

PROFESSIONAL
TROUBLEMAKER
with LUVVIE AJAYI JONES

[00:00:00] **this bill was the straw that broke the camel's back because literally it sent me to the bed. Like it sent me to the bed for a week, a week.**

I was not getting out of bed, which I've never done. And what I mean is I literally did not get out of bed for a week. Like I would go to the bathroom. I would get some food sometimes I was done because I was so deeply upset about how no matter what I'm doing to do my part, no matter how much I keep getting knocked on my [00:00:30] ass and getting back up, the hits keep coming.

[00:01:00] [00:01:30] Welcome back to Professional Troublemaker and let's get back into the truth, y'all. Where I last left off, I was talking about my last fire, which was one of my leads. I had let them go at the end of June, and I was left with one [00:02:00] internal team member, my content assistant. So, in this episode, I actually want to talk about the fallout. At first, I was going to talk about the rebuild, and then I had y'all vote on social. Because I said, before I talk about how I rebuilt my business and saved it I think it's important to talk about the fallout.

What happened after I fired everybody? What did I find that surprised me? What were the holes and gaps I had to plug and find [00:02:30] solutions for? What were all the things that happened in the aftermath of me basically letting everybody go and resetting my company? Because let me tell you a lot of things happened and this story won't be complete without me talking about all of those things beyond that. I also want to talk about how I felt as it was all happening. Let's talk about how it left me and what I had to do to heal from a moment that really scarred me in a way that I was not prepared for [00:03:00] or expecting.

We don't talk enough about entrepreneurship as a source of trauma and triggers. So I'll definitely get into how and why, because if you're not in therapy and you're trying to run your own business, good luck and Godspeed may the odds ever be in your favor because y'all it's the hunger games. It is the hunger games. Follow on this episode will be the one with dr. Joy, because that will be timely because after we talk about the fallout, [00:03:30] we got to definitely now talk about how you recover. So, yes, this episode is a time grab some tea or you should be cleaning your house, however way you want to handle this.

And again, I want to ask you to do this. If you're finding value in this season and these episodes, please share it widely. Tell others to tap in because I know it's helping people. Do them that favor of letting them know about professional [00:04:00] Troublemaker. And I've gotten such amazing feedback about how much these series of podcast episodes have really helped people. And a lot of people have been like, we really see the truth in this. And I will tell you, I'm committed to modeling who I say I am in real time. to say all I've said, it's been a choice because there were a lot of times when I was like, should I say that?

Should I tell him that? Should I go that deep? But I said, yeah. In 2021, my second book came out, [00:04:30] Professional Troublemaker, The Fear Fighter Manual. And I wrote that book because I was I wrote it for the version of me who was afraid of doing big things, who sometimes got big opportunities and sometimes doubted whether she could rise to the occasion. The me who turned my TED talk down twice because I didn't think I was ready for it. I was afraid of bombing on that stage. I wrote the book to help me figure out and remember that I should always choose courage and in the times that I have, I have been rewarded for [00:05:00] it. That in the moments when I'm afraid that I'm being asked to rise to the occasion and not fall back and pause. I wanted to always remind myself that courage is a choice and without courage, there is no brave, because if it was easy, everybody would do it. Everybody would do it if it was easy. So that's why the moments that are scary are so full of anxiety and doubt because the things that we must do are usually going to be scary because on the other [00:05:30] side of the fear is truly The life that we want to live. And that's why I wrote Professional Troublemaker, my second New York times bestseller. So if you've loved my episodes that I've been talking about the truth of entrepreneurship, if you've loved my voice, my writing, you will love this book.

So I'm going to ask you to do this. Support me by buying my book. If these episodes have blessed you, I ask of you to buy a copy of Professional Troublemaker. Not just to show up [00:06:00] for me, but to show up for yourself because I deeply believe that this book will push you forward. It will give you courage. It won't loan you courage. I used to say I want to loan people courage, but I don't want you to give it back to me.

I want you to keep that courage as a way to say yes to yourself. So if you've been sitting there thinking about how valuable these episodes are to you, I need you to do that for me and you. That's how you can say thank you to me because I really do appreciate your messages. They do matter. But a lot of you have been [00:06:30] saying, how can we support you in this moment? so that's a very strong way for you to support me that I'd really appreciate by my book, Professional Troublemaker, The Fear Fighter Manual. If you already have a

copy. Buy one for a friend who, you know, needs to hear and be given courage. Buy one for somebody who, you know, needs to hear that they got this. Buy one for somebody who, you know, would benefit from hearing how they can choose courage over And over again, especially in the moments when they're [00:07:00] super afraid, how you can do that.

You can go to professional troublemaker book. com. It's available everywhere. Everywhere books are sold, Amazon, Target, Barnes and noble, and there's an audio book and I recorded it that you could also get audible, you know, wherever. So that's my ask of you. Pause this and go place an order. All right, now let me jump into this.

So again, end of June, 2023, I had fired mostly everybody. I had my [00:07:30] Lone Ranger and in the firing of everybody was me opting out of chaos. I unsubscribed from chaos and tried to report it as spam. Because what had been created, the chaos that had been created was in mistakes being made, some big, some small, some public facing, some private.

It was in productivity levels that didn't make sense. It was in expectations that were not met. Promises that were not kept. And then me running behind [00:08:00] everybody trying to make it all okay. Me trying to make sure my partners didn't notice my audience didn't notice me making sure the quality of my output did not suffer because creating excellent work is critical to me and that I could still manage it all.

I was trying to make it all work. So when I fired everybody, I was opting out of chaos. At that point, our biggest project which is Little Troublemaker, the launch of that book was officially finished. It was a [00:08:30] moment for me to take a deep breath, a moment. Cause that's all I had really. I might've taken about three days, but I put up autoresponders and I tapped out for a moment.

And that gave me the energy to keep going. **I took a deep breath not to do just to sit in the crumbling for a second. You know what's interesting? a part of me felt a little bit free because sometimes we're afraid of the crumbling.** [00:09:00] **But when it happens, you realize you just took some heavy weight off.**

And the fear of failing that we have is often bigger than the fail itself. And I, by the criteria I had set for myself, had failed at CEOing. I literally spent six months in the Titanic version of a company and I had almost lost it all.

And now I'd let mostly everyone go. So that was not by any means a win. Like by any measure of success, [00:09:30] could you say that was a win? But when it happened and after it happened, and when I was down to one, I felt a little bit lighter because I was no longer chasing people to not mess things up on my behalf.

I was no longer looking at massive amounts of money coming out of the company bank account every two weeks. Like I had killed the noise. Now all I had left was myself. My dreams, my Lone [00:10:00] Ranger, my hope for a better future for my business, the lessons I knew I needed to learn, and the scars they left me with.

So yeah, I took a short pause to sigh. I didn't travel anywhere for those three days, but I simply didn't have meetings, didn't check emails, and I didn't care about deadlines. Because oddly enough, it was freeing. When something close to the worst case scenario happens and you didn't completely lose your mind, [00:10:30] you realize you can handle a lot more than you thought.

But listen, listen, I was not trying to apply for God's strongest soldiers, but I was definitely in the army of the Lord. You hear me? Because I was already over there in the battle. You hear me? In the battle. So after the initial sense of relief happened, then I felt driven because I was clear what my next steps were

I was clear what my next assignment was. I was clear what my next work would be and the ways in which I could rebuild my [00:11:00] company. I was very clear about that. And for that, I'm really thankful. And it was The Book Academy. That thing didn't just save my company, but it was a light of hope for me when so much was dark.

The Book Academy was God's work. And in the next episode, I'm going to talk about the exact rebuild there. It'd be easy to run to that part to get to the victory moment. But if I skip the additional tussle, I'd be leaving gaps and I wouldn't be telling the whole truth. So let me [00:11:30] talk more about the parts since July, 2023, which was 11 months from this recording that continued to test and try me.

The fallout was real. The fallout of no longer having the old team. Of the old ways of how we and I were operating and of the shambles that 2023 kind of left for me to clean up. All right,

So let me dig into this one. one of the [00:12:00] biggest consequences of all that had happened with my business is that I lost trust in myself.

I didn't know how to trust myself anymore. And that is one of the biggest scars that I had to work through because it was so anti how I've operated in general. It is so counter to who I am. I've always trusted myself always. If there was one person I depended on, [00:12:30] it was me. Now I was questioning what I knew to be true.

Because typically I feel very clear, intentional, and concrete in the way that I move. And I feel like that's led me here. And in the way God leads me, I'm very decisive with people, with decisions, with situations, with my opinions. I'm decisive, but this left me questioning my decisions and my decision making ability in general.[00:13:00]

I no longer trusted my ability to discern who people were and whether they were right to walk alongside me in the ways that I felt like I got team building wrong too many times in spite of whether it was my fault or not, I no longer trusted my sense of discernment, my intuition, my gut, because I felt like I had made so many mistakes in personnel choices and the trust that I gave to people.

I started taking longer to make decisions. [00:13:30] And I started needing more feedback and input. I started asking more people for their thoughts because my compass, my inner compass was compromised. It was off. Like North didn't feel like up anymore. And that was wild because I'm somebody who's very confident.

I'm very self assured. I am who I am. And it has led me that and God. Okay. When I was talking to my therapist, she pointed out, To me, all the ways I was giving people the grace [00:14:00] they hadn't earned, especially after they made repeated critical mistakes. And honestly, my trust had been breached so many times so much for so long.

And I was disappointed in myself for allowing it. So I knew there was a healing opportunity in that. I knew. In the past, my old therapist, may she rest peacefully, had asked me one day, why do people have to burn your house down for you to let them go? Why do you have to give [00:14:30] people eight chances for them to prove to you that they don't belong next to you?

And she was like, ultimately, it's because you wish people would do that for you. Man, Dr. Patterson used to read me for filth. Okay. Read me and drag me. I loved her. Like, ma'am, you, you, you ain't got to snatch every one of my edges out. I mean, you really do because wow, we often extend treatments to other people that we wish for ourselves.

We project how we want to be [00:15:00] treated sometimes. And a lot of times we aren't creating the boundary that we should because we're sitting in wish and hope and potential. And for me, what it meant was I had been putting myself in the line of fire for other people's wellbeing for longer than it should have gone on.

And because of it, I was holding that and almost punishing myself for not making the quicker decisions to fire, for not identifying the red flags quicker on people who I had hired, [00:15:30] and for allowing people to make not one, not two, not three, not four, not five mistakes before I finally said, you know what, you gotta go.

So me as a leader, I felt I had compromised myself. So that's one big way that this fallout affected me. That trust piece, a big way. And in me not trusting myself. I also wasn't trusting God to order my steps like he always has. I'm going to get deeper into that on another episode because the aspect of faith in all of this [00:16:00] is a deeper topic.

another consequence of all this raggedness was I was really stressed and possibly even depressed. Like for a long time, I've prided myself on being able to stay cool under fire. I am relatively even keeled most of the time. I laugh easily. But during this time, during all of 2023, I had lost some of my quickness to laugh.

I had [00:16:30] lost some of my joy in the stress of trying to balance what felt like a tornado of errors. And I was absolutely just exhausted. The most stress I've ever been. I was exhausted, like so tired. Sis was not doing well. Okay. Imagine the juggling of a thousand things. And every time I thought I had a handle on something, the rug got pulled out from under me.

Okay. And related, I was angry, like [00:17:00] pissed because what also ended up happening in this fallout was I kept on finding more things and more holes to plug. I kept on finding more mistakes that they left behind. I kept finding more things I had to fix because some of the things that my old team had done.

One of those things was our company Dropbox. Dropbox is what we use as our central repository system. It's our central organization [00:17:30] system that and Google drive. What is in Dropbox is what's finalized. What's in Google drive are things we're still collaborating on. And let me tell you, all of it was a mess.

If you know anything about me, you might've gleaned this. I'm a Capricorn type, a very organized person. Even my personal files and Dropbox is organized. I basically manage my, my whole family's photo [00:18:00] library. Okay. Okay. I had built a system for our company that's intuitive in our Dropbox. We have a folder for finance, content, brand assets, legal operations, partnerships, and projects, human resources.

We have systems y'all. We actually have an SOP library. Okay. A library of documents that only exists to tell you how to do your job. There's no need to guess what needs to happen to files. It's what you're working with. In fact, [00:18:30] remember I talked about how I had instituted something called Foundation Fridays to allow everybody to have at least one dedicated hour a week to do these types of cleanups and organizing the files, like make sure things are renamed.

Make sure things are in the right place. And when I tell you my team had our Dropbox in complete disarray and shambles, thousands of files, not properly named or in a folder that would make it. You don't even know where the [00:19:00] folder is, right? One person that we let go of when we went into her files had 79 untitled documents.

79, like I wanted to fight. So now we have to go through each document individually to know what was it for? Was it important? Did it need to be deleted? All of that. Our content bank and library was in complete shambles. Like my eyes were twitching. It was bad. I was incensed because this is [00:19:30] something I would bang the drum on often.

Hey y'all, please keep your files organized. Like, this was even something I told my leads. Yo, keep track of this. Make sure your files are important. I make sure your files are properly organized because what is the point of your company's assets? If you can't find or use them, if you don't know where, and nothing is, I don't operate in chaos.

I don't like it. It is literally one of those things that grinds my gears and be on my neck. I hate it so much. So when I found the state [00:20:00] that our storage system was in, I'm pretty sure I cussed out loud to nobody in general, but I was, I was pissed. Okay. So auditing it all after the fact and seeing how truly messy it all was really enraged me, but I couldn't do anything but figure out the fix because what was I going to do? So I hired a contractor. To help us fix and rename and properly organize our Dropbox and Google drive and y'all it has cost me thousands of [00:20:30] dollars Thousands and I'm still paying because

they're still having to organize because remember thousands of files I'm still paying for Not organized properly.

Yeah, it's taken a minute. I'll even give an example of how janky it's been and how much cleanup we've already done. So far, we have deleted over a hundred gigabytes of dupes, hundred gigabytes of duplicated files. Okay. that's how much we're still cleaning up. That's how much [00:21:00] of a mess they still left.

Okay. Photos, documents, files with text in it. That's important. All of those things. Okay. So that's a big money consequence that I've had to deal with. And I'm still dealing with another money consequence of the fallout throughout the last month of 2023 unpaid invoices from our little troublemaker sponsorship train kept popping up.

Let me explain that a little bit. When Little Troublemaker was coming out, I wanted to make sure kids [00:21:30] across the country who might otherwise not be able to afford a copy could get some of Little Luvvie in their lives to take home, read as much as they want, start their libraries, add to their libraries. So I did a sponsorship train where I asked my network to sponsor copies to be sent to classrooms across the country.

So for every classroom, We matched them with a sponsor who handled the cost of the books. And we also partnered with a lot of small [00:22:00] bookstores so they can also benefit in the process. Everybody was going to win because the kids would get a copy. Teachers would have a copy for every student. So nobody was left out.

Small bookstores benefited from this initiative because we sent people that way instead of just Amazon. So it was a win. And because of this 5, 500. Kids got a copy of Little Troublemaker Makes a Mess free of charge. It's something that I'm really, really proud of. And [00:22:30] it makes my heart smile. So in the middle of all the raggedy that my team was doing, that honestly kept me going.

Like it really made me feel good. I was feeling good about staying late and verifying our sheets and seeing the number going up and being like, yes, another kid is going to get this book in their hands. Like that really moved me. So that gave me energy. Our very clear and documented process was we'd get a request from a classroom or a teacher.

We'd go to our list of [00:23:00] people who had pledged to sponsor and we pass on an invoice from the bookstore who would then fulfill the order. Once

paid, the books would be shipped directly to the classroom. Now the manager of the logistics of matching sponsors to bookstores wasn't from my admin team.

And I was checking in regularly to make sure things were going smoothly. I would tell them to let me know if they have any questions, all of that good stuff, right? So between July and December, 2023, [00:23:30] I ended up getting six invoices from bookstores that had been told by my admin team. To ship books to classrooms, but they had not been matched with sponsors.

so these small bookstores trusted us and did it before even being paid because they trusted us. But I started getting emails of invoice overdue and I would be flooded. And you know what I would have to do? I'd have to pay them. [00:24:00] Because these stores, we're not going to suffer for these mistakes, not just pay them.

I would write every store an email apologizing profusely. I am so sorry because the one thing about me, I do not like to owe people money. It is a big core value of mine. I'm one of those people who ain't never been late on a credit card payment, who ain't never been late on nobody invoicing. I'm the one in charge of it.

I don't play with people's money because I don't want people to play with my money. So [00:24:30] when I saw over those months, six unpaid invoices, when I tell you, it made me want to melt into my shoe because some of this, think about it, five months late, a small bookstore who has shipped 2, 000 with the books, right?

I was so angry. I was so angry. Like if I could, I would go back and fire. And refire some people and say, you owe me some money back. Like how much I paid in these invoices. Like you owe [00:25:00] me multiple paychecks back. Okay. And each time these things would happen, this anger that I had, didn't have a place to go.

I couldn't direct it to anybody because the people who were responsible for it didn't work for me anymore. But my gosh, it had me really angry in ways. I'm just like, yo, what is happening? And that was not the end of it, y'all. That was not the end of it. So, you know, at this point, my stress is stressed.

Like my stress got stressed. Like my [00:25:30] cortisol levels had to be through the roof. I, my, my goodness. Okay. Through the roof, the stress hit a breaking point in October, 2023. Cause I'm dealing with the fallout while still rebuilding

all these things. while I'm still having to be a regular human being who has to show up for other people and live in this life.

Okay. **And then in October I found out that a 23, 000 obligation that [00:26:00] should have been paid across the year in 12 increments had not been paid. At all. So in October, the year's almost over and I basically have six weeks to pay 23, 000. At that point, I immediately fired my bookkeeper, my finance team, because for it to have happened was nothing but negligence.**

It is [00:26:30] what I am literally paying you for and I was paying them a lot of money to make sure I don't have to worry about any of this, but turns out I had to worry about it because a 23, 000 bill that you're not expecting in October during a year that has already stressed you out during a year where you've already felt like you bled money.

Yeah. So it was like, just when I thought I was finally riding the ship, a wave would come and knock me [00:27:00] off my ass. And this particular one finally knocked me on my ass for real. Where typically in the past, what I was doing was a disappointment would happen. I'd get up, I'd dust myself off, you know, feeling a little bruised.

You know, I put it in a box in my chest and I keep it moving. I'd be in the next meeting. I'd be at the next trip. I was unflappable, even though I was still flappable. But **this bill was the straw that broke the camel's back [00:27:30] because literally it sent me to the bed. Like it sent me to the bed for a week, a week.**

I was not getting out of bed, which I've never done. And what I mean is I literally did not get out of bed for a week. Like I would go to the bathroom. I would get some food sometimes I was done because I was so deeply upset about how no matter what I'm doing to do my part, no matter how much I keep getting knocked on my ass and getting back up, the hits keep coming.[00:28:00]

I was angry. I was frustrated. I was sad because I didn't know how to fix what was happening because in this case it was literally something. I have avoided because it was not my fault. I had asked the right questions. I had thought I put the right people in place. I had done my due diligence.

And for me, somebody who likes to be in control, likes to be responsible for herself and ultimately internalizes a lot and absorbs a lot. [00:28:30] I was like,

bro, like, when is, when is enough for me to do? Like my efforts are failing and the people around me are failing me and I didn't know where to put it. So it was like my brain and my body and my mind and my spirit were both like, you know what?

All of them were like, you know what? Let's just go lay down. Let's, let's just go lay down and stay there for a little bit. I felt defeated. That's the word. That's the word. I felt defeated. [00:29:00] I felt knocked down. There was a conference I was supposed to go to. In a beautiful location and I could not get out of bed to go.

I was like me getting on a flight right now would not be good. Like, yes, I lost money on that because the fee for that conference was nonrefundable. So more money lost, right? More money flushed down the toilet. But I couldn't imagine getting on a flight, trying to people through that moment where in a year wide almost [00:29:30] went bankrupt.

In a year where I fired everybody in a year where I had pivoted 18 times where I have put up more systems upon systems where even though the times when I wasn't supposed to trust people, I still gave them trust because I couldn't afford not to, because I could not create more time in my day to do more things.

So I had to trust them to do the thing and they did not do the things. Okay. So for that to happen, I needed to take to my bed and just wallow. For [00:30:00] a little bit. I needed to have myself a pity party that I had not let myself have up until that moment without any of the pretense or Or the toxic positivity or you know, it'll be okay.

You got this. Yes, yes, I know, I know. It will eventually be okay. In the grand scheme of things, yes. But in that moment I was not, okay. Yes, I knew I'd pay the \$23,000 and move on, but I surely was like, God, these, these lessons you send in my way. I don't know what they are right now, but consider me knocked down.

[00:30:30] Okay. People hit me up like how you doing girl? And I'd answer with child I'm here cuz that's about all I had to give them. I try not to tell people. Oh, I'm good. I wasn't but I literally would be like child. I'm here Cuz where would I start? Like where would I start? so That was probably my lowest point Mentally, I felt defeated and even spiritually, I was feeling some type of way, but I still prayed.

I was [00:31:00] confused as to what was happening, but I still prayed. And that is honestly what got me out of bed. Even though I was like, God, what's going on? I still prayed. I felt heavy. I was depressed. I was overwhelmed, burned out, but I also felt like I was being put on divine time out. Like my girl, Debbie Brown would say.

And even though I didn't know exactly why I talked to God. And then I called my prayer warrior, [00:31:30] mama, mama, Abba, my spiritual mama and had her pray for me. And I remember that day, like the wise queen that she is. She listened and then she prayed because you know, older black women have a main line to Jesus.

Like, and she an older Ghanaian woman, Mama Abba got a main line to Jesus. Okay. And I remember feeling like something lifted off my body, like the weighted blanket that I felt like I was under got lifted. And a wave of surrender came [00:32:00] over me and I decided, you know what? This is what it is right now. You just got to ride the wave.

This is the storm that is clearly here to teach you something. You might not know what the lesson is right now, but there is something happening that is clearly asking you to reset in a big way. Like even as I laid in the bed, I knew that I was being called to reset. I might not have known the exact lessons in that moment.[00:32:30]

Just like how when you're lost at sea, there isn't a map for you to look at to get you back to shore. And it was glaring to me that this was less about my efforts or brute force. And what I just needed to do was surrender to my limits because where I might want to push my way through tough times, this was not letting me.

And I could not ignore that one, two punch. It was like, I got punched in the jaw and the chest. Surrender is a word that has kept coming to me and I didn't [00:33:00] know what it meant. Well, I was now being forced to. I had to surrender to the moment, to the chaos, to the failures, the surprises, the disappointments, knowing that there's a lesson that I need to watch out for.

I had to surrender to God, but I got up that day after praying and I went to a meeting and I showed up as I typically would, like people had no clue that I was just in bed. Later that evening, I taught a book academy class. And I will [00:33:30] say though, again, The Book Academy also really anchored me in purpose and allowed me to not be in a complete black hole.

That work energized me in a way that was really anointed because even at my lowest, I was like, I got to show up for that. Like I felt convicted to show up for that. Right. As I encouraged my students and I moved them forward, I felt obedience to God's calling. So for the opposite [00:34:00] times when I'd get another fallout moment.

I'd remember my last book academy session or the last email I got about it and it bring me back to everything is not in complete shambles. And that allowed me to keep going. Like it's those moments of light that I really was holding onto. For sure. Book Academy was part of what saved me. How else did I manage my husband?

He held me at the worst times. Like there was one day when he saw me crying and he literally made [00:34:30] me get up. Tucked me into bed, turned off the light, told me to take a nap. Okay. Mr. Jones really propped me up in ways that I don't need to say here that's between me and him, but I thank God for him. And I talked to my closest friends.

I probably didn't even tell them everything that was happening because how many things can you tell one person? I didn't want to be a walking venting bomb. So some friends would know certain things. Some friends would know other things. I didn't [00:35:00] give any one person, all of it to hold besides my husband.

And it's not because I didn't think they could hold it but. I just didn't feel like I needed to give one person all the things. And actually one of my best friends, Felicia, Hey boo. She called me one day and it was one of the days when I did, I was not getting out of bed.

Okay. And she was like, Oh no, you do not sound. Okay. I'm coming to see you. And y'all two days later, this woman flew from LA. And spent four days with me just being, [00:35:30] and we had a blast just laying on the couch and eating snacks and just, she was feeding my soul. And I thank God for the village that he has swaddled me with to walk me through life.

I'm so thankful for them. So yeah, the love of my village also saved me and therapy. Okay. Publicly, I did talk about entrepreneurship being trash in a general sense. And I gleaned from the responses from those posts that I'll put up [00:36:00] the aments that others were in their own deep struggles. You could probably glean some things from my LinkedIn statuses, maybe, but I definitely didn't talk about it in any real detail online.

I just showed up and I did dope work. I still made most of my deadlines. I still made it all look good. I will say I felt scarred. There are moments in 2023 that were paper cuts. Some were slaps to the face [00:36:30] and some were complete punches to the head. The emotional, mental, money fallout was real and felt.

The physical fallout was felt because I was exhausted. And to be honest, I'm low key still in the messy middle of it all because I've hired and fired two virtual assistants since October 2023. One of them, y'all, was taking four hours to answer five emails. I'm not exaggerating. I would look up at 1 p. m.

and [00:37:00] ask, Hey, I need this task done. And she tell me she's still answering emails. When I looked in our inbox that morning and we only had 10 emails. So you spent four hours and you've only done five of these. And these are like, yes or no emails, decline or schedule emails. So why are you still answering emails?

The gift of what I went through last year is I fire quick now. you got to go like, nope, this is not something I can train you about. Right. And I fired two bookkeepers since then too. Two. Why did I hire and fire these two [00:37:30] bookkeepers? The first person I hired, I gave them the full rundown of all my pain points.

And I said, I needed somebody who I can trust to manage the money so I can put my brain on something else. And they said, okay, they came recommended and I fired them a few months later because they were paying bills late. Y'all know about my core values. Come on, come to find out. They had told me they had a team.

But they really didn't so they got sick and my company's bills were not getting paid on time

Like there were invoices that were not being paid until like [00:38:00] a week and a half after They're sent and my limit is usually I like to pay invoices within four or five days. And again, y'all know about my values I'm not playing about it.

So I let them go and then I hired somebody new. thing happened again, where They said they had a team all of a sudden after tax season, all my bills getting paid late. And I said, nah, you play with my money. You got to go. Right. So again, I always ask myself first, am I the drama? And the answer is [00:38:30] no. And I'm going to say this.

It's because the reasons that people give me for not doing their stuff is usually negligence. I give folks clear expectations, clear mission. I talk priority and systems. I have an open door policy. If anything gets overwhelming, please let me know. Throw up a flag. Let me know these things. And I realize I've just been getting the wrong people.

So if anything, my mistake, I kept on hiring too fast because I'd go, I need this whole plugged. I need [00:39:00] somebody in this place. I was hiring too fast.

In the rebuild episode. I'm going to talk about the reset and what my team looks like now how I've slowed down considerably and how I'm rebuilding my trust in myself. I am an active burnout recovery. I'm in healing mode. Your girl is not just rebuilding her company, but herself from ground up. And in this rebuild, I'm still managing to make my impact and do [00:39:30] my work.

Here's my superpowers. I'm an amazing writer, honestly, an amazing communicator. Writing, spoken word. I'm a visionary. I have amazing ideas that can make impact and can make money. I am both creative and pragmatic. So the same person who can write you a fire piece can also think about how we are operating.

Because I think in terms of math, I think in terms of systems. And I have been blessed by God with the gift of not fitting in. [00:40:00] I know I am extraordinary and that's God's favor in my life. That's God's blessings showing up. So I don't take that for granted. What I am trying to do with my gifts is to serve people with intention.

There's a quote that's like find your gift and exploit it in the service of others. That's the mission for me. That's my mission. That's my goal. That's my destination. That's what I want to do. And that's what I am doing. That's What I'm going all in on. I'm in the end of [00:40:30] the fallout and in the middle of the rebuild, but I'm more in the rebuild right now than the fallout.

So I'm thankful for that in my rebuild episode, I'm going to talk about why the crumbling in the fallout allowed me to honor God's assignment for me. Why I now know it all unfolded as it should divinely ordered.

That is why in the middle of the fallout, I just knew that in spite of the circumstances around me that felt crazy, that I was in the middle of honoring God's calling for me, that I was [00:41:00] obeying the divine assignment for me and that this moment of storm will get calm. and I think honestly that really anchored me even in the worst moments.

As I think back on last year, on the second half of 2023, what was anchoring me? What made me get out of bed? What, Made me move forward what made me know there was no quitting. That was not an option. Even when I was like, I hate everything and everybody. What gave me gumption and confidence was that I was finally doing the [00:41:30] work that I had felt called to do for years and without that crazy team, without people that I had to chase, I was finally able to honor and execute it, which was wild, right?

Like this thing that I went to do for a minute, I had a big team, couldn't do it. And then I fired everybody and finally did it. It was God's hands all over it. That allowed me to soar, that allowed this thing to soar. That is allowing it to soar now. And that has allowed my company to stand upright. It is what saved me.

The Book Academy is what saved me. So on on the rebuild, because we're going [00:42:00] to talk to Dr. Joy, I'm going to walk you through how I started on this assignment journey, and how I know it is where my deepest impact is, especially in this next season of life. And there's going to be another episode where I talk more about my God learnings.

There's definitely, that one needs to be its own Prop High episode, because we must give God the praise, because I'm telling you, the struggle was real, but man, so yeah, it As always, if this episode has blessed you, go ahead and share it with somebody. Go ahead and share it with somebody. Y'all said you wanted the drama.

Y'all said you wanted the tea. Well, [00:42:30] here's all the tea, the Lipton Factory tea. I want to hear your thoughts on this episode. I really do. I really want to hear your thoughts. So if you have any questions that you want me to answer about business, go to askl But in general, take the social media and let me know what you think about this episode and what I went through.

Did you go through anything like it? All of that good stuff. So yeah, next episodes. Talk to you then. [00:43:00] [00:43:30]