

**EPISODE 1492**

[INTRODUCTION]

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**FT:** Welcome to So Money, everybody. I'm Farnoosh Torabi. You might want to quit your job but you're not sure how? It is strange times. With layoffs happening, it doesn't feel like the right time to give your two weeks notice. But our guest today, the step-by-step, Amy Porterfield, is an ex-corporate employee turned online marketing expert and the author of The New York Times bestseller *Two Weeks Notice*.

Today she is the CEO of a multi-million-dollar business, and it all started with her giving her two weeks notice to her boss, which happened to be peak performance coach, Tony Robbins. Also known as the first guest on So Money.

Amy and I discussed how to identify what your next act is going to be so that you can anchor your departure in something really exciting. How to build that important financial runway, so that when you give two weeks' notice you are financially comfortable. And why we will never tell our mothers how much we pay for things? Here's Amy Porterfield.

[INTERVIEW]

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**FT:** Amy Porterfield, New York Times best-selling author, and marketing guru, and host of a podcast and all-around nice amazing person, welcome to So Money.

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**AP:** Well, thanks so much for having me. Listen, I'll never get tired of hearing New York Times. That's a new one for me. It's so exciting. Thanks for having me on.

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**FT:** It's so important to get more representation on that stinking list.

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**AP:** Yes.

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**FT:** The list we hate to love, or we'd love to hate.

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**AP:** I know. We love to hate. And that we got to get more women on there. I'm excited. Yeah.

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**FT:** Well, very deservedly, *Two Weeks Notice: Find the Courage to Quit Your Job, and Make More Money, Work Where You Want, and Change the World*. A lot of promises in your book. And you deliver. You deliver. You've sold many books. People are practicing what you preach. You have practiced what you preach.

And before we get into like the world, because right now, we know, it's hard enough just to feel like you're not going to get laid off. Where do we even get the courage to quit? I want to hear your story because this is a road-tested book that started with your own life. Tell us where it began.

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**AP:** It began at my very last corporate job. I worked for peak performance coach, Tony Robbins, for almost seven years. And I was the director of content development. And on paper, that job was amazing. I made great money. I got to travel to different countries. I got to work with Tony Robbins. I mean, it was an amazing job.

I had just gotten married and I was starting to learn more about the internet business world. And so, I was kind of paying attention to that. And then one day, Tony had a very fateful meeting where he brought in a bunch of online business owners to the San Diego office. And they were all men. And they sat around this big oak table. Humbly enough, I was asked to come in to take notes.

Now I know it kind of sounds weird that the directors called in to take notes. But for Tony's world, he took notes for everything. That man studied everything. These notes became transcripts. That became guides. That it was a big deal.

I was brought in to take notes. I sat at a side table. I wasn't even invited to the main table. And these guys went around and Tony said, "Tell me about your businesses." And they talked about different business models. Digital courses, memberships, masterminds, physical products. They talked about the impact they were making. The kind of money they were making. I think I put down my pen at the time and I was like, "What are they talking about?" And I didn't understand that world at all. But for the first time in my life, I wanted a piece of something different.

I wanted freedom. They all had freedom. They talked about spending time with their family, and the vacations they go on, and working when they wanted, where they wanted, how they wanted. And I didn't know how to get to all of that. But in that moment, I thought, "I've got to figure this out."

It was one year from that fateful meeting to when I actually left the company. For the next year, I put together a runway of how to leave a company with respect and dignity. But then also, the day I left, how to make that business I wanted to start on my own actually thrive.

And so, in Two Weeks Notice I talk about how to put together a runway to leave your job. But also, then, what do you need to do to start your own business? That's essentially how my business started with leaving that last nine-to-five job and starting my own business.

And the first two years of my own business were a hot mess. And so, one of the reasons I wrote the book is to help people navigate this that have no clue what they're doing, which was me.

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**FT:** Like anything in personal finance and in your career, planning goes a long way. Going back to that board room oak table meeting though, for a second, all those men, I mean, should we be surprised that they had the chutzpah to quit and all this flexibility? I mean, the world kind of revolves around men in many aspects. And it's harder for women to make those same decisions. How is that for you? As a woman, did you have very unique set of circumstances that created hurdles? Not to gender-ify this. But let's be honest, I mean, it's a lot easier sometimes for men to have that privilege, right? To quit and move on with the confidence that they're going to land on their feet.

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**AP:** Absolutely. I think one of the biggest things I came up against is there weren't a lot of women doing what I wanted to do. I knew I wanted to start an online business and I wanted to teach online marketing. I wanted to have digital courses and memberships and all of that. Again, I didn't know how to do it, but I wanted that.

And I looked around, and at that table there are no women. But there weren't a lot of women out in the world doing it yet either. I really struggled to find an example of, "Oh, I could totally do this. Look what she did." I had to dig really deep for that.

Another thing is that I didn't know what I didn't know. And I started to learn from a lot of men doing what I wanted to do. And it didn't make sense to me. We call it bro marketing. And at the time, 14 years ago, these guys were standing in front of Ferraris and private jets and saying, "Buy from me because I've got the lifestyle." I'm like, "I am not doing that."

I had very few examples. And then the guys I was learning from, it just fell off. I struggled to kind of find my voice to find my messaging. And what happened was the first two years of going out on my own, I literally marketed like a man. And it didn't fit. And it wasn't working. And so, those are some of the hurdles that I was up against.

And then I was a new wife. I had just gotten married. My husband that I married had a little boy. I became a new stepmom. And navigating all of that while I was trying to quit this job, one of the hardest things I've ever done. I felt a little bit like am I being irresponsible for letting go of a really good regular paycheck? Now I have this family, that my paycheck supported us. It was part of the family income. I also had a little bit of guilt about am I doing something irresponsible?

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**FT:** I want to talk about financial runway, speaking of that. But when you quit, and was Tony in the room like? Did you have to put in your two weeks' notice to Tony Robbins?

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**AP:** I gave my two weeks' notice to Tony's camp basically. His team. And so, I didn't have to call up Tony specifically and be like, "I'm quitting." Actually, I think I did call. But I talked to someone, his assistant. But here's what's really cool, I was very nervous that how he would react. And I had a boss that was before him and how that boss would react.

But the day I left – this is so cool. We worked on the road a lot. We did events; Unleash the Power Within, Date with Destiny. And my very last event that I worked at, my team had made me a video and everyone was like, "We're going to miss you. We're going to love you." And the last person on the video was Tony playing a song that Tony and I both loved. And so, he played the song and then he's like, "I'm going to miss you. I wish you so much luck." And I just thought this is the way to quit, when the head honcho of the business is so excited to see you succeed." And so, I feel like my runway that I put together and that I talked about in the book really kept some really important bridges still intact.

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**FT:** Yeah. That's a huge fear, is burning a bridge. But also, right now, a huge fear, Amy, is just that, "Okay, I could quit, I guess." But the job market is not really as fertile as it was like two years ago depending on your industry, of course. But people, if we're working in tech. I mean, that's a scary industry right now to be in as far as having that confidence to know, "I can leave and find something else quickly enough, quickly, so that I don't lose out on supporting my needs. And I don't have to have like a huge financial runway."

Advice that's really timely I would love for you to share. If you are unhappy at your job, what is the plan? Do you have to give yourself a year? Can you do it in two weeks, or five weeks, or three months?

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**AP:** Great question. The name of the book is Two Weeks Notice. But essentially, we're going to create a runway that's longer than two weeks. And when you decide on that exit date, you give your two weeks and you're out. That's essentially where it comes from.

But in the book, I talk about three months, six months, nine months or a year. But anything longer than a year, you're just making up a lot of excuses why you can't leave. And it's basically based in fear. Very normal. But that's usually what it's come to.

And so, what you want to do is a few different things. Number one, you've got to choose that exit date. That's the first thing we're going to do. That way, if you plan it, you make it real. I learned that from Tony early on. We've got to get a date on the calendar. You don't need to tell everybody. You could maybe just tell your closest friend, or your spouse, or whoever it might be.

But that date goes on a Post-It note. It goes on a mirror where you see it every day and you ask yourself, "What do I need to do today to move me closer to that date?" When I finally chose my exit date, it was six months. I gave myself a good six months. It was a year since that fateful meeting. But six months when I finally got serious about this.

And so, I gave myself that date. And I looked at it. And when I thought, "What do I need to do today to me closer to that date? It might mean I need to make a phone call. I need to ask for a favor. I need to read a certain book. Maybe buy a digital course. Whatever it might be to get me prepared to what I plan to do when I leave.

One of the things I did is there's this woman online way back in the day and she had a business exactly what I wanted. She was selling digital courses. She was teaching online marketing. She had a really cool blog at the time. I wanted that kind of business.

I went to her contact page and I sent her an email and I said, "I know you don't do this. You don't offer coaching. However, could I pay you for an hour of your time and you help me understand how you built this business?" Would you share that information? And she said, "Yes."

During my lunch hour working for Tony, I got underneath my desk because the walls were thin, and I thought, "If someone hears me, I'm not ready to leave just yet. I don't want anyone to know." I got underneath my desk and I'm whispering to her, "How did you start your business? How much money did you save? How did you learn how to create your courses?" I asked her all the questions. And she answered. That was really bad valuable.

Every day I was looking for a way to get closer to that exit date. That's the first thing. The second thing is you got to look at your finances. And this is where your expertise comes in. We can't pretend that you just leave next month and you're good to go. You've got to look at your finances and ask yourself, "What do I need or want to do to feel secure when I finally leave this job?"

For me, I wanted to save a few months of living expenses. And also, I had some debt that I wanted to get out of. Six months of really getting serious about that would let me do that. I have another student who said she didn't choose an exit date. She chose a dollar amount. When she had nine months of living expenses, she was going to allow herself to give her two weeks' notice. But she wanted it bad enough that she got aggressive with how to save for nine months.

Putting together a financial plan. Understanding how much are you going to need when you leave month-by-month with your expenses is a good call. The great thing is you you've got to

get scrappy. And I say that's great, "Meaning let's not put so much pressure on you that the day you leave, you have to make tons of money to keep up your living or your lifestyle."

It's not the year you're going to get new wood floors, buy a new house, buy a new car, go on vacation. The first year of entrepreneurship, you're going to get scrappy and not do a lot of the things you're going to make sacrifices in order for it to work. You got to look at the finances.

Now, if you want to save a bunch of money before you leave, the third thing is I want you to create a side hustle. And a side hustle is a great way to propel yourself into the world of business however you want to create that. For me, I did social media for small businesses. That was my first two years. I don't do that now. But that's how I started. I always love a good starter idea. It doesn't need to be your end-all be-all.

And so, I decided to start doing that mornings, and nights, and weekends while I was still in my nine-to-five just to bring in a little extra money. And I was able to save those living expenses pretty quickly from it. Start aside hustle. My book can help you with a side hustle or a full-time thing. It's a really good guide for that.

And so, those are some of the things that help me immensely. Getting that starter date. Getting clear about my finances. Starting a side hustle. And then finally, I told just a few people. I told my mom. I told my husband and I told my best friend. Only three people knew of my plan. Because the more people I told, I knew they would tell me why it wouldn't work. And I was so vulnerable, I would absolutely have believed them.

I wanted just to tell a few people that believed in me no matter what. And when I got scared and when I got closer to the exit date and told my husband, "Maybe I don't need to leave. Maybe the side hustle could just be ongoing." He's like, "No. No. No. You said you wanted to leave. Let's go." You need some people that will push you back out when you want to come back in.

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**FT:** But life has a way of just throwing you curve balls, and you've got the plan, and you're working on that side hustle, and you're keeping head above water at work and just like keeping



appearances. Like, "I'm going to be here forever." But actually, were there examples? Or can you talk about maybe things that came up that you weren't anticipating that did require a rerouting, or rethinking, or remapping as you were on your way out? Or even when you were out?

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**AP:** I'm on my way out, one of the things that came up is that my husband, who was a general contractor, decided he wanted to become a firefighter and he was in at the time his late 30s. That's not really a normal thing. But he had always had this desire. And that's what he wanted to go for.

He stopped working as a general contractor and started getting into the fire academy, which doesn't pay you. All of a sudden, we lost my husband's income. And it was only up to me. I felt a lot of pressure saying, "Okay, then I'm going to leave this job and I've got to make money right away."

That freaked me out. And I almost didn't leave when I said I would. But the side hustle, having a few clients, absolutely helped me immensely. And then at the time, I also signed up for a mastermind. It was a female mastermind of like 20 female entrepreneurs. Really expensive. But I had to pay the monthly fee because I couldn't afford to pay it all at once.

And this mastermind, being around other women that were doing bigger things than me, that changed everything. That was really on the cusp of right before I left. I got exposed to women that were making it happen. And I needed that. I needed to see how that would work. And I needed the support. That was really big.

But then when I went out on my own, here's what happened, my goal was to make just as much as I made in my nine-to-five job. In my first year, I actually did that. I made \$160,000 in my nine-to-five job with bonuses and all. And that's how much I made my first year of being out on my own doing consulting for small businesses.

My second year, I made, I think, it was at least 10,000, if not more, less. I actually went backwards. And the reason for that is Hobie was trying to become a firefighter. finances were really tough. We actually got into debt my second year because of his decision. And I supported it. But we got into debt.

And then third, I wanted to stop taking clients and I wanted to start creating digital courses and selling one-to-many, which is what I teach people now. But I didn't know how to do it. The first time I did it was a huge fat failure. And so, things weren't working in year two like I had hoped. But I stuck with it enough at year three we started to climb and I've never looked back.

But absolutely, I had every doubt, every fear. There were many times I told my husband I'm going to have to go gravel back for my job. I am not cut out to be an entrepreneur. This is not working. Many, many times. That's why you got to make sure you have the right people in your camp that will support you.

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**FT:** So, so important. Because things just – you have to anticipate things aren't going your way. But I mean, you called it a failure. I wouldn't call it a failure. I think it's just like the growing pains. It's just part of what has to happen. You learned a lot that year.

Going back to – again, your first story was so great. I just have a couple more questions around that that I think could help our audience, which is like how did – you were very inspired in that meeting. You quickly identified what it was you wanted to do as an entrepreneur. I think sometimes that's the biggest hurdle for us. We know we want the freedom. We know we want to be in control of our income and time. But what is the thing that we do? In terms of exploring that, what do you recommend people do? What are some shortcuts to figuring that out?

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**AP:** Yeah. In my book, I talk a lot about validating an idea. And some people come to my book and they've got tons of ideas and they're so excited. Others have zero ideas and not sure where to start. And so, I give a lot of validation ideas in my book doing exercises and different things to

kind of figure out where it is you want to start. And you're starting with a starter idea. Meaning that one idea does not need to be the end-all be-all. And it definitely doesn't need to take you 10 years into your online business just to get you started.

Mine was I did social media for small businesses. I knew from the get-go that was not my end-all be-all. But I knew how to do it. And I didn't know how to do a lot of other things yet. I just took what I knew so I wouldn't stay in my nine-to-five job for years and years and be unhappy. And so, I needed to push myself out.

What I have in the book is something called "the sweet spot". And it's this formula that you walk through. And I get into a lot of detail. But I'll give you a 30-foot view of what this looks like. There's four quadrants, and the first one is where have you gotten results for yourself or somebody else? Because we're not building a business around something where you haven't gotten results.

Maybe you are a really good meal planner. I mean, you are planning meals and saving money like nobody else. And people love to know how you do it. Maybe that becomes your starter idea. Or maybe you're an accountant and you're working for a firm and your starter idea is, "I'm just going to take clients and be freelance in the beginning."

We just need something to get you going. Where have you gotten results for yourself or someone else? People ask you, "How do you do that? Why does that come so easy to you?" Listen to your friends and family because they might have an idea for where you might start. That's number one.

Quadrant number two is what kind of challenge do you want to solve or desire do you want to meet? Because anytime you build a business, you're either addressing the challenge or you're meeting a desire. We have to get clear and we need to make sure that's aligned with what it is you're good at and where you've gotten results.

That will start to clear up also who you might want to serve. Who would be your ideal customer? Who would you love to work with? Quadrant two. Quadrant three is, if you've got an idea, are people paying money for that? Let's say you want to be that person who teaches other people

how to meal plan. How to do the shopping? How to save money? The equipment to use? How to cook it all? All of that. Have people paid money for that before? Are there podcasts about it? Books about it? Courses about it? Consulting? Coaching about it? If the answer is yes, that's a great thing.

Now I got to stop here because people will say, "Amy, what I want to do is already being done by lots of people successfully." And I always say, "Great. That is such a great starter idea of validation." Don't start your business with something where people have never paid for it before. They have no idea what you're talking about. Down the road, you can be a first adopter. But let's at least get your foot out the door and get going. If someone's already doing it with success, great. That means people will pay for it.

And then finally, what lights you up? Don't create a business around something that you don't love to talk about because you're going to eat, sleep, breathe this idea for a very long time. Make sure you and enjoy it. Notice I didn't say it needs to be your life's passion or your mission. That will stop you in your tracks. You will never leave your nine-to-five job. It's just something that you enjoy doing or talking about it, you're good.

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**FT:** Wow. Yeah, I feel like, in my own world, that has come true time and time again. I didn't want to go the online course route. Although a lot of my peers in the financial advice space were doing it. And I thought, "Oh, I was having FOMO." I write about this in my next book. "Oh, my gosh. I'm doing it wrong. Everyone else is making all this money. And leaving money on the table."

And then I recognize that what the fear was really pointing me towards was doing something where I could be in control of my income and connect more with my audience. But maybe like you don't have to do it the same way everyone else does it. My answer to that was to do workshops. Because I prefer the in-person experience.

And I hate creating a business for scale. That to me just doesn't – it's not fun. I don't want to manage a team. And that's valid. And I felt for a while that it wasn't. That I was like not – I didn't

have the right mindset. But I think it's important to listen to ultimately what your goals are and then creating your own path.

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**AP:** I love that you said that. I hope people really heard what you just said, where I create digital courses. That's my bread and butter. That is not the only way to create a business. If you want to do in-person workshops and you enjoy that, love it. If you don't want to scale a huge business – I have 20 full-time employees. If you're like, "No, thank you, ma'am." Then don't do it.

I have a really good friend, Jenna Kutcher, she makes great money. But she does not have a big team. She doesn't have tons of people that are supporting her. And she loves it that way. Do what you – that's the beautiful thing about being an entrepreneur. You are the boss. You call the shots. Do it your way. I always say, design a life and a business by your own terms, on your own terms. That's important.

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**FT:** Because it's a money show, Amy, we got to talk about money. You've made tens of millions of dollars during the course of – after you gave your two weeks' notice, you went on to you know make tens of millions of dollars. This question actually comes from our sponsor, Prudential, which is what is a moment in your life that propelled you to the next financial level? You talked about having debt early on. I can only imagine what it's like now.

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**AP:** I love this question, because it's beyond my wildest dreams. And I've always been somewhat responsible. Even though I got into debt in 2011, that was the only time that I really had an issue with debt. Meaning I've always been pretty responsible with money. But with responsibility, it also came with like I held it tight. I was nervous. I was scared about spending it. Or scared about getting back into debt. I've done a lot of work in terms of living in the abundant lifestyle.

But I'm going to tell you right now, it's really easy to live in abundance when you make millions of dollars in your business. And I just want to put that out there because I feel like it's almost cheating a little bit. When someone says, "What's your relationship with money now?" I'm like, "Actually, really great." Because I cracked the code to make money consistently. And I've saved a lot. So, I have a nest egg.

One, I have a lot of respect for people that aren't where I'm at, and they're struggling still and they're worried. I get it. And I've been there. And I know what that feels like. But what I will tell you is the more money you make, the better you can do in this world. And obviously, I need to. And I hope everyone feels this way when they make a lot of money. I become a lot more generous. I do look for the abundance. My mom worries about my money all the time. I have no idea why. She always says, "But you have so many expenses. And I'll want to treat her to something. Like, "No, no, no. You've got a lot of expenses." I said, "Mom, I've got a lot of expenses because I make a lot of money. Let me help you."

I see my fear of money in my mom for sure. But I've been able to let a lot of that go because I got a really good financial planner. Hobie and I save way more than we spend. We invest the money. And we're older. And so, I would love to retire in my 50s. That doesn't mean my business would go away. But I don't want to be working in the business as much. I'm really serious about saving, and investing and contributing to really great causes. That's kind of where I'm at now. But it's easy to be that way when you make a lot of money.

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**FT:** Yeah. But I would say, too, that even when you're not making a lot of money or you have financial hurdles, that I don't think we change the more we make. I think we become more of who we really are. Your generosity now, I'm sure it was there when you had the debt. You just couldn't practice it in the ways that you are now, to the extent that you are now. But I think that money can enhance who we are and who we want to be. Because, obviously, money is a tool and it can give us access to things and experiences. I love that. I love that for you. And I think that's true with a lot of parents. They worry for us. They came from a different generation. My mother's the same way. I just don't tell her what I spend on.

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**AP:** Same. Same. I just keep it out of the conversation.

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**FT:** There's a joke. You got to use parent price when you talk about how much you spend money on things.

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**AP:** Oh, my gosh. I totally use parent price. And I didn't even know that was a thing.

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**FT:** Yes. Sebastian Maniscalco is the one who introduced me to parent price. He's one of my favorite comedians.

[00:26:51]

**AP:** So good.

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**FT:** All right. We have a couple minutes left here, Amy. I want you to tell us, for those of us who are still a little bit on the fence. And again, it's because of the precariousness of our times right now with layoffs, layoff news, and the cost of living being so high. I get it. I got to save. I got to give myself runway. I have to have a really good validated idea. But I'm still not feeling confident. What's your parting advice?

[00:27:17]

**AP:** I don't think you need confidence in order to find the courage to leave your job and start your business. There's a reason I put courage on my subtitle and not confidence. Courage is I don't have a path. I don't have a proven road map that this is going to work. But I have faith in the fact that I can figure anything out and I want it bad. I'm going to take that leap of faith, take my courage and go for it. Confidence will come once you start building that road map of how you want to get there. We don't even need confidence. Just look for that courage.

Here's what else I'll say, it's a different kind of world when you are your own boss and you're not asking for a raise, promotion, a vacation or basically permission to do anything in your nine-to-five job. It's a different kind of world when you call the shots and you are your own boss. You get to be more creative, more abundant, more generous and also do the things you absolutely love. Working when you want, where you want, how you want is a whole different experience.

I will tell you, there will be challenges, and fears and doubts on your way to building your own business. But the rewards far exceed all of that. But you're going to have to trust because you won't feel that for a little while. It took me a few years to really kind of get my groove. But I wrote Two Weeks Notice so it doesn't have to take people a few years to get there. Even if you have a little tingle on your heart that maybe, maybe, maybe one day I could create my own business, get Two Weeks Notice, because at least you will have the guidebook when you're ready.

[00:28:47]

**FT:** Amy Porterfield, thank you so much. And we should mention your podcast, Online Marketing Made Easy. Over 41 million downloads. Soon, 41 million books sold too.

[00:28:59]

**AP:** Your lips to God's ears. I love it.

[00:29:01]

**FT:** Thank you. Thank you so much for giving us some really important advice, action-driven advice. Appreciate you. And congrats again.



[00:29:08]

**AP:** Thank you, my friend. I appreciate you too. Take care.

[OUTRO]

[00:29:13]

**FT:** Thanks so much to Amy for joining us. Her book, again, is called *Two Weeks Notice: Find the Courage to Quit Your Job, Make More Money*. I hope your day is so money.

[END]