

EPISODE 652

[INTRODUCTION]

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FT: Want to learn how to get two hours of sleep in 20 minutes? You're listening to So Money everyone, I'm your host Farnoosh Torabi. Thanks for joining me. Yeah, two hours of sleep in 20 minutes plus how to earn more and all that good stuff. This could be the podcast that tops all podcasts, ladies and gentlemen. I might just throw a big mic drop after this show I don't know, you be the judge. All I do know is that my guest today is a super woman, Latham Thomas, has been named one of Oprah Winfrey's SuperSoul 100 alongside super humans like Ava DuVernay, Doctor Brené Brown, Deepak Chopra, and others.

Latham Thomas is a wellness guru and founder of Mama Glow, a life style brand, that offers inspiration, education, and holistic services for moms and moms to be. She encourages them to mother themselves first. I'm all for that. Latham also is an author she launched a new book earlier this fall called, "*On Your Glow – A Soulful Guide to Luminous Living and Crowning the Queen Within*". Yes, so back to that two hours of sleep in 20 minutes, listen I tried it, it works, here you go. You're welcome.

Here's Latham Thomas.

[INTERVIEW]

FT: Latham Thomas welcome to So Money, Mama Glow herself, she's here.

[0:01:56.3]

LT: Thank you so much for having me Farnoosh, yay.

[0:02:04.9]

FT: We were just saying ladies and gentlemen like; Latham and I, we have many friends in common we both live in New York City. We're both obsessed with wellness and lifestyle, yet we've never met. Although we've been getting an ear-full about each other probably for many years. I'm just so excited to finally have you on the show and connect with you as I'm connecting you with all this other people listening and it's a real treat, so thank you again.

[0:02:26.7]

LT: Oh my god, thank you so much for having me.

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FT: You are the founder, right, of mamaglow.com and you are all over the place, really have created and cornered a market for a really wonderful market for mothers and mothers to be on all things, baby, wellness. How did you get interested in this area; I mean, we all need this information and you've delivered it in such a wonderful and digestible way? How did you get your start?

[0:02:58.8]

LT: Well it started with the birth of my son who's now 14. When I was pregnant with him 15 years ago if you can imagine the internet was not what it is today. People did not go to the internet to find an OBGYN they certainly didn't go to pick out a doula or a baby carer, you just went through recommendations, you went to stores, that was a very different experience. I found my, at that time I was searching for an OB, so I found her through the telephone book which is like a total relic now.

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FT: What's that?

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LT: What is that, right? Like my son won't even know, he probably goes to the Step Store or something. So, I go into the telephone book, I find this great person and then all of a sudden reach out and find out that she's booked for like eight months. I was like how is this possible? The most important time in a woman's life that it's impossible to find someone to carry her through that process. At that moment I kind of a little bell went off that this is something that I need to look in to because it's kind of seems a little bit difficult terrain to traverse by yourself.

I know that in any other life event and in the other sort of significant challenge that we experience in life we always have support and how come in this juncture, in this major life event, it didn't seem like there was that many opportunities for hand-holding and so I sought to create the rudiments of Mama Glow and that would be from a nutrition side, the yoga, and then the birth doula services would come much later but those for me were like the three pillars of where I saw the needs for women really trying to get on track with diet and lifestyle and also finding some form of fitness, as well as stress management and then obviously someone to hold their hand to the birth process.

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FT: Did you have experience starting a business and a multifaceted one at that? I mean, what were you doing before that gave you the confidence in yourself to know that you could execute this? I mean it's one thing to have an idea, right? Another to really bring it to the masses and in a successful way.

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LT: Right, so the answer is no. I had no business background or business experience. I'm a really great idea maker, I'm really creative. I grew up in a creative household. I was always problem solving from an early age and using the arts, as sort of a backdrop for a lot of my problem solving and so I thought I would be a scientist. Actually, that I would be a biologist and I went to Columbia University where I studied environmental sciences.

While I was studying, actually getting a lot of my science stuff out of the way. I just learned really early on that I wasn't suited. I just, you know, like bring friends to the labs and would be up late

and it will be loud, and people are like “Oh my god like this is not a social event.” So I'm like, you know, “I can't even be doing this. This is just not going to be my life.”

[0:06:18.2]

FT: You're not my people.

[0:06:17.9]

LT: It's not my people, it's not my tribe, and I'm not going to be quiet in the lab somewhere. So, although I was really skilled in that arena – also having grown up in, you know, in California where I had access to the outdoors. So I learned a lot about set plant systems in botany at an early age. So, for me the experience of life cycles and life sciences was something that bled in to this interest as well as I would say, became an obsession around a women's health and particularly the child bearing years.

I did have a seed planted when I was four years old. My mom was pregnant at that time with my sister, my great aunt and then my uncle's wife like one of my aunt, another aunt, was pregnant all at the same time and they would do a month of each other. So, there was all these women walking around with bellies at the height of like my, you know, eye line. So, everywhere I look I was looking at like a belly in my face.

So, I kind of was very interested at that point and my cousin and I who were, you know, very close in age would sort of mimic our dramatic play around what we saw and so there's stuff these little cabbage patch dolls under our shirts and deliver each other babies. And so, nowadays I think that I can attribute that experience of having a mom who is really just open and upfront about the birth process with me and about the strength of a woman's body at an early age. So I didn't have any issues or any weird perceptions or mistruths about the body. I think I had a very healthy relationship early on with birth process.

So, fast forward it was my time, right? I was pregnant with my son and I think the thing that felt most just I think it was like more than the business aspect of it. It was really like a need to fulfill a space that was like wide open and I think that sometimes people have this naïveté that compels

them and it's healthy because if you didn't have that, if you had all the business acumen and you're doing everything the right way you might not actually let yourself take the leap, right?

You might not necessarily go down the path of starting a business because there's so many obstacles and there's a lot of challenge involved, there's a lot of – I mean, it's like when you have a baby like you don't sleep a lot, you know, even in your business you don't sleep, you know, it's like you're around the clock working on things –

[0:09:18.2]

FT: The less you know the better.

[0:09:20.6]

LT: Yes, exactly.

[0:09:20.8]

LT: The less you know the better.

[00:09:24]

FT: It let's you know about the reality of starting – this is why I don't start other businesses because I interview people like you and other successful entrepreneurs and they get very honest about the behind the scenes, which I appreciate. It's important for us to share but then I go home and I'm like, "Yeah, I want to start things but man, I really like to sleep too."

[00:09:46]

LT: Right? Like resting.

[00:09:47]

LT: Amazing.

[00:09:47]

FT: I know, now you have a great new book out recently released. Latham, by the way I love your name. Where – is there something special behind your first name?

[0:09:53.8]

LT: There is. It's actually my grandmother's maiden name and it means "Barn dweller" which is kind of interesting because it's like the last place that you would find me. But my grandmother recently passed away and so now I really hold, I mean, obviously have been called that my whole life but now obviously takes on another meaning with my granny sort of like looming over and protecting me now.

[0:10:22.9]

FT: Oh, that is so, so, special and I'm sure she is so proud. Your new book, speaking of being proud, your new book is called *Own Your Glow* .

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LT: Yes.

[0:10:36.1]

FT: And I have to say as a mother it's hard to find your glow in the first place. I'm owning my overwhelm right now, owning my stress. I'm owning my hectic-ness. But I do have moments of feeling beautiful and whole and –

[0:10:55.9]

LT: Let me stop you right there Farnoosh, you're beautiful, you're radiant, you imbue a sense of confidence and like kickass-ness and badass-ery. I'm not taking for one second but you kind of feel in your beauty you are always embodied as beautiful. I've never seen you like walking around not looking amazing.

[0:11:18.7]

FT: Oh my gosh, well then there you have it everybody, Latham Thomas said I was glowing so it's official. What is the inspiration behind this book and, you know, if there's one thing that you want women to walk away feeling, believing after reading this, what is it?

[0:11:38.0]

LT: Yes, so the inspiration was really, you know, the modern woman that I feel like is really fraught with anxiety around like who she is, or who she is to become. I wanted to help women return home to themselves to feel a sense of well-being in reconnecting to who they are inside and part of that is embracing self-care as a pathway to empowerment, really owning their own stories, you know,

I think so often and for so long in culture we've inherited a narrative of really taking on what people want for us, rather than what we want for ourselves and living out other's peoples dreams instead of our own truths. This is really about us reconnecting to those messages within and the ones that are like latent that want to come to the surface to tell our own truth. It's about, you know, owning every aspect of yourself even the things that, you know, are resisting in the corners, that you don't really want to acknowledge about yourself but that make you wholly who you are.

It's about, you know, embracing other women and sisterhood and being in connection to rise up and change like this world that we live in and most importantly, I think it's really an invitation for women to reconnect with this idea of wonder, right? Of play, of pleasure, all of this aspects that we kind of throw to the side because you're busy hustling or working or raising the kids or whatever it is that we put a lot of stuff that makes us have a fuller life on the back burner.

And, so I'm asking you to actually put it on the front burner and let it simmer all the way up and like boil over and play on that, like get your hands dirty really. So, and it's an exploration, it's an opportunity to explore and excavate and get deeper into who you are. So, it's also like the fashion that I like to write snackable. So, even though there's like debts that I take you like a lot of the information is like okay, this is something that I can apply right now.

[0:14:14.8]

FT: So, give us an example, what is something that I can do right now?

[00:14:18]

LT: Yeah.

[00:14:18]

FT: I have two kids under the age of three and a half, sleep schedule – sleep patterns are all over the place, you know, you go through a period of like everyone is sleeping through the night and then no one sleeping through the night. And then, it's the fall, it's back to school, there's so much going on. I will say you might be proud of me, I just send out an email to all my mom friends in the neighborhood and I was like, "We're getting drinks on October 17th."

[00:14:41]

LT: Yes.

[00:14:42]

FT: "It's happening I already reserved the table, be there or be square."

[00:14:47]

LT: So, you just did one of the actions. I mean, making time for yourself, right that's self-care. Right, so it's not just – self-care is not just about like, you know, making a spa appointment or getting your nails done, or a blow-out but it's about creating boundaries, right? Like you need to have time for yourself to do things that you enjoy, to talk with adults about adult things and not just to talk to three years old's and watch like cartoons that are aimed at toddlers, right?

Like, you need to hang out with people that you can have really stimulating conversation with and fill yourself up that way. I also like that you didn't just say, "Hey guys this could be a cool idea." You set a date, you actually created action around it, right? So, it wasn't just like this could be fun, it's like "Here's what we are doing and there's a table reserved and here's the date and who's in," right? So, it makes it like, there's a commitment involved.

So, you committed to yourself as well as the other people who are going to show up and you will have a great night. What I would say for you just off of what you shared with having the little ones and you know the frantic back-to-school energy. Just you know like a sense of being you said overwhelm? I want you to get to a place where you just feel whelmed not overwhelmed but just whelmed, right? I think that you can get there by punctuating your day with moments for recharge.

I'm going give an example of my iPhone. I'm giving this example because I feel like I'm so good and I know a lot of people are too, that are listening, at making sure that when I go some place I know where the outlets are. I know where a wifi is. I know if there's a charger and if I need to bring like all of this stuff, we do in preparation to make sure that we don't get into that little signal where it's like 20% and it's like in the red. And you start having like palpitations because your phone died, right? Everyday.

But guess what? You always find some place to get your phone charged up. And, because we're listening and trying to figure out – make sure that we don't get caught out there with nothing and we're like "Oh my god what am I going to do?" We don't do this for ourselves though, like you will be on 20% running on fumes and your body is like "I need to rest" and you're like, "Oh let me just do this one last thing. Oh let me just... oh let me bake the cookies, cook for bake sale, oh let me just..." We always push ourselves, we don't listen to the signal that the battery is running low, right? That we need to recharge.

So, we are really better at doing it for our smart phone devices than for ourselves and that's sad but at the same time we know that we have the ability to put our attention there. So, why won't we just transfer that energy to ourselves? So, start to listen to the signals of your body gives a fatigue, right? And, it's different for everyone pretty much like there's the fogginess in thinking there's the you know the yawning, the lack of focus, sometimes there's moodiness, right?

So, there's a lot of things that can give you a clue.

One really quick tip that I love that can really help to recharge you when you do feel fatigued or overwhelm is called "Leg Drain," and it sounds crazy but it's so awesome and it's really easy to do. So, you can eat at your home and office, in your kids room, you mean an airport, and what you do is you lie on the floor on your back and you take your legs up the wall about 45 degrees up the wall. So, that you have this little right, not a right angle but like a 45 degree angle, right.

And then, you allow your feet to just rest against the wall and you can have your leg straight in a line or you can rest also the feet together and split the knees out to the side to make a diamond with your legs but whatever feels good for you. But you hang out there for 20 minutes with your legs elevated like that above the heart on the wall. 20 minutes is equivalent to a 2 hour nap and that's huge, I know.

[0:18:52.3]

FT: What?

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LT: That's huge.

[00:18:52]

LT: I know.

[00:18:53]

FT: Because your legs are in the air?

[0:18:52.7]

LT: Yes, because your legs are rested because happens is it flushes blood and lymph back up to the heart, right? Fairly quickly and you're lying flat and your relaxing and so all this blood and all this, you know, movement out of the legs and draining back up to the heart and the motion and the cycle that it does, actually helps reset your circulating rhythm.

So, if you're someone who is travelling, right, internationally or across, you know, a date lines, or not even datelines because you know you going trans continentally you might find that around the country or cross country. So, say you're in like Arlington, New York and that three hours make a difference for you then this is something that you can do, right?

But you don't have to do it just when you're travelling. People are fatigued on a daily basis. You can do this like for 20 minutes before you get on a conference call or you know while you're waiting to pick-up your kid from school or when your babies go down for a nap, you can also do that and they can be next to you so it's a really quick recharge. I promise you it will change your life just integrate it you can do it like once a day, you can do it more than once but definitely once a day.

And, even if you don't fall asleep what happens is that you're still activating your parasympathetic nervous system which will reverse the stress response in your body, send happy hormones into your blood stream and really create the sense of calm and well-being. So that would be like a really great tip for you that's actionable, and I think for a lot of people who are probably listening.

[0:20:30.1]

FT: You just gave me the tease for this podcast, "Listen to Latham and learn how to get 2 hours of sleep in 20 minutes."

[0:20:38.1]

LT: There you go.

[0:20:39.4]

FT: That's gonna make your brain do a backwards flip. I'm gonna try this probably when we get off the phone.

[0:20:47.0]

LT: Yes. All you need is 20 minutes.

[0:20:49.0]

FT: You are, Latham, on many other accolades and honors you are a member of Oprah's Super Soul 100. Can you give us, first of all congratulations that's amazing, and not a surprise but I'm – I was like to ask people when there's any connection to Oprah like how did that happen, what was it like meeting her? And yeah tell us everything.

[0:21:14.9]

LT: Yeah, I mean Oprah is like, I mean she like floats on air. I don't think she touches the ground, she like hovers over the ground and like the grass kind of like sways, like let me go this way, here's her foot coming down. I mean I think that there's just like an airiness but also such a strong presence that she carries with her and she commands a room as you would think in watching on how she shows up for a television and interviews.

She's incredibly comforting and creates the sense of like safety and comfort like there's just something about her and it's not just like this aura that everybody sees around her and believes her to be you know. I know she has this kind of almost like mythical attribute, you know, of like being just like holy and she does come across like that but it's not even that, it's just how she is.

Even when she is talking about like, you know, what she had for dinner last night, you know what I mean, she just carries herself in a certain way that's really quite interesting and remarkable in terms of her personality and her way with people. First of all, when I got the letter it was hand signed by her and I was like "Oh my god this is amazing and I think my heart's palpitating."

And then, you know, she invited us to come to LA to be part of this experience that she was doing called the Super Soul Sessions and to attend that and then also spend Sunday for a brunch with the Super Soul 100. We got to meet all each other and many of the people I knew and had relationships with and a lot of people I didn't. I ended up meeting a lot of the like young millennials and sitting at what I consider like, you know, the kids table at thanksgiving.

I was just like with all of these young badass-es like Amanda Listenburg and Zendaya and who else was there... like there was a bunch of young... Oh, Sophia Bush and I sat together and it was just a great group of young excited people who are creating change and just being positive in doing their work in the world.

And so, the brunch was amazing and then we did this shoot for her September issue and this was like last year so it was really awesome. But more than that I think the support that they give, you know, they have had me come in and do a series of videos around wellness and specifically the philosophies that I share with people which is aired on Own and on social as well and I'm really grateful for that.

I think that obviously any, you know, as we know like in business relationships are currency and any sort of anything that you can use to leverage more for yourself in terms of an advantage or to get a door to open for you, or to get a sit at the table is obviously amazing, right? And, we don't always have this things so it's important when people reach back and pull us up and allow us to actually now walk in to certain rooms because of the weight that their name might carry or their brand. I think the same goes for those of us who people look up too.

That they think we're like, I'm not even getting anything right and people reach out and I'm like "Why do you want to learn from me? Why do you want to talk to me? I'm not doing anything

right.” But, it’s great because at the same time, we we’re once there right where they are and so it’s my commitment also to reach back and make sure that I can help people who really want to invest in actually growing them their selves and their businesses that I help them in a way that I’ve been helped.

So, I just appreciate the acknowledgement obviously but also the association really helps as you know like this thing always take us a little bit further then we could have gone on our own. So, I think those are kind of some of the great things about having been able to work with them.

[0:26:03.5]

FT: Yeah, but what was the Oprah effect for you?

[0:26:05.1]

LT: You know, it’s hard to say because I think that, you know, my book just coming now and so I have nothing really to sell really when it came out so it was – I mean, people just were like “Oh, yeah, the doula,” you know. So, it was like more like a halo effect of, you know, acknowledgement but I do think that, yeah, I just think it was more like it helped me if I reach out to someone cold for instance I think it will help, or if someone introduces they like to use that.

Because it might make people listen more like if you’re on a conference panel or people don’t know who you are. This kind of things just help so I think that I can’t see I can’t like really say there was a measurable effect on something but I can definitely say that it has it’s like a blessing to add to, you know, a bunch of career accolades or accomplishments. But I definitely think that, you know, people should strive for that. I mean it’s great that it happened.

I see people who always say to me like, “I really want to get on this show. I really want to be seen over here. I really want...” And there will always be like different things that – it will always be different things that they want to show and be seen for, instead of like doing the work and focusing on that first as a way to bring awareness about what you are doing so then people can acknowledge you later.

And, so I think the most important thing is if you're doing these things, if you are, you know, doing work that's changing the world whatever way that is whether that's being a parent, whether you know a business person, whether that's, writing books, whatever you're doing in the world then you will like these things come as a result of all the work you put in, you create this vacuum that attracts a lot of people and attention. Versus you having to go seek the attention for something that you're not really actually committed to doing if that makes sense.

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FT: Built it and they will come.

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LT: That's right.

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FT: That's not my quote but it's the mantra I repeat, yeah.

[00:28:35]

LT: Yes.

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FT: Yeah, be prolific in whatever way that makes sense for you, whether that's your blog, your podcast, your book, your singing; you know, whatever it is just be out there making content and do what you love. I do believe that when you're authentic about it and consistent that's really a key that people come to you.

When you are out there sharing your advice and talking about all things wellness, Latham what, sort of, financial topics come up as you listen to your community and women like what problems

do you see yourself tackling? Or issues that seem to be coming up over and over again, when it comes to mothers and money?

[00:29:18]

LT: Okay, that's a great question and there are so many deep rooted issues around money with women. I want to talk about from the service provider and of things because this is where I see it the most. So, for those who aren't familiar with the background that I come from in the world of women's health and particularly around birth.

Birth doulas are essentially like coaches who help get you to the birth process. They don't deliver the baby but they provide emotional support and liaise between the doctor and the families. And, the role they play is really significant one and it's one that is regulated and so the care provider category.

What happens with people who are in the health and wellness fields traditionally speaking if we're looking at people who do massage therapy, or teach yoga, or birth doulas for instance. There are so many of them who are broke. Who are considered – or consider themselves like constantly hustling paycheck to paycheck even though they can be working so hard and attending so many births, or working with so many clients they can't get ahead. And the issue is, around the self-worth, the value of time and this sort of interesting archetype around, like, the earth mother giver type person, right?

So, the person who presides over the birth of the mother, having this kind of like hippy dippy Kumbaya energy and like "Oh, money don't worry about it" or, you know, like not wanting to charge. You know, this kind of energy is so pervasive. This kind of thinking. I know so many people who like don't get paid or who like, you know, don't have contracts or, I mean, people reach out to me even on my Instagram Farnoosh and I'll be like "Hey, tell me, so..." and I'm like helping them troubleshoot on like a DM.

I'm like, "You need to first of all schedule some time with me but also like this is not how you do this." Like, if you're trying to be in business like people who will say "Oh, I have this client and I was trying to get this woman. I was going to do it based off her using me as a testimonial." I was

like "Yeah but are you just starting?" And she's like, "No." I'm like so "Why are you doing that?"; "Oh well, because she's a celebrity." I said, "Why aren't you charging her?"

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FT: Right, she has money.

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LT: She can pay. So, things like this whether it's just this really like this very weird understanding of like how to value your time, your energy, and like your skill sets. So, my biggest commitment I think in this space of women, you know, who are in the field that I'm in, particularly is to help reframe this. Like we were probably the first in, you know, the birth space charging what we charge for doulas. For like master doulas and now we're figuring out a way to automate a lot of the process that doesn't need to involve humans and then the part that involve humans, really make sure that's the best use of the people's time that have to deliver that experience. Because so much time gets eaten away that does not get accounted for and people end up working for penny's.

So, if you think like a birth can be, you know, some birth can be like 20 minutes, can be four hours, can be four days,, it depends right? And so, if you're charging one price for an experience that you have no control over how long and how it goes and what the experience is. Whether you're going to be sleeping on the hospital floor for three days.

Whether you're going, you know – like you have to charge for that. So, I think that this is an area that needs a lot of work and this is an area dominated by women who are “professionals” in the space that have not yet harnessed their power around the money question. So that's an area I think really needs work.

So, moms who have babies, who are so mood by their births who want to get in to the doula business and they have the same challenge. So, I think it's just like it seems to me like it's a thing with women who feel a conflict around doing the work and wanting to offer something that they feel is so deeply spiritual, that they can't wrap their head around charging for it even though

like you can't pay your bills of, of like, you know, the good feelings and the good vibes after birth. That doesn't translate in to paying your rent, right?

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FT: It's hard, I mean money, I keep thinking about what you said about, you know, not asking for money. I mean, that seems silly but it happens. It happens to men too. I interviewed Tim Gunn and, you know, Tim Gunn he's like the famous Project Runway star and all around amazing being.

He shared with me in this podcast, you should go back and listen to it everybody that when he started Project Runway he was a professor at – or I think a Head of Fashion at Parson's. He wasn't familiar with TV, he wasn't familiar with reality television or production or whatever. He didn't ask for a paycheck.

[00:35:08]

LT: Excuse me?

[00:35:11]

FT: So, for two seasons Latham he did not get paid.

[00:35:13]

LT: What and everybody else was?

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FT: I don't know what everyone else was doing. I'm pretty sure Heidi Klum got a paycheck.

[00:35:19]

LT: Okay, I'm pretty sure too.

[00:35:20]

FT: Pretty sure. He just thought that – he just didn't know better. He had an assumption that reality TV was not -- because it's not unscripted and because he was just being himself and he was being an expert. Like, when you go on the Today's Show they don't pay you, right?

[00:35:34]

LT: Right.

[00:35:34]

FT: So, it's like why would I go get paid being on any other form of television?

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LT: Oh, my god that's hilarious.

[00:35:39]

FT: It wasn't until he met an agent at an event, one agent walked up to him and said, "I like your work, who does your representation?" He said, "What does that mean?" And he said "Let's talk". And then after that the money came in. But even someone as smart and confident and accomplished and male.

[00:36:01]

LT: Yes.

[00:36:01]

FT: We often think women are the ones who don't ask but men too. I mean, sometimes you just don't know what you're worth and that's the truth of it. And, also money's call an awkward conversation to have, so maybe it doesn't come up. But, I think that you're so spot on with that and if there's anything that we learn is that, you know, just speak up. People usually expects to have that conversation but you have to be sort of the brave and bold one to bring it up and then

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LT: Definitely.

[00:36:30]

FT: And then you're a winner. Latham thank you so much I want everyone to go and grab your book *Own Your Glow*. I know your website Mama Glow also has advice for men out there too. So, you're expanding to all genders and I think that's important and we appreciate you. Thank you for coming.

[00:36:47]

LT: Thank you for having me.

[END]