

[00:00:00] **Heidi:** Welcome to another episode of the successful fashion freelancer podcast. Thank you so much for joining me here today. I am so excited to introduce you to my guest. Sam Seamus, Sam is a freelancer who is kicking some major butt, but was not always the case because Sam had a lot of mindset stuff that she has worked through in her freelance career.

[00:00:23] Um, she worked with me years back as one of my very first freelance accelerator students when I was running the beta program years ago. Um, and her growth and trajectory since then has been phenomenal. So a couple of things I want to point out about Sam story that I think are really inspiring and really relevant is first, um, Is a freelance bridal designer and she's also a freelance fashion illustrator.

[00:00:46] Um, and when she was first thinking about going freelance, she actually wasn't even thinking about going freelance. She was very much set on like corporate nine to five jobs. She's like, it feels really stable. And then she was let go from three jobs and she was like, yeah, no, this is just as unstable. And I'm going to be in control of my own destiny.

[00:01:07] And I am going to build a freelance career and I'm going to kick ass doing this. So she kicked, kicked off her full-time freelance career in 2018 and she has not looked back and she's doing some amazing things, but that is not to say that it didn't come with some challenges. A couple of those challenges were mindset challenges, which we have found is something that we all struggle with.

[00:01:27] Right. And as a freelancer in the fashion industry, it can be a big uphill battle. Um, first of all, Sam is in bridal, as I mentioned, and she had a mindset. Well, bridal designers don't hire remote freelancers. They require people to be in house. And so there was this like block of like, it's not even possible for me in my industry.

[00:01:47] Well, that's not the case because Sam, as you probably saw from the title of this episode, just landed a project for \$4,500 doing bridal work. And what's really cool about that is not only is it like an amazingly huge dollar amount, but Sam told me that she has always, you know, listened to podcasts and, and, um, really paid attention to personal development.

[00:02:12] And she's always been like, yeah, I'm not that person that like puts myself down and says I can't do things. And then she started noticing that she would hear someone's story about sending a \$2,000 invoice and she would say

to herself in her head, oh, but I couldn't do that. I could never send a \$2,000 invoice and he, or she.

[00:02:29] Just landed a client for \$4,500. So I love how Sam talks through this and talks about how, you know, these have been challenges for her and something she's still working on. I think it's something we will all still work on for life. Right. Um, and the other cool thing about Sam story that we don't really talk about until the very end of our conversation, but freelance accelerator.

[00:02:48] Um, my program that she was one of the very first students in not only helped her grow her freelance design business as a bridal designer, but also has helped her tremendously grow her illustration business. She does a lot of, um, live illustrations and custom illustrations and she's pitching venues and she's putting herself out there and she's setting rates and negotiating and all that sort of stuff.

[00:03:08] And, uh, she took everything that she learned inside her for accelerator and applied it to her illustration business as well, which is really cool. Um, and we just kinda got to that at the very end of the conversation. So stick around because we do talk about that towards the end. Um, if you are interested in kickstarting or growing your freelance career, I would love to help you get started with that with some of my best free resources, you can check those out by heading over to [sew heidi.com/freelance](http://sewheidi.com/freelance) S E W H I D I .com/freelance.

[00:03:36] I will link that below in the show notes. Um, it will get you all my free resources. It will also get you onto the email list so that when freelance accelerator opens, which is just a couple of times a year, if you're interested, you can check it out and I can share all the details of how it works. All right.

[00:03:51] Let's jump into my conversation with Sam and hear about how she is seeing such massive success in her freelance career. Let's go see, um, oh my gosh. You and I go a little bit back like years.

[00:04:05] **Sam:** Yeah, it's been a minute at this point.

[00:04:08] **Heidi:** It has been a minute. Um, and you are one of, I mean, I've met you in real life, which feels really cool.

[00:04:16] Oh, yeah. Um, it's just always nice to, like, there's a handful of our freelance accelerator students that I've met in person, which is really cool pre

pandemic days. Um, but anyways, before we ramble on about our history, um, can you introduce yourself to everybody and let us know who you are and what you do in the fashion industry?

[00:04:36] **Sam:** Um, I'm Sam, I am a fashion illustrator and freelance designer. Um, I mainly work in the wedding space and, um, with embellishments and evening wear and things like that. Um, I have gotten more into the illustration side of things. Um, but I still do dabble in freelance design and I that's my first love, it was my major in college.

[00:04:59] I love it. So, um, yeah, just doing a little bit of everything. Yeah. Out of the like nine to five side gig thing for about, I think it's like 2018 at this point. Yeah. So I'm doing a little bit of everything. Just kind of like checking along.

[00:05:19] **Heidi:** Well, it was one of the big reasons I wanted to invite you in the Powercast.

[00:05:22] So you, uh, I think you sent me a DM on Instagram that you were like, oh my gosh, I just sent out the biggest proposal of my life. And you were like, I'm really nervous. And I was like, let me know how it goes. And then you messaged me. It was like a few weeks later. You're like, I haven't heard back. And then you did

[00:05:39] **Sam:** hear about, I think it's been, it was like a couple months actually.

[00:05:44] Okay. Yeah. I think it was about, it was about one to two months. It was,

[00:05:49] **Heidi:** it was a bit, and then you messaged me and you're like, I got the project and you sent me the dollar amount. And what, I mean, I want to talk about that project specifically, but, but the bigger reason, what I love is like you, and you even said a second ago, you are a freelance illustrator or you don't call yourself a freelance illustrator.

[00:06:05] We just call it fashion.

[00:06:08] **Sam:** Yeah, because the only reason why I do distinguish between the two is because my illustrations, um, can, are like specifically from me, like

people are hiring from me as a company, whereas an I'm freelancing for a company. I don't, it doesn't involve me as an entity besides being a freelancer.

[00:06:27] So that's the only reason why I distinguished between

[00:06:29] **Heidi:** the two. Yeah. But what I love is that, like, you're doing a little bit of both, right? You're doing your illustration and your freelancing. And I think, and, and you're not doing a nine to five grind. So you've managed to like build this career and business businesses for yourself where you're like getting to do a little bit of everything.

[00:06:48] And so, um, I just love the diversity of your story and that I think, you know, most of the people we talk to on the show are full-time freelancers or, you know, they're working nine to five and they want to go full-time freelance. And they've just gotten kick-started with a few clients, but you're not working nine to five.

[00:07:03] And you've got like your diversity. In common, your setup. So, um, talk a little bit about your freelance journey because you and I go back to, when was it? 2017,

[00:07:17] **Sam:** maybe? Uh, yeah. 17. And then it was, what was it? Six months a year.

[00:07:22] **Heidi:** Oh, it was six months, I think. So you were one of the first students inside the freelance accelerator beta program and yeah, we worked together for six months.

[00:07:31] You went through the program and then we worked together for like coaching calls for six months and stuff. Um, so just talk about

[00:07:37] **Sam:** 17th, 2018. I think it went a little bit into,

[00:07:41] **Heidi:** perhaps

[00:07:41] **Sam:** I think we started like towards

[00:07:43] **Heidi:** the end of the, okay, perfect. So just talk a little bit about like your freelance career and your journey, what it's looked like over the past, like three to four years.

[00:07:51] I'd love to kind of hear the whole story.

[00:07:54] **Sam:** Yeah. It's been a little all over the place and I don't realize how all over the place it is and to. People ask me a question like that. And then I go through it and I'm like, oh man. Okay. So I was in New York and you were actually one of the people. Probably one of the first and only people to kind of, um, talk me through my fears of moving, because I am no longer living in New York in 2009.

[00:08:26] Yeah. 2019. Um, my boyfriend got accepted to medical school here in DC, which is a complete coincidence as to where I am originally from I'm from the suburbs of DC. And, um, and I just had this whole fear of like moving back, uh, you know, in my mind, like back home. And not that I'm like from a small town or anything like that, do you see as great New York was always my dream, so leaving.

[00:08:51] It was terrifying. Um, but yeah, so the, the past, like few years I was working for a designer, um, I got. Laid off from there, I'm a bridal designer and I started working, um, retail, um, doing, I was like a visual coordinator at a trim company. Um, one of the biggest trim stores, like in the garment district, in New York.

[00:09:16] So, um, we saw really cool people all the time. Um, and, uh, that was cool just because I had never really gotten into like the marketing aspect of creative work. Um, so that was, that was good. And then, um, I worked at a few like retail stores, um, and I did get a job at a bridal salon, which was amazing piece that is actually where I did my very first live illustration.

[00:09:42] So yeah. Yeah, which I am starting to do so much of now, which I really, I really, really love that. Um, but even to kind of rewind even further back, just a little bit for some background, because just realizing I'm here, nobody knows me. I technically, I started an Etsy store after I got out of college in 2013 and, um, I wasn't doing much with it.

[00:10:08] It was just one of those things where I like threw stuff up there and didn't do anything with it. Um, but it was active. So I technically had my Etsy store for the past, like eight years and eight, right? Yeah. That's math. Um, and I was like, can't keep track anymore. Um, and then, and I was, you know, after graduation I was doing, I had full-time design jobs and, you know, things like that.

[00:10:30] So I was doing that like nine to five design gig. Um, And then I had gotten laid off from two of them and I quit one to go to the one that I eventually got laid off from, which was, yeah. Which obviously retrospect you're like, well, I should have just stayed there. And it's like, it's fine. I'm all right. Um, but yeah, so I started, um, my freelance illustrations.

[00:10:56] I started with like just basic prints that I was like, oh, I have this equity that I'm not doing anything with. Let me throw them up there and get some gifts. And so my boyfriend is actually the one who. Honestly, I'm pre I'm. Don't remember the exact like scenario, but like, I'm pretty sure he's the one who came up with the concept of like me doing custom things on Etsy.

[00:11:18] Like people send me their photos and I do the illustrations of them. Yeah. And, um, and then I was the one that like fine tuned it and like got it running and everything like that. So I started doing that in like 2015, and this is while I'm still having like my nine to fives and things like that. I'm, you know, getting laid off, I'm getting new jobs, I'm doing all those things.

[00:11:39] Um, and, uh, and then let's see. And then 2018 was when I got laid off from my last nine to five and I was like, you know what, screw this. I was always so against freelancing for the longest time because I, I, you know, it's just, it's unstable and it can be really scary. And, um, you know, especially. Um, you know, you're in your like early, mid twenties, you're terrified of literally everything and, um, you know, the steady paycheck, the healthcare, like everything that goes along with like having a steady job, but I was afraid of, but then after getting laid off for literally the third time, I was like, this is clearly just as unstable as like, you know, going freelance.

[00:12:32] I was like, I was like, you know what, I'm not, I'm not doing the same. Or like, this is, this is too much. Um, I'm just going to continue doing my own thing. Whether that's like having freelance design jobs or working full-time on like my Etsy slash website. Cause at this point I had built a website for my illustrations, um, which I have both now on there.

[00:12:54] I have my, um, my illustrations and like my fashion portfolio and all of those things. And also in this transition period, I did hire, um, not only hire, but I had like a session with her, of this woman who literally her job is to, um, critique fashion portfolios. So, so you actually, when I had, uh, I think you did, um, a little, uh, crit of mine, I did

[00:13:22] **Heidi:** too.

[00:13:23] **Sam:** That was actually, that was actually the like refined one, which is why the notes were actually like, not too extensive. And it's because I'd already gone to this woman who helps you with your fashion portfolio and she tells you what to change and all these things. So looking at the new one and the old one, my old one was like such a mess.

[00:13:42] Yeah. My new one, I love it so much better. But, um, yeah. So now I'm, uh, I, 2019 moved to DC, I was terrified because I was like, I'm not in New York anymore. I'm not in the fashion hub. Like. You know, am I going to be able to do X, Y, and Z and blah, blah, blah. So by the time I moved, my, I was basically, my illustration business was like half of what I do now, or, um, time was like half.

[00:14:09] And so I was like, you know what, I'm just going to get like a little side job in DC, but I no longer want to work retail. I'd honestly rather shoot myself. And, um, and I'm just going to, we'll see if it sustains me, like if I have to get, you know, another job I will, but I'm just going to kind of like, take that leap and see if I catch myself and now 20, 21.

[00:14:32] And I have yet to have that need. I love that. Yeah. I've only grown a lot more. And, um, and so I hadn't gotten a, um, I should say, not a fashion project, but I haven't gotten like a design project in a while. Um, uh, but then I got. Projects that I messaged you about. And I was so excited, um, that was from, you know, just like reaching out, um, coming across companies on Instagram or online or whatever, and saying that they're somebody that really fits my specific vision aesthetic and just like a, a company in general that I would want to work for that isn't like this gigantic company that I love, you know, the really well-known ones.

[00:15:22] Yeah. And she happened and are like, you know, her bio and stuff. And she was from Virginia. Like, I am like, not far from where I'm from. And so of course that was like my starting off when I was like, oh, you know, we're both from Virginia. And she is former military, which I, my boyfriend was in the military.

[00:15:38] My mom was in the military. So like we had all these things that were in common. And, um, and then we just got, we, uh, we got to talking. She was like, you know what, it's actually a really good time that you messaged me because I, um, I'm rebranding everything and I'm a creative, but I'm not a

designer. And I don't know, you know, fabrics or like why something isn't fitting properly and like things.

[00:16:01] So she's more on like the creative business side. Um, like she has a vision and she knows how to execute it, but she needs those people in between to help her execute different things. Yeah. That's like where I came in. So we actually started, um, Not long after I had messaged. You say, like, we officially are going to be working together.

[00:16:22] You know, I sent over, um, my outline and numbers and all those things, and she agreed to everything, which was incredible. Um, and, uh, actually I, I got, I totally forgot. I did have another design project, but that was, um, actually for my former fashion teacher from high school. Oh yeah. We still, we always kept in contact.

[00:16:46] Yeah. I actually went in and like talked to her fashion design student or fashion marketing students, um, a few times at the high school and all of that. Um, but she is starting a, um, sustainable swimwear. And even though she knows that I don't specialize in swim, but I can still come up with like just the general, um, designs and things like that.

[00:17:08] And we came up with something super creative, so she should be launching that soon. And, you know, I did see the sketches for her and all of those things. So she has a, um, a proper, uh, portfolio basically to send to factories for, to see if it works for her vision and stuff like that. Yeah. So, and I even told her, like, I have this freelance group that I am a part of.

[00:17:32] If you do need specifically a swimwear designer or someone to work with for that, I have people that you can contact, let know. Um, so yeah, those have been my, my couple projects that's been happening recently. Inspiration work. Yeah.

[00:17:53] **Heidi:** Um, so a couple, I mean, have a million questions. Um, first, would you be willing to share the details of the project that you just landed that you sent me in Instagram?

[00:18:00] Yeah, for sure. Yeah. So

[00:18:03] **Sam:** we share specifically specific things that you want me to like start

[00:18:09] **Heidi:** out with. I mean, just what the project was like, what you're doing and the, and the, uh, the rate, if you're comfortable.

[00:18:16] **Sam:** Yeah. I would say if I can remember the breakdown, I remember the total,

[00:18:19] **Heidi:** but I don't remember like down.

[00:18:22] Yeah,

[00:18:23] **Sam:** go ahead. The total project, um, is. 4,500, which is amazing, which is super exciting. Yeah. Um, yeah, I had never sent out that big of an invoice just in general, even for like my illustration work and stuff like that. Um, yeah, I, yeah, nothing that big of a deal and we got it. Was it, it was honestly, it was unreal.

[00:18:50] And I, the big thing that I'm working on for myself this year that I started this year and will full on do next year is mindset. Yeah.

[00:19:02] **Heidi:** I just for reference, we're recording December, 2021. Uh, people won't hear this until 20, 22, but I just want to give people a space with December, 2021. Okay. So mindset, go ahead.

[00:19:13] **Sam:** Yeah, mindset. Um, I am so good at putting myself down and convincing myself that things cannot happen for me. And I didn't, I hear people say that on other podcasts and other things and I, and I'll think I'll be like, I don't do that to myself. So I definitely do, like, I'll hear on, you know, like your podcast or somebody else's like, oh, I got a \$2,000 invoice for like that one invoice.

[00:19:38] And I'm like, I could never send a \$2,000. Um, and so after I got this, I, I was really like, you know what, I'm not allowing myself to think those things anymore. Like if I I'm going to will this into existence. So like literally every day, every time I caught myself, Being like, she's not going to agree to those numbers.

[00:20:04] No, she's not going to do that. And I'm like, no, 'cause,

[00:20:06] **Heidi:** it was like you said a month or two between the time you sent it and that you like heard back, which it takes time. Businesses need time to

like, think about it and process it and decide when it fits in their calendar. It's like, people like want a decision yesterday and it does doesn't work that way.

[00:20:21] So. Okay. So you're really,

[00:20:23] **Sam:** yeah. The whole first day that I sent it, I was, I was a wreck. Um, and, uh, but yeah, the breakdown was so the way that I kind of came up with it was, um, I figured out that my hourly now that I've been out of school for so long, I've had, you know, X amount of experience, blah, blah, blah.

[00:20:42] And, um, as like a side note, I don't really hate the fact that I had to have all of these. Retail experiences and stuff like that, um, for jobs, because I'm realizing now how well-rounded it makes me, I now know the production side. I know the design side, I, and then I know the retail side, which is something that I never would have had to experience if I hadn't gotten like those layoffs and stuff like that.

[00:21:06] Um, so when I'm building this invoice and I was trying to think of like my hourly rate and stuff like that, I D I really did put all of that into perspective for myself. I'm like, no, I have this and this and this and this that can bring tables. So I'm going to set my hourly rate at like \$50 an hour as like a beat.

[00:21:23] And then I just, it, you know, per, um, per project or whatever it is. So the two things that this designer needed well for associative bridal, let me start with that. Yeah, she has breakfast. She has bridal separate and so hurtful. You know, company mission basically is to bring, um, first of all, inclusive sizing.

[00:21:46] So be aware from a zero to a 20, and then she does want, after she like kicks it off and stuff like that, she does want to go bigger than that as well. Um, and she is, uh, a minority business owner, which is also a minority. It was very important to me to be able to like connect with other people that were like that.

[00:22:08] And she's, uh, she's building a team right now, but she's essentially by herself and, um, and she wants to do like mix and match pieces. So nothing super crazy. Like she has really, um, you know, crape wide leg pants, um, you know, crop tops, summer, late summer, you know, whatever. So, um, So I had

reached out to her, like I would, you know, do you need any design help, blah blah.

[00:22:33] And, uh, and she was like, yeah, actually I need, after a few calls I had with her, we broke it down to that. She needed sourcing for her lace because he's having issues with like fit and stuff like that, specifically with like around her lace pieces. Um, and you know, certain sizes aren't fitting from, you know, even though they're the same material and they're supposed to be the same size, but they're coming from different factories and they're different, blah, blah, blah.

[00:22:59] And I was very upfront with her that like, I can do tech packs, but I am not a technical. So I can do fittings and stuff like that. I've done fittings, but, um, I am not going to be the one to do like grading or patterns or anything like that. Like, I'm going to be so straight up with you. I hate patterns. I don't like anything that has to be super technical.

[00:23:22] Like one inch here. That's not me. I don't do that. Like the POM you're like,

[00:23:27] **Heidi:** yeah,

[00:23:28] **Sam:** no, not happening. Yeah. You know, I'm not, I'm not that person. Um, but when I'm fitting something to a person like, you know, fit models and stuff like that, that's what makes sense to me. Yeah. So she needs sourcing for her lacing and she needs, um, tech packs done for the 18 pieces that she has in her collection currently.

[00:23:48] Um, and she uses this site that I had never heard of before called enabled. Have you heard of them? No, I haven't. What is it? It's a, basically an all-inclusive website for, um, for design brands that you can have. They basically put the tech pack together for you. So you don't have to use Excel or anything like that.

[00:24:07] You can upload. Yeah. You can upload photos. Um, the tech sketch, like all the things that the, that they have, you list out all of your, um, materials, like all these different things. Um, so yeah, it's an and a, B, L D. Oh,

[00:24:26] **Heidi:** oh. I wrote down enabled like E N N a

[00:24:28] **Sam:** B L D. Yeah. That I, I honestly, I had the hardest time remembering what the website.

[00:24:34] **Heidi:** Yeah. And then I'll look it up for sure. Yeah. Interesting. Only two in the show notes. Yeah.

[00:24:38] **Sam:** Yeah. And, uh, I think they actually did like project runway or something like that. The people that was on there, they used it to help them organize for like their collections or something like that. So she said, um, she's doing, she wants to be as digital as possible.

[00:24:55] And she, um, she wants to do everything through this website and they do offer help if you do need help with, um, with sizing or tech packs or anything that they offer that actually through their website, extra things that you have to pay for. So that site was actually charging, I think, \$600 or more per tech pack.

[00:25:16] Okay. Which for what she's doing, she has. Basic pieces. Nothing's like a crazy outerwear,

[00:25:24] **Heidi:** like a technical ski jacket. Right, right, right. Yeah.

[00:25:27] **Sam:** Yeah. Like there's nothing super intense about it. So I was like \$600 for a tech pack is kind of crazy because you have 18 pieces

[00:25:36] **Heidi:** details. Like the BOM's are going to just be like, save as, make a few changes.

[00:25:42] Totally.

[00:25:43] **Sam:** Yeah. And so I was like, since you have 18 and we're doing, and you're paying like for all 18 at once, I'll basically break it down to like \$200 a tech pack per piece. So that, and I did want to emphasize that to her. That was one of the, like the emails, like in my follow-up that I was like, you know, please confirm the amount of pieces.

[00:26:02] So I know how much like make this invoice. And they didn't think that I didn't want her to think that it was going in like sets like one tech pack was like a set top and a bottom. I was like, no, no, no. There's 18 of them. So it's 18 times 200. Yeah. Uh, top to bottom times, 200, right. Again, with my I'm

making all these things up in my head as to why she wouldn't be paying this amount.

[00:26:24] **Heidi:** You're like, no, it's like, just cause the top and the pants coordinate. That's two tech packs, not line it's two separate pieces. Yeah. But you're like, oh, she's never going to go for that.

[00:26:32] **Sam:** Yeah. So that was the breakdown for that. And then the sourcing, she only needs like three laces or so, um, and so I said that I would be the one to like coordinate with her contacts and you know, those types of things.

[00:26:45] And I would have the, the samples like sent to my house and blah, blah, blah. Um, so I can, um, take a look at those. So I broke that part down to be 900. She said it, she said it shouldn't take more than like, like, I don't know, like a days where one, one full work days of work. Right. And I was like, you know what?

[00:27:08] Let's I feel like a day is kind of. Um, not realistic. So it was like to make it 900 and we're going to make it one to three days. Yeah. Yeah. Um, because she actually, she just moved from Virginia into DC. Yeah. So she's only like a 15 minute drive from me now or like 10 minutes. So, and she has everything in her house.

[00:27:29] So I said that, you know, I can come over and look at the samples with her and like all those things. So, um, so yeah, that's how I kind of broke it down. Now we're just in the process of, um, of, uh, getting the sizing worked out and she's getting her patterns back from, um, her original pounds back from a factory.

[00:27:50] And then we will go into the whole process. But we did say that, um, further down the road after we get kind of through this like roughly bumpy point is that I would, uh, I would be, um, monthly with her. Like just have like a monthly retainer. Oh, amazing. Uh, for any new pieces, we haven't figured out like what that looks like, but yeah, it was, I was super excited.

[00:28:16] I was like, yeah, there's no reason why we should, neither of us should be nitpicking on like hours or amount of work, whatever. Like, I'd rather just have like a flat retainer fee. And if one month is super busy, one month is super slow. They all just kind of even out, because I really like to be in this with her, for the long haul.

[00:28:37] So, um, so yeah, we're moving

[00:28:40] **Heidi:** along with it. I'm so excited for you. Congratulations. This is such a big success and such a big win, especially like I have to point out another thing. So you mentioned on, on our conversation right now, The mindset of like, oh, well, I can never send the \$2,000 invoice. And here you're sending \$4,500.

[00:28:59] I was just saying, but more than devil. Um, but something else that I specifically remember about working with you originally, um, you were like, well, I don't really know if freelancing is possible in the bridal industry because the bridal houses right there kind of would you, is that a fair bridal brands?

[00:29:21] Why do I feel like the other brands? The brand? What if like their houses, but maybe not. Um, You know, the, you had a list long, a long list of excuses and reasons as to why it was not possible to freelance in your category because they're so protective of their designs and they need everybody in house because gosh, you know, somebody could steal the idea or I can't even remember all the reasons that you were like, I don't know.

[00:29:47] It's not quite possible for my industry. Do you remember like having that mindset? Yeah. I mean, I'm not

[00:29:54] **Sam:** going to lie though. I ha I'm not entirely out of that either because a lot of the brands that I still do try to reach out to, they, they say they only take people in house. And so I, so I kind of go halfway with it, like, okay, it's not impossible, but it's not as, it's not as just like free flowing as like raid where brands are.

[00:30:23] Right. Um, but that's also, that's also because bridal itself is so small. Like there are so few wedding brands in like just in general versus the like millions or

[00:30:37] **Heidi:** yeah, totally

[00:30:38] **Sam:** aware or whatever brands. So I do have to take that with a grain of salt because my, my pool is so small, but

[00:30:45] **Heidi:** there's also a lot fewer people like you that like specialize in bridal where there's so many more people that specialize in active.

[00:30:52] So in a way it's almost like I like, even though I think it does even out, um,

[00:30:58] **Sam:** it's about finding them, it's a numbers game. It

[00:31:00] **Heidi:** totally is a numbers game. Yeah. It is such a numbers game. And so you found this woman on Instagram, is that right? Like, just by like looking at hashtags or who knows? I actually

[00:31:11] **Sam:** can't even remember if I found her first through Instagram or if I was just.

[00:31:17] Doing some random Googling. Okay. I, I, I really can't even remember, but I'm just trying not to let the, um, all the nose and all of the, uh, I I'm trying not to let that small pool intimidate me, but it's like he said, I had, I will come up with a million and a half excuses as to why I can't do something.

[00:31:40] Yeah. But it's a matter of, not necessarily like ignoring that list of excuses, but just being like, so what get over it, go past

[00:31:50] **Heidi:** it. It's just an extra challenge. And I can get through

[00:31:52] **Sam:** that. Yeah. It's an extra challenge. And if it works, it works. If it doesn't, it doesn't, I'm at this point where like, I just don't even care if something doesn't work out or not, because I'm like, I've gotten through this shit before I just kind

[00:32:06] **Heidi:** of move on.

[00:32:07] Oh my God. I love that attitude so much. That's such a good attitude and you always like learn from something. If it doesn't work out, you learn from it and then you figure it out. You do a little different next time and you, and you do better.

[00:32:18] **Sam:** Yeah. Yeah, exactly. That's amazing.

[00:32:21] **Heidi:** That's amazing. Um, okay. So have you started the project yet?

[00:32:28] **Sam:** Um, we have started just, just in the tr in terms of like, um, I've reached out to a few pattern-making grading people, um, and we've had, um,

we've had a conversation with a couple of people, um, but she's essentially waiting for the patterns to get back to her from an overseas factory for, for numerous reasons.

[00:32:52] But she's trying to get the, the original patterns back now. And then, um, when she does, then we can. Moving forward. Um, and we had talked with, um, with somebody at the website enabled, um, just to see like, because I'm going to be the one to enter in all of the tech pack information, all of those things. So just having like a tour of the website and she got a few names from them for, um, for other factors, uh, factories and seamstresses there in the U S um, of them that they recommended are in New York.

[00:33:26] So I was like, I was like, you know, I'm in New York all the time for business. If you want me to buy, I be more than willing to, you know, um, and she was like, she was like, Hey, I don't mind going up on a trip to New York either. You might have a few, um, a few trips thrown in there. Um, which, uh, and I even suggested, um, on the illustration side, some, um, some stuff for her marketing team.

[00:33:53] And, um, I was clear that those were not outlast. Obviously in her original proposal, she didn't want it. Um, the only things that are included in her proposal are the tech sketches. That is, um, probably the other thing that I have worked on a lot in 2021 and in 2020 is setting really serious boundaries on it.

[00:34:18] Not that I necessarily had a problem with that before, but I, if I let myself, uh, like be like, oh, it's just this one thing. It's just these two things. It basically, it takes me a while for somebody to like really push me to the point where I'm like, this was not in our scope of work. I'm not doing it. And let's see.

[00:34:37] Yeah. Um, but that's something that I've worked on a lot in the past year, this year and last year is being very clear about what is and what is, is, is not included. Yeah.

[00:34:47] **Heidi:** And there's like an especially graceful ways to do that. Yeah. Go

[00:34:50] **Sam:** ahead. Well, it's, it's not even just in design work, it's in, um, like my live illustration as well.

[00:34:56] Um, I've had a couple experiences already where I'm like, I come home and I'm just like, I shouldn't have done that. Yeah. Yeah, exactly. Which

that's, that's the other thing about mindset as well is if something upsets you and you, and it's your fault, you know, you didn't charge somebody enough, you didn't, um, set the hours correctly.

[00:35:17] You didn't do this, you didn't do that.

[00:35:19] **Heidi:** And it wasn't in the proposal.

[00:35:21] **Sam:** Yeah. You just kind of, you learn from it and then again, you just move on. It's just moving forward. You'd be like, all right, I'm going to hate myself for like five minutes and I'm going to get over it. And I'm just going to, again, move on because it's nothing is going to help the situation by like brooding on it.

[00:35:38] And I'm definitely that person that like, I will be all in my head about it. Yeah. So, yeah,

[00:35:44] **Heidi:** that's good. Good. I love all the mindset stuff that you're working on it. So, I mean, I don't know. It's become a lot more common. Talk to like, just talk about mindset. And I think a lot more people are aware and familiar with it now over the past multiple years, but it's a newer thing.

[00:35:59] And I think you can sound sometimes a little bit like, whoo. Like you gotta hear mindset figured out, but like, it's so true. It's like the root and the foundation of everything in life. Whether it's your career, your relationships, your relationship with yourself. Right. It's so important. So I love that.

[00:36:16] You're doing that.

[00:36:17] **Sam:** Yeah. Yeah. I was always that person. I was like, if it's not something tactical I'm so down to earth mindset wise that I'm like, I was always that person. I was like, that's too woo for me. Like, it doesn't make any sense. I don't understand it. And then, um, and I've talked about this on Instagram too.

[00:36:34] I'm like, I'm not that person. I am not like that manifesting person, but when it works, you can't, you can't deny when something works and I'm not going to question it. Yeah. Getting into a correct mindset is going to make me more jobs and more money than I'm going to be all

[00:36:52] **Heidi:** for it. Let's do it. Yeah. Let's bring 2022 in with like a huge bang and be like, you know what, this works.

[00:36:59] So like let's do more of it. Yep. That's huge. That's huge. Um, okay. So you found her somehow and you just sent a cold pitch by email?

[00:37:10] **Sam:** Yeah. Okay. And the email thing is definitely something that I a hundred percent attribute to you. Um, when I was going through, um, uh, the freelance program, um, because the example that you would put up of what not to do with.

[00:37:30] I was like hiding. I was like, Heidi went into my email, took one of my email pitches and put it up for the whole world to that's it with that. I'm convinced.

[00:37:40] **Heidi:** So, yeah, I'll just summarize real quick. Cause I'm very familiar with basically the email. This is the email not to send that everybody sends hi, I'm a freelance designer and I have X years of experience doing this and X years experience doing this.

[00:37:53] And I've worked for brands like this, this and this. And I can do sketching and tech packs and sourcing. And this, if you have any work, I've attached my portfolio and my rates are this. If you have any freelance work for me, please let me know the worst email ever, but everybody sends it. I know, but you know what?

[00:38:12] It's, everybody's exact email and it's terrible. It's not going to get any responses. So you learned, um, how to write an effective pitch. And it worked and you don't get a response and a yes from everyone you send out, like you said, you get nos. Um,

[00:38:32] **Sam:** yeah, but you just get ghosted. Totally.

[00:38:37] **Heidi:** But here's the thing, you get this client for \$4,500, and now it's going to turn into a monthly retainer.

[00:38:45] And like, you don't need a lot of like, those really kick ass clients to build something really substantial or for like you. And maybe you're like, you know what, my illustration is taking out 50 or 70% or however much of your

time. And this is like great added income to that. And you're like, I'm just going to do this and this one client or like, whatever it is.

[00:39:05] But, you know, I think that it's so important to think about like, yeah, you're going to get nos. You're going to get ghosted. You'll you'll not hear back from people. Um, But that's the case that's like with everything in life, that's with everything in fashion, right. Starting your own brand, having a job. Um,

[00:39:21] **Sam:** I mean, actually even my very first, um, bridal, bridal, uh, designer job, um, I had sent in my resume in sometime I think, right after graduation or right before graduation or something like that.

[00:39:37] And she ended up, she didn't, I actually don't even think I got a response from her at all. Yeah. And, um, and all of a sudden she emailed me that she wanted to bring me in for an interview in may of 2014, like literally almost a year later. So yeah. Yeah. It was almost a year later and I was like, oh my God, you actually kept my resume.

[00:39:59] I know people say, they're going to know, I know, I know right by. Right. But like, you actually kept it. So, um, and that was straight out of college. So obviously I did not have. You know, I didn't really have anything, but like impressive internships on there at that point. Yeah. But it's

[00:40:18] **Heidi:** yeah. Someone else, I can't remember which guests it was, but it was talking about this idea of like planting seeds when you're doing outreach.

[00:40:26] Right. And they, it might take a year for them to grow, but it's about planting those seeds and developing those relationships and building those conversations. And, you know, sometimes at the end of the day, I wouldn't say something. I think a lot of times doing outreach for freelancing is sometimes just luck of the timing.

[00:40:45] Like if they need that service right then and there. And like you are this amazing freelancer and you fall in their lap, it's like all the stars just aligned. But then like what happens is you do a kick ass job and it turns into like ongoing work and, you know, all the strategies to like get ongoing work and then to get referrals and all that stuff.

[00:41:03] Um, so. The building this foundation is, is effort for sure. Like everything in the world. Right. And it's

[00:41:11] **Sam:** just makes a lot of patients totally as well. Yeah. Um, it's, uh, I'm deaf and I will be the first to admit, like I'm not a patient person, so it's very, it's, uh, it can be really stressful for me, um, to wait that long or whatever, like, especially, you know, like we said, with this current project, like, it took a while for her to get back to me and I immediately, I was like, she hates me.

[00:41:37] I bid too high. It was too much. Yeah. Yeah. Totally. Or just like in general, she's going to be like, oh, I decided like not to do it or, you know, whatever, whatever excuse I can come up with, like, that's what was happening. And so, um, and then when she emailed me like, Hey, I was just, you know, really busy cause she has her full-time job as well.

[00:41:57] She's trying to start this like on the side essentially. Um, and. I love her and she's not the only one that's done something like that. Like hasn't responded for a while and just said, oh, sorry. I was so busy. I make sure to over-communicate everything, like if I'm too busy to respond to you within a week, um, I will email you and be like, sorry, I'm still working on this, but I'm here.

[00:42:22] Like, don't worry. But I, but again, I'm that person that like, wants to know that you're still there. Even if the answer is no, I don't have one yet. Um, but everybody thinks like that. So I

[00:42:34] **Heidi:** don't, I I've learned that over the years. Cause I'm the person like, oh my God, at least just acknowledge.

[00:42:39] **Sam:** Yeah, exactly. I just want to acknowledge that we're still like, we're still on the same page.

[00:42:44] Um, and actually somebody that I am supposed to be talking to, so potentially this will turn into something. It is, um, it kind of will be marrying my, uh, my illustration with design skill, which would be really cool. And she reached out to me through my website, which was awesome. I love it. When I go thing for people, she owned a bridal salon, I think in Michigan, I want to

[00:43:11] **Heidi:** say that was the one I was looking at earlier.

[00:43:13] Bridal salon.

[00:43:15] **Sam:** Uh, full-on but definitely

[00:43:16] **Heidi:** different than, uh, like a

[00:43:18] **Sam:** brand, the actual designer. Yeah. Um, she owns a brow salon and they do a lot of custom work. And so she was like, um, she was like, we don't really do sketches for them. We just kind of like throw pictures together and we really want to make this, you know, process more streamlined and stuff like that.

[00:43:35] And, um, and I was like, yeah, I would love to jump on a call with you to just iron out details of like what you're looking for and, you know, things like that. Um, because you know, I do have that design background so I can kind of assist in that way as well. If. That extra, like help over there. Yeah. Yeah.

[00:43:55] Besides just doing illustrations and then all of a sudden, just nothing. She stopped her spying to me. And we hadn't even talked about like pricing or anything yet. And so how did I do her?

[00:44:10] Um, and then she emailed me back, like, cause you know, I, and I did the whole follow-up thing. Like I did my three followups and I was like, this is my last time reaching out to you. I'm not doing this again. You know? And she still didn't email nothing. And then she emailed me back probably like three weeks later or something like that after my last name and was like, so sorry, this month was crazy.

[00:44:32] Um, you know, we'll, we'll have to talk in December and I'm like, okay. So we're just gonna really stretch this out, but it's still something I'm super interested in. So hopefully we can, you know,

[00:44:45] **Heidi:** Cesar something right

[00:44:46] **Sam:** away. But again, it's, it's one of those things. Yeah. I I'm the person that gets discouraged when, when I don't hear back right away.

[00:44:54] But everyone needs to know that's not always how it works.

[00:44:58] **Heidi:** Yeah. I mean, there's so many variables that go on behind the scenes and like, as SFD has grown and we've hired freelancers and I hired freelancers when I was freelancing as well, but, um, it's a different, like, I, I get it. I get what it's like to be on the other side of the table, because as like the client, right.

[00:45:21] It is all about timing. And like sometimes projects get pushed back or you're not working on that for a while, or it was a priority and then things change and I totally get it. Like, I'm not saying I, I don't want to be the one that like, doesn't reply for three weeks or however long. Um, cause that's just not really my character, but like I get now when that happens and that's why it's just about like, kind of planting the seed and then just like being an awesome person.

[00:45:50] You know, even if, if you had like a good initial communication and then they kind of felt like they fall off the radar, you know, you can ping them again in like two months, not even like bothering them about the thing they never replied to, but just like sending them a little piece of value, right. It's like, maybe there's something to like spark this and maybe the timing is good this time.

[00:46:10] Um, and then it just takes those few clients that you get, right. That then can return into ongoing turn into ongoing projects that can turn into, um, retainers. And that's where you build the foundation and then you start, you know, building the referral sort of wheel and stuff can grow really, really fast.

[00:46:27] Yeah, for sure. I feel like you're getting some momentum.

[00:46:31] **Sam:** Yeah. Yeah. It's always it's. Yeah. And it's, it's nice because obviously, um, uh, the more you, the more you put yourself out there, the more you're like getting through it, it does honestly get easier. And I always hated it when people told me that like, it'll get easier.

[00:46:48] Yeah. And I'm like, how long is it going to take to get easier? Because I'm not a patient person, but it really, it really does. And also what makes it, what makes it easier once you're getting that momentum is not only that you get the positivity, you feel, you know, you feel better going forward as you're getting that momentum, but I'm, um, I'm starting to, uh, kind of hone in on, you know, what everybody keeps calling like my genius zone.

[00:47:19] Um, like I don't do certain things well, like I wouldn't be the first to admit, I really hate sending pitchy emails or cold emails or whatever you want to call them. I really, really dumb. And I don't like them. So I'm starting to not do them. I'm hiring somebody to do them for me. Oh, good for you. So I'm doing this.

[00:47:38] I, I have a whole like, spreadsheet for it, which you would really appreciate it with all my super appreciate your spreads. Um, but I have a, so I have designers in one tab, which I have decided, like, I will take care of those myself because you know, like you say over and over again, like things need to be personalized.

[00:47:58] You need to show your personality through your emails and stuff like that. And I'm like, nobody can show my personality better than I can, so I will deal with that. Um, but as far as like outreach for illustration goes, I have all these other tabs for like venues and planners and, you know, surrounding areas and like all these things.

[00:48:19] And I've hired somebody to do that for me because I, I don't want to, and I don't have the time and I'm totally okay with that. I never, no one ever told me that that was like an option or. You can hire somebody to do this. You can outsource anything. Um, but I just never thought that it was something that I should outsource because it needs to be personalized and things like that.

[00:48:46] But what I did for my VA was I told her, I gave her the, the template and I was like, this is where things need to be personalized. This is where you need to go through their website and see what's great about their portfolio and stuff like that. And, and then here's my little blurb at the bottom. And, um, you know, you sign it and you send it.

[00:49:06] And I come up with all the contacts for her. So she doesn't even do that, like research portion of it. Yeah. But it's something about hitting that send button that really trips me up. And I don't know what it is, but yeah, but I'm done trying to find out why I hate it. And I'm just outsourcing,

[00:49:26] **Heidi:** that's smart to like, acknowledge that.

[00:49:29] And then. To like take action on it, I think is so smart. Right. Um, so

[00:49:37] **Sam:** honestly I would sit there with my lifestyle to contact and it's a big, long list and I'm like, great. I have all the contacts now. I need to make all these emails and I don't want the email.

[00:49:48] **Heidi:** Yeah. And then that can just be like such a mental drain that it's like, this isn't even worth it.

[00:49:53] So I didn't realize, and I know he likes, spent the majority of our conversation talking about this project in your design stuff, but it sounds like you've taken a lot of the freelance accelerator strategies for like pitching and outreaching and maybe even like pricing and negotiating and all that stuff and applied them to all of your illustration stuff.

[00:50:11] Yeah. Oh, a hundred percent. Oh my gosh. Okay. Let's talk about that for a few minutes. Um, like I had no idea you were pitching venues, um, because, so, so we'll just collaborate or elaborate. Cause I, maybe it feels second nature to me because I follow you on Instagram. I see. But like you do a lot of live sketching at like.

[00:50:28] Holiday parties or weddings or any type of like event, right? Any,

[00:50:34] **Sam:** yeah. Any type of event. Um, so it's really been my, um, my goal at this point to really connect to with any, uh, cause I, I work at like, or my, I guess my target market is like a really luxurious wedding market, um, wedding and events. Um, and uh, I just love the people that just want to like throw all their money at their weddings.

[00:50:58] I'm like, yes, I'm surprised you like me. Cause I did not. I did like negative that we like did like a quick elopement with our family. Okay. Gotcha. Gotcha. That's funny is that I personally would not do that, but I love the people that do.

[00:51:14] **Heidi:** I mean, there's tons of people that do and that works for them. So.

[00:51:16] **Sam:** Yeah. Yeah. But so looking up all of, I still base myself here and in New York because I still go up for like every family weekend, stuff like that. Yeah. So, um, and obviously it's so easy to get back and forth from DC. Yeah.

[00:51:29] **Heidi:** You've done something really cool. Like behind the scenes live sketching at fashion week to,

[00:51:35] **Sam:** uh, I passionate, I have a, oh, well, I've gone

[00:51:38] **Heidi:** to posted something.

[00:51:41] Okay. Maybe

[00:51:43] **Sam:** a few presentations and I've done like quick sketches there. Okay. But every fashion week, I just take my favorite. My favorite looks that I've seen and I'll sketch those out and I'll tag everybody,

[00:51:54] **Heidi:** all that I must be thinking of like other like runway shows or something you've been at I've, you've posted stuff on Instagram where you're like behind the scenes with the models, like getting dressed and you're like sketching them.

[00:52:05] **Sam:** Yeah. So every, every fashion week I, um, I freelance for, uh, this, um, Dressing company that they it's literally, they get hired to like dress the models and do all that organization. Okay. So, um, so it's really great that I get to like go back there and really have this behind the scenes, you know, thing again, with the, like, I just love having all the experiences, doing all the things.

[00:52:30] Um, so that's where I get to see like all the up-close things with the clothes and, you know, all of those. And then I would like go home and sketch them and be like, oh, I worked on this look or whatever. And, uh, so I've, I've been doing that, but, um, with the going back and forth, um, I've made a list of venues and planners that are, uh, the high-end planners that are in the DC area and in New York.

[00:52:54] Um, those are the lists of people that I've been trying to reach out to. And, uh, which has been Grapey as like the problem with what I do. And it's a good, and a bad thing of live sketching is everyone loves it. So that's the good thing, but the bad is that people have never heard of it, so they don't go looking for it.

[00:53:16] **Heidi:** Okay. So if you're in the venue, then the venue can tell the party planner, whoever about it, but it's not something they're like Googling or searching out.

[00:53:27] **Sam:** Yeah. It's either that, or it could be like when I'm at these weddings and events, people are like, oh, this is so cool. And then they'll take my business card and they'll be like, oh my sister, she'll love this.

[00:53:37] You know? Um, so that she just happens. Uh, I just booked a wedding for April at this venue that I sketched out with another illustrator because it's so many people at the wedding that there's two of us. And, uh, it's at the exact same venue that we were with, that we were together with, uh, last year. Um, and, uh, in a bride, I guess like found us through the venue or something, or I don't know, maybe the bride tag does my, I don't even know where she found us, but she failed the other illustrator and was like, are you both available again?

[00:54:12] Same venue next year. So actually what we had done, um, before we even got this inquiry was after we had worked together for that wedding, um, I emailed her and I was like, you know, it was so great working with you. I know we got along really well. Do you want to do a bundle deal? So that smart weddings we'll just be able to, we'll have one contract, they'll pay us separately, but it's going to be the same rate for both of us.

[00:54:39] And it would just be so much easier to have like one person contacting all these people. Or you can get like double the inquiries,

[00:54:46] **Heidi:** two birds, one stone.

[00:54:48] **Sam:** Yeah. Yeah, exactly. So we did that. So when, by the time this pride reached out to us, we were like, we're ready to go. We already have our information, all of our stuff.

[00:54:55] So we don't even need necessarily like, um, we don't need to necessarily need to contact each other about it besides, or to make sure that we're both available for the state. Yeah. But besides that, we can be like, oh yeah, I'm going to email her with, you know, our rates and blah, blah, blah. And

[00:55:11] **Heidi:** yeah. That's so exciting.

[00:55:14] Yeah. Um, I feel like you've learned like, and this is a constant evolution and like life and career in business. But if I feel like I'm hearing all these really cool. Just sort of strategies that you're implementing, um, as you get smarter each and every year that you do this and you're like, oh, let's do this.

[00:55:34] Right. And it's all just like building the foundation of your business to like help you kick more ass without having to do more work.

[00:55:43] **Sam:** Yeah. It's, I mean, it's definitely just a process. Like I, I always listened to podcasts or like other people's experiences and I'm like frantically making lists of all the things I need to do.

[00:55:55] And I'm that person that wants to do everything at one time. And when it's not done, you know, by that next weekend I freak out and I'm like, I'm never going to get anything done. Um, so yeah, I did every single year, just trying to nail down, you know, one new strategy or one new thing or hire one more person or, or whatever.

[00:56:16] Um, so this year, actually, no, it was last year or the beginning of this year was my first time actually outsourcing

[00:56:24] **Heidi:** something. That's a

[00:56:25] **Sam:** big step. Yeah. And, and I was like, oh, is it, you know, worth outsourcing and blah, blah, blah. But it's, I'm slowly. I now have, like, I'm looking at a list, you know, right now, like on my wall, like I have a list of things I want to outsource eventually, like having everything written down in front of me, um, is definitely makes it easier to make it a reality.

[00:56:48] But also I think the important thing is realizing what works for you and what works for somebody else is not the same thing or vice versa. Like I need, it's definitely been easier over the last couple of years, listening to other people's, you know, interviews and strategies and stuff like that. And instead of trying to twist it around so much to make it work for myself, just being like, that's not a thing that's going to work for me.

[00:57:13] Totally. And that's yeah. Like other people, you know, want to do X, Y, and Z. And I have. Y and Z and maybe a little bit of X, so this is not going to work. I'm like, you know what, that's not gonna work for me and I will find something else. Yeah. That works for me. Yeah. Um, but that's really where like the key is, is like admitting and implementing the things that actually work for you versus what everybody else is doing.

[00:57:44] Just trying to

[00:57:45] **Heidi:** do everything. Yeah.

[00:57:46] **Sam:** Yeah.

[00:57:48] **Heidi:** Yeah. That's like a lesson. I feel like I've learned over and over. I totally get where you're coming from. Yeah. Um, Sam, this has been so much fun to chat with you and hear about all your amazing growth. Um, I mean, I clearly perked up at like the \$4,500 design project with the tech packs, but, you know, I, and I think I got a little bit like tunnel vision talking about that, but like, you know, so many props to you on building your whole illustration business and growing and kicking ass on that.

[00:58:19] And I, I mean, I just, I know that's what you. A majority of your time. Cause I see that on Instagram. Um, so yeah. Congrats on all of it and kicking ass as, I guess, three year celebration of working for yourself. Yeah, yeah. Actually three and a half, depending on board

[00:58:41] **Sam:** may even be more than that.

[00:58:43] **Heidi:** Yeah.

[00:58:43] Depending on when you left in 2018.

[00:58:45] **Sam:** Yeah. Yeah. And I'm, I'm learning to actually, you know, my, I did hire a business coach last year. She's been incredible. Um, and so I've been making actual goals and trying to hit them instead of just looking at them and just looking at them. Um, but yeah, it's, it's just, it's a process.

[00:59:09] It can't be done all at one time as much as I would love it. Yeah. It's it's honestly, it's something that you have to like go through it to be able to. I feel like you can't. Yeah. I don't even know how to explain it properly.

[00:59:22] **Heidi:** I will just quote, I literally saw this yesterday when driving and it was this like big, like, I dunno, I'll say tricked out, but like this big, like truck that was like pretty robust truck.

[00:59:35] And, and then on the back of it, um, was the sticker. It was like big, it was like the whole size of the back bumper. Like these dye cut letters. And it said the pursuit is, and his was in quotes. The pursuit is happiness. You know,

the saying is the pursuit of happiness. And I was like, no, that's beautiful. The pursuit is happiness.

[00:59:58] Right. And so I, I bring that up because I mean, I just saw it. So it was fresh in my head and I loved it so much, but you're commenting on how, like, you know, you're, you're going through this and you're learning and all this other stuff. And I'm like, that is the happiness though. Right? It's not, the happiness is not the goal at the end of the sprint.

[01:00:13] Right. The happiness is a sprint or in life, more like the marathon, right. That

[01:00:18] **Sam:** is still have to tell myself that I never, we do.

[01:00:21] **Heidi:** Yeah. But like, you're like, you know, I've learned all these things and all this stuff over the past three years. And that's the happiness though, right?

[01:00:30] **Sam:** Yeah. And honestly, I don't, I don't realize things like that until, you know, I do things like this.

[01:00:36] Like I talked to you about these things, I'm like, I'm like, oh, I did do a lot of things. Yeah. I literally have just like no idea, you know, when you're in it so much, you don't realize all the things that you, that you do or that you learn. And of course you get, uh, I don't know of anybody else like this, but I get tripped up when people were like, what's the one thing you've learned, like being a business owner.

[01:00:59] And I'm like, I don't know that this shit's hard. I don't know.

[01:01:06] Like, I know you're looking for some like answer, but I don't even know what to tell you. And then, um, but of course, like when you ask really specific questions, that's when you know, you can kind of pull it out. Wow.

[01:01:17] **Heidi:** So I'll just toss it out. Cause the timing feels impeccable. Um, what's the one thing nobody asks you about being a fashion freelancer that you wish they would?

[01:01:27] The question I ask everybody at the end of the interview,

[01:01:30] **Sam:** no pressure say I was, well, I was trying to remember. It was, you asked at the end of every interview because I knew it was kind of, um, I think nobody. Nobody realizes like all of that extra work that goes into it, either like finding people or running your business or whatever, like people just see the things that you post on Instagram or the end result of things.

[01:01:55] Nobody does the behind the scenes stuff, but nobody thinks to ask about it either. Nobody asks, like, how did you get that client? Nobody asks, like, how did you come up with your rate? Or why are you charging that much? Or ha or like, what are the exact things of your project or whatever. Um, nobody asks anything like behind the scenes stuff.

[01:02:20] Yeah.

[01:02:21] **Heidi:** Well, hopefully we can, hopefully we talked enough about it today to give you a little bit of a scoop into that bucket. But yeah, I agree. It's not talked about enough, but that's kind of the stuff where I like to nerd out.

[01:02:34] **Sam:** And I mean, even whether you're you have like a solid business, like I do in my illustration, or you're just freelancing.

[01:02:42] I, you know, I have my like marketing calendar that I, I post on social media doing X, Y, and Z. I've gotten my videos and the reels and all of those things. So it's like all of the marketing, all the social, all the, like all these different things you have to do to keep relevant and all these things. And, you know, the skills, like those are the things that nobody thinks to ask about.

[01:03:04] Everyone's like, oh, you got this design job. And then that's your job. And it's like, well, no, I had to do the job. And then I have to do all the other things. So that was, yeah, it's definitely a fine

[01:03:15] **Heidi:** balance is definitely a fine balance. But you get like the freedom and the flexibility and the lifestyle.

[01:03:22] And I don't know for personalities like you and me, you get to be in control. And like, you get to call the shots, which is priceless as far as I'm concerned, compared to working for someone.

[01:03:32] **Sam:** I say that all the time that my, my freedom and my, um, you know, my scheduling and all of those types of things are.

[01:03:42] Like in measurable to me. Yeah. And then, and then my boyfriend makes fun of me and he's like, but you didn't want to run your own business. You didn't want to be freelance. And I'm like, leave me alone. I got to it on my own. It's

[01:03:54] **Heidi:** really working for me now. Okay. Let me enjoy this moment.

[01:03:57] **Sam:** Yeah. I'm like, oh, now I enjoy it.

[01:03:59] So leave me alone. That's amazing.

[01:04:02] **Heidi:** Um, and everybody connect with you online. What's the best place?

[01:04:07] **Sam:** Uh, Instagram is my favorite place. Um, Samuel in design. So S a M I a Lin design. Um, and that's my handle on all the platforms. So Facebook Pinterest trying to do the tick talk thing. Yeah. Um, but yeah, everywhere.

[01:04:25] And then that's my, my website as well as, uh, Samuel and.com. Okay. Yeah. If anyone wants to check out like my portfolio or anything like that, it's all in

[01:04:35] **Heidi:** there. If anyone's has an event coming up and needs a kick ass live illustrator in the DC New York area, I'll give you a little plug. Yeah. We'll link to all that in the show notes.

[01:04:45] Thank you so much. It was so amazing to chat with you, Sam, and, um, yeah. So amazing to just hear, you know, I've known parts of your story, but it's just so exciting to like, hear all the details of what you've done and how much ass you've kicked over the last few years for sure. Have you to thank for

[01:05:01] **Sam:** so much of that.

[01:05:06] **Heidi:** Thank you so much for listening to this episode of the successful fashion freelancer podcast. I am your host, Heidi, and it was really, really awesome to be here with you today. I really appreciate you taking the time and hanging out. I hope you're having an awesome day, whatever it is that you are doing.

[01:05:19] Um, I also owe a big thanks to two people behind the scenes who help make sure everything runs smoothly on the podcast. Um, that is Tara my right hand, who coordinates the guest and make sure that we have shows that come out as well as my husband, mark, who does all of the editing and tech to make sure that the audio sounds good and that the files get delivered to you.

[01:05:38] Pretty way. Um, beyond that, if you are interested in kickstarting or growing your freelance career, I would love to help you do that. You can head on over to [sew heidi.com/freelance](http://sewheidi.com/freelance). We will link that below in the show notes, and I will get you kick-started with all of my free resources. And I will let you know about my freelance accelerator program, which only opens a couple of times a year in case you're interested in taking your career to the next level.

[01:06:00] I'd love to share the details about that with you and yeah, that's it. I hope you guys have a wonderful day and I'll talk to you in the next episode. Bye

.