

Episode Title: DOES YOUR CAREER NEED THIS?

Guest: Guadalupe Hirt

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Jackie MacDougall: Reading your bio, you refer to yourself as a 'pro-aging advocate'. We have to start there. What does that mean to you?

Guadalupe Hirt: So, what that means to me is really helping, I would say everyone, but women, in particular, really own their age and be proud of the number and chapter that they stand at. And not subscribe to any of those ages beliefs that, unfortunately, try to hold many of us back. So, reminding women that they're truly badass in their own right.

Jackie MacDougall: That's awesome. You're speaking my language for sure.

[laughter]

Jackie MacDougall: There's so much out there though about pro-aging, and then we see women like J.Lo and others – and we're like, 'Yeah, she's looks amazing.' But like, it feels like it's not the realistic pro-aging. When you talk pro-aging, are you talking about *mind, body, spirit*? Are you talking about work? What are you referring to?

Guadalupe Hirt: Yeah, you know what, I'm going to go actually go back to the J.Lo kind of conversation because I feel like oftentimes, I think a lot of women in this-- And we're talking like 40, 50, 60-plus, right?

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Guadalupe Hirt: And there is a huge divide between what women think that we should look like, act like, and everything, right? Should we Touch Botox or should we color our hair? Should we stay grey? Should we get a little, you know, tuck here and there?

It's this idea of like, I feel that pro-aging is really about you owning how you want to feel about yourself. Not necessarily being driven by the ideas or influenced by what people think you should look like or think you should do – but rather, what makes me feel good?

So pro-aging from the standpoint of like looking in the mirror and saying, *"Hey, you know what, what makes me feel good? What makes me want to celebrate my age?"*

And if that means like myself coloring my hair, then hey, more power to you. Right?

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Guadalupe Hirt: If it means growing you grace, more power to you – but the idea that there is no judgment and that we at 40, 50, and 60 plus can look whatever way we want...and each of us has the power to own that and celebrate without judgment of others.

Jackie MacDougall: Right. And that's the big part, right?

Guadalupe Hirt: Absolutely.

Jackie MacDougall: Because. Pro-aging might look different for you, for me, for someone listening. And so, I, during the pandemic was like, 'I'm going to try that gray thing, I'm going to see. And I did a two-year ex, almost two-year experiment.

And I realized I actually have a gray streak, which I thought was pretty cool – but it wasn't the gray that bothered me, it was the mousey brown that came along with it that was just like, there was no vibrance to it – I felt dull. If I could have kept the gray but had like the brown stuff, look a little bit more vibrant...I probably would've kept it. We tried.

[laughter]

Jackie MacDougall: I made my hair guy crazy.

Guadalupe Hirt: And I've got gray too. Like, I mean, I'll show you like right here. Like if I let this grow, I'm sure would be like you're saying, a streak. And I feel like at some point in time, I will do that.

But for right now, I like my dark hair; and it's, you know, what I am comfortable with and what I enjoy seeing in the mirror. So, until that point, you know, we'll continue to color; we'll keep the colors in business, right?

Jackie MacDougall: Exactly right. Exactly right. Trust me.

Guadalupe Hirt is a four-time entrepreneur, pro-aging advocate, speaker, blogger, and midsentence life strategist. Most recently, she was the co-founder and CCO of SecondActWomen, a pro-age global community for women 40 & 50+.

Through education, events, membership, and community – she helped shift ageists perspectives, inspired bold thinking, and created age-inclusive spaces that rallied women over 40 to excel in business, career, and life.

Now, Lupe has taken a long overdue sabbatical, focusing on her own physical and mental health. What she's learned during this time can help us all prioritize our own selves. But if a self-imposed break is not something you can (or want to) do right now (I'm with you there), Lupe also offers some small everyday actions we can take to bring more joy, balance, and peace into our lives.

This is The Grown-Ass Woman's Guide. I'm your host, Jackie MacDougall.

Ageism, it is a very real thing. So many women in a variety of fields are feeling less than vital and relevant to their work environment. But what if we're actually contributing to aging out of our own lives?

If you have listened to the previous episodes of The Grown-Ass Woman's Guide released in 2023, you would've heard that I have taken my own action to address this aging-out phenomenon by creating a production and marketing agency called Grown-Ass Creative – that not only contracts brilliant, experienced women over 40, but also offers personal and professional development to bring our skills and mindset to the next level.

But this is something Lupe has already been doing for years with her work as co-founder of SecondActWomen.

Grown-Ass Creative is something that I recently announced. Yes. And getting in front of brands and people who want to work with my company, where women over 40 are celebrated and given opportunities – and also given some personal and professional development so they can hone some new skills or evolve, and all of that good stuff.

But before that, you were doing SecondActWomen. You were seeing these women who are feeling like they're aging-out, felt like maybe that they were end of the road. What did you discover, and how did you address those issues?

Guadalupe Hirt: Yeah, so I was co-founder of SecondActWomen for almost four years. And you know, it was a-- It was quite the spectrum of women. So, I'll say that there were women at all stages in our community.

So, some women that felt super in the zone of who they were at 40, 50-plus and were owning it. Other women were a little bit more on the periphery; and some women were barely entering and so didn't really know kind of how to navigate what we called 'middlescence'. And so, it was women at all kind of stages.

And so, what we found was that regardless of where they were in their storyline, there was an underlying narrative about what existed or how society saw us as women over 40 and 50.

So, even though we maybe felt superb and felt like, *'I'm on top of the world'*, we still were finding that those women were still encountering real ages experiences on the job in entrepreneurship – heck, even in society, like in everyday just exchanges.

And so, what we found was that, unfortunately, gendered ageism is a growing truth for a lot of women; and how we deal with it or how we navigate it really starts with how we feel about our own selves first, because we can't necessarily change how everybody else sees us.

But if we own our own truths and feel good in our own skin, there's a chance for us to really kind of rise and reeducate and rescript our own narrative for others to see as well too.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah, absolutely. So, how do you do that? How do you take somebody who's feeling insecure and not confident and feeling like she's done for, and help her feel better in her own skin?

Guadalupe Hirt: It comes back to what you are doing through your initiatives, through what we did with our community. I mean, SecondActWomen still exists. My business partners still is keeping it, you know, the flag going – and I'm doing some work on my own through my work.

But it's really building community, making sure that women know that they are not alone, that they're other women exactly in their same shoes. And really, honestly, it's that whole concept of the 'hand forward' and the 'hand backward'. Right?

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Guadalupe Hirt: Like making sure that we share our experiences, that we talk about how we're navigating middlecence, talking about the truths – the good, the bad, and the ugly. Right?

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Guadalupe Hirt: And then really, hopefully, being there for all the other women. Being that cheerleader that we all need so that when we find ourselves in situations like that, we know that we're standing side-to-side with other women that believe in us and see us in the year, as we should be seen – not the way that others want to see us.

Jackie MacDougall: Absolutely. And so, you said something that really sparked something in me, that 'hand forward' and the 'hand back'.

Guadalupe Hirt: Yeah.

Jackie MacDougall: Many of us know and have been told on social media or through our careers to reach back, right, and to pull the next person up; and I am a firm believer in that.

Getting that 'hand forward' where you're trying to get help yourself, where you want mentorship, where you want support – maybe you want to start a business or change careers. How do you ask...or first of all, how do you

find it? And then when you do find it, how do you ask for that? Because I see more women struggling with the 'hand forward' than the 'hand back'.

Guadalupe Hirt: Yeah.

Jackie MacDougall: Or did I get the hands wrong?

Guadalupe Hirt: No.

[laughter]

Guadalupe Hirt: Yeah. I feel it comes down to always making sure that you are aware of who's in your network, and staying connected. And I'm not talking that it has to be women-to-women.

Like ideally, it would be great to find a female mentor; and sometimes we can find them in the space that we are in or in the industry we're working in – but sometimes that's a male ally. Right? Or sometimes that is a group.

And so, it's truly understanding and finding those, but really starting with your network, because your network is something we've grown over the last 40, you know, 50 years, right?

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Guadalupe Hirt: And so, to be able to kind of go back and with a fine-tooth comb, see who is...who believed in you, you know, at the beginning? Who has been there for you lately when you're posting and supporting your posts, right?

And then, honestly, women have a hard time asking for help, but we've got to do that.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Guadalupe Hirt: It's something that we, oftentimes, feel like it's a handout or that if I ask for help, I'm going to be seen as weak.

Jackie MacDougall: Yes.

Guadalupe Hirt: And it's quite the contrary. If we don't ask for help, then we stay limited to what we know or a circle that we can access. But if we dare to stretch beyond that and have confidence in ourselves to know that, *'Hey, we're not asking for handout, we're asking simply for guidance or for help, there's nothing wrong with that.'* And that can only move us forward in the right direction.

Jackie MacDougall: Right. So, now I have to ask you, do you ask for help?

[laughter]

Guadalupe Hirt: I do. You know what? I got to say before SecondActWomen, I was horrible; I was that girl who like was always thinking that I had to do it all by myself. Even that meant I'm working around the clock.

And now, I've recognized that, 'No, you know what? Being able to ask for help actually allows me to bring in others to the experience (A). (B) also tap into the minds of other people and see things that maybe I didn't necessarily see as I was approaching a particular project or anything it might be.

And then, I think also, thirdly, it just makes it more fun. It wants to run by themselves, and be limited to their own ideas. *The more, the merrier*, honestly, is really a truth here.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah. I think it's a problem how much we think we're supposed to know all things. Like, you wouldn't go to your dentist to have them do your taxes, you know?

[laughter]

Guadalupe Hirt: I hope not

Jackie MacDougall: But as women business owners, if you're an employee, you're supposed to-- I'll speak for myself; I feel like I'm supposed to do all of it, I'm supposed to know how to do all of it.

And there are certain things in business I am terrible at or maybe I could get by, but it's not my skillset, it's not my gifts.

Guadalupe Hirt: Yeah.

Jackie MacDougall: So, like, why am I spending so much time trying to do that?

Guadalupe Hirt: You know, I think it's also a little bit about this idea that you start to think, and I'm guilty of it, where it's like, *'Oh, I'm 45'*. Well, I'm, I'm actually 49, so we'll use my real age, right?

'I'm 49, oh shoot, I should know this.'

'Oh, I'm 55, I should know better...I don't want to ask my younger counterparts because then I'm going to seem like I'm not the smartest person in the room.'

Newsflash, it's not written anywhere that 40, 50, 60-plus we should be knowing it all.

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Guadalupe Hirt: So, let go of those outdated beliefs that because we are older, we should know everything – and really kind of just welcome the idea of fresh perspectives, collaboration, intergenerational thoughts.

Jackie MacDougall: Yes.

Guadalupe Hirt: That's where I think the magic happens.

Jackie MacDougall: Yes. I think that beginner mindset, it's like, why do we hit a certain age and we don't have it anymore? *I should know this* is like the death trap, [laughs] you know?

Guadalupe Hirt: Right?

Jackie MacDougall: I know. It prevents you from evolving and growing because there's a level of shame, I think, that comes with it.

Guadalupe Hirt: Absolutely. Yes; shame, fear, judgment, all of that. Right? And those are just internal saboteurs ladies at work trying to hold us back and when we can recognize them and say, "These are not serving me," and be able to put them on the shelf and truly just work into and own and have those conversations and be forthright with what we want and be honest with ourselves about what we know and don't know, you're only bound to grow and attract people that want to help you.

People want to genuinely help other people. I have never really come across people who are like, 'Nah, you're good, you're on your own.' Right?

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Guadalupe Hirt: Like, if you ask sincerely and you've created great relationships, use them. You'll have the opportunity to reciprocate at some point in time too.

Jackie MacDougall: Absolutely. And I think people want to be useful and-- Yeah. I mean, everybody wants to talk about themselves, right? That's why, like, you reach out to a person and you ask them to be on your Instagram, you ask them to be on your podcast, you ask them whatever, they're like, 'yeah, I'll do it', because we all want to share our gifts. We all want to share our voice and be heard. And so, that's another level of allowing that person to share their gifts and be heard.

Guadalupe Hirt: Yes. I love that. That's so great, Jackie. Absolutely. What a shame if we didn't have a chance to share our gifts and our talents with other people.

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Guadalupe Hirt: Like, think about that. I mean, the idea that you would say, *"Oh, I'm embarrassed that I don't know it all and so I'm going to keep this talent to myself or not want to share it or limit its abilities or impact,"* that's a disservice. So, you know, I love that idea because it's just a different perspective, right?

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Guadalupe Hirt: Is all that it is. And what a powerful twist on, oftentimes, what holds us back.

Jackie MacDougall: Right. I'm always twisty, I'm always twisting something.

[laughter]

Jackie MacDougall: That no, my body not as twisty, not as bendy as my thoughts, I guess.

Guadalupe Hirt: That's hilarious.

Jackie MacDougall: So, late in 2022 you stepped out of SecondActWomen to do your own thing; and you and I had a call, and you were talking about sort of recalibrating.

Guadalupe Hirt: Yeah.

Jackie MacDougall: And it was such a powerful thought to not be doing, doing, doing – but to just stop and sort of, like, sit in where you are and recalibrate and figure out where you want to go. Can you talk to me a little bit about that?

Guadalupe Hirt: Yeah.

Jackie MacDougall: Like, how did that happen? How did you have the courage to do that?

Guadalupe Hirt: I wish I could say it was a blessing that I just walked into. Unfortunately, it was the result of years of being an entrepreneur and me hitting the wall with burnout and saying, "I can't operate at this pace anymore." And what I call it is a *self-prescribed sabbatical*.

Honestly, it's this idea that I realized that I was no longer operating at my best. I was, in essence, just spread out too thin. And I was part of a community where we were all about helping and serving our women over 40 and 50s – and being their biggest cheerleaders and advocates.

And I found myself not doing that for myself. I found myself at a point where I was so burnt out, I was working crazy hours, we weren't getting compensated so we were trying to make, you know, *rob Peter to pay Paul* – and there was just so many stressors involved in it.

And although I was intoxicated – and I still am – by the mission of our organization, at the time, I just hit a wall and I could no longer continue that path and have it be healthy for me...but personally, professionally, but also just mentally.

And so, I said, "You know what, I'm going to step away." You know, my partner was amazing and totally understood, which was great. But I decided I'm going to just slow down and see what it's like to not have to, you know, step into the grind...and slow down. And I've slowed down for the past five months now, if you can believe it.

Jackie MacDougall: Wow.

Guadalupe Hirt: It's been five months since I've left, and I've grown so much and learned a lot. It's been amazing.

Jackie MacDougall: What have you learned about yourself in that time?

Guadalupe Hirt: I learned that-- Well, I think one of the biggest, I think, revelations for me was that I am a pleaser.

Jackie MacDougall: Oh.

Guadalupe Hirt: I realized that there was a lot of things that I was doing because I wanted to please other people, be liked. I am naturally a giver. And so, what I found was that I was overextending myself in that capacity because I was really wanting to always be there for other people.

And so, what I realized about myself is that I can do both. I can be there for someone else, but I can also have the wherewithal to take care of myself. I think as women, we are natural caregivers and so that becomes something that naturally we just step into, but it can't be at our own demise.

So, I learned how to put up boundaries. I learned how to kind of reprioritize myself not at the expense of others, but in par with others. And I learned that there is an opportunity to both be able to give and receive.

So, this is where I started to learn how to ask for a little bit more help, support...you know, guidance, conversation; and I learned how to be still, which was crazy because I'm not one of those to sit still for a very long time.

[laughter]

Guadalupe Hirt: There is beauty and power in just calming the mind a little bit and not falling victim to this whole kind of chaotic world that we live in that's always having you go 24/7.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah. And I think there are specific women too, I believe – and I am one of them – who finds their value, our value in doing and achieving and being able to handle so much.

And I think, I don't know if it's burnout because you just hit a wall with how much work you've done, or you just get to an age where you're like, *who the hell am I doing this for? Who am I trying to impress?*

Guadalupe Hirt: Yeah.

Jackie MacDougall: Because a community like SecondActWomen, I can only imagine that you were giving and giving and giving. And frankly there are a lot of women out there.

I'm not-- I'm not going to necessarily like credit to your people, but who just want all the information, but they're not willing to give in return...so, financially, they don't want to pay for it. And there's this expectation that if you're passionate about what you do, that you'll do it for free – but your passion doesn't pay the bills.

Guadalupe Hirt: You know, there is truth to that; we know of a lot of organizations where it's give, give, give – and it's not reciprocated. Fortunately, there was a great part within our community of women that were very supportive of our organization – and still continue to do.

And you know, whether it was through volunteering or participating in our paid programming, would I say that that's the majority of the community? Not all of them perhaps maybe had the opportunity to participate – or so I'd like to think – but yeah, you know, you're right.

I think there is this idea that because it is intended to be a goodwill project or a social impact project, that there should be no payback on that or you shouldn't be--

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah, no compensation.

Guadalupe Hirt: Yeah. And to that, I say that's bullsh*t, honestly. Well, hopefully, I could--

Jackie MacDougall: You're good. You're good.

Guadalupe Hirt: I think that's bullsh*t because you should be able to create, you know, this world into a better place, but you should also get paid for your work. And that was hard for us. I think, you know--

And I know I don't speak out of turn and I know my partner would agree, like there was a lot of times where we were just like, 'Oh my gosh, how are we going to make ends meet?' But yet, we kept at it because we believe in it.

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Guadalupe Hirt: And that's the hard part, right? I think that's where a lot of women face two words, this idea of like, *I love what I do, I don't want to charge* – or *I want to charge, but maybe they can't pay this* or whatever it is. No. Like, I think we need to start breaking down those ideas, and say we need to start getting paid our worth.

Jackie MacDougall: Full disclosure, I probably have 10 pairs of reading glasses around my house; in every room, in my car, in my computer bag, my purses – but I always reach from my favorites from Look Optic.

With Blue-light blocking reading glasses, I know I'm protecting my eyes when I'm on the computer or my phone for hours at a time. And I just discovered something life-changing; not only do they have sunglasses, they now have progressives.

So, you no longer have to go digging through your bag to read the menu at a restaurant...you can just wear them on your face, see perfectly, and be ready for that small print wherever you go. And they have so many styles and colors; there is something for every look. Visit Grownasswoman.guide/lookoptic and give your eyes a little gift.

Absolutely. Or at the very least, the value for the actual job, right?

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Guadalupe Hirt: The value for what you're providing. It's really upsetting to me how many women over 40 specifically, who gave so many years, decades of their lives to become as badass and grown as they are.

And then there's this message that we send to each other where it's like, 'Oh, well, if you're truly giving, you'll just give that to me.' Like, could you imagine walking into the grocery store and being like, 'If you care about people--'

Or if the grocery store was like, I don't know, 'Some of these people can't pay for the food, so we should probably just make it free for everyone.' No, I am a firm believer in scholarships, in helping those women, in reaching back and helping--

A friend of mine says like, "Taking the elevator down, getting them, bringing them back up," you know? I'm all about it. And there are plenty of women who have much more money than I do, or maybe even you do, who could absolutely pay for services who are usually the ones who are complaining more than anyone else.

Guadalupe Hirt: Yeah. Yeah. You know, it's interesting--

Jackie MacDougall: I've never said that out loud before.

[laughter]

Guadalupe Hirt: Tell me how you really feel, Jackie.

Jackie MacDougall: I know, right?

Guadalupe Hirt: I think there's also just a retraining. I think one of the challenges we found in our community was that it was predominantly comprised of entrepreneurs...or solopreneurs, what we'd like to say.

And what we found was that a lot of women were having issues billing their, you know, like you were saying, at least the cost of what they were providing. So, whether it was a service or a product or whatever it was, there was a lot of women that struggled.

And I think it came down to just this, 'I can't be charging this' or 'This is too much', or how to justify it with *I'm charging this because of X, Y, Z*. Right?

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Guadalupe Hirt: That is a woman thing.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Guadalupe Hirt: I've never heard a guy tell me, "It's going to cost you X, and here's why."

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Guadalupe Hirt: It's something that we need to retrain women to just say, "*Hey, you know what? It's going to be 599 or whatever,*" right?

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Guadalupe Hirt: And just leave it, let it sit and let's see how they react. Odds are, you know, that they may not push back. And if they do, then you can kind of go into your dissertation. But oftentimes, we feel like we have to justify what we're charging; and that has to end, ladies, we need to definitely start to make a living because nothing's for free.

Like you're saying, the grocery store is a perfect example. That'd be all nice considering the cost of groceries these days, but it isn't going to happen, right?

Jackie MacDougall: Seriously, they should do something.

[laughter]

Guadalupe Hirt: But you know, I will say this, if you are listening and you have benefited from another woman's blog post – and we're going to get it to yours in a second – or podcast or you know, free content out there.

And we are not asking for a dime, just stop for a second and say, "How could I support in other ways? How could I share this with a friend? How could I post this on my social media? How could I send them a message that says *I listen regularly and I really appreciate this?*"

Like, I don't think that we realize how much of a difference we can make in a woman's life by just acknowledging like, "Hey, I heard that episode and it was really impactful, and I appreciate you being candid about that, or whatever." You know what I mean?

Guadalupe Hirt: Absolutely. I have loved that, Jackie. Yeah. No, I think that's important because I think sometimes we get in our heads too. I'm like, I don't know if you ever thought, but I know I've thought about it with my blog too, where I'm like, *'Why the hell am I writing this? Is anyone even reading it? Like, does that even matter?'*

[laughter]

Guadalupe Hirt: That's right. You spend your time; you spend time creating this, and you do it with the intention of helping others, and then it's like crickets.

So, I love the idea saying, Hey, pass on...whether it's like, check out this blog or check out this podcast or recommend you on to someone else, whatever it might be. Like, you never know. But yeah, you're right. There's always intrinsic value in that kind of share. It doesn't always have to be financially compensating someone.

Jackie MacDougall: Absolutely. So, let's talk about your blog.

Guadalupe Hirt: Okay.

Jackie MacDougall: What made you decide after all the hustle and all the work that you have done, 'I'm going to stop and take this time and just start writing my thoughts about, what you call 'middlescence'?

Guadalupe Hirt: Yes, middlescence – just like adolescence, right? Middlescence is just midlife. It's called *Dear Middlescent*. It's on LinkedIn right now. And I'm at the point where I'm trying to kind of grow it so that I can be a LinkedIn influencer and they start to kind of promote it for me.

Jackie MacDougall: Awesome.

Guadalupe Hirt: So, I got to thinking what-- I had just-- Literally, I think I was on my sabbatical for about a month in, and I kind of just started to get a little itch. I've always loved to write.

I mean, I have a communications background, so I've always done some kind of writing. And for me, I think it was more of a cathartic journey, if anything; I wanted to really put into practice and share some of the tips, personal experiences that I had come across as I was, you know, turning 40 and beyond.

And what I found through our community really kind of stem from that was that people grow and learn when we share – and when we dare to be vulnerable, and when we dare to say, *"Hey, you know what? I don't have all my sh*t together, but that's okay...I'm going to still share. And hopefully, what I went through maybe will help you not go through the same sh*t so that we're all kind of, you know, moving each other forward a little bit better."*

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Guadalupe Hirt: And so, I kind of come out of SecondActWomen with that mentality of the power of the *share*. And so, I decided, *'Hey, you know what? Why not start to write my own blog about my quirky thoughts, experiences, the ups and the downs of what I've been kind of going through?'* And it's been great. I've loved it.

I see both equal parts contributing, but equal parts cathartic for my own self. And the responses I've been getting from people, both men and

women, has been really encouraging. And so, it's just a weekly blog on LinkedIn that you can check out if you're interested in diving a little bit deeper into my hit.

Jackie MacDougall: Absolutely. We're going to blow that blog up, aren't we ladies? I also, I get an email because LinkedIn, I don't know my-- I never check my notifications, so sometimes I get a bunch of emails from LinkedIn and I turned them all off, and I get your blog sent--

Guadalupe Hirt: Oh, cool.

Jackie MacDougall: -via email whenever you post on LinkedIn, which is convenient for me because I'm not as regular with LinkedIn. I need to do better with LinkedIn, so I'm glad that I get it with email.

Guadalupe Hirt: That's cool, didn't know that.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah. So, what kind of response are you getting from women, specifically, about this? Like, are they feeling heard? Are they feeling seen and connected?

And the second part of that is, what have you written about that's you're like, 'Whoa, this really struck a nerve'?

[laughter]

Guadalupe Hirt: Well, if you check it out, you'll definitely see I like to be that girl who offers up a new perspective. Doesn't have to fit you, it doesn't have to be right or wrong, I just say, "Hey, can you think about this in a little bit of a different way?"

Jackie MacDougall: Right?

Guadalupe Hirt: So, the responses – to kind of address your first question – has been really kind of cool because I kind of come at things from a different perspective.

And this all stems from either my own thinking or I've had conversations with other people that I'm like, 'Ooh, that's a kind of a cool idea.' Have been really, really eye-opening.

And I think I've received, you know, positive feedback from saying, "I just didn't think about that that way", so that's kind of neat.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Guadalupe Hirt: Some of the topics I kind of have, women have responded to you in that way of like, 'Ooh, you've given me something to now noodle on.'

I talk about like, not finding your passion. I'm so over this whole freaking, *I need to find my passion bullshit*. I hate it. I hate it. I hate this idea that I have to go find it...first of all, like, it's inside of us. I already know what I like, enjoy doing.

I rather say, let's be curious about the world around us and explore with curiosity. Take the edge off of passion because it makes people sometimes believe like, *what happens if I don't find it? What if I don't have one?*

You know, it's like, oh my gosh, the pressure...because we don't have enough pressure on us already, right? So, I wrote a pretty poignant piece about, *don't find your passion*.

Jackie MacDougall: I love that piece.

Guadalupe Hirt: I wrote just recently another piece about, *you're not enough*, in a good way because oftentimes so many people struggle with this idea of like *I need to be enough, I'm scared of that...I'm not enough this, I'm not enough that – I'm not young enough, I'm not beautiful enough, I'm not successful enough*, whatever. Right? Like, stop trying to be enough.

I heard this really kind of interesting perspective at a conference that I attended where the speaker talked about 'enough' being a measurement, and just a measurement that we use like to basically satisfy the very minimum of what the measurement needs to suffice.

And so, who wants to be the minimum? Nobody. Nobody. But there is all this conversation about there that's being thrown our way about, *you should strive to be enough*. You're enough as is. Well, no...you know what? I am. That's what you should strive to be, I am.

Not, enough. I just am. And because I am, I am amazing by my own birthright and by my own divine creation. I don't need to go be seeking measurements to tell me I'm enough in this category or not enough in this one. Like, I swear I tackled to topics like that.

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Yeah. I have a perspective on 'enough' too that--

Guadalupe Hirt: Oh, share.

Jackie MacDougall: -when people talk about like, "Am I enough in this way or that way", I like to ask them what the definition of enough is because usually it's like, 'I don't have enough money' or 'I don't have enough success'.

Well, tell me what that success in that area looks like so then we can figure out how to get it to be enough, in that area. But then they're like, 'I don't know.' I'm like, 'Well, how could you ever possibly be enough if you don't even know where the bar is?'

Guadalupe Hirt: Exactly. Right?

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Guadalupe Hirt: And enough is so arbitrary, like it means so many of these to different people; and it's intended to be a good, you know, a positive phrase...like, you're enough.

Jackie MacDougall: Mm-Hmm.

Guadalupe Hirt: And I think sometimes, we just don't take the time – myself included, guilty – to go and look up the definition of what it means and say, "Is this really black-and-white what I want to be?" And then determine it for yourself.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah. That's good.

Guadalupe Hirt: I have fun with kind of having some conversations about things like that. I also talk about just how, you know, our value at 40 50-plus and what does that look like, and who gets to determine our value? What does that mean?

This idea of this, *'I need to be at this level because I'm 40 and 50,'* well, where is it written that you need to be at that particular level? It's kind of like just ingrained in us...these thoughts, these ideas that we should strive for these fake success barometers that are out there. According to who?

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Guadalupe Hirt: To nobody.

Jackie MacDougall: Well, to other people on the internet, who are like posting reels about how you should 10X this and hit these many figures. And you know, it used to be like six figures, now it's seven figures. You know, it's like the messaging that we're getting. And so, it's crazy.

I'm a big believer of like, if you're opening up your phone and social media, and you feel like, *oh, I'm not enough*, then delete whoever you're following--

Guadalupe Hirt: Amen.

Jackie MacDougall: -because they're trying to make money also.

Guadalupe Hirt: Yeah.

Jackie MacDougall: You know, they're trying to-- They're trying to create a business. So, if what they say resonates and you want to work with them, great. But if they're just making you feel like sh*t about yourself, it's time to move on.

Guadalupe Hirt: Mm-Hmm.

Jackie MacDougall: You know, I've never had girlfriends who are like, geez, Jackie, I like you, but you're just not enough <laugh>.

Guadalupe Hirt: Right?

Jackie MacDougall: You know? Thank God.

Guadalupe Hirt: Yeah. Right, I know, but it's just a different, it's a different outlook. Like, but you've got to kind of put those questions into your own head. Either that or surround yourself with people that will put those questions so that we're not just all blindly following what we think we should be following.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Guadalupe Hirt: But rather like, engage in your life. Question what doesn't, you know, fit you anymore. We're not who we were at 20 or 30. Heck, I'm

not even the same person I was at 40, now at 49. So, why am I still using those standards, that bar that I set back when I was 20? It's not applicable to me anymore at 49, so why haven't I changed that?

Jackie MacDougall: Right. Right. Absolutely. I mean, you wouldn't expect a 20-year-old to be exactly the way they were at 10 – but yeah, even a 51-year-old.

[laughter]

Jackie MacDougall: Exactly. Actually, it would be a problem if they were the same.

Guadalupe Hirt: Isn't that crazy?

Jackie MacDougall: But at 51, this expectation that *I should be the same as I was at 41* is ridiculous.

Guadalupe Hirt: Yeah. And we're talking looks and everything there too, right?

Jackie MacDougall: Oh, yeah.

Guadalupe Hirt: Like, I should look like the way that I did at 41. Well, no. Like, no, that's not going to happen. So, why do we put on these pressures that says, "Oh, I can't, you know, have my wrinkles" or "I can't feel good in my skin"? We're all going to age.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah, If we're lucky.

Guadalupe Hirt: Like, shocker.

Jackie MacDougall: If we're lucky.

Guadalupe Hirt: If we're lucky. Amen to that, Jackie. For sure. If we're lucky, that is the goal of everyone...whether they tell you or not, admit it or not – it is.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Guadalupe Hirt: It's privilege.

Jackie MacDougall: Absolutely. I don't know if I ever told you, but the whole reason, so my mom died at 39 of breast cancer. I found out I had the same gene as her at 34, and I had surgeries and the whole thing – and I just, for my whole life, thought 39 was my end game...like, that was it.

Guadalupe Hirt: Yeah.

Jackie MacDougall: And so, when I hit 40, I was like, 'Hey, bonus time.'

[laughter]

Jackie MacDougall: And it was this like freeing thing that I was like, *'Now I don't have to listen to what everyone else thinks I should do with my life, I'm going to do some sh*t. Like I'm going to-- I'm going to, I'm going to do some stuff.'*

And so, to me, like over 40 is a time of freedom to discover yourself and rediscover yourself over and over again. And if something's working for you, keep doing it. If it's not like, pivot or shift or try something different. I mean, you're the epitome of that...like, shifting and trying things are different.

Guadalupe Hirt: I'm trying.

Jackie MacDougall: That's all we can do. But let me ask you this. So, someone might be listening and it's like, 'Oh, that sabbatical sounds incredible.'

Guadalupe Hirt: I will admit it, yes.

Jackie MacDougall: You're in a place of privilege that you get to have that. So, what if somebody doesn't feel like that's an option in their life? They want to try other things, they want to dip their toe in some other exciting ventures. Do you have any advice for becoming more of who you want to be, but knowing that you kind of have to be in this space still?

Guadalupe Hirt: Wow. Yeah. You know, I agree. It is a place of privilege that I can afford to take this time off. And granted I'm doing some side gigs, so it's not like I'm 100% off the clock.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Guadalupe Hirt: But you know, if you find yourself where you're like, I got to work and I can't just take this time off, there's a couple little tinier things that you can do.

You know, even taking a look at, what can I carve out in my day? We all say, "Hey, go for a walk or journal or write", but is it on your calendar? Is it on your phone as a blocked out time? Is it something that you actually strive to keep or is it something that you whimsically can do if there's time?

Jackie MacDougall: It's optional.

Guadalupe Hirt: It's optional. Exactly. So, I would say, "Hey, you know what, start to put some boundaries about what you want to do." And, what does taking time off look like? Is that taking one day off over the course of the month? Is it course of a week? What do you do during that time? Do you go for a walk with your dog? Do you meditate?

Identifying what at least brings a sense of calm, but then it also can even take the form of, you know, you recognizing...if I'm taking out too much at work, knowing how to say No.

I mean, that's a way to honor and kind of take that time back and own your time, instead of saying Yes to everything...own what you say Yes to and what you say No to. And so, start to create those so that you free up a little bit more your time and you're not feel like you're just in a washing machine on auto spin, in essence. Right?

Jackie MacDougall: Right, right.

Guadalupe Hirt: And it could be also very well as, hey, if you get a recharge from going to a conference for some personal development or taking on a new class or whatever it may be...again, carve out the time, honor yourself in that way, and it will go a mile in the benefits that you'll reap from that when you start to say, "I'm going to fill my life with little things that make me happy or that bring me joy or that help me relax".

Before you know it, it's a compound effect. And then you're like, I want more. And then you'll start to figure out that, 'Oh my gosh, there are more hours in the day than I thought.'

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Guadalupe Hirt: And, what can I do with that? And it's so empowering when you start to figure out that I've got a little bit more control over my day with how I show up and what I choose to engage in...versus letting life just run me over and I'm just co-pilot on it.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah. I think we've all been there, at some point, where I remember I was working on a job recently and I thought, 'Oh, well, I have no time, I work 80 hours a--'

And it was a very intense position at that time, but in hindsight, I'm like, *how self-absorbed was I that I thought I couldn't actually get on my bike for a half an hour or take a walk or*, I was in that state of that...like, that martyrdom that we can do, especially Gen X women.

We're so good at it, where it's like, 'I am so valuable in this position that I couldn't possibly--' You know, 'My kids need me to make them this well-balanced, nutritious meal.' No, they don't. I have teenagers, go get yourself some crap in the kitchen. You know?

Guadalupe Hirt: Yeah. We live at a time where we glorified busyness.

Jackie MacDougall: Yes.

Guadalupe Hirt: I totally-- Like, you hit a chord right there when you're like, you know, that I am so valuable that I've got no time. You know what? If, God forbid, you passed tomorrow, they're not going to say, "Oh my gosh, she was just like everywhere, and she was always where I needed her to be."

They're going to remember you for the interactions, for the positive exchanges, for the special moments – those impromptu, kind of, little escapes or whatever, for the person that you are. They're going to remember you for that, not for all the deadlines that you hit or for, you know, the projects that you kind of kept. So, why is it that we feel that we have to constantly be that busy bee?

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Guadalupe Hirt: I think that's one of our biggest detriments. And I think we need to shake off and say, "No, it's not about being busy, it's about how much time do we spend, quality time, spend with ourselves and with others.'

Jackie MacDougall: Right. And we're discovering, especially right now, a lot of people getting laid off that, you know, this loyalty that we give to our businesses and to our jobs, it's not reciprocal.

Guadalupe Hirt: Unfortunately.

Jackie MacDougall: That things could go sideways. And I don't mean that to scare anyone or to be negative. I mean it in a way to free you up.

Guadalupe Hirt: It's a reality.

Jackie MacDougall: I'm going to show up. I'm going to do the best I can possibly do in this position, and I'm also going to prioritize myself because this is not everything.

Guadalupe Hirt: Yes.

Jackie MacDougall: You know?

Guadalupe Hirt: That's exactly it, it's not everything. We're a compilation of multiple things. And I think when we really work and operate and live in our values, that's where I think the light really kind of opens up for us and we start to see, what do I value?

If the work that you're doing is something that you value, that's great, but there's got to be other things that you value. So, how are you prioritizing? Are they getting 5% of your time? Is it 50/50? Is it 10%?

And when we start to see how that looks on paper, then we can determine, 'Oh wow, I am really out of whack here because I'm prioritizing this over everything else that I say is important to me.'

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Guadalupe Hirt: The idea is like, let's bring some balance. That's not going to always be balanced, but there has to be...it can't be too big of a divide where we're completely lopsided and not feeling like we're honoring what's important to us because we're not going to always have that in our lives.

So, cherish what you do and, you know, have it in your life right now, because we never know what tomorrow holds.

Jackie MacDougall: You're absolutely right. So, speaking of tomorrow--
[laughs]

Guadalupe Hirt: Okay.

Jackie MacDougall: What's next for you?

Guadalupe Hirt: Ooh, wow.

Jackie MacDougall: Did you get a sneak peek?

Guadalupe Hirt: Yeah. You know what? So, I put a couple of things that were a priority to me this year that I wanted to do. And so, travel is one of those that I kind of put out there.

So, we've got a couple of trips planned, but I'm also actually in conversations with a pretty big hotel brand that I could be landing a really kind of cool contract side gig with.

And if I'm able to secure that, then that would allow me to do some travel on their dime, which would be nice, but also be able to kind of explore and so satisfy my wanderlust a little bit.

And then I'm also talking to another organization that's doing some really kind of cool pioneering work here in Denver, helping people over 40, 50 find their next act as well – very similar to kind of why I work with SecondActWomen, but in a different setting.

And so, I'm excited about what that will bring forth, but honestly girl, I think I'm going to welcome my 50 in June, which I'm excited about.

Jackie MacDougall: Nice.

Guadalupe Hirt: And really honestly, just remember to enjoy life; I want to do that. And I want to be more cognizant regardless of whatever job I take, I'm going to definitely pay attention to where my values lie – and what's important, and the lessons learned during this time off.

Jackie MacDougall: I love that. And I love the idea that you want to do more traveling, and so then you maybe seek out or discover opportunities within the travel world so that you can kind of get what you want and feel like, 'Oh, the work that I'm doing will lend to this value that I want.'

So, if you're out there and you're listening and you're like, 'What do I want in my life?' Like, maybe there's some work you can do.

Guadalupe Hirt: Absolutely. Yeah. For sure. You never know what talents you can bring in, and that's really taking a look at both your hard skills and your soft skills. Don't forget those famous soft skills of ours--

Jackie MacDougall: Oh my goodness.

Guadalupe Hirt: -because you never know how those can be applied in different ways to move you forward and inch you closer to what you want to do and what you enjoy doing.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah. I think I'll have to have you back and we can do a whole episode on soft skills and how valuable they are.

Guadalupe Hirt: I love-- I love that.

Jackie MacDougall: Lupe is a prime example of a woman who is unafraid to ask herself what she wants today, right now, and take the action to make it happen. And she's always ready to reach that 'hand back' to uplift other women along the way.

Guadalupe Hirt: Honor the woman that you see in the mirror. Honor her a 100%. Love on her like no tomorrow because of the fact that you are her biggest advocate. You are her biggest champion and you are the person that's either going to lead her to success, success by your own definition, or you're going to take a down a path of trials and tribulations.

So, make sure that when you are in a situation where you're not 100% sure where to go, look in the mirror, ask her, *what would you do*, and then honor

her in that right...and move her forward. Don't let anyone stand in your way, because, girl, you got this.

Jackie MacDougall: Oh, that is so powerful. It's perfect ending. Guadalupe, thank you so much for being here, for doing this.

Guadalupe Hirt: Thank you.

Jackie MacDougall: I feel like this is the first of many collaborations that we will have.

Guadalupe Hirt: I love it.

[laughter]

Jackie MacDougall: To read Lupe's blog, check out the link in the show notes. And remember, sharing another woman's work with others is a small but impactful way to support each other because when we take even just a minute to uplift one another, we all win.

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