

Ep #264: Partnerships and Podcasts with Kandrac & Kole Interior Designs



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Tobi Fairley

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You are listening to *The Design You Podcast* with Tobi Fairley, episode number 264.

Welcome to *The Design You Podcast*. A show where interior designers and creatives learn to say no to busy and say yes to more health, wealth and joy, here's your host, Tobi Fairley.

Hello my friends, I hope you are having a great day, a great week. It's a good one over here. And I have some friends coming to the podcast today. Today we have Kandrac and Kole, Joann Kandrac and Kelly Kole. They've been friends of mine for years. They took a lot of my courses and things back in the early days of having my designer MBA program and seminars. And we've just known each other in the industry for a long time. Joann and Kelly have a very successful firm in Atlanta.

They were named Atlanta's top 20 residential designers by Atlanta Business Chronicle. They've been featured on HGTV and the New York Times and a whole bunch of other places. And what I love about them is that they've really mastered the art of a partnership, which is a hard thing to do. And they've also really done a beautiful job with their own podcast. So today we're talking partnerships and podcasts. So enjoy this interview with my friends, Joann and Kelly from Kandrac & Kole.

Tobi: Hey ladies, welcome to *The Design You Podcast*. I think this episode has been a long time coming. So I'm so glad you're here.

Joann: I know because I think we, this is Joann, I think we started our podcast very close to the same time. We're five years in, how about you?

Tobi: Yeah, I mean right about that, probably, I can't even remember, this is episode 200 and something. So I'm in the fifth year, yeah. So I passed my four year mark and we're in the middle of the fifth year. So probably right around the same time, yeah. Well, I'm so glad you are here. We've been

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friends forever. We've said multiple times, "We've got to get on each other's podcast." Now we're doing it finally. So why don't you tell everybody about who you are, what you do. And then we're going to get into some of the really unique things about the way you run your business.

Kelly: Okay, well, we are Kelly Kole and Joann Kandrac. We are Kandrac & Kole Interior Designs based out of Atlanta, Georgia. We have been in business for going into our 18th year. And we do mostly residential and commercial design, everything ground up, renovation, you name it, we do it. And we travel a lot. We're big charity givers. And we've had our podcast *Inside Design* with Kandrac & Kole now like we said for going on five years. So yeah, there's a lot to chew on.

Joann: And a second career for both of us.

Tobi: That's so cool. Okay, so maybe we'll roll that in a little bit to our discussion too because I think I always like to bring guests that have a perspective that I know either the people that I coach with or which do happen to all listen to the podcast. And then people that have never worked with us yet but are probably out there thinking the very same things, we know what they're thinking and what they're wondering. And the question I get all the time that I cannot answer because I don't have this experience is, what about a partnership, are they good or bad?

A lot of people have heard nightmare stories about partnerships. How do we make one work? And there's always just literally maybe three partnerships that I know of that are really, really solid and work beautifully. And you're right there in that, maybe at the top of that list. And so I would love for us to dig into that today and really help people understand the pros, the cons. I'm sure there's some cons, although not very many maybe, but let's tell them, and maybe there aren't. Maybe you're like, "No, we can't think of a single one."

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But let's tell them what it's really like to have a partnership. So maybe I'll start by how you became partners, what that journey has looked like and then let's kind of get into it. We'll start with the pros and then we'll search around and see if we can think of any con. But both of you are like, "No, I don't think there's cons."

Joann: Well, it is funny because we get this question asked a lot of times. And I guess we're very proud of our partnership but how we met is we were both working in a design store. And I had worked there for several years. I was doing the buying and the accessorizing of all of the furnishings that came in. And then Kelly started working there in the fabric department. So we were kind of chummy. And then one day a designer came into the owner and said, "We're going to be doing this million dollar showhouse, would you want to be a part of it?"

And he was the kind of guy who said no to kind of everything. He thought, if I say yes to this person then they're all going to be bothering me. So Kelly happened to be at the front when the girl was asking him. And she's like, "No, no, you should do it, this would be great for the store." Kelly, the ultimate salesperson. And she's like, "Joann, can do it." She had never even asked me and he was like, "Okay." So that was the beginning and then we ended up doing the showhouse. We did the guest master. It was a pretty big area because now we don't always do the big ones.

But it was a guest master bedroom and bath. We had so much fun doing it together. And I think one of the key things was that we both have the same work ethic. We both worked really hard on it. And it was like, wow, I just had never thought about maybe working with somebody like that. So right after that experience, Kelly was like, "What do you say? I'm ready to kind of do something." And I had been at the store 13 years at that point.

Kelly: I'd been there four.

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Joann: Yeah, I'm ready, let's do it. And literally we opened up a bank account. We got business cards, we messed around with our name and it just happened.

Kelly: Well, the blessing of it was that the owner of this design store did not actually sell design services. He sold furniture, fabric, wall coverings, tons of accessories and so forth, but he didn't sell design services. So as we said earlier, this is a second career for both of us. I had been an area vice president in luxury property management. And had decided that I didn't want the corporate world anymore. And that I would go back to school and I would just find something to help pay the bills.

So I was going to school at night at the Art Institute of Atlanta and then working at this place during the day. And so I hung a shingle right away, just I mean what the heck, like Joann said, I am the ultimate salesperson. I mean I am a pretty smart girl, I can figure this out. So I just figured, whatever, I'm just going to do this. And so he let me just openly kind of slap my wares in the shop. So when I was helping people at the fabric counter they would say, "Oh, man, you've just been so great. Could you help me with more stuff?" And I'd be like, "Sure." And I literally had this little black book and so four years later...

Tobi: Now that you mention it.

Kelly: Yeah. And so four years later we had a little black book of literally probably 150 clients. And we just took that little black book and we said, "Goodbye, thank you." And that's how we started.

Tobi: I love it. I love it. Okay, so one of the things that Joann said that I think, I know you both really well so I know this to be true. And I think it's one of the things that gets in the way of a lot of partnerships is that you do both have the same work ethic. You're both equally in on the business, you're both equally in on the vision. You're both equally in on the

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commitment. So can you speak to that a little bit because I think I've coached someone recently who has a partner.

And this comes up a lot where people are like, "Well, I have a business partner. And either we're not both designers, I'm a designer and he's the money guy or we're both designers but she doesn't want to work that much and I want to work a lot." And I think that gets in the way of it, so can you talk about that a little bit?

Joann: Yeah. I think that's the key. I think that's the key. I think the other part of it is we're in very similar situations in our lives. Not one of us is 25 and one's 50. We don't have babies. We had young kids at the same time. We both agreed on the work life balance that we wanted. Our husbands are very similar. Our finances are very similar. So that I think really helps because we can relate to each other on so many levels. When I was having issues with my teenagers, she was just a little bit behind me.

And there was always that mutual respect for the other one if we were going through different things at different times.

Tobi: Yeah, that's so true.

Kelly: And I think one thing that people are always very interested in is we decided from the very beginning that we would be 50/50 partners financially. So that really helped things. And also we were both kind of coming up together in the world of interior design. We'd been entrenched in it for a while and we had different strengths but we were still really newbies. And so we kind of came up together, one wasn't overly stronger than the other and that was great.

So we kind of hit the ground running with jumping in together, both 50/50 financially, but I think we have coached a couple of friends, partnerships.

Joann: I know, they both had their own businesses and then tried to match them and that didn't really work.

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Kelly: We did a buy-sell agreement in the very beginning to kind of, we went to an attorney and said, "What do you do in your partnership?" And basically a buy-sell agreement is just covering you if one bails and one doesn't and kind of giving some structure to your business. And I was very protective of that little black book that I had. But Joann was like, "Well, I'm not going in if we're not 50/50." Which was very smart on her part because down the line, 18 years later, financially it's just made it so easy that there's no 60/40s.

Joann: Here's my 33%.

Kelly: Yeah, let's just stop.

Tobi: And you can give me four pages of that little black book, rip those out, I'm taking my pages. I hope they're good people and not the crappy people, and I'm out of here.

Kelly: Yeah. So if we get a great paycheck, we both get a paycheck. If we miss a paycheck, we both miss a paycheck.

Joann: It's a lot like a marriage, it really is. You just have to, there's give and take and there is, like I said, I think the most important thing is the respect for the other person. We may have disagreements but they're very...

Kelly: They're minor.

Joann: They're very minor.

Kelly: I think the biggest thing is if she was a schlep or I was a schlep, we'd have some major problems going on. But we both really work so freaking hard.

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Joann: [Inaudible] I just don't feel like getting on my computer, I'll be like, "Oh boy, she was on last night, she was doing stuff." We kind of feel it's okay because...

Kelly: Yeah, but we do that to ourselves, the other person [crosstalk].

Tobi: It motivates you to make sure you're pulling your weight though.

Joann: It does, and for sure.

Kelly: Yes. And that is probably why we work so hard, because we're trying to keep up. But we've also gotten better as we've gotten older. Last night I was peace out, got a massage at 4:45, don't [crosstalk] again, because we work at night and it's probably a bad habit but it keeps us.

Joann: I have to say the other thing is too, and this is kind of out there for people who are by themselves. They feel pretty lonely. They don't always have somebody to run something by. So for example, I get stuck sometimes. I'm like, "Where can I go for a rug that's got?" And Kelly will just tell me. So I think that designers, when they're by themselves, don't have that person to kind of throw things out.

Tobi: Agree.

Joann: And so we're thinking about starting a mentorship program where we are going to be a partner for somebody else who doesn't know where to go or how do I handle this person? There's all of that stuff kind of out there.

Tobi: It's so smart though, I agree, because you're just bringing a different perspective. Because like I said, I get asked this question all the time. And I can give some advice on parts of it but I can't speak to the experience of having had a partner, I just can't, so yeah, super smart.

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Kelly: And I will say that just to help people along in this journey is we didn't know each other terribly well. I mean we had been working together for four years.

Joann: But we were both working part-time there.

Kelly: And it's not like we were bosom buddies or sisters or whatever. So that respect was there from the very beginning because we had to...

Tobi: Agree, yeah, a little boundary, kind of like a boundary.

Kelly: Yes, we had some boundaries. And we don't really socialize together. I mean we travel a lot together for work but on the weekends we don't see each other and we have separate friend groups although sometimes we overlap for some things. But it's good because we're together Monday through Friday morning till night. And so we definitely separate on the weekends, which has been good.

Tobi: Yeah, that makes sense to me. Yeah, I see that even in my own team. I mean I spend more time with my team even though they're all over the place and we're on Zoom and we're connected and we're working together for hours a day. And yeah, then we don't talk on the weekends. But then I'm so happy to see them when I come back to work on Monday because you've missed them and they're your person kind of. So I hear you.

Well, I definitely find myself having a little envy with that. There's so many times that I wish that there was somebody carrying the weight of the business with me. I mean not that I'm trying to be misery loves company. And you can have team members support you, but there's just something different about being the person that the financial stuff, the book stops with and the responsibility. At the end of the day your team members at some point are going to be like, "Well, I'm checking out, it's five o'clock", or, it's whatever time. And you're still there holding the thing by yourself.

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And so there have been many, many times, I mean thankfully I have my mom as my sounding board still. And she's in great health. She's here today actually. We're doing design work together today. But it's not quite the same because she's not in it so much that, like you said, she knows every vendor or she knows the people or she can get on the phone and make the phone call. I am envious that you have kind of another version of yourself. It's almost like cloning yourself in the best sort of way, cloning yourself but bringing additional strengths that the other person has to the table.

Joann: Well, the thing is too, there is just inherently, we have things that we're better at. Kelly can write unbelievably. It comes very naturally to her. I'm better at maybe doing research or finding things. So it's kind of nice because when I sit down to write something, I have to, it takes me longer because it just doesn't come naturally. So there you've kind of got, right, there's two, and it's also kind of like two for the price of one. When we come in and people are thinking about hiring us, they kind of think, well, we've got two minds to go with.

Tobi: Two brains, yeah, totally. Yeah, I love that.

Kelly: I will say, I did probably think of the only con that I can think of and that is that because there's two of us and we are so aligned we are very fast. We are efficient. We can bang the stuff out, but we have not been able to get to the point where we hire a junior designer or another designer. We've had some interns that did some design work. So we've just decided that we have all the backend covered. So our team handles everything administrative, all the expediting, all the orders, all the vendor stuff, all that, but in terms of design it is all on us, which sometimes is very overwhelming.

Tobi: Yes, I can see that.

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Kelly: But it comes and goes, so we kind of get over it, but that's really probably the only thing that we haven't been able to let go and just, I can't even really explain why.

Tobi: I understand that. That makes sense to me, yeah.

Joann: There'd be a third of us, I don't think that we could get a third person that would, I don't know, yeah.

Tobi: You might be able to sometime in the future when you want to slow down even a little bit more. But you would have to, yeah, it would probably take digging kind of deep with yourself to be able to be patient enough, to slow down enough, to train the person because it's going to take some time. And as many years of experience as you all have and you've got your groove together, I could see how it could be done, but I could see how it would be trying to get there. So probably every time you start you're like, "Oh, it's not worth it, never mind, forget it."

Kelly: And then the commitment to pay them because we wouldn't want to pay them really well.

Tobi: You're like, "That's my money."

Kelly: And we're kind of like, "Could I suffer just a little bit longer to not pay them?"

Tobi: Right, yeah, totally.

Joann: The other thing is we're doing other things and we were traveling. We're going to Highpoint. We have a podcast. We're doing a lot, even though there is two of us, there's two of us still doing a lot.

Tobi: Can you speak a little bit too, what it actually looks like when you break down your workflow, do you both work together on every project or

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do you each own your own projects and then tap each other in? How do you run the workflow?

Joann: We both always go to the consultation. So we both meet the client, see the space, take the measurements together and kind of really understand who this person is. Then we get back to the office, Kelly generally writes the proposals. And then once we get the job it just kind of depends on who's working on what. And we just kind of start. And then, for example, we just got a project, I'm starting it today. We're doing four rooms. And so I'll start on it. She might be working on other things. And then something may happen and she'll be like, "Alright, I'll take over that next room." There's no real formula.

Kelly: No. We used to do everything together.

Joann: We used to.

Kelly: We would sit in the workroom side by side with our laptops. And then we just got so busy that we couldn't do that anymore. So I will say there's generally a lead for each project but the client really doesn't know because we go to the consultation together and we present together. So the beginning part and the end part and we do all installs together.

Tobi: I love that, yeah, those are all the things I wish I had a friend on. How much more fun to drive together and then get to talk about it on the way back to the office.

Kelly: Yeah. That's the other great thing, not having to go anywhere really kind of by yourself. She does not like to drive in cities, parallel parking.

Joann: No, I can't parallel park.

Kelly: Park in garages. I'm like, "If it's night time or raining", I'm like, "I'm driving again." [Crosstalk], she has to be able to parallel park and drive downtown in the night time.

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Joann: Yeah, I'm a little bit older, I confess.

Tobi: I love it.

Kelly: What were we just saying?

Tobi: I was saying how much more fun to not have to go by yourself to do things.

Kelly: Yes. And sometimes we'll leave a consultation and we're like, "Okay, don't say anything till you get to the car. Don't say anything till you get to the car." And we get to the car and I'll say, "Oh my God, they liked you so much more than me. I'm out. I think I scared them with my loud obnoxious voice and you're going to have to take this one.

Joann: Or one of the clients might have gone to the same college as Kelly or whatever. So there's always usually a connection where people will learn about us. And then that person, yeah, there's always probably one that just...

Kelly: Yeah, if it's got tons of animals, it's mine.

Joann: Yeah, for sure, yeah.

Tobi: I'm kind of just imagining that this is what it's like to be a twin in life. You always have that person with you all the time, yeah.

Joann: So many people ask us if we're sisters, I can't tell you how many people as, us.

Kelly: All the time. We look nothing alike, what are you saying right now?

Joann: The mannerisms, it's just been together for so long. It really is a blessing to have a partner. And if anybody's thinking about it, there's got to be some chemistry there. And you have to really be able to kind of give up,

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you can't have your way all the time. And you want it to be fun as well. I mean we do, we have a lot of fun.

Kelly: Yeah. But there are days when I'm like, "Oh man, I mean I don't want to work today but I have to. Everybody else is working today." And so I drag myself in and I am accountable to these people. And sometimes I don't like that.

Joann: But I think the accountability is what's really key and I think that's why...

Kelly: Yeah, it keeps us going for sure.

Joann: It does keep us going and why we remain steady in our business. People say, "How are things going?" All I can say is we've been steady for 18 years. And it's probably because we're always working.

Tobi: Well, I can see that because even the most resilient and a hardworking person, and I'd probably put myself in that kind of category, still gets tired. And if there's not somebody else already at the office expecting you to be there, you could be like, "I've just got to take a break today. I've got to procrastinate a little bit today." So there is some beauty there. Well, let's talk about your podcast. Well, let's move into podcasts in general because I want to hear what you have to say about podcasts because I obviously think they're amazing for your business, so do you.

And then we can get into what's so fun about the fact that you're partners on a podcast because again, I find myself having a little bit of envy when I'm always the person to decide what we're going to talk about or who I'm going to interview or what I'm going to say or got to be on the mic all the time. And it would be so, I think all of the time, I'm like, "Do I want to co-host? Do I want to bring somebody from my team in? Would I ever want to have another designer join me consistently for a while or whatever?"

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So let's start with podcasts in general. Why did you start a podcast? What has been that experience? How has it grown your business?

Kelly: Well, it's very crazy how it started. If anybody wants to tune into episode one, we tell the story. But in a nutshell what it was, was we were in Las Vegas and we went to a mastermind kind of group with Kelly Ellis. And it was a small group, I think there were 16 designers, we were kind of in there to brainstorm each other, brainstorm together and grow our businesses. And Phil Pallen was there, who's a brand strategist and we kicked it off so well. And he was offering a brand audit for \$1,000 or something, or \$500 or something.

Where he would kind of just review your whole business, your social media presence, your website and he would give you suggestions. And so we're like, "Okay." We really didn't know what we were looking for but we loved him and so we thought, what the heck. And so he ends up calling us. He's like, "Listen, I have never told one of my clients this but you guys need to start a podcast. You have something special and you've just got to do this." And now, granted, this is five years ago when I hadn't even listened to a podcast before. And our daughters started, yeah.

Joann: Our daughters were like, "You need to listen to this one."

Kelly: We're like, "What, what is that? How do I get to it?"

Joann: And do you watch it, listen to it? What is it?

Kelly: So we're like, "Okay, Phil, well, we love you and that's a great suggestion but we're too busy to even begin to figure that out. So we're going to put that on the backburner." I kid you not, two weeks later, Joann gets a message from our friend, Tracey Deforge who we had been friends with in the very beginning of our business.

We joined a group called Ladies Who Launch. And it was again, another incubator type. So this is all about planting seeds and all of these coaching,

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[crosstalk] and all that you do and how it comes back to you. So she's like, "Listen, guys, I know we haven't talked in a long time but we've been together on social media. I have gone into podcasting." She had a radio background. "And I've just come back from this podcast conference in Nashville or LA."

Joann: Women podcasters.

Kelly: Women podcasters. "And I sat there at this conference and all I could think about was you guys." And we're like, [crosstalk] just thought about.

Tobi: What is happening?

Kelly: She's like, "I just know you guys, and I just think you need to have a podcast."

Joann: We were flabbergasted.

Tobi: You're like twice, we've never heard of podcasts.

Kelly: I heard Joann in her office freaking out on the phone with somebody. I'm like, "What is happening right now?" And so she was the piece that we couldn't, when we thought about, well, how do you even start or what's the technology? How do you get a microphone? How do you put it out to the world?

Joann: It was too much.

Kelly: It was, it was crazy.

Joann: So it was like she just fell into our lap. So it was kind of meant to be. And they do everything for us. They told us what microphones and what technology to do. They hooked us up with a producer. And within a few months we started.

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Kelly: And we thought, well, do we really, I mean what are we even talking about here? I mean, why? Why do we want to do this? And I think we were both at a place where we were getting a little itchy. And we were wanting another creative outlet. And our future for ourselves has always been, we know there's going to be a time when we fry out a little bit from the hard stuff we're currently still doing. And we wanted to set the stage for either writing a book, speaking in public, mentoring, starting a mentoring program.

Joann: It kind of replaced the blog I would say because we really weren't blogging anymore.

Kelly: Yes, that's true. We had been blogging for 12 years, just a few years after you.

Tobi: The same with me, yeah.

Joann: What was interesting though was when we thought about what we would talk about, one of the things Phil had said is, "There's two of you, there's a great chemistry with both of you." And so it was kind of nice because it's two different voices, you're not listening to one person the whole time. And so we decided kind of early that we were, because we can have a conversation and talk about our projects, talk about our travel, but that's what it's going to be like, design questions we threw in there.

And then we just decided, well, we were kind of running out, let's have some guests. And so we've done all that, but what's really interesting to date, the top five episodes out of the however many we're at now, 150 something, are when it's just the two of us.

Kelly: Even though I think we've had the most spectacular guests.

Joann: Yeah, we've had some great guests.

Kelly: I think everyone is fantastic.

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Tobi: I think that's true for mine too. I think my top episodes are some of my solo shows where I teach a concept or talk about something really personal or something, yeah.

Joann: Because people are just, they're so hungry to learn about our business.

Tobi: Yeah, I love that.

Joann: And we let it all out there. I mean we just had a designer reach out to us and say, "I was sitting here at lunch with my design assistant, we were talking about how much we've learned from your podcast." And that just makes me feel so good because I know when we decided, and when I've listened to podcasts sometimes, the first five minutes is all this stupid talking about the weather or whatever.

Kelly: [Crosstalk] 15 minutes [crosstalk].

Joann: I want the meat right at the beginning. We're not that famous, that people care about.

Tobi: I love it. So what has been, I mean obviously it's going beautifully and it's helped a lot of people, what has it done for your actual business? Has it led to sales? Has it led to opportunities? What's been the benefit that you can see now looking back over these four or five years or podcasting, what benefits?

Kelly: Well I can't cite, correct me if I'm wrong, I don't think, we've gotten a design client from it. But I think it's given us enormous street cred. And so we have definitely picked up on our speaking engagements. We've spoke at Design Influencers conference. We've spoken at Dallas Market, we've spoken. So we're getting, I guess it's that whole, people view us as experts kind of thing. We are insiders tour guides at Highpoint Market and our tour fills up almost instantly because people think they know us. And they know how much we'll give to them.

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Tobi: Yeah, and they trust you.

Kelly: And now we're back with Phil for another adventure. And he has just put together a whole program for our mentoring program, being your partners. And for all those people out there that don't have partners, we're here to be your partner. And we will kick that off hopefully by the end of the year.

Tobi: I love it.

Kelly: And I think that people have heard our voice for five years so I think that will, that comfort level is there for people to hang out with us. So yeah, it's been interesting.

Tobi: So leading to other revenue streams, not necessarily your main revenue stream but leading to other revenue streams, other opportunities, all the things.

Kelly: Which is kind of what we wanted because again, there will come a day when we fall down and start gasping for breath.

Joann: It's difficult, it's a lot of physical work that we do.

Tobi: Yes, I love it. Well, if anybody now, because I mean you've done such a great job of helping people understand. And my big takeaways for the partnership piece is that you have to be aligned in pretty much every way because you said, we're aligned on work ethic, we're aligned on our skill level and our kind of path into the design industry. We're aligned on our vision. We're aligned with our finances. We're aligned personally as human beings, we're kind of in the same categories across our own personal finances.

And I would agree that most of the problems I've heard from people asking questions about partnerships have always come from that, either a power disparity or a financial disparity or a work disparity. Where one person feels

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like they're giving more than the other. And one person's kind of carrying the weight and all of that stuff. So I love that. And then the podcast, I mean beautiful, just a beautiful way to use your partnership and your chemistry to take your business to this next place of revenue streams.

Is there anything that we haven't covered that you want to share with the audiences that are listening like do it, jump in? I know one of the things you added later on your podcast was video we were talking about. I'm a little late to that party. I'm going to jump in. But is there anything that people listening that are like, "Yeah, that sounds great but they probably had the it factor or they just had this magical partnership." There's always people thinking that we're all special unicorns and they couldn't do it.

So in either of the partnership or podcast, anything that you want to share as we wrap up?

Joann: The one thing I would say about the podcast was we just attended a podcast conference. Go to events and learn. If you go to a design event you might meet somebody who is aligned as you. I'd say put yourself out there and get out in the kind of the industry. You just never know who you're going to meet at that time and just constantly keep learning.

Kelly: And I was just going to say that in a little bit of a different way. I talked about earlier, planting seeds and all that we've learned from you. And we went to your mastermind coaching class all those years ago. And then we were with Kelly Ellis and Phil and now we've got all these newbies joining us for Highpoint on the Insiders tour. You've got to put yourself out there. You cannot learn unless you walk out of your front door and get out there.

And as Julie-Ann Taylor said on our podcast, you've got to do it scared. And it gives you the adrenalin you need. You don't have to be perfect out the chute, that is the biggest thing. Give yourself grace. Nobody cares. You do not have to be perfect out the chute. So just dive in. And there's so

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many women especially, we all support each other. And if there's women out there not supporting you, kick them to the curb and go find new friends and new supporters because I think all that we've learned from all these things. We didn't come up with all this on our own.

Joann: Yeah. And things came back at later times. Look at the story with Tracey and the podcast, that was 15 or 16 years later.

Kelly: And being with you and all we learned from you. And now we're still together helping each other and I think it's huge to do that, but do it scared.

Joann: Another thing, it's kind of like the eighth grade girl who doesn't want to go to school that day because she's got a zit on her chin. No one is looking at your chin, honey. Don't worry about it, no one's looking that closely.

Joann: They're all worried about themselves.

Kelly: Yeah, they're worried about themselves, yeah.

Tobi: And they're mostly, I think if they are looking saying, "Gosh, I wish I could be as brave as they are." They're not looking at the pimple, they're looking at how you're showing up and thinking, wow, that's inspiring, I want to do that too. That's what I hear and see time and time again whether it's me showing up or people I've coached showing up, that were so afraid and then they did it. And then proved to themselves, yeah, nobody was looking at whether they thought I was pretty enough or skinny enough or smart enough or whatever.

They were just in awe of the fact that I was showing up and bringing my own experience and wisdom to the world. So I love that.

Joann: I think confidence is a huge factor as a designer. You have got to be confident when you're presenting.

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Kelly: And if you don't have it, fake it. I did a lot of faking in those [crosstalk].

Tobi: And if you don't put yourself out there you don't build the confidence, because the confidence comes from going out scared and surviving it and reminding yourself you did that.

Joann: Absolutely.

Kelly: That's exactly what it is, it's really that simple.

Tobi: Yeah, so good. I remember, one last thing, I remember seeing you, I was actually going to ask you about that then I forgot, that I did see you go to a podcast event. And I haven't been to a podcast event now but now you're inspiring me to go because I know there are some out there. So in the world of podcasting or design, are there a few key places that you recommend? Definitely people going to Highpoint. You mentioned the influencers conference.

What are some of the things for people that are just going to start out, where should they go for design or even for podcasting, do you have any rave reviews?

Joann: I think for design, we might be just lucky here in Atlanta, but they have something called Design ADAC. So if there's any keynote speakers or things like that, going to Round Top, go where other designers are. Going to Round Top, I mean we met a few people there and it's a very fun thing. Podcasting was very unique. We didn't go for the first time until last year and it's very different. There's 5,000 people at those things.

Kelly: There are several. The one that we went to was called the Podcast Movement. And it was in, where were we?

Joann: Dallas.

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Kelly: We were in Dallas, but doesn't it move around?

Joann: It moves around. It was in Colorado or [crosstalk].

Kelly: It was in Denver the year before, it was in Palm Springs one year. It moves around. But there's Podcast Movement and then there's another one.

Joann: There's The Podcast Academy.

Kelly: If you Google it, these conferences will come up. We didn't even know they existed. And we were so humbled. We were there with Wondery and Disney and Ethereal.

Tobi: So cool, yeah.

Joann: And [crosstalk].

Kelly: And we thought we were so hot. And then we get there, we're like, "Oh, we're little."

Tobi: We're little babies.

Kelly: Little tiny babies.

Joann: We're so used to walking in and seeing all of our friends, we don't know anybody here.

Tobi: How much better to go with a partner though. How terrified I'd have been if I went by myself, yeah.

Kelly: So when you want to go we'll go with you.

Tobi: Okay, perfect, yes, it's a date.

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Kelly: Yeah. We're used to being at Highpoint going, "Hey, hey, hey." And there was nobody there that we could shove around with, oh my God, but we learned a lot.

Tobi: I love that, I love that you did it. And such a beautiful example of we're doing it scared, we thought we weren't scared, we got there, were terrified but we're going to do it anyway. And then you took a lot away from it, so yeah.

Joann: And what we took away from it is we need to do video.

Tobi: You did it, yeah.

Joann: Now that we have our little tribe, we went right to, Produce Your Podcast and they set it all up and we're on video.

Tobi: Oh my God, and they're so good. I told you. I've already contacted your people. I'm like, "If you make them look this good, can you make me look that good?"

Kelly: It is really professionally done. And that's the other thing, if you're going to start a podcast, have it be professional. I've seen some that are really hard to listen to. And my husband was so funny, he was watching, I guess, this documentary on the Murdaugh trial, he's gotten obsessed with it. And there's a lot of podcasts about it. He was like, "I couldn't believe it." He goes, "The quality was so bad. And then I watched your podcast and it's so clear and it sounds so good." I was like, "Wow, that's quite a compliment, thanks, honey." Well, we paid for that.

Tobi: I agree. And I was going to say the same thing. I did the same as you, I started from day one with an editor. All I do is record and drop it in a Dropbox and they take it from there and they make it beautiful and sound amazing. And I agree with you. Definitely there are some people that just happen to be whizzes at technology and they can pull it off. But for most of us, it's not even a good use of our time to be doing all of the backend stuff.

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Joann: I think it affects your brand, if you're doing it kind of sloppy then what's your design work like?

Kelly: Yeah. And it's not cheap, I mean as you know, I mean this is a financial commitment to have a podcast. So it's not like grab your iPhone, put it on the stand and shoot it out to Spotify and they're going to accept you. That's not the way it goes.

Tobi: No. It's hundreds if not over \$1,000 an episode depending on how much you're doing and who you're using to edit it. And people don't get that, but then you get a lot of return from that too. Well, this has been so fun. Thank you so much.

Kelly: Thank you. We're honored.

Tobi: I love that it's partnerships and podcasts, like I told you, the perfect little iteration on two areas that you're both experts on. If people want to find you, if they want to be watching for your mentorship program, if they want to be signing up, it may be too late now but the next time you're at Highpoint, how do they find all that stuff?

Kelly: The fastest way is probably our website, kandrak-kole.com. And you spell it K-A-N-D-R-A-C - K-O-L-E.com. We're Kandrak Kole on everything, Instagram, Facebook. We're very active on every platform that you see, so it's probably that, would you say that's the...

Joann: That's the best way.

Kelly: You can find us on everywhere podcasts are found, it's Inside Design with Kandrak and Kole, so Spotify, Apple, YouTube, whatever.

Tobi: So good. Well, thank you so much. I loved it.

Kelly: Thank you, Tobi.

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Tobi: And we've gotten to be together twice now because I've been on your podcast, you've been on mine. So we're going to have to stay in contact better and find a podcast conference to attend together.

Joann: That would be fun.

Kelly: Well, we should definitely do that.

Joann: And hopefully maybe breakfast at the Oh Henry maybe.

Tobi: Yeah, I will be in Highpoint, yeah, this whole time, so okay, I'll follow-up, alright, ladies. So glad you were here, thank you so much.

Joann: Thanks, Tobi.

Kelly: Bye.

So I hope you loved that lively discussion. They are always so much fun and check out Joann and Kelly's podcast. Also check them out on Instagram, all the places that they mentioned because you will love them and love what they do. And I'll see you back next week with another great episode of *The Design You Podcast*. Bye for now.

Thanks for listening to *The Design You Podcast*, and if you're an interior designer or creative looking to uplevel your business, I have something for you. It's my Build a Better Business guide, because burnout, rampant undercharging and the feast and famine cycle are epidemic in the design industry. And there's a better way to run your business.

So head to tobifairley.com/betterbusiness and get my manifesto and guide that will have you on your way to a business with more ease, more joy and more money. That's tobifairley.com/betterbusiness.