



# MODERN CPA

Transcript for Podcast Episode: 006

## *Evolving a Business Over the Decades with Kelly Stento*

Hosted by: Michelle Ward and Shawn Cahill

Guests: Kelly Stento

**Michelle:** We are modern CPA. Our purpose is to provide valuable information to small business owners on our podcast Profit Points. We discuss business how tos give tax tips and dig into real life experiences in the crazy world of running your own business. If you find this podcast helpful, then like, subscribe and follow us on social media. Thank you, everyone, for joining us on the points where we talk to professionals, industry experts and other business owners about the crazy world of being in business. And today we have Kelly sento with us from LeRoux School of Dance. Kelly, why don't you tell us a little bit about yourself?

**Kelly:** Well, good morning, everybody, and thanks for joining us. Thank you for inviting me to up on your podcast. Very exciting. I am a mom of three, almost grown children. My youngest is going to be graduating from high school this year. My oldest will be graduating with a bachelor's degree, so we're soon to be, I guess, empty nesters around here. And we've been quite consumed with our business over the last twenty five years. I live with my husband, who I met when I was in high school, so we are high school sweethearts. Yes, decided to spend our lives together, and it's been a pretty nice one.

**Michelle:** Yeah, that's awesome. Yeah, you got a great family there, Kelly. So we as small business owners, I know I love to hear about how people have gotten to where they are and their journey in life and what led them to making certain decisions. And I know you have an interesting story as far as you and your business, your owner of a school of dance. Can you tell us a little bit about like what happened then and maybe kind of like your journey through being in business for so long?

**Kelly:** Way back in the day when I was young, my mom happened to find a little girl in a swimming pool who did not seem to have any parent observing her and soon became quick friends with the actual mommy. And that woman had a dance studio and they invited my sisters, there are four girls in my family and invited all four of us to come and take dance lessons in a little axis near our house, LeRoux School of Dance, the original school was in Hawkins. So that was way back in the 80s, and I guess I could have even been in the 70s. The very end of the 70s but I started dancing, and I became a student teacher when I was in high school and I continued my journey there and through my 20s. And although Bonnie, the friend of my mom, moved away when I was in high school and someone else took over the business, that woman beneath was became a huge mentor to me. As well as Bonnie was and they kind of trained to me to be a teacher and went she was ready to step away from the business. She asked me if I would be interested in taking over, so it was not really. I always knew I wanted to be a teacher when I was a child and I was growing up. It didn't quite realize I would be a teacher of children in the dance world and also a teacher of other teachers. And that is kind of what fills my day

today. So it is it was a wild ride and I guess just being in the right place and providing provides opportunities for you. The things that you love and I can honestly say, I don't really feel like, you know, some days I feel like I work. For the most part when I look back on my life, as definitely has been a journey of something I really love.

**Michelle:** So you just kind of student. Yeah. Just kept following the love of dance that led you to being an owner of a business of a dance school, which you probably never thought in your mind at that time that you would be a business owner or had maybe even the aspirations to be a business owner.

**Kelly:** That is very true. I have zero business backgrounds whatsoever. I mean, except for self-help book and now conferences and things. When our second Child was born, I was about five years into the business. I was at the studio like at all. I had set it up, so that was given to me in such of a way though, it was very easy for me to take over and, you know, we purposefully set it up so that we could have a family and make our own plans on our own schedule. And that when I was a stay at home mom for a little over a year, I decided that really was not as fulfilling for me as what I had hoped it would be. And I opened a second location here where we live in Rory Port. So the other studio is about twenty five miles away. I like never seeing anyone from the grocery store or at my kids school, but that quickly changed with this studio and I kept both the school for six years. When I was approaching six years, I now have three children. I had grown the Rory Port studio to be almost exactly the same size as the one in Conshohocken. I was managing a very large staff, and my house, and my kids in elementary school and activities. Yeah. And so another Leroux alumna approached me and about the possibility of taking over the pool inside the Hokkien, and so I did sell that to her. And so since then, I have focused my energies here. I think about it. I think it was in 2009 that I sold the studio in Conshohocken and I've been focusing my energy here in Rory Port.

**Michelle:** Where you had mentioned that the original owner, Denise, one of the owners, the one that you purchased it from, she was a big mentor to you. Did she help you get, maybe catch you up to speed on how the business operated and when you were taking over for her. Like how did she impact that?

**Kelly:** Yeah, she was a huge part. Yeah, she was a huge part of that for me. She had I don't....Way back then, they did not have dance degree. So there was no dance teachers operating in the world with have going. Having gone to college for four years, a grand dance, if there were, there were very limited. I was not aware of any of them. Denise had gotten her degree in physical fitness and gym, and she had her own aerobics company that travel from church to church. And that's how it became to do with an eagle cheerleader and somebody who danced as a little child was a friend of hers, and that she came to know Bonnie and got to take over the studio. I was in high school at that time when all that was happening. And but as Denise came into the business, there definitely was much more of a business person than Bonnie. Before that, it really was just a hobby. Everybody just came and it was we took checks and her kids would come in and I would give them cash out of the drawer and, you know, they would go grocery shopping and whatever. And the bookkeeper would come and I would hand him a bag of checks.

**Michelle:** It really is very different than the way it is now.

**Kelly:** So, so even when I bought the business from Denise, they had really kind of had an operation, even though it was now recorded on three-by-five cards that lived in a little box on the desk. We did have a computer and a dot matrix printer and but we didn't use it for any. There was no client information that we didn't have any, you know anything like that. That wasn't, yeah, but there was snail mail. Yeah, yeah. And he's here. Buher sister did the bookkeeping for her. So I had my big safeguard. I don't know if she big long. It was a big, long feed of papers and that's how I did my ledger and on it. But very soon, very soon after I within a year of buying this, my accountant got me into QuickBooks and we began to find CRM programs and things that could help all of the information for our clients. So that was a quick turnover and they needed a lot of work to make sure that I could do that. But as you can imagine, there are all the systems are different today. I mean,

**Michelle:** It's a learning process. Yeah, it's a learning process. So it was building on itself like you were probably taught her system and then over time evolve that into what it is today, where you have a full on dance studio CRM system, you have your accounting software, you have your contact, you know, emailing type of I don't know, I think your dance studio system does some of that right? Like the emails and stuff.

**Kelly:** We do, we could use up contact or something like that if we needed to. But we do not at the time where and we do have a project managing system that we use. So, yeah, we do. We have like a, you know, a master organizer or multiple people, and it really is like my husband would kill me for saying that, you know, Microsoft employee. So.

**Michelle:** Yeah. And initially when you took over the business, you didn't have children at the time. Is that right? Or you did?

**Kelly:** Right. When I when I first bought the business, I had no kids. I mean, my goal was to get in there and pay off the loan and establish the business as well people to see. Because when I bought the school, I was working there, actually sitting down Monday through Thursday and on Saturday morning. So I was that was when it was open. There was another classroom. So in that school there was someone else working there with me. And I was very lucky that the administrative staff that Denise had employed stayed with me for a few years. So that was great. And then, you know, soon after, by the time we get to three years in, once the loan was paid, you know, I wasn't young and I wanted to have a family. And yeah, I felt like it was time for me to move in that direction.

**Michelle:** And that's great that the business kind of was flexible enough for you to be able to have the teachers teaching for you. And then you were kind of still running the business, obviously in the background, trying to make sure that everything got done. That must have been difficult to do that double duty with little ones.

**Kelly:** It sounds funny to say that it was so long ago that I don't even remember how I did that, look at that.

**Michelle:** We have more energy when we're young.

**Kelly:** Yeah, yeah, I mean, it wasn't even when I opened my second business, which would have been about five years, my ownership. It was at that time that one of the dads in my studio came to me and asked me if I was interested in building and what I did. And I was like, We don't need that. And he said, You need, you know. And at first I was like, no one that I know has a computer in the house with kids in kindergarten or younger. None of my friends or really honestly anybody that I knew had a computer in the house. And when I had left my last job before I took over the studio and that it's been five years, there wasn't I didn't have email at my last job, so it was very difficult for me to grasp the concept that people were going to email me. Yeah. And that people were, you know, yeah, no cellphones yet. I still had it. I had a cell phone, but it was called a mobile phone and it lived in the car. I didn't know my number and it was for only making outgoing calls in case of an emergency in the dark at night on the expressway.

**Michelle:** Well it was so expensive to do that.

**Kelly:** Yeah, yeah. So yeah, I didn't even know the phone number of that now. By the time I opened my second school, there were people with Bell. There was more people. They still were called mobile phones. They weren't the phones they are today. There was no iPhone yet or anything like that. No texting. Yeah, yeah. So I've seen quite a transition over the way people changed over my 25 years

**Michelle:** Oh my gosh, it's crazy.

**Shawn:** Well, well, you went from this, this business that was kind of like a side business that evolved into, you know, more of just a normal regular running business. Then you take over and then you expand to multiple locations and then you transition that other studio out to somebody else and back to one studio. So you've you've gone through a lot of transition. The business has evolved dramatically over the years. One thing, question I have is how what's the difference between teaching students to learn how to dance versus teaching teachers how to teach dance?

**Michelle:** Oh, that's right. That's a great question.

**Kelly:** Great question. Believe it or not, very similar to very few people, especially today. There's very few teachers in the world without a degree. A lot of them come to me with master's degrees in choreography and things like that and a lot of a lot of that experience. Although colleges are sort of in some situations, making it through helping people learn how to take what they know and pass it on to someone else. But a lot of times people come in, they don't. They don't really have any idea where to begin. And in a business like mine, you know, I'm not a conservatory school or I wouldn't say that I'm that we're not professional, but clearly we're teaching like a recreational program that we want to be available to the. And who wants to come and explore their any family who want to expose their child to physical fitness or dance. So a lot of times we have to start just at the very beginning and having a curriculum specific to every single teacher, to every single class across the board within my school is very important because I feel like that is the way that, you know, when you're at home, when I'm sitting here talking to you, that the class is going on in my studio right now and I know exactly what this teacher is teaching, exactly what music is being, you know, in some cases, even exactly

what words are being used to teach. So I find it actually very fulfilling because teaching a young child and watching them overcome separation from their parents, even if they can separate from their parent, but they just stand there and watch you for four months and then all of a sudden one day they just come in and grab it, and start moving around the room. It's a thrill and a joy that I don't. I definitely didn't get that from my desk job. So teaching other people to recognize and understand that that's the kind of joy and gift that they can give from their knowledge and helping them backtrack like go? But nobody ever remembers what the beginning was like. But that's where the real teacher is, not the person who can come in and put a piece of choreography on some kids who've already dance asked for 12 or 15 years. Right now that I don't want to say that's not a skill, because it is.

**Michelle:** It's just very different.

**Kelly:** Yeah, yeah. Yes. And it's it's not. It's only going to that's only going to fulfill you in a small niche of the people who want to dance. We want to be able to come in and make an environment that's good for everybody. I don't know if that really answered your question.

**Shawn:** Yeah, it's completely. I mean, I can understand how different it is to teach it, you know, you're just working with children versus working with other teachers to to have them have the skills to be able to teach kids. I mean, it's a challenge, but I mean, you guys have like a real good, real passion for this and it's...

**Kelly:** I always laugh. It is way harder to even threes and fours and five. I mean, that is the job where you are soaking wet and sweating and alive and entertaining. You can come in and keep a group of 12 or 13 year olds in your sweat clothes with a sweater fully zipped up. And the kids are like dying with the fans and and you didn't even break a sweat in an hour or so. They are totally two different kinds of job. Wow.

**Michelle:** Wow. I find it really interesting that you have this creative side because that dance is is very creative, you know, and that was where you originated in the dance world. And then you have to switch your brain to the analytical side in order to run your business, because that really has to happen in order to be clear on how to operate your business and to make it grow. Do you find that's a struggle, sometimes flipping back and forth? Or how do you deal with that?

**Kelly:** Yeah, I think there was a period in my life when I really didn't deal with it very well. I mean, the the business was simpler before the internet, so I can say that I do remember that as a as a young business owner and before I had my children, Fridays were like dedicated to office work, you know, returning phone calls and not that we weren't doing that every day, but Friday really was like the day, like it was a full day of just administrative work with email came a whole new side of things, people, you know, at first. It's very exciting. So I was sending email 24/7 and then I was creating multiple email accounts to try to focus my energies in different than in that I don't recommend that to anybody. I feel like it's better now that I've experienced that. I just put it all in one place in at least it's a one place because there are some days when I don't get to check, all of my email accounts so that at first things I did that I could converse with people at a time

when I didn't think they would reply back was very inviting. But then I quickly learned that I needed to set boundaries. I needed to be able to turn on my computer. We were in Disney World with our children, and those of us were on our phones. So you're waiting for the bus. And at one point, the bus or the park that we wanted had come three times and they actually then got on the bus without my husband. And it was a very eye opening experience up from that moment on. We were like, Now when we go on vacation, we're going to be with our kids and we're not going to allow these types of things to impact us the way that they were. We didn't really realize we were right there in that moment. So now we take two week vacations every year our children look forward to that time because it is whatever they want to do? That's what we do. And it's mostly laying by the pool.

**Michelle:** Whatever floats your boat.

**Kelly:** Doing a few excursions over the two week period of time. So we didn't, we weren't lump on a log the whole time, but we don't do very much and we even have pj days even when we're in the island somewhere and play games inside all day inside. So we really did. It's a challenge to balance all that. But yeah.

**Shawn:** It's really important to do that, though, because you know, you're in your business when you're a small business owner, it doesn't shut off at five o'clock, it doesn't start at nine o'clock, it's 24 seven. And you know, it's it's really difficult to shut that off. And but you absolutely have to do that in order to keep the momentum alive, to keep your your your energy levels and, you know, be able to focus and then have a successful business.

**Michelle:** I think it's really important to to understand that if you are coming from the being employed or the corporate world where it is very structured, eight to five. Let's just say when you're a small business owner and you're coming from that, you have to remember that you're going to have to lot yourself time. And that may not be, you know, at 7:00 in the morning or 6:00 at night. It may be that you take an hour at 10 o'clock, or you might take a couple of hours in the afternoon, but then you have other things that have to get done into the evening. So it doesn't look the same as a very stable corporate job or you go to work and you come home. It's very different.

**Kelly:** Yeah, yeah, and I remember some friends of mine, of my my older son when he was in elementary school, you know, and they would say, Oh my gosh, I just don't even know how you do it, you know you have your house. And I would say, Listen, I just put my pants on one leg at a time when things are really good at home. There's some chaos going on in the business and vice versa. And it's much easier right now. My kids are very independent. COVID sent us out into a whole world of the unknown in every aspect of our lives. And if I had to be homeschooling my kids, I don't know if I'd be sitting here today.

**Michelle:** Yeah, it wouldn't be enough. You wouldn't have enough time.

**Kelly:** Yeah, yeah. And I know there are studio owners out there who did it. But just in my mind, the exhaustion that I felt myself and where I was trying to take my business, if I would have had if my kids were not independent, I don't. I honestly don't. I say I don't know. I'm sure I would have done it, but I don't know what I how I would. So because

that's how difficult I felt. It was just trying to keep the business going and, you know, communicate with everybody, all in a whole new world

**Michelle:** Yeah, I would love to hear about that. Like what? Because there are so many just starting out small business owners, but you you're really seasoned by this point when the pandemic hit and tell us a little bit about how just in general, like how you had to pivot, you had an in-person dance studio. So what happened, you know?

**Kelly:** So, you know, there was a day where I just thought, You know what? I just kind of get in bed, cover my covers over my head, and this was it. I lived a good life. I had 20 years in it, and I'm not going to lie right like. Yeah, so a bunch of dance studio owners got together. I'm in an organization, right away, the leaders of those organizations that started sending emails out. Let's get together. Let's talk this through. How are we going to do it? And I was intimidated by all of the technology people had already in the studio for a minute, for a minute. At one point I just said, Well, I don't have cameras like, what do you mean? Like, How am I going to bring this, you know, an old lady like, literally went like this, Kelly, we got one of these, you know, and I was like, Uh-Huh. I have a couple of them. That's all you need, you know? And I said, okay, and it was like, this whole new life breathed into me. So this all happened in seven days, seven days after the first day we weren't open. We went live on Zoom.

**Michelle:** I mean, you just literally change your entire business model. Yes.

**Kelly:** Yes, yes. So in why we did, we offered three classes the Saturday. After the first Saturday, we sat down and the first one was like we had lots of technical issues. The second one we had a little less, the third one was like a charm ran like it was great. And then on Sunday, we sat and we said, OK, How are we going to get.. What day can you be on Zoom, what day can you be on Zoom? I just told my staff and said, OK and we build our schedule. We sent it out Sunday afternoon and then every day of the week we started classes and as we went through every two weeks, we added more classes and we because we got better with the technology and we had parents on the calls in the beginning saying, This is what we're going to do for your child. We started holding up hardware to show people what they needed if they wanted to hook their computer into their TV so their kids could dance in a bigger room. We started to see people in their basements with, like everything moved away. People went out and got dance floor. We started it because the floors on this on the ground and portable bars so that they could do their ballet classes. I mean, it was most people were using a chair and a kitchen towel for their scarf. But you know, in some cases, there was lots of people that weren't buying lots of things and turning their their space at home into a real classroom for their kids. So that was four months. We did Zoom recital, and then we started bringing the little kids back in small group, which was tremendous. That was a great way for the teachers themselves because now we were with people again. And then our older group, we kept them separated. So half of the group would be in the studio one week and half. The group was on the TV at the same time. And we did that for an entire season. We did celebrate at the end of the year with the in-person recital, so a little bit just a little gold along the way. I feel like before this ever happened, my tagline is for my business was "Creating strong, confident leaders, one step at a time" and I just felt like I needed to really read this myself every day and say, What would a leader do? A leader would not

get in their bed and pull the covers over their head. A leader would say, girl, you know, it's not always what we want it to be, but it isn't. But it's still here, we're still here and we still can do this. And it's not exactly how it was before, but that's the life lesson that's really hard for a lot of people. I mean, honestly, even without it, we would be in a different place today than we were three years ago.

**Michelle:** Well, yeah, because I think you are also looking, you know, you are only looking at trying to get through that next step. Right, because you were if you had looking back on it, if you had been at the beginning and you had and you looked at the period where you had all of these classes and all these Zoom and all this technology going on, you would have been like, There is no way I would. I can do that. There's no way. But you were looking at, OK, let's just get one or one week of class, or let's just get two classes down or three classes down. And then we got that you get better and better. And then you added more teachers and you started tweaking it. So it wasn't like the whole product was finished, you know, it wasn't like you were jumping to that end point. You were building and learning as you went. And I think you're like an expert with all this stuff now. So within Zoom and group and sessions and split hours and oh yeah.

**Kelly:** See, and that's like the humbleness of just who I am within the business because I still don't consider myself to be an expert of anything because I still in my mind, I have like all these things that I haven't done all these aspirations for where I want to be, you know, it would be better. You know, the next great thing is always the right thing, right? And then you're I still feel like I'm on this journey of getting where I haven't gotten there yet, you know?

**Michelle:** Now, tell us what you think about that?

**Kelly:** Oh, yeah, yeah. Well, what I think about the journey ahead?

**Michelle:** Well, you know what it is. You know, you just said that you see, you know, there's more things you want to do and there's more that you have. You don't know yet. And so what does that look like?

**Kelly:** Well, for right, in the immediate future, we are about to launch a new campaign with a company that specializes in dance studios. So I see influx of dancers coming my way at a very fast pace, it's an automation system is that some of it's automated and some of it is personal. So we are carving out we actually have our final training today, and I'm hoping that the ads are going to go live over the weekend. So this is hopefully going to transform really and help us grow back to where we were. Nobody wants to go to year one after they've completed year 19 in their business.

**Michelle:** So you're looking at me when you say back to you being pre-COVID pre?

**Kelly:** Yeah, pre-COVID I was at like 19 years and then now in COVID, I mean, at the very beginning of COVID, I went all the way back to my very first September open indigo. I mean, our numbers plummeted back to 50 students, a youth person who's 19 years in, does not want to go back in year one ever. And not so that's what happened. And so now we're still down 40 percent of what we were pre-COVID. So we've been looking into ways to be more efficient. And this program I believe is going to really help us. And the



team of people that are bringing along with me right now are young and they are hungry for it and they're going out because I don't think I can do it myself. I couldn't be doing it.

**Michelle:** You shouldn't be doing it yourself.

**Kelly:** Yeah, so that's that's the immediate future. I see some real growth happening for us. We have some some big goals for the next three months, so we want to make sure that we hit them. And at the same time, I'm growing this new office staff is like, as I said, hungry to learn about the business and they are wanting to take on more tasks. So it's forcing me to really get my systems in place, I have that right here and they need to be not here so that other people can do them. And I was at the waiting to get a person want to do this because I wanted to have it all written down. But honestly, I shouldnt have been waiting, I should have just been writing as I was doing it. That's what I did this year and it really is hoping and the other person is resourceful and doesn't mind doing some research or finding things. And so that is actually making everything way easier, too, because she's is writing a lot of the stuff. I keep doing it. So I'm really in a good place with some good support, and so I see some real growth happening for us here and it has always been my plan with those studios. As I said, I thought the other one, eventually the studio went by that I don't want to be, you know, I don't say I just tied to the business in any way because right now I have. I don't go there every day anymore, so. But if there's the time when I want to fully step away, I want the business to be strong and be able to show that someone else can make a living from it. It may be even a better living than it is definitely much more of a machine and a process, and it has a lot of things that it didn't have when I came on. And some of the things that it had when I came have improved with the way the technology has improved over the years. So the studio itself is seventy five years old. I am the third owner and I fully anticipate that there will be a fourth owner and a fifth owner.

**Michelle:** I mean, it's a living thing. This business is I can continue to evolve and grow and change and, you know, sold. Maybe not pass down necessarily to children or something like that. But it is a thing that can stay in existence if that's what you choose and you get to treat it as such, know it's always going to be ever changing.

**Shawn:** So what's impressive is that you, you took the, you know, the pandemic and you, after a little bit of, you know, getting under the covers cut out and you know, you went from, I don't know how I'm going to do Zoom to teaching parents how to set up their cameras on their TVs, but within a matter of days and weeks and use some of that. I think you said you had other people show you how to do it. So it's even into being a business owner for 20 years. You still need mentors. You still need people to experts other guide you. Yeah, but and then you can pass that on those lessons to the next generation that's going to be owning, you know, taking over for you.

**Kelly:** Yes, exactly. I was just in Miami this weekend with a bunch of hundreds of dance studio owners, and I went up to the founder of the program. He's been doing this for about seven years. So like I said, twenty five years ago when I started, Denise was the only person when there was conflict or scheduling problems or parent problems or whatever it might happen to be. They need to say, Go to thank goodness you allowed me to pay for a consulting fee for the first three years that I owned the business. Oh, awesome. We

are still great friends and we still have lunch a couple of times a year and I still call her when things are crazy. I received an award a few years ago in Vegas, and she came to the event where I was receiving the award. She's not just the mentor when I was young, but it's always been there and she's like, Oh my goodness, you're way better than I am today, you know, with everything that you do. And it's very humbling because I still hold her in that regard of the person who was, like helping me go along my way. And there are several women who have worked for me over the years who have branched out and have their either bought a studio or opens their own from scratch that I have worked directly with, and they still call me on a regular basis when they run into things. So I thank that person who runs the organization where I was because I go mean to be, you know, no other dance studio is going to tell me what their secrets were or, and these organizations that are now available that really support the dance industry to be, you know, they encourage us to call ourselves the CEO and be who we really are.

**Michelle:** Exactly, you are running a business.

**Kelly:** I just, you know, I would go to my high school reunions and people would say, Oh, Kelly, you still doing that dancing. I wanted to say to them....

**Michelle:** You mean operating and running a business and employing people?

**Kelly:** Right, yes I am actually.

**Shawn:** Affecting generations of kids with me. So I mean, it's it's not a little thing and it's not something that that, you know, oh, you doing that dance thing. That's a little patronizing, I guess.

**Kelly:** But you know, whatever. I mean, it is what it is, you know, and I think they're happy to hear that I am still doing it. But that's probably who they knew me to be, you know, in high school.

**Michelle:** Yeah, yeah. So just to kind of recap, I, you know, after this interview here they were talking, it seemed like having a mentor, having somebody who was going to help you through the beginning stages and in various parts of the business was really helpful. And then the fact that you are now in organizations that are with other dance studio owners where you can bounce ideas off of whether it's a mastermind or various conferences that seems very, it seems like it had a big or is having a big impact on you, along with the various types of other types of organizations that are kind of giving support to you guys as owners has been really helpful.

**Kelly:** Yes, I heard a disturbing. I hope I'm saying it correctly because I was surprised me when I heard it. One of the speakers over the weekend said that only one percent of people on Earth read books beyond their schooling. And I thought, what look at me with all these people in this room who read self-help and books?

**Michelle:** That's me too.

**Kelly:** And I know and I'm in other organizations where I know people are reading all the time and sharing the books that they read. So it's just I think the key is the fact that you are a

life learner. Life learner mindset, right? Then you are always going to be putting yourself forward. I see it in my husband too, even in what he does for his job. He's constantly learning new technology. It's been something I think will probably work until he can't anymore now because he has to, but because this really is what he loves to do and..

**Michelle:** It's who he is. Yeah, the learning part and the growing and and being sharp and staying active.

**Kelly:** Yeah, yeah. And I see that in myself too, and I hope to be inspiring the next generation of business, whoever you know, whether it's in my business or somebody else's who's in my school, who goes on to have their own business someday, like that they see that continually educating yourself and making changes. It's not a bad thing. Everybody makes changes. McDonald's makes changes.

**Michelle:** Everybody does, you have to.

**Kelly:** Yeah, changes mean growth and opportunity. And hopefully everyone can embrace that the way that I have, and I hopefully will be able to continue to embrace them as long as I want working and impacting the kids.

**Michelle:** That is awesome. So Kelly, thank you so much for joining us today, and we learned so much from you. And I hope other small business owners, you know, can take some things away from what you went through, and we just really are thankful to have you with us here today.

**Kelly:** Well, thank you. It was really a pleasure to be here. Thank you for having me.

**Michelle:** Awesome. Yes, absolutely. Well, we're going to wrap this session up and we'll look for the next episode shortly. Thanks, everybody. Take care. If you find this podcast helpful and like, subscribe and follow us on social media.