fitting right and feeling right.

Maya Angelou actually says, "Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it," and that's one of my favorite definitions of success I've come across. But for me personally, I told you success was that kind of corner office, high heels. I hate wearing high heels, I hate stuffy suits. The idea of walking into law makes me kind of cringe a little.

And now, it's just like getting a good night's sleep and connecting with my husband and having fun with my friends. And these sound so simple, but they're actually the things that make me happy. So if I've created a life that builds those things into my every day, I can't imagine anything better.

Ben: Yes, beautiful. I'm curious then into what you've gone through and you just described a bit that what people can do who are feeling stuck. What else would you say to people who are kind of feeling like they are ready for this leap into what would be a more authentically successful life for them?

Alexis: Yeah. So one thing I've told people that -- I talked to a lot of people who have no clue what they want to do with their life, which is where I was, and that uncertain, dissatisfied, completely freaked out space, I tell them to close their eyes and consider what they would want their day to feel like.

So you don't have to say what it is that you would actually be doing, but how would you want to feel? When you wake up in the morning, how do you feel and what are your senses sensing? So do you hear your alarm clock going off? What time is it when you wake up? What are you feeling

when you wake up? And then go through your day that way. What kind of clothes are you wearing throughout the day?

So if you can't come up with some sort of occupation, which I think we so often tie to success, our professional achievements and titles, though I don't think that's comprehensive enough, I think once you start to create an idea around the feeling and use your senses to create that, it really helps you start to build kind of an accurate idea of what it is that would make you happy or what it is you would want.

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So I saw myself working at home. I had never liked dawned on me before. When I did this exercise, I thought, "Oh, my God." I am in yoga pants. I'm braless and in yoga pants sitting at my computer, writing for part of the day. That was not at all like on my radar screen. But when I realize all about it, what clothes do I want to be wearing? Where do I want to be? What am I doing? What am I feeling? I started to get a better sense of what I wanted.

I think one of the other things that helps people most identify who are feeling completely confused to have no clue what success really is or what they really want to do with their lives which I think many of us at least at this age, I fill in this blank. "If I have the guts, I would..." because I think one of the things that we most do is run from our fear and if you can actually turn that on its head and follow your fear, you might find the things that make you happiest.

So I found that I was like incredibly scared of speaking in public. I was incredibly scared of being in front of a camera, but my five-year-old self so badly wanted to be an anchor on Good Morning America. So what I realized, oh, I'm coming up with all of these funny things like I want to be on TV, I want to be on the radio, I want to be on stage, and those were horrifying scary to me but they were the things that I really most wanted. I kind of shoved in the corner thinking like I'm way too scared of that. I'm just not going to do that, like I just kind of brush to the side. But when you found the blank, not only do these things emerge, they actually show you what will bring you joy, crazy enough.

Ben: Yeah, absolutely. I can totally attach. My life has been a complete revelation of both the things you just described without a doubt.

Alexis: Yeah. I mean if this is all universal.

Ben: Exactly. Yeah, so I think that one thing that comes up for people when they imagine to start to move towards more creativity, more passion, more inspiration in their lives is a bit of a block about "Okay, I can fill into that a bit, but how would I actually create a life around that? Like how can I create a life where I'm not wearing high heels and braless sitting at the computer writing?"

How did you make that shift from reading the books and being interested in doing it for yourself to then making a leap into doing it professionally and creating a life around that?

Alexis: Yeah. I mean it definitely takes a lot of courage. I think people have to be really creative about it because they think when we start being honest about what are dream life would be, it's so easy to get caught up in the excuses. You don't have enough time. You don't have enough money. You're not blank enough, smart enough, skilled enough, whatever it is.

You start to come up with all of these reasons why you can't live that life, but those are all just excuses. All you need is resourcefulness. You don't actually need those resources. I once heard Tony Robbins say that and I loved it. You don't need resources. You need resourcefulness. And that's true. I mean you have to get really creative about how to go about it.

I think that people get very stuck in this like there's a right way to do things. So okay, so you decide "I want to be x. I want to do x," and it's entrepreneurial. So you go to the bookstore and you buy every book from an entrepreneur, a successful entrepreneur about the five ways to do x and you try to follow that formula and it doesn't work and it doesn't feel good.

The best way to make your dream life happen is your way. And if you can just take one step at a time, what I tell people to do is okay, so you write down your big goal and then you do an exercise around that dream or that goal and you break that goal into different components. So you have your big goal and then you have the actions steps that are required to make that goal happen and then you break it down even smaller. And what ends up happening is you have these bite size pieces that you can do every day.

If you can really just take action every single day towards that goal, by the end of a week or a month or a year, you're so far ahead. So if your dream has been to write a book and you're just dreaming this dream in your head and not living it in reality, if you write down, "I will write a book," okay, what is this going to take and you write down all of those

pieces, you can break it into things that you do every day. It can be as simple as send another letter to an agent or big like write for two hours a day.

So I think breaking goals down into their different components is super helpful making sure to be very creative about it and making sure not to feel limited to doing things other people's way because I think the right way to succeed is always your way.

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Ben: Yeah, that's great. Really quickly to everyone who's listening right now. Usually, we hold off questions to the end, but for some reason, having the inspiration to invite people, actually on the webcast, you can go ahead and write questions in and I might just sprinkle them in throughout our conversation because Alexis just shared on a different stuff. I want to make sure that if your question pertains to where we're at in the conversation, we can throw it in. So if you're on the webcast, just throw the right questions in while we're going.

One thing that just came for me as you're saying though, Alexis, is what a paradox it is sometimes between having big goals in our head and also really listening to our deepest truth of the calling because as you were saying before like you had a big goal for the Mercedes and the high heels and all these things but not have the juice for you.

So I'm curious as you've been growing going through your own transformation professionally and in your life, how are you finding the process of really connecting to your authentic goals? How do you imagine to even change throughout the years?

Alexis: Yeah. I actually personally have had some issues around a lot of my authentic goals. I think some of the outside world could say are quite ego driven, but they're like my deepest desires. So I'm super excited about being on TV. I have a message I want to share. I'm so excited. I shared with you before, my five-year-old self wanted to be on TV. There's something about that medium that just calls me and it's exciting to me and I want it.

I've had to do a lot of like reconciling. Okay, is this like an ego thing or is this an authentic thing? My big goals have been so big like they have felt so big. I want to be the next Oprah. When I tell people that, some people might think it's laughable. It took me a little while just to be honest with

myself about what it is I want. I want a book. I want this. I want that. They were big goals and big dreams.

I think what happens for most people is that when they're being really authentic or they're trying to be really authentic, what ends up happening is this other voice comes out and says like, "You're crazy. There's no way. Think of a realistic goal. Think of a realistic dream." You end up compromising down your dream before you're ever really honest about what it is. I think it's a really big act of bravery to be vulnerable with yourself and with the world.

It's so magical when you start talking about what it is that you really want from your life because I was recently telling a group of women at a conference about the magic of just sharing your dream because when you get really clear on what it is you want and you start telling people, stuff just shows up. People have ideas for you, people have connections for you, and it's like this big web of support. But when you're hiding your dream inside and you're hiding it even from yourself, you can't get anywhere with that.

A lot of this is about being comfortable, being comfortable and honest with yourself and with the world. When you're confident about what it is you want and what you're going for, the world receives you that way. But when you're ashamed and uncomfortable and embarrassed or you don't feel worthy of that goal or that dream, it's funny. It's like not even worthy of having it, worthy of just wanting it. The world will receive you that way and, it's part judgment from the outside world and it's part totally self-manufactured judgment that you're putting on other people or making yourself feel.

Ben: Yeah, that's great. Yeah, I definitely feel like the more and more people I see who are really going after their dreams with tenacity and great courage, it does feel like there is a level of ego to it but in a beautiful way where like why can't our ego also enjoy the things that we're like deeply called to do? In some way, our ego is in places with those things so that all of us can be on board to go after that big dream.

Alexis: Right, right. I like that.

Ben: Yeah, it's really subtle but it's like when there's something big that I want that feels really ego-driven, it does feel very different when there's something big that I want that feels like purposeful and aligned with who I am but also my ego wants it. But I don't quite know how to articulate

that, but it does feel like it's real and you can see it when people are with it. There's difference between a dream and just a need or a want.

Alexis: Right. I like that.

Ben: Right on. Well, I would love to actually -- I have a number of things I'd like to talk about. But one is I want to hear more about your TV stuff and what you're going to be doing with the Oprah Winfrey Network. Can you talk about that project?

Alexis: Oh, yeah, absolutely. So it's pre-production right now which means it's -- say this for next year, but it's still in development but they're turning one the movie into a TV series. So it's all interview. It's basically interviews with people with actually with celebrities and personal development gurus and spirituality leaders. We're all talking about life and love and happiness, and it should be really wonderful. But that's all I can say for now but stay tune in 2013. That would be great.

Ben: Right on. Sounds great.

Alexis: Yeah.

Ben: Well, from there also, another project that you're working on which you mentioned was -- or I mentioned in you bio was your book, Borrowed Wisdom. I know that's going to be offering advice to people our generation may not often hear. I'm wondering if you could talk a bit about what the inspiration for that book was and also what are the advices that you're offering where that's come from.

Alexis: Yeah, definitely. So yeah, my book is called Borrowed Wisdom, and it's basically key pieces of advice that I think 20 and 30 somethings never really hear but we really need to get. It was inspired by, as I mentioned when I was doing all this personal development work and it was me and women in mid-life crisis and they were all reinventing themselves and I was just looking to invent myself. So I realize that so much of their wisdom resonated with people our age and people our age had to hear it, had to know it.

So when I started writing articles and getting such an amazing response, I realized that book was really in order. So I came up with the idea for this book. The concept of offering advice that we rarely hear really came from the fact that I was learning all of this stuff. There's really deep wisdom about how to live a meaningful life and how to make decisions, how to just navigate our every day. This is the stuff that people our age just

weren't getting. We weren't the target audience for it, but we just so desperately needed this wisdom. So I'm taking the best of the best that I've learned and packaging it in this book.

I think some of the problem with being a 20 and 30 something is that we hear a lot from our parents and well-meaning family friends and friends and books about we should be doing and what we're supposed to be doing and all of that is wrong. So much of the advice we get is wrong. We're living as if anyone else could possibly know what's best for us. It's almost silly when you really think about it. But we're told what we should be doing and I think a lot of the advice we get is just plain wrong.

So I'm trying to do us all the favor and put each of us back in the driver seat. The stuff that I share is super practical and super simple and easy to implement, and it's all stuff that people can put a practice right away.

Ben: Right.

Alexis: So it should be really fun when it comes out.

Ben: Right on. One of your speeches in a workshop or something, if you're sitting with someone who's 25-year-old from Wisconsin and she's asking you how to invent herself, what are one of the two ideas that you share with her about how best to do that? I know you've already covered a few.

Alexis: Yeah. Yeah, okay, so I talked briefly about succeeding your way. The only way to actually choose success is your way, and I think one of the biggest lessons that people can learn and easily implement is that they should follow their enthusiasm. So it might seem when you graduate college or when you graduate from law school or whatever that you should be a lawyer, you should go to business school, or you should be a doctor, or you should take this job or your whatever. The list goes on and on depending on what your life circumstance is. But what will really end up working for you is what calls you, what you feel excited and enthusiastic about.

So if you can even take just baby steps towards the things that excite you and that get you enthused, you're going in the right direction. What I often tell people is that people are so scared to commit to something and then not like it. Two things: one, you can commit to something and not like it and leave. The only person that's telling you you can't is you. Everyone might be telling you, you can't, but the only one person who has permission to really tell you that is you. So you can always start something and decide you don't like it.

Two, I think playing a more adult version of getting warmer, getting colder is one of the best ways to navigate through your whole life. So you move in one direction because you are enthusiastic or excited or interested or curious about something and then you find that it either works or it doesn't work. If it doesn't work, then you change direction. I think we're all so scared to change direction. We're also scared to commit to something and then not work out and feel stuck but you're never stuck. You always have the opportunity to change direction or to change gears or to change course.

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I think people get really locked into what they're supposed to do or what they should be doing or what is expected of them or even just what they expected of themselves, but that's really a paradigm that they're allowing themselves to live in. If they can just break free of that and give themselves permission to do what it is they want to do, things will work out.

I think just following your curiosity is one of the easiest ways to move through life and people forget to do that. It's like, oh, yeah, if I had thought about law school, I would have thought -- I'm not actually curious about law. I'm not enthusiastic. I remember having a conversation before law school started with a good friend of mine and I said, "I'm dreading starting. I don't want to start." It wasn't because I didn't want to go to school. I was always an incredibly good student. I loved learning. I had lots of other masters programs that I was excited about, but I decided I didn't want to commit to it because what if I didn't like it when I finished it.

Well, look what ended up happening. I went to law school and I didn't like that anyways. But I remember telling him like I don't want to go and he was like, "Well, then why are you going?" I am like, "What? Why am I having this conversation a week before law school and here I am years later looking back?" If I had just been honest with myself about what I was excited about and what I wasn't excited about, I could have made decisions that fit better.

Instead, I spent three years in law school actually taking a very non-traditional law course. I took classes. So I went to Penn Law School. I was fortunate that Penn allowed me to take classes in other programs. So I ended up taking women in birthing in the nursing program and Chicano literature with English PhD. I was trying so desperately to just find classes

interested me because law was not my thing. I wish I had listened in on someone telling me just follow your enthusiasm, follow your curiosity. I started doing that in law school with my course work, but I certainly didn't do that before I went.

Ben: Nice. I love that. It's so great how you following that path and not listening to yourself in that moment. Now it allows you to bring this message to the world so much more powerfully because you had to go through that experience because I always **[0:27:41] [Indiscernible]** how people's journeys kind of bring them to the work they're meant to do in a more powerful way. So big kudos to you for that whole thing.

Alexis: Thank you.

Ben: Yeah, totally. Well, I'm curious, being here with this community and being at The Shift Network and just the work that we do in the world of trying to support people's evolution and growth and then in turn support the evolution of culture so that more and more people can be living authentically into their calling at a younger and younger age and creating a beautiful world together.

I'm curious, as you go around the country and give speeches and you do workshops, are you finding that there are more young people who are coming and who are asking these questions and engaged? Because you described in your own life going through these workshops and being the only person who is kind of not reinventing their life with the people who are older, I'm curious what trends you are noticing in the younger generations.

Alexis: Yeah. I think people are really showing up now that things are offered for them. I was recently at the Texas Conference for Women in Austin a couple of weeks ago. It's a women's conference. They largely target women later 30s, 40s, 50s. There were a lot of young people there. There were a lot of people in there, 20's and 30's, and it was amazing to see. We actually had a whole panel devoted to just them and our issues, and so it was really exciting to see.

I think people have all been looking for this. We're all talking to each other about the exact same things. I don't know if you've noticed this, Ben, but the conversations I have with my friends repeat; they are on repeat. Everyone is having the same conversation and it was funny actually.

So I write for the Huffington Post and for Forbes.com and I often write stories about that or inspired by conversations I have with friends or things that friends are going through. So I will say my friend and I had this conversation and I quote a friend, anonymously always, of course. I posted an article relatively recently, and I got five emails from different friends in different parts of the country. "Oh, my God! You wrote an article about me." I had a handful of friends who all thought they were the person in the article, and it was really funny.

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It was actually one of them, but it wasn't all five of them. The reason that I got that many emails is because we're all going through the same things. We're all getting to this point thinking "Oh, my God! What I'm living right now is not what I thought I was living." I'm 29. I live in an apartment, and I'm married. I have a career that's really just launching.

I totally expected at 29 I would live in a house and have at least one kid. I was sure I was going to have one kid by 30 and still I imagined myself in that power suit. I imagined I would be making just a ton of money and have everything figured out, and that is not even remotely close to my reality. I think that we all feel this way. I think some of us think how do we get here and we're not married yet? Or how am I here and I have no clue still what I want to do with my life? I was so sure by the end of college I would have some idea what I wanted to do with myself and my life, and I'm still constantly every day figuring it out.

So we're all going through the same things. Our reality isn't matching our expectation. We're feeling uncertain about what it is we want to do. I think at this age in particular we have so much more consciousness about who we are as people and our identities and that's kind of freaky. Now, we're paying attention to what I'm thinking and who am I and how did the world receive me and what am I doing in this world, things that I think in college I was way too busy just having fun to ever think about. I think we all have a heightened consciousness now about who we are and what we want from our lives, and we're getting to a point where we're like, "Okay, let's start to really make this happen," and there's a lot of crisis and meltdown and freak out around that.

So we're all really looking for wisdom. We're all looking to develop ourselves personally, but for a long time I don't think the resources were there, and I think it's so wonderful that we have things like the Gen Y Shift Series so that we have something to offer now. It's great.

Ben: Yeah. Thank you. Yeah, it really is a beautiful thing. It's not something I was consciously aware of, but the more conversations I have like this and more of my friends I'm speaking to, the more really I feed into what an amazing generational shift is occurring where our generation is really conscious and evolved and doing work on a whole new level. It's just super exciting to imagine the world we're creating as we do that and then in turn who our kids get to be in the world they get to create and on and on and on.

Alexis: Yeah, I often say the economy is really bad and so it's a struggle I think for a lot of people because our parents had much more linear trajectories. They were going from point A to point B to point C and it was all that is kind of trotting along. For us, we don't have that luxury, but the flipside of that is that we get to be a lot more creative. So we have a lot more room to play. We have a lot more flexibility. So, yes, it's harder because we're not fitting in a box that was already made for us. We have to create one for ourselves, but that's so freeing and you get to be so flexible. It's really just a matter of your perspective.

Ben: Totally. That's the beautiful role we can just play for each other as it go through our growth pains and as we have to go through those processed that we haven't had any models for. It's like we just get to cheer each other on saying like, "Yes, you're going for it. Go for it." I'm okay. I assume that I'll have many more of those growth periods onward and onward throughout my career and my life in I'll call on all of you to continue to be my mirrors. It's going great and doing the right thing.

Alexis: Yeah. Yeah. Definitely.

Ben: We have two questions coming through the webcast. I want to offer those into the mix. Some are specific to some things we're talking about before. One is someone is saying that they're having trouble staying committed to my dreams. And there are things that I stop and start a lot and don't follow through. I'm wondering if you have any advice on how to really move forward.

Alexis: Oh, okay. So the first thing is you can have a dream or a goal at one point and then not be it for you and not work out for you. It can be right for you for a time and then it may not serve you anymore and may not work right for you or just may not be right for you, and that's okay. So that's one thing. You really have to be comfortable not following through on things.

I know personally how hard that is because I do that with law, and I know that when you share your dream and get excited about it and tell everyone about it and you have all the support from people and then you decide not to follow through on it, not only is it difficult for yourself because you committed to it, now you feel like, "Am I just flaking out on this? But it's also hard because now you shared it with the world and it's embarrassing or whatever. But you're the only one who should be able to make the call about whether you want to follow through on something or not. One of my favorite things that help people is don't follow through. If it's not working, don't follow through.

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The other, if it really is something that you want and it's something that you still want, some of the best ways to stay committed to it are: one, I think list making. It's so practical. In the most practical way making that list that I said. Write down your goal, write all the things you need to do to achieve it, and then force yourself to do one thing on that list every day. Then you're holding yourself accountable for getting closer to that goal. It can be small things. It can be like make another list of the things. Break down this one thing and make another list. But if you're at least doing one thing, then you actually have a physical representation of what it is that you need to do and you can hold yourself really accountable that way.

Another is sharing it. So if you haven't talked about what your dream is with people and gotten other people's supports, it's really hard to stay committed and stay excited because you have no one to share it with. So talking about your dream to other people, talking about the goal, getting people on board really, really helps. So those are two suggestions I have that hopefully will be helpful to you.

Another one that actually one of my favorite worth mentioning, if you aren't already doing this, one of the most fun ways I think to get excited about your goal and start manifesting your goal is visualizing your goal. So what I do every day for even just a minute up to a couple of minutes is I actually imagine myself having achieved the goal, living my dream life. So it's like a movie in my head. It's like a daydream. But if you do that every day, you start to feel what it would feel like.

This is all law of attraction stuff obviously, but it really does, one, get you super excited because you're in it and you're feeling it and you're just enthusiastic about it because it's your dream and you're so excited and it moves you towards -- it just magnetically moves you towards it. So I just

had to throw that in there because it also feels so good. It's so fun. I love doing this visualization.

Ben, do you do that at all?

Ben: I actually do it. It's exactly how I ended here at The Shift Network doing what I'm doing right now.

Alexis: Oh, that's very cool.

Ben: Yeah.

Alexis: Oh, nice.

Ben: As you said, it has a beautiful -- it's two-sided. One, it has you just feeling great as you move to the rest of your day; and two, I do find that it attracts what you're looking for.

Alexis: You start to believe it. You start to believe that's where you're going.

Ben: Totally. Right on. Well, there's another one that actually is perfectly related to what you just described which is -- this person is saying, "I'm curious about what practices you have in your life. I'm finding a little overwhelmed by all the possibilities of journaling and meditation and yoga and therapy and workshops. What ways do you find yourself connecting to these works each day?|

Alexis: That's such a good question. I actually was at a talk. Polly Campbell recently wrote a book called Imperfect Spirituality, and she was in San Francisco last night so I had a chance to listen in on her book's talk last night. It was so much about this everyday practices. So it's just funny.

I completely understand that feeling of total overwhelm, and the good news is you can do one thing a day; you can do several things a day. You should only do what works for you and throw out the rest because all these practices like I'm a runner. I really don't like yoga. It's so hard to say that in this field because everyone loves yoga. Everyone is on board with yoga. I don't know. It just doesn't do it for me, and it probably will in the future but it doesn't right now.

So that is one thing that everyone says, "Oh, you have to do yoga. You're in this field. Of course, you got to do yoga." I run every morning and that's my thing and I love it and it's my meditation. So the first piece of advice I have is just do what works for you. Pick and choose. You don't

have to feel overwhelmed because you really get to choose just a couple of things that work for you and then switch them up.

So some of my favorite practices are my gratitude exercise. I do a gratitude exercise every night before I go to sleep. Once I had hit the pillow, I turn off my light, put away my book, I think about things that I'm grateful for in a day. My promise to myself is I'll think of three before I get distracted. Often I'm off and running and think of lots of things to be grateful for. Some of my favorite things to be grateful for are the simple.

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The other night I felt grateful for my really soft comfortable bed and sheets, and it brought me back to where I was like I hadn't really thought. Oh, I am so cozy in my bed that I was so grateful for it and it was such a cool mindful thing to do. So mindfulness and gratitude, that's going to all connect. So I do a gratitude exercise at night for a while though not recently although I would like to get back to it.

I was doing an intention setting exercise in the morning. So I would wake up and set an intention for the day. I would think about what it is that I really wanted for the day. So on the mornings that I woke up really anxious, sometimes it was just to give myself permission to deal with the anxiety and not freak out about it, and that was it all day. It was just, "Okay, my intention, I'm feeling anxious and I'm just going to accept it and move through it."

Intentions can be big or small. Your intention can just be like every hour to take a deep breath or your intention to pay more attention to how you're eating. A while ago my intention was to slow down when I'm driving, to pay more attention to just be in less of a hurry. I find that it makes me more deliberate about how I approach my day and just more careful about how I'm spending my time. So those are a couple of practices that I love most.

I have a couple more. Another one I really like is after I go on my morning run and I don't run with music or anything, I'm fortunate to live right by the Golden Gate Bridge so I get to run right along the water every morning in the Marina in San Francisco. So that's kind of a meditation for me. And then when I get home, I sit in a chair for a couple of minutes, and I am by no means any master of meditation.

I've read about meditation. I've learned to a meditation. I am not a master meditator, but I sit there just kept quietly with my thoughts and

sometimes I will do a guided meditation or sometimes I just take a couple deep breaths and look out my window at the trees and listen to the birds. But that does it for me. I am just kind of getting back into my body and getting a little bit grounded. Sometimes I repeat a mantra, super basic. At first, I was like, "This is ridiculous. I can only stay here for 30 seconds." I have no clue what I'm doing.

But it did make a difference to my day and I think the meditation for everybody is different. There's no one right way to meditate. So that's another one that I really like. But my advice really is to just pick a couple of things that work for you and that are resonating for you and then change them up. When that's not resonating or working for you anymore, don't do it. You don't have to be a master of any of these things to start doing them.

Ben: That's awesome. I love that. Yes, definitely true especially for those who are into personal growth and just constantly working on ourselves and have these dreams and goals. We can definitely pile on like a dozen practices to feel like we shouldn't do, to work on ourselves perfectly. It's definitely great to, as you're saying, have flexibility and just go with what's alive and inspiring in that moment. I love it.

Alexis: Yes because that's the only thing that's going to work for you anyway.

Ben: Exactly. I appreciate how you talked about the running versus the yoga and that's really a little apologetic but totally understood.

Alexis: I know.

Ben: I get it. It's awesome. Right on. Well, we got another question here.

Alexis: Great.

Ben: Someone is asking -- I choosing a specific one. This one is about writing saying, "I really like to write about consciousness and my spirituality and personal growth. I'm wondering if you have any advice on how to share my work wider, things like getting on the Forbes.com, et cetera?"

Alexis: Oh, yeah, yeah. So this is what I tell everybody. You have to ask. You have to ask. I love the story. So the first thing I ever wrote, I love my own story. I like how I say that. It's really funny. Well, I'm really into self-love these days. Anyways, the first thing I ever wrote, after law school, I moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico for a year because my husband, fiancé at the time, had a very prestigious clerkship with a judge there. So I moved out

to Albuquerque and had a total of three friends and nothing to do and I'm in the midst of this meltdown.

I'm like, "What I'm going to do with myself?" So I thought, "I could write. I could write out here. With some learning all this great stuff, I'll write about it." So I wrote this little 500-word piece and I thought, "Okay, where do I send this?" So I found some website online with some women's website, I sent that, and they immediately rejected and said, "You're too young. Your voice is too young."

I thought, "Okay, where else can I send this?" I thought, "Cosmo magazine. That's a good place to send this piece." I looked up the email address of the editor-in-chief of the magazine and sent my piece off. I said, "I think this is perfect for your magazine." I don't know that I have read Cosmo about recently, but I was pretty confident that my piece should be in their magazine.

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A month later, I got a reply from Kate White, the editor of Cosmo. She loved -- I'm talking about the editor-in-chief of Cosmo, "Love your writing, love your voice, love the peace. We're going to do it. I'm sending it to the executive editor, and you're going to work with her on it. Great." That was the first thing I'd ever written. I got published in a major coffee magazine. The reason that that happens beyond the fact that that was amazing luck because it doesn't always happen, is that I asked for it. I went straight to the person who had power to say yes to me and I asked her to publish it in her magazine and I did it confidently.

I think one of the best advice for writers but also advice for anyone in any field ever and just life in general is ask for what you want and ask the people who have the power to give it to you or to help you. I think a lot of people are very, very scared to go straight to the top. They're scared to ask because they think they don't have enough experience so they're not good enough yet or whatever. You can put your list of reasons or excuses, but the truth of the matter is the people who ask of things are the people who get things.

So my best biggest piece of advice for you is start sending your work into places that you want to be published and see how it goes. It doesn't matter whether you've already had your work published in a fancy place or you have some special byline yet or not. You can just start where you are. But go for what you really want. Don't start sending your stuff into

smaller places because you think you have a better chance. Send it widely but go for gold. That's what I say.

Ben: I love that. That's awesome. Right on. And from there, did you just kind of continue that process and just found it snowballing?

Alexis: Yeah. Listen, I've certainly been dealt with my fair share of rejections in the writing world. It's truly painful. But yes, but yeah, it snowballed from there. It was that first piece of validation that I really needed. Someone that I thought was very special said, "You are a good writer." So it kind of clicked for me. I had never really thought about being a writer. I always chose classes where you could write a paper instead of take a test, but that was where my writing skill started and ended. I didn't think that writing would ever really be it for me. I hadn't expected this at all, but it was very cool and it started unfolding.

I think that's the other part of my answer to the person who asked this question is that this is the kind of thing where in writing and in life for any goal that you have and, Ben, I'm sure you've talked about this with people before is that you're probably going to get rejected over and over and over again and it's just a matter of picking yourself back up and dealing with it. I am no better than anyone else doing that. I cried for a week and lost a lot of episodes of Real Housewives and then I just pull it together and then I am just like, "Okay," but this is something I really want.

So I gave myself a chance to wallow and cry and kick and scream and get really pissed off and feel really small and rejected and then I moved through that and continued to do it because that's really the only thing -- you read these success stories, the people, the most successful people have had the most failure, have faced the most rejection. The best ideas get the most resistance. So that's just the name of the game and you just have to be totally confident and comfortable with yourself and ask to persist despite that, despite everyone telling you you're not good enough, this isn't good enough, whatever. You have to hold your head up high yourself and not wait for other people to validate you.

Ben: Yeah, that's so good.

Alexis: It's so hard though. It's so easy to say that and it's so hard. It's painfully hard. I actually recently had an experience. It was at the Texas Conference for Women. I'm changing literally agents right now and so I'm pounding the pavement finding a new agent, and it was 20 minutes

before I had to give this talk in front of hundreds of people. I checked my phone. I checked my email on my phone and an agent has rejected me.

This is like I really thought this was going to happen, and it was the biggest sting. It was like that back of my throat want to cry. I now have to get in front of 200 -- no, I'm sorry more than 200 people, hundreds of people and play enthusiastic like how am I going to do this? So I feel like it seems like, "Oh, it's so easy for everybody else. Everyone else has it okay." We're all dealing with the exact same things.

Ben: Yeah, exactly. I feel like that's such a beautiful thing. I mean certainly teachers before us to do that, but I think it's a beautiful mark of our generation that more and more of us are willing to be transparent with the vulnerability of what it takes to really go, become who we want to be.

[0:50:07]

Alexis: Yeah.

Ben: You're describing that situation. It's so true. We're all going to go through it and we all get to be on the sidelines **[0:50:13] [Indiscernible]** each other to continue on and continue to grow those muscles to bounce back and do it. So big kudos to that. It's awesome.

Alexis: Yeah, I think the more real you are the better it works out anyway.

Ben: Exactly, yeah. It's more fun and authentic.

Alexis: That's for sure. Thank you.

Ben: Yeah. Totally. Well, what you just described about your agent and I wish you all the best in coming to the perfect person for that but relates to the question I always ask people which is I'm curious what you feel like your biggest growth edge is right now, what is the thing that you're most focused on becoming and stepping into or struggling with?

Alexis: Yeah. Oh, that's a great question. You're making me work on myself here. That is a really, really good question. I'm trying to come up with one thing, like I have like lots in mind for you. But I have been working so much recently on feeling fear and dealing with it and facing it anyways. I said earlier one of the best ways to get to what you want is to follow your fear. So I am trying to practice what I preach and it's really scary.

I spoke at a conference a couple of months ago with hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people and I was absolutely terrified. I'm so glad I did because now it's so fun. So now I get in front of an audience and hundreds of people and I'm not shaking. It's very exciting. I can sleep the night before which is a miracle. But I'm doing a lot of just working on feeling scared but doing things anyway, and it's so satisfying because I feel so proud of myself.

While I'm doing it, the best thing I can do into this thing like, "Oh, my God! What did I get myself into?" I often now think to myself I am going to be so proud of myself. I am so proud of myself. Look what I'm doing. I was so scared of this and now I'm doing it and it's just this amazing transformation, the conversation I'm having in my head now with myself about things that were or are scary,

Ben: Awesome. I love that.

Alexis: Yeah.

Ben: Well, people on the webcast, since we're coming to the end I want to give you all some opportunities to ask questions, to go ahead and stick them in. Last call for anything you want to share. I see one here, kind of a little of a backtrack but it's good. We want to go over someone is saying, "Are you finding that most of your friends are into personal growth is much as you are because I have a hard time sharing my interest in these subjects with my friends and want to find a way of having community that supports me who are also supporting the people in my life who are into those things."

Alexis: Oh, yeah, that's great. I actually really found a community of people who are into this stuff but not initially. I was way fringe for my friends. I was the first person talking about a lot of this stuff. Fortunately, I was doing it in a language that really spoke to my friends. So I was bringing them stuff that I was learning that was really helpful or really resonating with them.

So I interested them though they weren't doing the same kind of personal growth work I was. They were interested and excited to talk to me about it. But because I am in this field very publicly, I write a lot **[0:53:43] [Indiscernible]**. I have attracted at community of people that are into it which has been so much fun for me because I can really talk about it and like bathing in it some days.

I've also really thought out people who are interested in it, in personal growth, in personal development in general. A lot of that has been just

me reaching out to people who I see are also doing it, are joining communities like this one or people who are really into it. I think it's like this balance between putting it out there that you're interested and attracting people that way and also really finding like, okay, who's interested in the stuff in your community or online and getting people that aren't so into it with. It could be a real gift for them too.

Ben: Yeah, right on. That's great. That leads us perfectly into this. I think we'll be completing question coming from the webcast is, "You mentioned that you are married, and I'm wondering if you have any advice on how to have a relationship that really thrives."

Alexis: That's such a good question. That's another hour at least. That's a lifetime. Listen, I'm by no means a total expert on this subject, but I think we can all make an effort and so this is what I found. If you're really conscious of what you need in a relationship and what the other person needs in a relationship, you're well on your way. I think what often happens in our relationships is that we give people what we need, not what they need.

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I used to do this all the time with my husband. I was constantly showing him love in a way that I wanted to be shown love. So I would be very physically affectionate or get him gifts or whatever. These are all things that show me love but don't necessarily mean that that's not necessarily his love language.

So figuring out I think how to show love and figuring out what your partner really needs from you and wants from you and doing it for them as opposed to just doing for them the things that you want and need are like one of the most critical pieces to having a relationship that thrives. Also, kind of being sensitive to the other person and not taking everything so seriously. Even though that sounds so stupid it's like I have to remind myself on a daily basis like is this the end of the world? Not really.

Ben: Right.

Alexis: Although it feels like it right now because my rage meter has like blown through the roof. Yeah.

Ben: Nice. I love that.

Alexis: I hope that's helpful.

Ben: Yeah, that's great. So if you haven't heard about the love languages, I am sure you go into Google and check out the five love languages and look into that material which Alexis just spoke about and I'm sure there's a test too so you can look into your love languages and look into your partner's and also you can figure it out on your own. There's just ways that you are best suited to receive love in the ways you enjoy it. So it's great. I love that.

Well, awesome. It's been a total complete pleasure. I really appreciate getting to know you and I love what you're up to. How can people stay in touch with you following this?

Alexis: Yeah, thank you. Thanks for having me. So people can find me on my website and you can sign up for my newsletter there. I send out all kinds of inspirational little newsletters, but I won't crowd your inbox. I'll let you know what I'm up to there.

So you can find me at www.alexissclamberg.com, and you will have links there to all of my articles and to upcoming events and information about my book and stuff there too.

Ben: Right on. Alexis, thanks again so much.

Alexis: Yeah. Thanks so much for having me.

Ben: All the best.

Alexis: Yeah, I hope to connect with all of you listeners too.

Ben: Right on. Yeah, everybody, go check out her work and check her on Oprah Winfrey Network coming in next year and her book as well, Borrowed Wisdom, will be coming out.

So big time love, Alexis. Thanks for being with us.

Alexis: Thank you so much, Ben. Thanks for having me.

Ben: You're so welcome. And all of you, thanks again for tuning in. Big time love to you. Have a beautiful rest of your morning, afternoon, or evening and we'll be sending out emails soon with the next round of calls and some great guests coming up. I'm looking forward to it. As always you can write onto us at GenY@shiftnetwork.com with any questions, comments,

et cetera, et cetera. All right, everybody, have a beautiful rest of your day. Bye-bye.

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