

# Finding the Joy of Making Your Podcast with Sydney Weiss from Seek The Joy Podcast

## **SPEAKERS**

Emily Merrell, Sydney Weiss

### **Emily Merrell**

Welcome to the The Sixth Degree Podcast, the podcast where we grill our guests about the things that make them tick and find out how human connection plays a role in their life. I'm your host, Emily Merrell. Hello, and welcome back The Sixth Degree with Emily Merrell, the podcast where we grill our guests about the things that make them tick, and find out how human connection plays a role in their life. I'm your host, Emily. And today I am so excited to have my friend Sydney Weiss, founder of Seek The Joy Podcast as our guest. Sydney, welcome to the show.

### **Sydney Weiss**

Thanks for having me. I'm so excited to sit down with you today. I know it's been like two years since I think you were on my podcast. So this is gonna be fun. I'm excited. Thanks for having me.

### **Emily Merrell**

It was gonna say... is it does it feel weird? Does it feel like you know, someone who's used to driving cars sitting in the backseat or pilot the passenger?

### **Sydney Weiss**

A little bit, 100%, I've been going on other people's podcast lately and I feel my actually really enjoy it. Like I enjoy the roles being reversed a little bit and, and being asked the questions, which initially I didn't expect so yeah, I feel like I'm in the backseat, which I'm really cool with. I'm cool with someone else driving, I'm into it.

### **Emily Merrell**

Would you like some water or some gum? You've got it all in this

### **Sydney Weiss**

Back in the day when we were all in Ubers? Pre-COVID. And they had the water and the gum and then some had candy. I mean, it just the whole thing. So I love it.

### **Emily Merrell**

Do you mean back in the day when Uber started and people like actually cared what their ratings were? And they are

### **Sydney Weiss**

talking about a throwback

**Emily Merrell**

Yes. And you actually cared about like keeping your car maintained. The last Uber that I can remember that I went in, there was a woman who had like, I'm pretty sure it's just like a sheet of plastic separating the front and the back. And then she had three of her dogs in the front seat. I was pretty positive we were gonna die cuz she spent most of the Uber going. No, no, no, Billy, no, Molly, no, this and I had our dog in the backseat because you're on our way to the airport. And the dogs were just yapping up this dog. And I was like, I wanna give this woman a bad review. But also like good for her. You do you, girl

**Sydney Weiss**

That sounds like my personal nightmare. It just sounds like my head would start to explode. Honestly, that's a lot of commotion.

**Emily Merrell**

There's a lot of commotion on the way to the airport, which felt stressful in its own situation. But yes, so yes, Ubers you anyone who's driving an Uber bring back the gum. We miss you. We miss the gum, we missed the water. So I cannot believe it was two years ago, what years now? It's 2021. Right. So 2018 was on your podcast

**Sydney Weiss**

Wait so does that mean It was actually three?

**Emily Merrell**

It was three years ago?

**Sydney Weiss**

No way.

**Emily Merrell**

Yeah, I know.

**Sydney Weiss**

See, I have no concept of time, apparently,

**Emily Merrell**

We're still in 2020 in my brain. So

**Sydney Weiss**

I don't process the fact that we're actually in 2021. So yeah, it was three years ago,

**Emily Merrell**

Three years ago and Seek The Joy Podcast is crazy. And now you posted over 190 podcasts since you've started?

**Sydney Weiss**

Isn't that wild? But that's a lot of content. There's a lot of interviews and a lot of conversations. It kind of blows my mind. I haven't really, I guess we're almost at 200, which I didn't actually realize was a thing. Until today. So yeah, it's pretty amazing to see just how much the show has reduced and allowed opportunities for connection and conversation over the last three and a half years. It's wild

**Emily Merrell**

I was gonna say how much of this conversation and connection have you actually retained and remembered after talking to so many different people

**Sydney Weiss**

You know, it's funny, I feel like I've actually retained a lot more than I realized I was on the phone with someone last week, and it was a friend. And we were talking about just sadly talking about our inner critic and negative self talk and how it's still so present even though I personally have done a lot of work around that. And I started to bring up an episode from two years ago. And I was like, Yeah, I remember had this conversation with this guest and she's like, what are you even talking about? I was like, oh, on my podcast. So it's like amazing. Just pull it out, like random pieces of knowledge. I didn't expect to be able to retain as much as I've been able to.

**Emily Merrell**

I think that's really cool, though. What about the idea of the podcast in a way, it's like a stored memory bank or like a storage unit for these conversations that you have. Because over the course of your life, you do have so many extraordinary conversations that you wish you could remember and recall in such detail, so enough, you have 190 really cool conversations. But before the Seek The Joy, you didn't have a podcast, you know, just had an idea for a podcast. So tell us the origin story of what made you see the joy in 2017 and start the... start the party.

**Sydney Weiss**

So I got to take you back to 2016 I think to tell this story. I was about to graduate from law school, it was like April or May of 2016. And I was so stressed as one is when they're about to graduate from law school and sit for the Bar exam. And I actually had shingles about a month or so before I graduated from law school, graduated from law school, sit for the California Bar Exam, which at the time was three days and I was in such deep fear and anxiety over the exam that I actually made myself sick. I was setting like 14 to 16 hours a day, I was not taking breaks, I was not taking care of myself. And so by the time I sat for the exam, I was like the sickest I had ever been in my whole life mentally, emotionally, physically. A month later, I had appendicitis, which is a whole story and journey in an in and of itself. And so by the time I found out, I didn't pass the Bar in November 2016, I was really at my equivalent of a rock bottom, I remember checking to see if I passed, and it said, This name does not appear on the Pass list. And I kept refreshing and thinking this is a joke, like No way, like no way this is, this is the result. And I remember sitting on the floor in my parents living room. And I was so mean, like talking about negative self talk, I was just in a deep space of shame and embarrassment. Because for me, my whole life, I based my self worth on the external, how I showed up in the world, what other people thought of me how I define success was tied to a great I got or if I pass an exam, and so I really had to

undergo this sort of nine month metamorphosis, this journey with myself, of changing the way I spoke to myself changing the way I treated myself, and really the way I viewed who I was in the world. And so by the time I sat for the Bar, the second time, in July 2017, I came out of that experience, a totally different person, not only like the way I approach the exam had shifted so dramatically, and that was really a result of a lot of mindset work. But the way I viewed myself and who I was, and my value as a person was no longer tied to the external. And I thought, all right, I gotta find a way to connect with other people who had similar stories or experiences, or wanted to just have a conversation and be vulnerable. And at the time, I was listening to like, 10 to 15 podcasts every week, I was obsessed with the media. And I thought, I'll start a podcast like I can do this, I can figure it out. And I just dove in. And within two weeks had the idea for Seek The Joy, the name, I recorded the intro, slash trailer, whatever we could call it at the time with like the headset that you get when you get an iPhone, which by the way, terrible audio quality, not great at all. And just was kind of off to the races. And then about two months after I really had the idea of or Seek The Joy and put it out into the world. I found out I passed the Bar and became a lawyer. And so my journey of being a lawyer, as well as having a podcast and building it out, and building this brand has really existed simultaneously on very parallel tracks. So that's the origin story behind the podcast.

### **Emily Merrell**

I don't think I realized I think I met you. I want to say I met you before you pass the Bar. But I guess it's not true. I guess they met you right after you pass the second Bar.

### **Sydney Weiss**

I think I think that's when we met It was like, because I passed the Bar November 2017. And I think you were on the podcast, and I got a double check. But I think it was like March or April of 2018. It was very soon after. And so that the I think that was pretty soon after.

### **Emily Merrell**

It's crazy. So your identity, you've been managing this identity of being both a lawyer and also having a podcast? What kind of law do you practice?

### **Sydney Weiss**

I practice entertainment, actually. So I work in scripted television. On the studio side, we make TV shows. And so it's really interesting to see how I can have like a creative outlet that's my own in the podcasting space. And it's just been a really wonderful, I think, experience and education to be able to do both.

### **Emily Merrell**

I think that is so cool. And we talked about this earlier, before we started our podcast, just idea that a lot of people now feel like everyone, myself included. So I'm definitely looking myself in this bandwagon, have started a podcast to be adjacent to my business. It's just an extension just like I have a blog and I have an Instagram and I think I have a Twitter account too but that's not there barely gets any any light of day. But you created a podcast completely just to serve others. How did you decide the topics that you were going to talk about? And how did you start finding and cultivating the the interviewer, the individuals for interviews?

## **Sydney Weiss**

Yeah, I think what you just said is really interesting. And I didn't realize how maybe I was an anomaly in the podcasting space until I really got started. Because I've had so many people say, Oh, did you have a following or an audience prior to the podcast that you were serving? Did you have a business? No, I just wanted to start a podcast. And so I think there's value in doing it both ways. But if you are going to do it, and I think you do this so wonderfully as a companion to your business, making sure that you're serving that same audience through the podcast, and I think you do such a great job at that. But to answer your question, I think the topics have really centered around mindfulness and mental health and wellness because and entrepreneurship and building a business all these things because these are topics I've always been really interested in, like how can I develop greater mental wellness in the midst of a pandemic? How can I continue to take better care of myself and have self care be more holistic as opposed to what we see in the mainstream media? These are things I've always just been so fascinated by and as my interest and my understanding of things have evolved over the last three years the topics on the show have evolved to. And so I think that's really how I have chosen the topics that are on the show and then the same thing with the guests and the interviews I mean when I started Seek The Joy I was just interviewing my friends and I reached out to like one of my best friends from college and law school and even high school and I said hey I'm gonna start a podcast do you want to be on it and I was so surprised that they all said yeah I would love to you we had no idea what we were doing was just a conversation in a way to sort of dive into who they are as a person and what lights them up and what brings them joy and how they continue I think to push for despite adversity and despite challenge and then I will never forget the first time I reached out to somebody who I didn't know personally it was like on Instagram I was so nervous, I was so nervous because I've never done something like this in my whole life and I think I said something really dorky like hi you may not know me but my name is Sydney and I have this podcast and I think you're really cool would you want to come on. Obviously my pitch has refined, now they're pitching me which is wild, like you want to talk about a full circle moment, it's weird. And so yeah when I when I'm thinking about guests or people to come on the podcast, it really comes back to how will this conversation serve the audience how will this provide greater wisdom or clarity or bring up a topic something that somebody hasn't thought of before I feel really fortunate that there's been a lot of diversity of experience and perspective shared on the podcast I don't always agree with what is shared but I do think it's important to give somebody that platform and an opportunity to share their insights and share their perspective and I think it's all about just opening up the dialogue for for greater conversation. And you're right like now people get to me which is like wild and I'll never forget the first time I received a pitch... and I looked at the email and I thought are they emailing the right person? Like you want to talk about imposter syndrome? I had all of it, I was like sure yeah we can talk about your client, like it was just a wild moment. So it's been fun to see this journey I think evolved for sure

## **Emily Merrell**

oh my gosh I know like this person has 4 million followers but is it okay if we're on your podcast like yeah uh huh

## **Sydney Weiss**

maybe we just like would you consider them on your show i know you probably are very busy and i'm thinking

**Emily Merrell**

i'm doing my nails right now

**Sydney Weiss**

yes, i will, i will, i will consider it, yes thank you. I mean it's really it's really fun, and it's really... it's... I feel honored to be on it to to have the podcast and provide space for conversations and the fact that people pitch me is a super honoring humbling moment for sure

**Emily Merrell**

i also think it's it's a great lesson too for people who are like i don't know how to meet people or i don't know how to get in front of x y and z person and having a blog or having a podcast i think are great mediums for connecting with people that you aspire to connect with because as you said like you're being pitched now but before you were pitching these people, your dream people, and they were probably nervous to accept a podcast. I know so many individuals who have like big followings and have a ton of success but maybe have never even tried their hand at podcasting quite yet. So you never know who you're giving the opportunity to and also like what that opportunity can blossom into and i always remind i've been talking to a lot of college students recently like now's your time to start a podcast, now's your time to start a blog or something, some sort of platform that you own and interview the people that you ideally would like to work for like kind of get in front of. You're a college student, i would totally say yes to anything a college student asked me to do, i don't know if you're the same city, right? Like you're in college, you're not unemployed yet, you're not you're not seeking a job yet, you're just asking advice and so i just think those are great platforms to get in front of individuals

**Sydney Weiss**

yeah i think so too. I think it's all about cultivating a vehicle or connection for yourself, and a podcast and a blog are two really wonderful vehicles for connection. And for me when i started the podcast, i was really craving that connection i had just come out of an experience that required a lot of time just with me, studying for the Bar but also this mental health mindfulness journey i was on, and i mean i've met so many incredible people who have become friends, who have become really wonderful friends of the podcast in addition to me, and relationships that i've been able to build there now business relationships too, that i wouldn't have had the opportunity to cultivate without the podcast. And so i think you're spot on, i think using a podcast or a blog as a way to meet people, and to network, and to develop connections. You know at the end of the day, podcasting is really about relationship building. And i think that's kind of lost especially in maybe mainstream media and it's something that i keep trying to tell people about is podcasting is really about relationship building, building relationships not only with your guest, but also with your audience, and making sure that what you're saying, and sharing, and cultivating is serving those connections and serving those relationships

**Emily Merrell**

it's so true. It's so, so important to provide value of tangible takeaways and walkways that people can have. I think I actually started a podcast, I forgot about this until this moment with one of my best

girlfriends. And it was kind of just like us brainstorming and brain dumping. And there's, I think we made one or two episodes, there was a platform we found where you could just record and then it went live, we probably need to go find it and delete it, because it's one of those things that might be incriminating down the line. I'm going to send her a text after the podcast to remind her that we needed to delete whatever we.. it was very weird. It was like a string game insane stuff. So it definitely had no format, no structure or whatnot. So I do think that podcasts kind of like clubhouse too, clubhouse, a lot of people think are just random conversations. But usually they're pre planned, and they're intentional. And they have some sort of agenda with the exception of certain rooms, obviously. But you know, switching gears a little bit, the fact that you have 190 podcast, you are doing this incredible podcast, well, which also feels like a full time job, I'm sure, and also working a really important lawyer job. How do you balance all of that, and also create more visibility and have time to grow your visibility for your podcast?

### **Sydney Weiss**

It is a challenge. I'm not gonna lie. I am not the best of balance. And I think it's really important to be super transparent about that. Because I have had a lot of people in my life, both who know me and meet me through the podcast, how do you do it all? Are you outsourcing? Do you have a team? I am a team of one, I have no help. It is just me. And so I've had to really figure out how do I allocate my time. And so for me, it's all about like time management and making sure I'm working I think as effectively as possible. So like my work day usually starts at nine. And so from seven to nine, I work on the podcast, I usually take my lunch break to work on the podcast. And then at night, I'm trying to do probably at least like an hour after my full workday, which is exhausting. Like, I'm not going to pretend that it's not. But at the end of the day, like I am so passionate about what I'm doing not to sound corny, because my podcast is about joy. But it really does bring me a lot of joy. And it's the fuel and the passion that I need in trying to cultivate this level of visibility, while also balancing all the different responsibilities. And oftentimes feeling like a little bit underwater by the amount that I've taken on, I think has been an interesting challenge. I've really loved it, because it's also provided an opportunity for me to be I think, a little bit more strategic in the way that I share the podcast and the way I communicate about it and the type of conversations I'm having. And so for me, it's a lot of planning, like on the weekends, I'll make sure to take out carve out time to plan out the content for the week, especially if I'm sharing an episode. That's really the only time I had preplan content. Otherwise, it's just off the top of my head when I feel like sharing, which I don't know is effective or not, but I'm going with it. And I just make sure that I have a production schedule, and I stick to it. And I give myself enough time to do the editing and the post production and getting the graphics together. So for me, it's really about finding that rhythm that I can create for myself and making sure that I stick to a schedule. I'm a planner, I've got a physical planner that I literally have to write things and I can't just rely on the computer and the calendar there. And so that has been really helpful for me. And I think paying attention to what other podcasters are doing has helped me in developing what's going to work for visibility for me, I spend a lot of time looking at other podcasters and listening to their shows and, and looking at what I feel like is working for them and what isn't, maybe it's the lawyer in me doing a lot of research. I just I really enjoy just immersing myself in the space and and through that process of trial and error, just really figuring out what works for me and what doesn't. And there's a lot of things I used to do that I don't do anymore. And a lot of new things I picked up I think in the last year or so, letting yourself grow and evolve i think is key

### **Emily Merrell**



again back to someone who's like a podcast of Jason, I have a podcast, but I'm like, Oh yeah, I guess I'd be a podcaster

### **Sydney Weiss**

You are a podcaster you 100% are and I think you know, owning that title is weird. Like there's been a journey. I had a conversation with a fellow podcaster of the Hello Friend in the Space, about a year into having Seek The Joy. And I said to her, I said how do you refer to yourself? Are you a producer? Are you a podcaster? Are you a business coach with a podcast? And she said, I'm actually struggling with this. I don't know what to call myself. And so we both decided we're gonna call ourselves podcasters and we're gonna go with it. And anybody who thinks it's weird probably doesn't we're just projecting. So owning that title owning any title for yourself, I think

### **Emily Merrell**

I've definitely struggled with owning titles even founder or CEO and I'm like I'm the CEO of my company. I'm like, exactly what you said party of one, you know, party with the contractors one over here so it's not doesn't feel so legitimate to be like I'm a CEO, when you think of CEOs, you think of like CEO of a huge fortune 500 company. So thank you I am now a podcaster as well that will be part of my... my title moving forward. Something that I really admire about you is the fact that you are doing the lawyer in and the podcast you can simultaneously. And that when you set out by with Seek The Joy, you literally had no experience in the in the field. It's not like you're... it's not like you were an audio visual major or you're someone who is familiar with this stuff. I'm sure the interwebs were very helpful in figuring that out. And 2017 I'm sure a ton has evolved 2017 to 2021. So what advice do you have for individuals who do want to start and try on the title of podcaster and create their own podcast? Where do we where do they get started at?

### **Sydney Weiss**

You're right, the interwebs were really helpful for me back then. And I think the internet is is super helpful now too. But I also think there's other great resources. There's lots of podcasts out there that talk about, you know, how to start a podcast or how to market it. And I think at the end of the day, though, the best place to start is figuring out why you want to start a podcast? Is it to help build your brand? Is it to share a message is it to connect with people, I sometimes it's some of the fate, my favorite podcasts are those that are very specifically niche, and then others where it's just friends talking, like I just love that, especially working from home. And being by myself. I'm like, I'll take somebody talking in the background. So I think being really clear on your why and the purpose behind it. I think that's always the best place to start. And then figuring out, you know, your cadence, how often do you want to, you know, produce and publish an episode is it can be weekly, is it twice a month, is it once a month, figuring out how much you can juggle and handle is really important too. And don't be afraid to start small. And by small, I mean with one episode a month and build on it, I think when we get started in something, and I don't know about you, Emily, but when I get really excited, I want to go all in and do all of it. And really quickly. And I think if there was one thing I could change about the way I started Seek The Joy, I would have maybe planned like a like a four month four episodes, batch them really had the content ready to go. And being very clear on what the messaging was at the very beginning. And that way, I would have produced content that I think really aligned from the very beginning, I didn't have that perspective, I didn't have that knowledge. At the very beginning, I just



shared four episodes with friends. And they were fun and exciting. But it wasn't focused on the message of the show. And granted, the show has evolved so much in that time too. So figuring out your cadence and how much you can handle. And then starting to just immerse yourself in learning about, you know, conversation styles, and graphics and promotion, all that stuff can come at the end. But really understanding the why and how much you can handle I think is probably the most important thing.

### **Emily Merrell**

It's such a healthy exercise because as I said, I started a podcast, I think with my friend well having a drink or two. And we had no why it was just to be funny. I think it was funny. We were trying to be funny with one another. And there are those styles of podcasts out there like I love I've listened to parts of like the Britney save Britney podcast, I think it is

### **Sydney Weiss**

The free Britney podcast, I think?

### **Emily Merrell**

Yeah, yeah, they're just dissecting Britney Spears life and over analyzing everything. And I'm like, that's fascinating that someone is dedicating their time to doing taking their time and exploring someone else's life. Same thing with TV shows. So there is kind of a podcast or space for everyone who wants to have a podcast available. It sounds like it's just being clear on what you want to talk about. And do you want to be kind of investigative journalists podcast or do you want to be more of an Oprah and Megan Markel podcast?

### **Sydney Weiss**

Yeah, and I think that's such a good point. And you know, some of the best podcasts are those funny ones are we're just friends talking to each other. But knowing what you want to do, what you want to accomplish, who you want to serve, the type of people you want to attract, I think is really, really key. So I really wish I had that perspective going into it. And you know, beyond that, too, is just knowing that the more you immerse yourself in any space, your knowledge, your understanding, it's all going to grow and you're going to continue to learn. I think sometimes we wait until things are like very perfect, or what we believe is perfect to dive in or to launch or to put ourselves out there in a new way. The truth is, it's never going to be quote unquote, perfect. You've just got to dive in and allow yourself to grow and evolve. And so if anybody is feeling curious, go on my Instagram and go all the way to the bottom just keep scrolling. And you can see how much the social media graphics the content has evolved. I've learned a few things. You just can see the evolution if I had waited until the graphics look how they are today. I would have been waiting three and a half years maybe more to launch something. So I think it's about taking the pressure off of yourself letting yourself dive in having fun with it. Connecting to that why and knowing you're gonna grow and evolve as you as you dive in.

### **Emily Merrell**

Gosh, I feel like all of our Instagrams we go to the very first 10 pictures you get to two likes and like sepia sepia filters on it and stuff. Yes, very frightening. Oh very inappropriate pictures are like bad captions, I definitely need to go through and edit do a little cleanup there I'm as well. So, in addition

to doing your day job, and you're doing this podcast with a party of one, you've, you've also you've spread your wings a little bit into offering podcast consulting, something that I imagine every podcaster wishes that they had had when they start their podcast. So what does podcast consulting look like? And how can people learn more about that?

### **Sydney Weiss**

Yeah, you know, I never really expected to dive into helping other podcasters launch or grow or share their their mission and their shows, there's like, over the last two years, I've been reaching out to me being like, Hey, I have a question. What microphone do you use? Or, Hey, can you help me figure out like, how do I describe my podcast? Or what should it be about, and I love helping people. That's probably why I have a podcast that's so focused on inspiring connection and bringing people together. But I had this moment one day where I was like, if people are asking me, then I should offer this as an offering, which has been an interesting journey for me even to step into doing that. Switching from, you know, offering something for free to offering something for someone to pay you for it. So that's been a whole new journey. And as someone who I guess, is kind of an accidental entrepreneur in that way, I am just trying to step into it as gracefully as I can. But podcast consulting with me has looked like a couple of different things. I've been helping some podcasters really hone in on what their show is about. It's, we've done some brainstorming sessions, what topics they're interested in what they want to share, is it going to be an extension of a business they're trying to build. I had one client who came to me and she said, This is what I want my podcast to be about. But I don't know how to frame it, or how to phrase it. And within five minutes, I said, This is what it's about. And I gave her two sentences. And she was she literally said to me, You just put together encapsulated what I've been trying to figure out for three months on my own in five minutes. And I was like, No, I did it. It's like, No, no, we did this together. She's like, no, Sydney, like, you really helped me do this. And so it's looked like that I've worked with some podcasters trying to figure out how to edit their show. These are clients who are just unsure, they know how to record on zoom, but they're like, how do I edit this? How do I add music? What does that look like? So we've been doing it through FaceTime, which is hilarious, because Hello, COVID. But also, they're in another part of the country. And so I'm holding up my phone being like, Okay, so here, you drag this here. I mean, it's really hands on. And then another recent client that I worked with has really been focused on, how can they start to share their show in a meaningful way? beyond just posting about it on their social media? Who else can they reach out to in this space? Can they cross promote, can they cross collaborate? What is that look like? So I've been really trying to draw on my three and a half years of experience, and the things that I've taught myself, and really wanting to share it in a meaningful way, so that someone can really turn their idea and their vision into a podcast that they're really excited about, and excited to share. And, and record and do. So. It's been fun. I just never expected to do it, but I'm really enjoying it.

### **Emily Merrell**

I love that you're doing it. I love that you've continued doing it. And I love that it's become a big part of your identity. So in addition to the podcast coaching, you've got this podcast, we didn't even have a chance to bring up you have a second podcast as well. And and you have Seek The Joy Summit coming up. So how can people find out so much more about you what is going on in Sydney's world? And make sure that they don't miss anything?

**Sydney Weiss**

Yeah, you know, I know, we talked about how podcasting is really about relationship building. And that has never been more true for me until this year, when I launched Seek The Joy Summit, which is a wonder one day virtual retreat on Saturday, April 10. And if anybody's listening to this, please check it out, I think you would love the day, every single guest speaker is a previous guest from the podcast and someone who had been able to feature and have a conversation with and really get to know. And so it was a really big honor to bring people together in a panel like setting to have a conversation that's really an extension of the one that we had on the podcast. So I'm super excited. It's going to feature sessions with people like Dr. Linda Ulrich, who's the founder of Ever Widening Circles, AJ Sarcione, Kelly Rutherford is our closing speaker. So it's gonna be a really fun day. So I'm super excited. And then as you mentioned, I have a second podcast. It's called Stories of Inspiring Joy. I launched it in May 2020, as an extension of a series that I had on Seek The Joy called The Power of Storytelling, and the premise behind that is really you come on and you share your story uninterrupted, something you've gone through, I've had people share music or a poem or that about their entrepreneurial journey. It's really become a beautiful space for people to share their reflections and experiences, especially throughout the pandemic. So I've got two podcasts. I've got the summit coming up. There are so many beautiful ways to connect with with me in the show, but everything can be found at [seekthejoypodcast.com](http://seekthejoypodcast.com).

**Emily Merrell**

Oh my gosh, fantastic, that sounds like an incredible summit, I will definitely be in the virtual audience checking and applauding you out. I love it. Sydney we love... Thank you first and foremost for being on the show. It's been so fun to hear all the growth and see where you where you are now three years later, versus where you were when you were still a newbie podcaster. And it's extraordinary to see you taking this to the next level in so many different ways. I feel selfish for saying this, but I feel like this podcast really is like a reunion for me. It's like a it's a hangout. It's a check in with individuals that are friends that I admire who maybe I haven't had a proper catch up within a long time and you just happens to be a recorded conversation and other people have to have to hear that.

**Sydney Weiss**

I love it though. I love it. I love it. I think I said this at the beginning, but it's about the rapport you have with your guests. And it's because you know them, because you have relationships with them. So I echo what you said 100% Yeah,

**Emily Merrell**

you got it. You got to maintain those relationships over the years.

**Sydney Weiss**

You do, you really do

**Emily Merrell**

You really do if you want them if you want them to last, but one of the things I love asking our guests are six questions. You know, I like the number six, Six Degrees Society, there's a little theme there. So my first question for you Sydney is I would love to learn an unknown fun fact about you.

**Sydney Weiss**

Okay, so this is kind of embarrassing, but I feel like we're just gonna go there because it just feels like a good theme of our conversation. When I was younger, probably like 13 to 15, my sisters and my cousins, we had a YouTube series. And we would post I would Creek scripted. This is so embarrassing. Please, nobody go look for it. It's still up somewhere. But please don't. We would create like scripted little sketches like from like SNL like, and we would post that, I would edit them and then we would post them on YouTube. And I forgot all about it until probably a couple weeks ago. And I was thinking, wow, I was kind of like already dabbling into this, like producing media space way back in the day and just didn't realize. So that's Yeah, nobody really knows about this. So please don't go look for it.

**Emily Merrell**

I think that's that's a great like origin story. And it's better. Yeah, I feel like that makes more sense for your origin story. And the idea that you knew how to do a lot of the tinkering on on the computer that most people don't find a neat. Also, I don't think YouTube is around when I was in high school, which is really sad to say out loud. So there was something called e bombs world. I don't know if you even heard of probably, but there Yeah, that was where people posted like, they're very embarrassing.

**Sydney Weiss**

You and I are so similar in age, though.

**Emily Merrell**

I don't know. I guess I'm old. I think Sydney.

**Sydney Weiss**

No, no, we're like, we've got to be around the same age. That's hilarious. I got to look that up. Okay. All right.

**Emily Merrell**

I think a little later, it was probably like two years afterwards, since you were just two years behind me in high school, something like that. Okay, so who would be a dream person you'd want to be connected with? Could be a podcast, podcast guest too

**Sydney Weiss**

so I'm just gonna go with the first person that comes to mind is definitely Oprah. I just feel like I want to ask her so many things. And I want to learn from her. And she's one of those people who I really watched their interview style. And yeah, Oprah we're just gonna go with Oprah. Yeah. Oprah,

**Emily Merrell**

could you imagine interviewing Oprah just the questions like the intensity and the thoughtfulness of her questions and her responses?

**Sydney Weiss**

I think I wouldn't sleep at all the night before, let alone the week before. Yeah, I think it would be phenomenal

**Emily Merrell**

editing. And again, perfect. I've met Gail once, which I truly didn't know much about Gail. I just always associated her as Oprah's best friend. And then I met her I was manning the the front of an event and I had a leader up to where the event was. And she was so lovely and super tall. Then I saw her again at a restaurant and they took everything in my power not to go over there and be like, Hi, we met once. I was like kotek girl, essentially. But I want to meet Oprah but I also want to revisit my moment with Gail.

**Sydney Weiss**

Yeah, I think you need to revisit that moment while also simultaneously meeting Oprah so they would be they would need to be together is essentially what we're saying.

**Emily Merrell**

So in the pandemic, we watched a lot of Netflix which feels like maybe this is like the matrix or flex or like living in a different different reality. But we probably logged I'm curious how many hours we all logged watching TV. Probably not something worth counting. But what show are you currently watching at the moment if any?

**Sydney Weiss**

I really wish I had kept a log by the way of all the shows I watched since like March 13 2020. Like one of my regrets is not writing everything down. Because I really could reflect on all of the TV I watched. But I just got Discovery Plus, I needed another streamer and I've been watching the Long Island medium like at home the pandemic version, which I'm really enjoying like watching Theresa Caputo like talk to people about their past on loved ones through zoom is just a really I'm really here for it. So that's what I'm watching right now.

**Emily Merrell**

Okay, that was great. That was, that was, that was the first time we've gotten that answers well done. We'll check out that discovery bless. What book are you reading right now? which I feel like book reading went down TV watching went up

**Sydney Weiss**

Book reading has definitely gone down for me since law school but i actually just finished on Audible listening to The Beauty of What Remains which is by Steve Leder, he's the head rabbi at wilshire boulevard temple here in Los Angeles and it's really all about grief and holding on to the beauty of your joy your memories your connections with your loved ones after they've passed, it's a beautiful book, i really recommend it to anybody

**Emily Merrell**

it sounds like you need to introduce Theresa to that book?

**Sydney Weiss**

do you see like... I'm noticing a through line here a pattern.

**Emily Merrell**

I see that connection, I don't want to turn this into a therapy session but i have some questions for you, everything okay?

**Sydney Weiss**

everything is okay. My grandpa passed away in October 2020, so i've been on a bit of grief journey and that book really really helped me. But i've always been fascinated with the Long Island medium, but yeah there's a through line. yeah for sure

**Emily Merrell**

yeah i think that's that's wonderful. And that sounds like a beautiful book, I will definitely visit that one. So texting is something we do way too often, what is your most used and or favorite emoji?

**Sydney Weiss**

oh my god if any of my friends listen to this they're gonna still laugh, but my most used emoji, and my friends call me out on it all the time, is the sparkle emoji with like the three little stars. I use it all the time, I use it in everything probably in almost every social media post and like text all day long, I don't know what it is but this sparkle emoji but we have a very close relationship

**Emily Merrell**

so warm one, i like that i use that in a social post today, so i'm with you on that one. Yeah it doesn't like evoke like a positive or a negative, more positive emotion than the negative emotion. The last question is who gave you permission to do the thing you wanted to do?

**Sydney Weiss**

That was such a good question. Me. Ultimately, me. i think we can get permission from other people all day long to do the things that we want to do, and to live out our dreams but ultimately you have to give yourself that permission. And you have to allow yourself i think just step forward in taking a risk or going after what it is that you want to do, and that can be really scary to give yourself that permission especially if it deviates from what you thought you were going to do or who you expect it to be. So me. Yeah. I think me

**Emily Merrell**

I like that. I love that, and i love that you know, Sydney of 2016 devastated with shingles and appendicitis about her Bar exam, would be very surprised to meet Sydney of 2021, who who's smashing her podcasts, her podcast consulting company, and you know her day job as a lawyer so

**Sydney Weiss**

She'd be like who is that girl? who is that?

**Emily Merrell**

different person, like the before and after like She's All That you know, she's wearing glasses, and she's not wearing glasses, to make over sequence perfect. Well, Sydney, thank you so much for joining us today it was such a pleasure. Audience, please check out Sydney, listened to her podcast, get some joy in your life Seek The Joy with Sydney, and if you'd like today's episode, make sure to give it a like and share and we so appreciate it until next time on The Sixth Degree.

**Sydney Weiss**

Thanks all