

Angela Kelly Smith

Bret Shuford: Content-Creation Strategy Tips How to Become an Influencer and Grow Your Business Brand + Design Scoop ep. 019 Podcast Transcript

Welcome to Brand + Design Scoop where I share practical, relatable tips on branding, design, and building a business for freelancers and do-it-yourselfers who want to spend more time focusing on the work they really love doing.

I'm Kelly, a brand strategist and Squarespace website designer and founder of AKS Design Studio.

Today I'm interviewing Bret Shuford about growing your business through content creation.

Bret is the CreativeLife Coach. He's an openly LGBTQ-working actor and the founder of the CreativiVisibility mentor program. He has performed, produced, choreographed, and directed dozens of Broadway, regional, and national tours; viral videos; and television and film productions—from "Wicked" to "The Wolf of Wall Street."

As a certified life coach, he helps creatives all over the world move from impostor to influencer. He has worked with colleges, universities, and corporations, such as Disney and Marketing Impact Academy. His insights have been featured in leading outlets such as *The Huffington Post*, *Backstage*, "The Today Show," "Good Morning America," and "America's Got Talent." He's also one half of the lifestyle blog Broadway Husbands with his husband Stephen Hannah.

Welcome, Bret! It's great to have you here!

[Bret] I'm so happy to be here! Thanks, Kelly!

[Kelly] Absolutely! So, in addition to the things that I just read off, can you tell me a little bit more about yourself—like, you know, what do you do in your business, who your clients are, anything you want to share.

[Bret] Well, sure. I mean, i spent 22 years living in New York City, working as an actor. And, when the pandemic hit, I ended up, through a series of events, my husband and I ended up moving from Pittsburgh to Houston, where now we we actually have planted roots here.

I grew up in southeast Texas. My whole family is here. But, when I left, I tell you, I left in 1997 and was like, "I'm never going back," and here we are. You know, never say never.

[Kelly] Yep!

[Bret] It's 2022, and I now live in a house, we are having our first child, and, I live in a house in Houston, and I've been able to take a lot of what i've learned over the years of being a performer and successfully navigating that industry at a high level and translating that into helping entrepreneurs, especially really... My vision is to help LGBTQ+ entrepreneurs and creatives become more visible because, as we're learning even now, there is a real need for more visibility of, especially people in leadership, who identify in that area so that we can start to dispel some of the mysteries and ignorance that kind of plagues that community.

So, it's been a real passion of mine to help [people] step into a higher level of leadership, not only in personal development and all of that space, but in in marketing and social media and building their own businesses and being, you know, like i said, say influential in helping change the world.

[Kelly] That's awesome! Yeah, I love that part about helping people go from impostor to influencer.

[Bret] Thanks.

[Kelly] I mean, we deal with impostor syndrome so much. It's, I mean, it's really prevalent among creative people. So, you have found that to be the case, as well?

[Bret] Well, it is, I mean, if you think about it, it makes total sense. It is an industry that has profited off of a scarcity mindset for years. You know, anyone who's, anyone who's seen as a creative is seen as flaky. And, you know, we're all told, "You're never going to make money; you're going to struggle; you're going to deal with a rejection." You know, all those things that are told to us before we even pursue the industry. Right before we even pursue going after that creative dream, people tell you this these things: "You got to be a lawyer or a doctor in order to be wealthy." And it's not true. It's just not true.

You know, life is hard. I remember, you know, I had a brief moment where I was teaching theater. Not my favorite thing to do, I learned, but these parents were like, "How do you know, how do you deal, it must be so hard living in New York and pursuing your dream." I'm like, "Life is hard, honey." Like, give him break.

Life is hard, and if life is going to be hard, no matter what, you might as well go for the thing you really want to do.

[Kelly] Very true, yeah. So, what do your clients come to you for?

[Bret] Most of my clients come because they want to, like I say, like be seen. They want more visibility. They want to be able to make money.

But the challenge is, they deal with this imposter syndrome, this idea that if they're seen, there are, especially artists, people who have maybe skills and have trained as artists, are afraid they're gonna sell out.

[Kelly] Oh yes.

[Bret] Right. They're afraid they're gonna be a sell-out if they grow a social media following. They're afraid they're going to betray... the people who are "high artists" that they trained with are gonna be judging them

[Kelly] Yeah, yeah.

[Bret] And, you're like, they're, yes, but how much money are they making? Right?

[Kelly] Right.

[Bret] What if you actually become seen and actually start to get paid for what it is you love to do? You can't do that if you're not building a following. And you know you can't make an impact, you can't change the world if people don't know who you are.

[Kelly] Yeah.

[Bret] So, it's about helping people, kind of get to a place where they can do that and not feel gross and not feel like they're selling out because they do see, we all see this, right? A lot of people who market themselves in their brands very poorly, right? There are a lot of people who are super-aggressive and sales-y about their promotions. And it turns, it turns that impostor on. It's like you see a piece of bad content. You're like, "I don't want to be that." And then we all of a sudden, we generally make social media that, when it's like, no, actually you get to create whatever you want. It can just be a version of yourself you want it to be. But that impostor is looking for proof. Always.

[Kelly] You're right.

[Bret] It's always looking for a moment where you can just go, "See, it's gross. It's icky and gross." And if you want proof, you'll find it

[Kelly] Yep, you're right. Our brains are looking for proof for anything and everything. But it's just their brains hone in on, that *home* in on that more quickly than anything.

[Bret] Yeah, so when people come to me, it's usually they have a skill they're trained. They have maybe even a following. Maybe they have, you know a business. But they can't scale it. They don't know why the things that they're making aren't working. They haven't maybe done enough research, and mostly they haven't figured out how to take this person that they are, this incredible artist or creative, and translate that into a digital space that makes sense.

[Kelly] It's like Michael Gerber [writes] in his book *The E-Myth Revisited*. And he talks about how you need to be three people when you're an entrepreneur: The entrepreneur, like the visionary; the manager, who essentially runs things; and then the technician, the doer, the artist, the maker. And so many people are the technician when they start a business, especially a freelance business, a small business. And the technician, the the artist, the maker, you know, isn't necessarily thinking big picture. They don't necessarily know how to run things. They aren't thinking in terms of marketing, and they are worried about selling out.

[Bret] Yeah, and from my point of view, a lot of people I help who are maybe more entrepreneurial, who maybe haven't pursued a career in the arts.... So that's my background, right, having a successful career, especially in commercial theater, which I think is the perfect blend of making money in business and arts. But when you come from this artistic background, what i've learned in my community is that we just want to be recognized for our talents.

[Kelly] Yeah, yeah.

[Bret] Right? There are so many actors and dancers and singers who are like, "I just want to sing and people to pay me." And it's like, "That's awesome, yes." That would be wonderful if that could happen, and maybe you've read some story in some magazine on "Entertainment Tonight" that says this person was discovered which is total BS, 'cause that's not true.

[Kelly] Right, right.

[Bret] You know, if you look at their family line, their dad was probably in the industry, or they went to Yale, or, you know. So, it's always interesting the way media spins, the way we all sort of see things, our perception versus the real boots-on-the-ground work. And so what I've learned is that there's the artists who just want to be recognized for the work and don't want to actually put themselves out there because it feels scary and vulnerable. But then there's those people who are entrepreneurs and very, like you're saying, technically-minded, like they're measuring everything. They're measuring the analytics. They're trying to figure out the algorithm. They want to find all the keywords and SEO, and you're like, "But there's people on the other side of that and you just need to connect with them and move them and touch them." And, all of a sudden, if you could do that, you're gonna see that the analytics will go boom.

[Kelly] Yeah! So, okay. So, how are you helping these clients do that? What are you doing with them?

[Bret] Oh, my gosh. Well, it's a lot of things.

[Kelly] I'm not asking you to give away your secrets!

[Bret] It's a lot of things, but I mean my most, the way I've created, I've created a formula that I call the "Create Method" and that really is, you know, it's, what's the word, when I, why can't you think of it. I want to say alliteration is not. It's the, each letter represents...

[Kelly] Oh, acronym

[Bret] Oh, my gosh, my brain! I think the baby shower yesterday just like took my brain away. Yeah, acronym. So, Create Method is a method I came up with that is an acronym and it stands for: Clarity, research, establish, authority, T is time management, and then E is for expanding.

[Kelly] Awesome!

[Bret] And so the idea is that I use sort of an overarching analogy in my methodology is Disneyland because I'm a huge Disney fan but also because I believe that your brand is, at any time, someone enters your sphere—whether it's in-person, networking, following you on social media—they're entering your theme park. You create an immersive experience for them. And Disneyland is the epitome of the perfect theme park. If you walk into Disneyland they immerse you, sights, sounds, all the senses.

And there's a reason why that park has been recreated all over the world. So, I use that as sort of a map to guide people through building their personal brand because it starts with Main Street, and Main Street at Disneyland, you can't get to the castle without walking down Main Street. That's your only way in. And the castle is your vision. It's your goals. It's your life's vision.

And so every time someone enters your park, they need to know what that vision is. Can you imagine Disneyland without the castle?

[Kelly] Right, right.

[Bret] You need to know what that is. That's the guiding force that everyone comes back to. But Main Street is Walt Disney's idealized version of his childhood home in Missouri. So, when you're, you don't even know you're doing this, when you're walking down Main Street you are being immersed in Walt Disney's past, in his values. All the windows have the names of the people who helped him build his life and career. So, even the people are looking down that help you, you're being immersed in all of that.

So, it starts there for me. With people, it's like, know your castle. Know your vision. But also start to own your story, your past because it's what makes you who you are.

You know, there's a lot of people who teach social media. There's a lot of people who are beautiful singers, beautiful actors. But they're not you.

[Kelly] Right.

[Bret] So, the more you own that story and then also choose the stories you don't want to share, and, you know, there might be some things you don't want to tell, but you have to consciously make those decisions in order to successfully move forward and telling your story repeatedly, in building that brand.

[Kelly] That's brilliant. I love that.

[Bret] Thanks!

[Kelly] That metaphor, yeah, that's really great.

[Bret] I mean that does make it fun. I mean, there's just so many people who teach marketing, and it just feels like a science.

[Kelly] Yes, yes. And it can be fun. It really can. And, you're right, turning it into something fun for other people because, if you already love marketing, then you naturally find it fun.

[Bret] Totally.

[Kelly] And like I always found in school, the classes that I liked, and I was a good student. I just, I loved learning. I loved school. But the few classes that I found difficult were the ones where the teacher answered, "You know." And I said, "How do you know how to do this?" So, like chemistry, how did you figure out how to balance the equations... that "You just know." No, lady you don't just know. So, she was entirely the wrong person to teach it. So, when I'm teaching something, you know, like about marketing or branding, I have to put myself in their shoes, you know, the client's shoes, the reader's, the listener's shoes, whatever. It's like, and the block is usually that, like you said earlier, they find it slimy, you know "sleazy" I think was your word. So, we have to overcome that block and I know that they tend not to find it fun. Y'all listening might not find it fun! But it can be when you do it authentically. And like you were saying, bring in your story.

[Bret] And ultimately, you know what's beautiful, like going back to kind of the Disney analogy, it's like Disney, the reason why this company as a corporation has existed as long as it has, good and bad, is because they put their customers first. They put the experience, and they don't even

call them “customers.” They call them “guests.” They put their guests first. And that is so, to me, the thing that unlocks for a lot of my clients is when they stop making it about them. They've been consumers for so long they forget that the person making the content isn't making content for the person. They're making it for their audience. And if you don't know who your audience is, and you don't know why you're doing it, and the purpose and what it's driving to, and you don't know what stories you want them to gain knowledge and experience from, your own personal life, then you're going to constantly get burnt out. You're going to constantly get stuck and you're going constantly not to have fun.

[Kelly] Yep, very true. And what you just said about, like, the purpose that the content is driving to, so sure we ultimately wanna make money. Yes, we want to convert website visitors into paying clients. If we're creating content as a way to make money then then, yes, pure content creators may have ads on their websites, whatever. I get that. We want to make money. But, like you just said, we have to be creating the content that's valuable. It needs to be helpful. It has to serve the people who are reading the blogs, listening to the podcasts. We're not doing it for our health. Though I do have a driving need to create. You know, I'm an artist; I'm a writer; and I want to create anyway.

[Bret] Same.

[Kelly] So, like your clients, as well, they're creative, so they're gonna create.

[Bret] Yes.

[Kelly] And like the professional artist in me who paints and does film work, that's, for me, even though you know I also sell, but i'm not creating that with the viewer in mind. That's different. But when we're creating content to share with the reader, you know, or the listener, that's different. We have to create it for them, don't we?

[Bret] Correct. Yeah, yeah. I think that that's ultimately because no one's consuming social media for you. They're consuming it for themselves. So, you have to give them something that they feel seen, they feel related to, or they feel like they're learning something.

So, I would say there's three things that need to happen. You need to educate, entertain, or inspire.

So, if you're not doing one of those three things, you're probably doing it wrong. It needs to be about them, if you want to grow your following.

And so, I think that it's interesting, too, with, I know artists it's a struggle, you know, for a lot of the artists I work with because of what you were just saying, like they want to just paint and not think about who they're painting for. They wanna sing and not think about who they're singing for—which is fun, which is great. Like i usually i say to some of those people then, you

don't, if you don't want to serve an audience, then social media is probably not the great place, a great place to be. And that's okay. Stop.

You know, we all tend to buy into other people's rules. You'll hear somebody say, "Well, if you want to grow, you got to be on social media." That's not true. I know plenty of Tony-winning, Oscar-nominated actors who are not on social media. I know plenty of painters who make a great living not being on social media. But you do need to decide what you're going to do to market your business if you do want to make money doing that. So, social media is just one of the easiest and current ways to do that

[Kelly] Yeah, for sure, yeah.

[Bret] I'm not sure where i was going with that, but that's....

[Kelly] No, it's good! So, you do both a blog and a podcast, as well, don't you?

[Bret] Yeah, so I have my own podcast, the CreatiVisibility Podcast. But then I also have a personal brand with my husband called Broadway Husbands which now has about 70,000 Instagram followers. And so we do, I do YouTube content and Instagram content for that channel, Youtube content and Instagram content for my own channel, and, believe it or not, I still audition here and there. So, it's been it's been a fun balance of figuring out how to do all of this. And then I'm sure it's all going to change in a few weeks when we have a baby. But, you know, it's all part of the adventure, you know.

[Kelly] So, I mean, that is a lot of content for few to be creating between the blog, YouTube, the podcast. About how often do you publish content?

[Bret] So, I try to publish...

[Kelly] Not including social media, so, they the actual content.

[Bret] So, I try to do, you know, I try to go live once a week, kind of the way I, and this is what I teach with my clients is kind of this hierarchy of content. And the idea is that you do one long-form piece of content. So, whether you like to blog or do video or even, you know, for me i'd like to choose one form. So, I do a long-form. I like video. I can talk for for a long time. I love to talk! So, I will do, I will go live on a topic, typically it would used to be on Facebook. Now i'm shifting over to YouTube. So, I stream that so I'm getting one piece of content out of that.

[Kelly] Nice.

[Bret] I will then send that and get it translated or transcribed. That transcription will get edited into a blog. I will then take that video and splice it down into snippets for Instagram reels or Instagram video, and then we'll take three to five minutes of that and put that up on YouTube.

So, it just depends on the content and where I feel like it fits my audience. But really what I try to do is minimize the work: Get that one base piece of content that I can then split up and use in multiple ways.

[Kelly] That's awesome.

[Bret] Yeah.

[Kelly] I have talked about that before but not in that exact way, about you know do a podcast and then repurpose it. You know, do a broad topic, podcast or blog a broad topic and then chop it up into several more specific subjects to blog or podcast about, and, yeah, it saves time.

[Bret] And one of the best ways I say with clients who are just starting out maybe is I'll start and say, "Hey, listen, do a summit, or do a challenge." "Well, what if I can't get people?" You're not doing it for people. You're doing it for content.

So, if two people are there, great. If five people are there, 500 people, or whatever, it doesn't matter. Line up for a full week. Do three interviews a day or three pieces of topics a day. Record everything. You know, that's kind of how it started for me in getting my content out there. What I love about interviewing people, too, and this is why the podcast is great—I film the podcast we can use those snippets on Instagram so you're constantly getting as much content out of everything.

But what I tell people is, like, do an event. Make an event out of it so you build a library. Because the truth is, like, people aren't paying as much attention as everyone thinks they are. You know?

[Kelly] Right.

[Bret] I could share the same piece of content that I shared three months ago, and I get an email from somebody going, "This is amazing! When did you do this?" It's like, this is the second or third time I've actually shared this piece of content. And they just didn't even realize it.

[Kelly] Yes. Well, and people aren't ready all the time.

[Bret] Correct.

[Kelly] So, you share something right now, and they weren't ready to hear it. You share it at another time, they'll be ready then. And you have new people joining your community, so they didn't have the opportunity to hear it then. They'll have the opportunity when you share it again in the future.

[Bret] Yeah.

[Kelly] I used to feel like, no, I will never share a piece of content twice. And now I'm like, of course, I will.

[Bret] Yep. You know those people are like why I'm not gonna need a different outfit every day. Like, girl, I've worn the sweater, this gold sweater I'm wearing right now, I have worn so many times it's become like a signature piece. And then somebody will actually be like, "I love that gold on you!"

[Kelly] Yes, it does look great on you!

[Bret] Well, thank you!

[Kelly] Yes, I know, why can't we have a signature piece, you know, a uniform?

[Bret] It's totally, no one's, you know, it's like somebody said, what is that quote, I think it was Oprah said this: "People don't remember what you did, but they remember how you made them feel."

[Kelly] Exactly.

[Bret] Those rules don't change versus in person and on social media. It's the same thing.

[Kelly] Yeah, totally. Alright, so. Obviously you recommend that everyone create content unless... Okay, let me take back that "obvious" because you just gave the exception of artists who are like, "No, I don't want to be on social media" because they don't care as much about connecting with people. So, who should create content? Who do you recommend, let me get, let's get rid of that word "should."

[Bret] There's no "should," right.

[Kelly] No "shoulding" all over of ourselves!

[Bret] Yeah, but I think that if you have an impulse to reach a bigger audience, if you know you can make a bigger impact, if you're consuming content... This, I like to tell the people this: If you're consuming content, you should be creating content.

[Kelly] Great! Love that!

[Bret] Because you're, it's sort of like, you know, when we're buying things or how people say you vote with your dollars, if you're giving money to organizations whose values don't align with yours, then you're actually contributing to the problem.

[Kelly] Right.

[Bret] It's the same with consuming content. Like, if you're consuming a ton of content and not creating content, you're actually not adding your own voice to the world. And your voice matters. There's a reason you're consuming this contents—because you see yourself in that. So, you might as well start to put your own voice out there in whatever way that that is for you, that can help somebody else because if you're feeling a certain way in your consumption, guaranteed there's somebody else feeling the exact same way that you are. And you can help that person today if you put your voice out there.

[Kelly] Absolutely. Yep, absolutely. It's like when people are wondering about, "Should I start this business? There are already too many life coaches. There are already too many website designers. There are already too many whoevers, whatever, too many businesses like this." No, no, no. It's like, that's an excuse.

[Bret] It's a resistance.

[Kelly] Yes.

[Bret] It's the imposter syndrome.

[Kelly] It's the impostor. It's fear, yeah.

[Bret] I always say, I used to use the an analogy that like I love Mexican food. I grew up in Texas. I'm not gonna eat at one Mexican restaurant. I'm gonna go to try different ones, of course.

[Kelly] I do have my favorites.

[Bret] Of course! But then, like, I'm not gonna be like, if somebody's like, "Let's go to this one," I'm not gonna be like, "No, I only eat at this one."

[Kelly] Right!

[Bret] I may be like, "Great, let's try it! Let's do it!"

[Kelly] Yes, their salsa may kick ass and I'm not gonna miss out on that. Or queso. Come on! And margaritas.

[Bret] So, like, yes, there's probably other people doing it. Everything's been done before. Even "West Side Story" is *Romeo and Juliet*.

[Kelly] Right.

[Bret] It's the same thing. So, that's all the more reason for you to put yourself out there.

[Kelly] Yeah, no one has said what you're going to say just the way you're saying it. Like you said earlier, we need your voice, your perspective, your thoughts, your feelings on it. You know, the more personal you make the content, the more perspective you give it, the better, the more it's gonna resonate with people and connect with people.

I love that you said that earlier; it's not just a matter of, what, teaching. You know, you don't want to sound didactic, certainly not all the time. Lord knows I do plenty! You've got to really make the connection with people.

[Bret] Yeah, people, you, like, think about... So, I did this really cool immersive experience last week. It was the Frida Kahlo immersive experience. There's one with Van Gogh, and now there's this one with Frida Kahlo. And, like, I don't know Frida Kahlo's work. I didn't, I've seen some of it, you know, recognize it, 'cause there's so many self portraits. But what people love about Frida is not her paint brushes; it's not the strokes in her paintings; it's her story. It's who she is and what she represented and the things that she did. It's the life that she led, the fact that she was an accident and she had to overcome that.

And her mess was her message. And we all have that ability. Like, there's a lot of great painters out there, but they're not Frida.

[Kelly] Right.

[Bret] Right. Your story, and that, so I always kind of used these two terms: You can be on social media in order to grow or in your brand and growing your following or getting more people coming into your sphere. You have to bridge the gap between your credibility, your skill set and the training and all that, and your vulnerability, your ability to connect people and be seen—that Brené Brown part of us. And there's a lot of people we know who just share their credibility, and you're like, "I don't care. Like, I don't need to learn more how to make better Instagram stories. Why should I learn from you?" But then we also know those people who only share their vulnerabilities. It's like, "Oh my gosh, you're just like dumping your emotions on here, and I don't know who you are, what you do."

So, the people who are perfectly balanced in both of those things are the people who really break through and become known.

[Kelly] And that's tough to do obviously.

[Bret] It takes practice. It takes trying. It takes trying and maybe even failing sometimes, and not getting it right until you do get it right. It's like making the perfect recipe.

[Kelly] Yeah and that trial and error and failing sometimes, that's okay, you know.

[Bret] Yeah, everyone has. I made a an Instagram Reels this morning that's literally, like, you got, you have to suck first in order to be good, or, I forgot. It was like, in order to get even, like, remotely good at something, you kind of have to suck at at first.

[Kelly] Yeah, totally. And, you know, like, the biggest and the best out there started out sucking. You know, the major influencers that we follow and admire, they started out sucking. They started out with big failures and just kept at it. And so, yeah, I used to be, I mean, I'm still kind of a perfectionist, but I used to be really afraid of vulnerability to the point that, you know, like, I wouldn't ask questions in class if they were gonna make me look stupid, quote unquote. And then I realized, you know, there are other people out there who have the same question and are probably holding back, too. And, so, if I ask, I won't, I probably won't look stupid. Some people will still think I look stupid! Whatever. Screw them. You know, there's gonna be other people who are gonna thank me for this, and that kind of feedback loop, everything ended up making me become more and more vulnerable and real and closer to people.

[Bret] Isn't that it amazing? I think that in my head I've always just always come from this place of "what do i have to lose?" Right? That's always, and that's easy for for me to say, right, cause I'm, I've just always been like, "Whatever," like, "Life's too short, go for it, take the adventure." And I understand that there's people's trauma and there's not just trauma, you know with a capital T but there's those little-t traumas of societal traumas or cultural traumas which is, again, why I helped the LGBTQ community--because we all have suffered societal traumas. Of course, I think women suffer that at a great level, as well, you know, and of minority groups.

So, we, but everyone, regardless if it's a capital-T or a lowercase-t trauma, it gets in the way of us really going for that thing that we want. But the truth is, everyone has it no matter the size or no matter the capital letter or lowercase, and you don't win a prize, or, you know, you can still relate to people no matter the size of that. And there are people who need that message. And so for me, I just think that if you can as much as possible know that there's nothing to lose. There's nothing to lose in trying and putting it out there and putting yourself out there.

[Kelly] Very true. And the people who will end up resonating and being helped...

[Bret] They'll find you

[Kelly] It just feels so good. They will find you. Yeah

[Bret] They'll find you. And, gosh, that to me, that's, like, what life is about. It's about service. It's about helping others. Everyone just wants to feel seen and feel connected. And we we have such a great opportunity to do that now in our lives.

[Kelly] Yeah, we really do. I mean, for all of the the ill that can come out of social media, I just don't leave, simply because of the positive that comes out of it, the connections and the opportunity to help and do good.

[Bret] I agree with you on that.

[Kelly] Ain't leaving. So, I mean, you've shared so many good tips! Do you have any, like, any really succinct, specific tips you wanna share with listeners, specifically on, well, let's say, yeah, how about social media then, since we were just talking about that?

[Bret] I believe social media, if you want to be successful at social media, posting and creating content needs to become a habit, not an event. And so, if it still feels like a whole three-act play to make a piece of content on social media, you have got to simplify. You have got to stop overthinking it. And you've got to get to a place where you know it can be just as easy as brushing your teeth. It can be just as easy as putting your contacts in. You know, it can be just as simple and easy as getting up getting on the bike, working out, whatever these things are that you do that create healthy habits. You have to attach this to that if you, if growing your following and becoming a content creator is your goal.

[Kelly] That's awesome. I tell you that I have not gotten back to doing, like, back as in from when I was a life coach however many years ago. So, I have not gotten back into doing any video on social media. [I've got] videos on my website, tutorials, but I haven't been doing any social-media videos yet. So, what you're saying I know to be true. But I'm like, "Oh, it does not feel that simple." It's, you know, doing the visuals, where I go into Adobe Creative Cloud Express, and I create visuals even multiples, you know, for Instagram, up to ten, you know. And I write stuff well. That's easy for me because I love writing. Now, I do love talking, obviously. But to pull out the video and the lights and get everything set up and do I trust the mic on my computer, or do I pull out the lavalliere, which I do have. It's a production!

And I know that people say, "Screw all, just whip out the the phone." I have a stand for my iPad or phone. Just throw it on there and do the damn thing.

[Bret] Yeah, so, I mean, yes, or you know how can you, like, to me, I always say to people, it's like, okay, this, like for instance, I have a client who is a YouTuber, and he's still editing his videos. And he's like, "Oh, I don't know if I can get these videos out in time." I'm like, "Stop editing your videos. What are you doing?" It's like, there are people who get paid to do this. Like, pay them to do it right. Or, you know, for me, like even if you really want this content creation to be part of your life and then how do you create a habit out of it.

Okay, if it's a full production every time I have to go to make it, how do i make it less of a production?

[Kelly] Yeah.

[Bret] I may have to set up a station in a corner and tell people, "This is my station," right, or whatever it is, you know. For me it was like finally having an office. I lived in New York City for 22 years and never had this kind of space. But to be able to show up and just press record, how do you simplify simplify simplify?

[Kelly] You are correct. Yes, i should never take down the light kit.

[Bret] Just set it up in a corner. It might be annoying and ugly, but, like, that's your job. That's your business.

[Kelly] Yep, you're correct because it's the, it's the process of setting up, even though it's quick and easy. It's two little lights. It's two lights that stand on the the table and boom. So, yeah.

[Bret] Just remove the bottleneck, right. Just remove it. Just go for it.

[Kelly] You're right

[Bret] That's what I've learned.

[Kelly] So, I will challenge myself to...

[Bret] I can't wait to see what you make!

[Kelly] Y'all are hearin' it here first. So, this time next week I will have a video up on social media. I don't know what I'll be doing. Not promising length or content. Just I will have one—of me.

[Bret] I can't wait to see it!

[Kelly] Excellent. All right, what else do we have?

[Bret] I think that was that.

[Kelly] You have shared so much great stuff!

[Bret] Oh, thank you

[Kelly] I really appreciate your being here and being so generous with your time and content.

[Bret] I love it. I love talking about this. I am so happy to meet you. I'm so excited that we're now in each other's circle. So, I can't wait to see what we build.

[Kelly] Me, too! This is just fabulous! Y'all can find Bret online at Bret Shuford dot com. I will put that link in the show notes. I will also links to your social media accounts.

[Bret] Great. Thank you.

[Kelly] So, I would love to read y'all's thoughts on this episode. You can leave comments on this episode's post on my website. Link in the show notes, of course. And I'll be back next week with more branding, design, and business tips.

See you next time on Brand + Design Scoop!

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Bret Shuford at [The CreativeLife Coach](#) website

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Angela Kelly Smith provides custom Squarespace websites, branding strategy, and marketing instruction so freelancers and entrepreneurs can run a successful business while spending more time focusing on the work they really love doing. Check out her [website design + marketing strategy services](#).