

#107 Behind The Button with Jill Strickland Brown

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SPEAKERS

Michelle Glogovac, Jill Strickland Brown

M Michelle Glogovac 00:01
You're listening to the mind simplify life podcast and this is episode number 107.

M Michelle Glogovac 00:12
Welcome to the mind simplified life podcast, a place where you will learn that your past and even your present. don't define your future. Regardless of what stage of life you're in, I want you to feel inspired and encouraged to pursue your dreams, simplify your life and start taking action today. I'm your host, Michelle Glogovac, and I'm excited to share my stories and life lessons with you will taking you on my own journey. This is my simplified life.

M Michelle Glogovac 00:46
Hey friends, welcome to another episode. I'm your host, Michelle Glogovac. As you know, I record everything from my closet, the home of my treasured wardrobe and shoe collection, which you can all see from a photoshoot I actually did from my closet last year. So of course, when I read the book behind the button by Jill Strickland Brown, I had to invite her on the show to talk about our book, her fashion career, and how a dyebath really represents all women. Jill is an entrepreneur, author, image transformation consultant and founder of frocks, a clothing boutique in Pennsylvania. Before launching her luxury boutique, she was a seven figure sales rep. and is now not only sharing her own story with the world, but empowering other women to share theirs. We're talking about Jill story, how she helps women find the perfect outfit, and the importance of being vulnerable. Go grab your coffee, because this is a great girlfriend chat.

J Jill Strickland Brown 01:50
Hi, Jill. Hi, how you doing? Michelle?

M Michelle Glogovac 01:53
"

I'm so great. I'm so excited to talk to you. And like I said before we started recording, I feel like I already know you since I read your entire life story in your book.

J Jill Strickland Brown 02:03

Right? I know. It's really it's been an interesting journey with that.

M Michelle Glogovac 02:08

Can you take a moment to introduce yourself to everybody, please?

J Jill Strickland Brown 02:11

Oh, sure. I am Joel Strickland Brown. I am an entrepreneur. First. I'm an author. And I'm also an image transformation coach as well.

M Michelle Glogovac 02:21

We have to talk about that because I don't know. Maybe I don't know you. So your book behind the button I have in my hands. And I love it because you share about yourself and how your journey was to get to where you are today. And create not just the life but the career and the business that you wanted. And completely organically. Can you share a bit about how this all came about how you launch this career within the fashion industry, and you just kind of went with it.

J Jill Strickland Brown 02:59

I know it's kind of crazy. Um, you know, people say, Oh, they have a calling, when they're a kid, and I always had this calling, I always loved fashion. I even as a kid, I said, You know, I want to go to New York, and I want to have a fashion career. You know, I love fashion I drank it in. And because of I was growing up in fundamental religion, we actually went door to door and talk to people. And I found that I was really good at that. And I was able to persuade people who possibly want to throw me or probably wanted to throw me off their step. So rejection really wasn't an issue for me. Because if you can do that you can do anything. You can pretty much anything if you can go to someone's door and knock, you know, on the door. So you know, that wasn't a fear of mine. And you know, my dad used to say, it's not a job, it's an opportunity. And I grew up with the American dream that if you worked really hard, and you did what you're supposed to do that someone would give you an opportunity and I am grateful that I grew up in the generation that I did where you know, you're not on a track that you must go to college and you must do you know all these things. I tried all these crazy jobs, and I got to experience so I've had 1000 live so I'm really cool journey and I just went to the next thing to the next thing to the next thing. And they all led me somewhere. So maybe God had something to do with that, I'm sure.

M Michelle Glogovac 04:30

I think he's always involved in some way. That's how I believe so and now you're a business owner, you own frocks, yes, share what that is I love the story behind the building that you chose to launch it in and just how I just pictured it in my head of what it looks like when I read the book and the details and you know, the local artists that you brought

in for the racks and everything else. How did this all come about that you went from you waitressing right. Doing some sales, learning every detail about what goes into creating clothing and then getting hired to sell

J

Jill Strickland Brown 05:12

it. Crazy Crazy. Yeah. And again, like I said, you know, one thing led to another. I was waitressing bartending and I was making a lot of money sometimes I think I should come back to that but but I'm too old for that. But I was bored I was really bored during the day and someone said hey, you know I'm there's a really cool store in mahaska you know, go check out see if they need anyone I went out and talked to the owner and she said, You know, I have sons that own a clothing manufacturer you know, in the next town over you know, they need someone to answer the phone. I'm like, I can answer the phone like nobody's business. So I went in, and little did I know that was the foundation of my fashion career. So I learned everything, you know, garment dyeing, costing, you know, we went to the shows, dye bass, everything, you know, the foundation, drape fit fabric, everything I needed to know about the manufacturer of clothing, and I really use that today. So when I look at lines in New York, I'll say oh, that's not going to make it through, you know, production or wow, this is really good price for what it is see all the seams see all the you know, the buttons. So that was you know, where it started. And then again, through, you know, my fundamental religion, I'm, I'm a good salesman, so they were like, wow, you're really good at this. And I started selling it. And then I started my own roofing company. And then I had children. And I was like, wow, I don't really want to travel the country anymore. You know, I want to settle down on 911 happened and I said, I really don't want to be in New York anymore. And that's when I started frocks yeah so crazy just out of necessity, you know, out of necessity and where my life took me

M

Michelle Glogovac 07:01

and you know, it all just flowed and came together though. I love that

J

Jill Strickland Brown 07:04

yeah, it's crazy. Yes. Let now Yeah, and yeah,

M

Michelle Glogovac 07:08

yeah, let's talk about the dyebath what is the dyebath and can you share how you you know really related that in the book to life?

J

Jill Strickland Brown 07:19

Well, I would say because I've had 30 years in the fashion industry, it's definitely the filter of my life. You know, from a little kid all the way up to now so the dye bath I really feel like it equates to life. Where what happens in a dye bath you have these very big, you know, metal tubs that are almost as tall as a person. You Ed's hot hot water. And then what's really cool about dharmic garment dyed clothing as as opposed to piece dyed clothing is garment dyed is in its gray state. So it's all it's all white. And then it actually is very sustainable. And it's it's something we've been doing for 20 years but it's something now that the industry is really interested in sustainable what happens is we take we make the garment ahead of time and then we fulfill the orders based on what people order if they order 10 blue and five black, um you know you do it that way and it's much more sustainable than making clothes and then not selling

them but the dyebath so what happens is you get to experiment with with fabrications because it transforms the fabric so when you put fabric into that hot scalding water, it shrinks it and it actually makes the fibers stronger as well. So you have to start out with a stronger fabric. And then when you pull it out is really cool is the effects you can do by the shrinking and by the dye. And what you do with it. Like we used to take large pieces almost, if you can imagine a square a very large dish rag and then when you put it in the water it would make a very smaller weave. Or you know we would take a cable and mix it with cotton and poly and the die you know six to the cotton and comes off the poly and there's probably more technical than your customers. Or I'm sorry your guests I would say customers I'm sorry that your guests need to hear but what's cool is when the fabric comes out, it's more beautiful and more strong. So I equate that to life where you know women go through life and they have lines and stretch marks and you know, badges of honor of a life well lived and you know they come out stronger and better and so you know I certainly had my struggles Michelle I'm sure you've had yours and you know we come out of that dyebath stronger and then also when we start telling our story is we realize that our friends are right next to us in the dyebath all along. So that's really the story of the book.

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Michelle Glogovac 09:48

I love it. I love the way you just put that and it just it to me it's like you know we're all a different piece of fabric and as you said we go into this dye bath and the dye bath is our Life and we go through different kinds of things. And we all come out differently.

J

Jill Strickland Brown 10:05

Everything is unique even on the tag of a garment dyed says this is unique and this is part of the beauty of the fabric and we're all unique so that's a different aspect that I don't think about but that is true see Michelle, I love it I get up every day I learned something

M

Michelle Glogovac 10:21

it's so true and I love that you said that you know when we become vulnerable others are encouraged to be vulnerable and share with themselves and I think that's something that's so important you know, we try to hide kind of the past and there was something I just read it I think on Instagram the other day that said you know you have to embrace your trauma you have to embrace your past and don't be ashamed of it. And I think in doing that you connect on a deeper level with other human beings.

J

Jill Strickland Brown 10:50

I agree people can spot fake people people can spot when you're being Teflon you know even on social media you know who pays attention to someone that their life is so perfect you can't relate to that person but somebody that shares a part of themselves you you ultimately feel connected and I will say that is an unexpected benefit that I got from sharing my stories I expected judgment I expected people to not understand I expected and what I got was a surprise which was compassion and love and connection so you know people are inherently wonderful and we don't give them enough credit

M

Michelle Glogovac 11:33

let's talk about when women come into your store because you say you know you get to know them on a level that

they probably don't even realize they're letting you into with you know where are you going what is what are you looking for why is it that you need it you know what are you drawn to and then you're also kind of check I don't want to say this in a weird way but you're checking them out like what is going to fit them what's going to look good on them and you know that can almost be like a therapy session in itself

J

Jill Strickland Brown 12:02

Oh it is sometimes they say you know \$100 for the therapy and you know 50 bucks for the top but you know it is vulnerable you know women walk in and they definitely have you know body issues but you know the filter that they look through life what they were told as a child that they were you know ABC you know whatever negative you know messages they got whatever it is but when they walk in we do and I always feel that clothing it's great but it's really a connector and then I also like the power of clothing which is giving women confidence you know kind of like fake it before you become it you know so it gives them the confidence to go out and do whatever it is they want because they feel they feel good so when they come in the shop I do kind of assess them

J

Jill Strickland Brown 13:01

i mean i you know women are beautiful but you know yes I assess their body shapes and I'm you know pretty good at that because I've been doing it for a while and you can tell if someone's curvy or someone's you know has more of a straight body or you always hear about apples and pears and so I'm also because I have that manufacturing background and I meet all the the manufacturers and the designers at the shows I kind of know what lines work for apples what lines work for you know, pears, but I'd also let them pick out you know what they like and kind of get an idea and you know, where are you going okay and wedding well you know, are you the mother of the bride? Or are you a guest you know, and then you tailor it towards that. And I also teach women about a lot of women tend to buy a lot of clothes they think you need a lot of clothes and I always say you don't need a lot of clothes, you just need the right clothes and I actually even teach them how to go on vacation with five pieces of clothes and how to mix and match them how to wardrobe build, you know, by this gray top and it's going to go back with these five things in your wardrobe. So even after we pick things out, you know, we really affirm you know what they're doing, but really the magic happens in the fitting room. And that's when you know they get vulnerable because they're undressed and you know they come out and I'm gonna say I've stood in that mirror for 20 years and there is not one woman that's come out and said I'm amazing Look at me you know they don't do it. They're like oh my bus line Oh my god, oh my belly, oh my size, whatever it is and I just see a beautiful woman standing in front of me and I say that all the time is we don't see what you see when you walk in a room we see your face we see you know, we're not looking at all your flaws. So you know, let's teach you how to how to, you know mask them I caught smoking mirrors but you know we you know we kind of drape the fabric over the things that they don't want to say And then we emphasize their good parts. And that's kind of what we do in life too, you know, so we teach them and then I educate them. So yes, they can shop in my store. But really, they can take that knowledge and shop anywhere. So I want you to come in my closet. Actually, that's what the Transform. Image transformation coaching is. We're working on packages, because I'm meeting people, especially with the TED talk, and all the things I'm doing. I'm meeting people that are beyond the scope of my local little boutique. So we're working on a package where we do just that virtually I come to your closet, which actually you're, you're in it. You're podcasting out of your closet, I did check out your closet on your picture, I was like, Oh, I can help her. Oh, I see some things we could get rid of. So I yeah, so we're gonna do that we're gonna do a virtual package where you know, I you get one on one with me, we kind of go through your closet, yes, no, do a full clean out and then kind of recommend either things in my store or you know, somewhere or somewhere else that you could purchase these key items. So we're working on that. So yeah, my

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Michelle Glogovac 16:10

name is I hold on to everything.

J

Jill Strickland Brown 16:12

I know, like so many.

M

Michelle Glogovac 16:15

Right now, I haven't worn these in years, they're definitely pre COVID when some of them just now fit again. Because even during COVID, I actually worked my butt off. So I'm like, Oh, they fit so then maybe there's hope for some of these other pairs of pants that are hanging.

J

Jill Strickland Brown 16:31

Women get emotionally attached to their clothing. Like when I was 20, I wore this I'm like, and we always say fit the body that you are today, you know, except what you are today. And let's dress that body. But we do if women are in transition, a lot of them are dieting, or they're exercising, and they're in transition. So we'll help them say, Okay, this fits you today. But if you lose the 10 pounds of your goal, or whatever that is, you know, this will still work for you. Or we say you know, use it as a motivator. You know, like this, this your pair of pants, you know if it motivates you to lose weight or gain weight or whatever is that you need, you know, you can use that as a motivator as well. Yeah, yeah.

M

Michelle Glogovac 17:14

I think one of my big issues is jeans.

J

Jill Strickland Brown 17:16

Oh, jeans are so hard to fit. And you might

M

Michelle Glogovac 17:18

have literally my husband has probably 20 pairs and the weirdest thing I'm like, What is with you? Why do you have so many pairs of jeans like well, they all fit differently. And I'm like, but you're a guy like That's weird. And then I know that the skinny leg is going out for women and I have some boot cut, but I'm also only five what my licenses Five, four, but I'm closer to five, three. So yeah, so I don't know if the boot cut makes me look a little bit shorter.

J

Jill Strickland Brown 17:49

Um, so the other thing I teach women is you want to be on trend but not trendy. So if that doesn't fit you, um, I always say just because it fits doesn't mean it fits. So if you don't enjoy flare legs, then don't do it like skinny legs are never going away. You know, flare legs may be in favor at this moment, but nothing goes away, you just you know, you tailor it a little differently, but I'm actually flair legs are good. I'm five three as well. Um, I do say sometimes I'm gonna have to have it and I can make pillows out of this fabric. But you know, they're coming out just like skinny legs

with many different fits that you know work for all body shapes. But yeah, and that's what we're here to do. Or what I'm here to do is when you come in the shops thing that might not work for you because you're petite, you know, try, you know this, this this and this is gonna work for you. And people love that they love it that it's curated for them. So complaining

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Michelle Glogovac 18:51

you're kind of answering the question. This is totally not not in the book or anything. I'm just curious, like how has online shopping affected you as a clothing store owner, because I know that for me, like I'm an Ann Taylor freak. I love loft I love and tailor and that's really the only store I will go into and shop at. But at the same time, I know what sizes I am so I can just order it online. And I've become very lazy. I am like I don't want to go out and go try on clothes like No thank you. That doesn't sound like fun anymore. So how has online changed things for you?

J

Jill Strickland Brown 19:26

Well, you know, in the early stages of online, you know a lot of my customers were older you know, I opened my store when I was 35 most of them were in their 40s and 50s. So they still liked a tactile, you know they like to coming in touching and feeling. And that's what my business was it was localized. So in the beginning it wasn't now that I'm again meeting all these people all over the place, they can't come to percuss See, so our online has tweaked in the way that we have a very cool app and I love So what you do is if you're interested in this talk and also we use our customers as models I actually take all the pictures so I'm like Oh see now Yeah, yeah it's called you know, real life real bodies you know real models real life so these are people out about they are not models they are you know, my customers I'm like, hey, Irene, can you come Tuesday we got a new box. And you know, so, you know, are there absolutely real people, but we have an app that we just got, and I love it for the online is if you're interested in a top, we do a live every week, where again, my employees are my customers, try on the clothing and talk about it. And so what's really cool is you can when you click on that, it takes you right to the live where we're trying on that top so you can see it on different body shapes. So that's cool. Um, and online, you just have to the other thing is, again, just like I assess them when they come in the store. I've been really good with with like a questionnaire or pictures or looking at them on Facebook, and I sort of, I'm pretty good at, at assessing them and sending them the right things I have. I have women all over the country, they're like, I've never sent anything back. You You got me down. And I was like, yeah, you know, I'm looking at your body shape. And I know what's going to work for you. So your personal sales? Yeah, I do think it I think it's not, I think the challenge that you're having with online is you're not having any help. You're not you know, it's it's very, you're just trying to guess just like you're guessing in my store. And we kind of make it where you don't guess.

M

Michelle Glogovac 21:41

Yeah, and I'm very bland, like I I will look at people's, you know, perfect Instagram and go Oh, look at that flouncy top and that pattern and oh, that's just not me, I am a solid type of person.

J

Jill Strickland Brown 21:56

But then again, what are you looking at? You're looking at the curated picture that the real person and you'll never, you'll never, you know, and that person because I had the background in the modeling agency. Those models didn't even look like that, you know, there is there. They have a team of experts. And we all know airbrushing, everything can be fixed. Yeah, filters. Everybody's got a filter on it. So everyone's doing it. So nothing you see is real, real reality TV isn't real, nothing's real.

M Michelle Glogovac 22:27
It's all fake everybody. But I am in my messy closet. And that is

J Jill Strickland Brown 22:34
our real that's why I love podcasts because they are real. It's just you and me talking in your closet. And I'm in my living room right now. So Larry,

M Michelle Glogovac 22:42
we need to move you in your closet.

J Jill Strickland Brown 22:45
Right now, you know, I shouldn't admit that I have a clothing store because my closet it's a mess right now I need to box up my season and start afresh so and that really box up your season? I do. I box it up, and whatever I really don't wear goes in the trash. And there are some closet clean outs. I'm like, Oh, you know, because I came back and I'm like, Oh, I really wish I didn't throw that away. But it always comes back different with a twist. It never really comes back exactly the way it did 20 years ago.

M Michelle Glogovac 23:17
So you throw them out, you don't like put it away for a season, then bring it out,

J Jill Strickland Brown 23:21
I put away what I've used and what I know I'm going to wear. But if I haven't worn it and you know, a couple of years it goes. Yeah,

M Michelle Glogovac 23:30
yeah, I did do that during COVID. And I need to do it again.

J Jill Strickland Brown 23:34
They say you were and it's very true, you were 20% of your clothes. 80% of the time.

M Michelle Glogovac 23:41
Yeah. And then the other one that I love. especiallv beina out here in California where we have all the fires. is that

really you shouldn't just pack a bag of clothes. Just take your hamper because the clothes you wear the most are gonna be the ones that are your hamper. So if there's a fire, bring your hamper of dirty clothes. That's what you're gonna miss the most.

J

Jill Strickland Brown 24:02

Yeah, and I always say that, like if they say, you know, I don't know about this top. And I say are you gonna dig in the dirty hamper for that top? And if you're not doing by that's your that's your scenario as well.

M

Michelle Glogovac 24:19

What do you say? I feel like, you know, especially since we've had COVID and everybody's in their sweat pants, their yoga pants and you know we've gotten kind of lazy about it. You know, I feel like when you put on something that makes you kind of dress up it makes you feel better. Absolutely. Like yesterday I showered I knew I had a video interview who I always shower but I blow dried my hair. And I put on one of my favorite and tailor sweaters. It's beige, and then it has these are flouncy cuffs that are blue and white pinstripe and it's got a little color. It's my favorite. And I was like oh yes, I feel so good. And my six year old goes, Mommy, you're so dressed up. You look so good today. I work with jeans. It's really no,

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Jill Strickland Brown 25:03

I'm sitting here right now because I didn't know if you it would be video or audio and I'm so grateful it's audio, I have my sneakers on jeans and like a pretty top. So it's from the top up, I look really good. So, you know, yes, we've again pivoted, just like we've always pivoted in our 20 year career, but right now, you know, they are looking for something comfortable, but they also don't want to be in their pajamas, 24 seven, so they want something a little elevated that if they go to the mailbox, if they go to Starbucks, or wherever they go, you know, they can kind of be comfortable, but go out, and then I am selling a lot of pretty little tops, because everyone's virtual, you know, so you know, they're in their sweatpants, but their top is pretty. So I'm selling that and then, you know, weddings are coming back, you know, because everyone put them off for a year or two. Now, so that's starting to happen. But you know, we opened with, after 911, we've had two recessions we've had the housing crisis, you know, this is definitely I'm going to say the worst of all of that. But we always had a pivot, you know, if you're not in business for a long time, if you don't learn how to pivot, you know, so yeah, this was tough, I'm not gonna lie, this is the first time where I've ever been closed down. And then just the entire world is affected. It's been challenging, but there's so many silver linings, you know, certainly people have been affected, you know, lives of loss, so I'm not mitigating that. But I will say, it gave me time, the gift of time, which is one of our most valuable assets and something we never can get back. So, you know, time with your children time with your spouse. For me, it gave me time to write a book and really reflect and, you know, deal with some stuff that I had in my childhood and now, feeling like that was therapeutic. And I learned on my writer, I never thought I'd be a writer, I've dealt with dyslexia, most of my life. I can't spell to save my life, and the entire process of just like,

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Michelle Glogovac 27:10

Siri, spell.

J

Jill Strickland Brown 27:14

Siri spell. My process was quite interesting. But it gave me a confidence, you know, and I think that, you know, with clothes and life, just trying these things, and you talk about it with the podcast, you know, you don't have to be a superstar to do a podcast, you know, you can try something and pivot and you know, I love your message as well. You know, that you don't have to be this crazy person just to get your message out, because I agree with you if you help one person. That's all that matters, you know? Yeah. Yeah.

M

Michelle Glogovac 27:47

So that's changing the world changing one life is changing the world. So yeah. Oh, Jill, it is such a pleasure to talk to you. I'm so glad we got this opportunity. Can you share with everyone where they can find you, please?

J

Jill Strickland Brown 27:59

Yes, my website is Jill Strickland brown calm, and that has a link to frogs. And it has a link to my image transformation coaching if someone wants to work with me virtually.

M

Michelle Glogovac 28:10

And your book is behind the button. So

J

Jill Strickland Brown 28:15

by the way, I wrote a book and that's on Amazon.

M

Michelle Glogovac 28:20

Thank you so much.

J

Jill Strickland Brown 28:21

You are so welcome. Michelle, thank you for the opportunity to talk to you to that.

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Michelle Glogovac 28:26

Okay, now I'm ready for a closet and a wardrobe makeover. I don't know about you, but Jill has me rethinking some of my fashion choices, and why I've hung on to some items for so long. I definitely plan on having Joe come back and help me with an image transformation. So stay tuned for that. The big thing that I hope you got out of today was the beauty in sharing yourself with others and how that will come back to you. Embrace your past and what you've been through because it's made you uniquely you. And that's a beautiful thing. You have the power to be whoever you want to be and do whatever you want to do. share that with others. And remember that you also deserve to look and feel your best. Get rid of the old that no longer serves you and surround yourself and clothe yourself with whatever it is that makes you feel good inside and out. You deserve it. Until next week, friends, stay true to yourself, share of yourself and go put on your favorite top

