



Episode 64: Uncovering Your Genius, with Aveline Clarke

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Rob's comments are in italic

Aveline's comments are in bold

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A lot of my work is in helping service providers to tell personal stories about themselves, to build trust with potential clients so potential clients can see who they are, can feel like they know, like, and trust you before they engage you, before they work with you. And I think that's because in some respects, you are involved in the you're either involved or you're associated with the delivery of your service. So then personal stories become quite important. But personal stories are a tricky thing. So just last year, I was reading a book called Uncommon Measure by a lady called Natalie Hodges about a journey through music performance and the science of time. So she was a musician, and she tells her story, but she says at the outset of the book that she realised that telling her story actually changed the story itself because it changed her relationship between herself and her story. And I was like, oh, that's quite interesting.

Because actually, when I go through this with clients, there is this change in some respects. You can tell your own story for narcissistic reasons because it improves your understanding of yourself just in the mere fact of telling it. And it alters your perceptions of the things that have happened in the past. It allows you to unlock certain things or move forward in certain ways. So there is that as well. I think more recently as well, though, I realised that telling your personal stories is a way it's a communications bridge. It's reaching out to people. And rather than just telling them who you are, what you value, what you stand for, it's showing them who you are, what you value, what you stand for.

But the kernel at the centre of that has to be you. There is a kernel that is your values, who you are, your unique genius that you bring to the world. And I have to say that in terms of holding up the mirrors to you, in terms of allowing you to understand what your genius is, what your values are, I could do that, but it's not really my forte. So I've got Avalon Clark back on the show today. I've been working recently with AV for this myself, so I thought, well, great, let's get AV back on the show to explore this topic of understanding truly and deeply at the deepest possible level that you're capable of, who you are and what you bring into the world. So, Ave. Welcome back.

What a beautiful way to create some context for that. Rob? I was completely engrossed, and I'm like, yeah, I want to listen to this. Oh, crap. I'm the one that's answering the questions. Hello. Thank you. I'm in the hot seat. Thank you. It's good to be here.

Great. Perhaps for anyone listening who hasn't heard you on the show before, perhaps you could just give us a short summary of who you are, where you are in the world.

Thank you. So I live in Australia on the east coast, near the Gold Coast, and obviously I've known you for a number of years in a couple of different scenarios as in business, but effectively my background is the human journey and creating experiences. I did it in the corporate world and I've been in small business myself for about 15 years now. And I met you, of course, when I sort of fell into marketing automation all those years back, which was effectively delivering on a journey. And through my own journey I figured out a few hard truths, I think that were never explained to me, but I knew at the deepest core of me were really necessary in order for me to be not just successful at what I was doing, but have a sense of meaning and fulfilment. And through the school of hard knocks I figured out what gave me fulfilment. But I also discovered that in my clients. I now, of course, run the Six Star Leaders podcast and community. And you were a co author in the book that we did a couple of years ago, how to Be a Six Star Business. And I have a business called Journey Point and that's been my actual business. Six Star was a passion project and now it's very evident that the work that I do holistically belongs together. So the program, the process that I take my clients through Journey Point is actually called the Six Star Journey. And it's the journey to uncover the self and then bring the self to the market, to the world in the most authentic, unique way that's right for them to create that engagement with their prospects and eventual customers.

And that's what the world needs, I think. I think anyone listening to this will probably hopefully have nodded along to that. I think it's telling as well that what you're doing at the moment took a bit of time. Like you mentioned, the school of Hard Knocks, I think it's a requirement to go through the school of hard knocks. I don't actually think there's a way of shortcutting it because that's the universe's way of teaching you things about you in order for you to get to the points that you need to get to.

Yes, I remember when I was back in the corporate world, we're talking 15 - 16 years ago, and a woman in an executive there for some reason told me about this book and the name now that I'm in the moment almost escapes me, but it had gotten the title anyway. And I read this book and it was not necessarily religious or a spiritual book, but it was. And it was about the human condition and it was simply that in order to know who you are, you've got to figure out who you're not. And I learned that back then. And then of course, I went through a lot and I heard something even today, so I'm still learning. To me, life is learning. The journey is about learning, and it's learning about yourself. We've got to figure out who we're not.

Unfortunately, we're born into it and brought up in a system, in a matrix system, through the education system, the financial system, all the rest, all the systems that exist. And all you gotta do is sit at home, turn on that little box that beams out words, and spews things to you if you want to, to tell you how to think and what to do. And unfortunately, a lot of us have been brought up in this system, so our subconscious has been programmed in a certain way, and it's only through the school of hard knocks and consciously peeling back these layers of hang on, that's not me. That's not me. Oh, I don't like that. That's not me either. To figure out, oh, this is me. And I was reflecting this morning, actually listening to a documentary, and I realised that I'm not sure that, like you just said, that you can't just miraculously get to this place of knowing unless you had the most inspired, pure, organic upbringing without any false narratives and conditioning.

I think it just goes without saying, even if you had that, you still have to figure out who you are. And that means trying certain things and learning about intuition and learning about following that path of knowing for yourself. I also want to mention something that's really coming through to me through just some words and whispers, and it's this. If we don't fully love what we do in our business, we can't deliver the most amazing service. We can't be super successful if we don't love what we do. How do you love what you do? Well, you've got to know and align. First of all, know who you are, and then align that knowing of your genius with your business. You can't get there any other way.

I feel like it creates a vibration that feels right, and it feels right to you, and it feels right to the people that you serve as well, because they can sense it.

Absolutely. And the first time I started talking about vibration to a potential customer, she just said, oh, my God, I feel like I'm in a very different meeting here. She said, But I like what you're saying. And then I said, look, it's all about vibration. If you're talking to a prospect or your customers without having this internal clarity and knowing who you are, you're not vibrating on the right level. And she got that. And then the other question I've had from prospects is, Avaline, how do I know that this is going to work? How do I know that I'm going to attract the right people after going through your process and figuring all this stuff out? And I said, ah, well, you don't. But I can tell you, I promise you, once you've figured out who you are and what your genius is and you've aligned it, you'll be in a completely different vibration, and you will attract the right people, because that's one of the laws of the universe.

It's just the way it is. And unless you actually are sending the message out to the universe that there's something wrong with me and no one wants to buy my product or service, then the people are going to come. But it's a vibration.

I think we've all experienced that on a personal level. When someone that we love walks into the room, they've had a bad day, they somehow, without saying anything, manage to suck all the air out of the environment. Or it could be the opposite. And it doesn't have to be high output, high energy. It's just like a way of being, I guess, that we sense. Yeah. The other thing that I was thinking as you were talking and you mentioned the Matrix in the box and just absorbing things that then become laid on top of who we are.

I was recently reading a book of essays by Ursula K. La Guin, and she was saying that reading is a very active thing to do in the sense you're co creating with the author in your imagination. You're co-creating that environment of what happened in that story, and you're more actively participating in the story. Like, it's completely different to read Harry Potter than it is to watch Harry Potter at the cinema. At the cinema. You're a passive observer, just viewing what the film people have prepared for you, which is fine as an art form, and I'm not necessarily bashing that. But I think the reason that reading is better is because you're active in the story. It's not that we literally imagine ourselves being Harry Potter, but we imagine ourselves being there in our mind's eye. We create the world.

I've had clients in the past query, like, why don't we tell stories and video first? And it's like, yeah, you could do. But I think the reason to start with writing is because it's more active. It's this active co-creation. And the co-creation allows people to envisage what is possible for themselves. And that's the difference. It allows them to imagine something. It allows them to imagine something that they didn't previously think was possible before reading that email or reading that story.

Totally agree. And from experience working with different customers and with different budgets who've ended up creating different things along that customer journey. After doing the work and figuring out who they are and all the pieces we work on, then we look at the assets and what they've got to create those that have had the money and the resources to go forward and create a bunch of things and do it well. What I've seen is that the use of video is really great in capturing the attention up front. And it's that initial piece. It literally could be the first two minutes of them seeing you for the first time. And yes, that's critical. But for those that don't have the budget to create that, okay, you don't need to then co-creating that story through the email and the written word is another layer, I guess. You're moving to a different level of connection, and that's where you start building that relationship.

You can still have imagery up front. If you don't have the video yet, you can still use the right imagery to portray that someone gets the feeling that they're in the right place and it exactly primes them to start reading. And then when they start reading, they discover this world of possibilities that they hadn't really thought about that much, for sure. Yeah, I wanted to just mention empathy as well because I work with clients who I think generally have empathy, or they probably don't stick around in my world very long, but I think you can't understand someone

else better than you understand yourself. I feel like it has to start with yourself first. I've got friends who are always trying to run around figuring out if everyone else is okay, but they're not okay themselves. And it starts with you in some respects, and I wonder what you thought about that.

That's a really insightful comment, and I agree. And I think you can't have true empathy unless you can be empathic and understand yourself. Otherwise the empathy that you're giving to others is perhaps quite shallow or a distraction or has a means to an end or an expectation attached, maybe. And yeah, having listened to hundreds of stories through the podcasts I've hosted and these are not just business stories, they're personal, challenging stories of challenge adversity through another podcast, I've spent a lot of time listening to stories and thought about why is it that I can listen to these people and hold the space for them? And it is because I understand who I am and have gone through a lot myself and in my past, but also accepting it and just accepting the human path of human condition, that we all go through some form of trauma at some stage. And I think it's only then that I've been able to just really naturally hold that space.

So let's say someone's listening to this, they're nodding along, it's like, okay, well, how do we then begin to go about turning the mirrors onto ourselves? What's maybe the first thing to think about, if that's the right way of thinking about it.

I just had a visual image then, Rob, of someone standing in the hall of mirrors where no matter where they're looking, they're just looking at a different angle of themselves. And really, that's where you start. It doesn't actually matter depending on what it is that you want to achieve. But the best way to do this is simply just accept who you are and where you are.

My wife thinks I walk around in a hall of mirrors where I only ever see myself. But sometimes she's right, sometimes she's not!

I think we all suffer from that, to be honest. I think it's accepting where we are. Again, going back to the conditioning. How many of us were told that the successful path was to go through school, go to university, get a job, get a mortgage, have 2.3 children? Let's face it, there's this expected pathway. And there's also what I see as perceptions in society of when you should do something and think about how we judge people if they haven't had a baby by a certain age or been married by a certain age, or at least partnered. And there's these life events and series of things that are normalised or expected. So then if you have gone long and then there's these beliefs about what you

should have done by a certain age or with a certain person or whatever and you haven't achieved that, you could be feeling quite crap.

You could be feeling like people are judging you or that you've failed. And again, this is just one perspective. This is one mirror in that hall. And it's about learning to accept how you feel, but then that's not the truth and letting go. So the moment you shine a light on the thing that is showing up for you as being hard, difficult, painful, that's triggering you. The moment you accept it, accept how you're feeling, then you allow the emotion to go. And some people need more work than others to let those peel off. Imagine it like you've just got all these layers of clothing and when one of those layers gets shone with a particular light and you actually accept it and do the work and then literally that layer just comes off, it disappears.

When we reject who we are and that means all the aspects of us, all the things that we don't like about ourselves or hide from or run away from, that's when they stay there and they become more painful. So getting to the heart of who we are and figuring out ourselves, it always starts with acceptance. Who am I today? Can I love myself? Can I stand in the bathroom, look in the mirror and say, hey, I really love you Aveline. You know, the first time I did that, I cried. Felt felt sick. Wasn't nice. It takes practice to do that. But how can you love what you do and give true love to your business if you don't love yourself?

Was that because you didn't feel like yourself was worthy of love?

I think so, yeah, that's right.

I think this is true in business as well. I think there's a lot of pressure when people set out. And let's face it, when we set out, you're quite likely to fall on your face because of this school of hard knocks. It just is how it is. But then that isn't what we're told to expect or told to. There's this thing where it's like, oh, yeah, you should have, quote unquote, made it by 25 or 30 or whatever. I've been sort of fairly reassured by mentors like Perry Marshall saying that most people don't really achieve traction until they're in their 40s or maybe 50s even. I'm like few.

I've always had absolute confidence that at some point I will really hit my groove and achieve what I want to deliver in the world. But I've also come to accept that it takes time. And maybe I've always even had that knowledge about the fact that every time I've had the opportunity to scale up a business that I didn't really vibrate with. So, like the Google Ads work, I had the opportunity to build an agency, to create the AdWords agency for Infusionsoft users. I definitely could have done that. But I just didn't feel like it. So perhaps I knew that at the time.

I've reflected myself thinking the exact same thing as you. I've had these opportunities to scale up and do things in these areas that I wasn't fully aligned with. I.e I didn't fully love it. And I have asked myself, well, why is it that that other person can do it? Is it because they are more aligned with that?

Maybe some people are capable of just viewing it as a business to then build up, to then get out of and take the cash, and that's fine. It's just, for whatever reasons, it's not the way my head works.

Some of us are wired a bit differently, and I've had to accept that as well. Some people are just motivated by the numbers and see this as a problem to solve. I'm going to build this, scale this up, and they get their meaning and purpose through maybe the growth aspect and how much they can sell something for. And they're different. They've got a different purpose, different meaning, and that's okay. It's perfect. We're all different.

Megan Masoto distinguishes between artists and entrepreneurs and reckons that we're all on a sliding scale somewhere between the two, where an artist is one extreme and entrepreneur is the other extreme, and potentially a lot of people or a lot of us sit in the middle. I actually think I'm weighted towards the artist end of the spectrum in that the workout that I'm doing, in some respect, it's all about the work. It's got to feel right.

I like that I've grown up as an artist and wanted to just do art and then egotistically or societal pressures pushed me down a business track. Go to the corporate world, go to university, go to the corporate world, make money, make money through art.

One of my best friends as a teenager was a brilliant artist. She still is and she's made a career of it. She teaches art in a high school. She also has a business on the side. She exhibits in galleries, she sells online, most beautiful pieces and she's in some really nice homes. She gets featured in magazines.

She is a pure artist and I've seen the way she's done it and I'm really proud of her because I think what she's done has been able to look at her art and then go along that scale and maybe looked up the path towards the entrepreneur and said, oh, what are they doing? How can I do this? Because obviously she's got to feed herself and that's why going into teaching and being an art teacher to year eleven s and twelve s was meaningful for her and a way to obviously pay the bills and yeah, it's just lovely to see that. Whereas I just went into business, into the corporate world and art gets done in an art class when I have time.

If you asked me to draw you a picture, I'm not conventionally an artist, but I've always written, I've always created stories.

You're an artist.

I would like to write a novel one day. And writing a novel is definitely art.

Oh, yeah.

So yeah, that's just something I was thinking about. When you get a new client that you're working with, how quickly can you sense that the vibration maybe isn't quite right or that they need to make.

Some changes pretty much in the first session, maybe to the second session. Sometimes I think I'm pretty good at reading people up front even before they engage. And it comes down to their willingness to be open to the journey and do the work. So if I can sense that they're ready for a change, they know that there's a misalignment, but they just don't know how to get to the alignment. Well, that's perfect because I can help them get there and direct them if they need to talk or see someone else with a specific skill set that I don't have. But it's very early on.

What role does purpose play in this?

A fairly big one. In that some people are clear on their personal purpose from a young age. And some people we see sports stars who've risen through the ranks, they're famous the world over, they've achieved a lot and they obviously have this purpose for their profession and they've got obviously a skill and there's a genius there. Then what I do believe is that that purpose can also change because not always do we set a purpose that's so big that we'll never achieve it. Some people do achieve that purpose and then it evolves, it changes. They have a massive life event that shifts the course of their life. And typically one of those events forms a purpose as well.

When it comes to business, I fully believe that business is a separate entity to us. So we're our own organism and energetic being. Well, we have a business and that is separate from us. For Solopreneurs, our business is an expression of us. And understanding the purpose of your business is critical in being able to align it. So bringing your being who you are, who you naturally are, what your genius is to that purpose of the business, is how you can connect and be in that vibrational alignment.

It's like the North Star. That's what you face yourself towards. And then that acts as a decision making filter to say yes or no to things that come across the table.

Yeah, exactly.

What would you say your purpose is?

My personal purpose is to inspire evolution. That's who I am. And that's evolution of the self, community, whatever it is, it's all about growth. Then there's the business purpose. And that's about inspiring impactful leaders, because for me that's the leader of a business.

It's you, it's me, it's everyone who brings themselves to their business through their genius and understanding the purpose of that business to create the change and the impact in the world. That's the person. We're all leaders. We might not call ourselves all leaders, but we are. If we're running a business, we're a leader.

Yeah, I agree. Are there any more mirrors that we might hold up?

Many times what we do is we compare ourselves to others. That's how marketing is fundamentally crafted through the Unique Selling Proposition.

I believe there's a bunch of issues with that and it effectively commoditizes you. You're a commodity, not the unique human that you are. So the mirror that I'd like you to ask or look into is where are you selling yourself short? Or where are you comparing yourself to others in what it is that you do?

It's one of the biggest conditioning beliefs that we've had since probably primary school. I came out of school comparing myself to others. And our society feeds this, right? And you look at teenage girls and what they go through, and I've got twin boys. Well, I couldn't get a more poignant example of two kids comparing themselves to each other. I have boys at the beginning of puberty, right? One twin is about two and a half inches taller or maybe three than the other one. So they're different and they compare themselves to each other all the time.

So I'm, as a Mum going through that. But typically us humans, we forget about this, but we see magazines, we see billboards, we see other businesses being praised, getting accolades, getting awards, or seemingly making all this money or being successful. And

the judge in us goes, that's not you, you're something else. You're not as good as that. Oh, look what you're doing wrong. So look in that mirror and then ask where the judgy voice sitting on your shoulder is having a field day.

I think that's a very natural human thing to do as well is to compare ourselves to other members of the tribe. But it perhaps doesn't serve us very well today.

No.

I was just thinking as you were talking, how much do I fall into this trap? I do compare myself to others and I maybe spend less time worrying about it than I've got clients who very specifically created a grid comparison of all of their competitors. I've never really felt compelled to do that, I have to say.

Yeah, it's so funny. Part of my service a number of years ago was doing this really detailed competitive marketing positioning. I'd have a field day doing all these comparisons to the competitors. I don't even touch it now!

Comparing yourself to someone else isn't necessarily a bad thing; it's how you limit yourself and your belief about yourself as a result. So if we're judging ourselves and then we're holding ourselves back, we're making ourselves feel bad, then we are moving away from who we are. Anything that causes us to lose sense of who we are is not a great thing, especially if we then start to resist. The mirror is showing us a picture, and if we're resisting that, then we need to face the mirror, accept that it's there, and then let it go.

So comparing ourselves to others when it's through the lens of, “*oh, wow, look what they've done, that's amazing, good for them. I could learn from that. How can I learn?*”

It's when you judge yourself in relationship to the other person that it limits you. So it's the way that you're being aware of yourself and aware of what you're looking at. It's all about that perception. It's an easy trap to fall into, to fall into judgement and self criticism.

When I did more Google Ads work, one of the processes that I would follow is we'd have a look at the Google search results page and we'll see who else is advertising. And you realise quite quickly that a lot of the other people bidding on the same keyword aren't actually competitors. You'd then get clients who'd be very focused on competitor 'A', and they wanted to do everything that competitor A was doing. They would insist that you copy what they're doing, and were surprised that it didn't work. In fact, they blamed me!

That was one very real example where I've experienced this looking outwards, looking around, blindly applying things that other people are doing because it's other people's rules of thumb.

The other thing that I did was I worked for a property investment training company a few years ago, and the advice on the courses that we ran was to follow the system, implement the processes. We presented it as a business in the box. 'Do this and you will achieve X outcome'. Some students did go through the process, implement everything and achieve X Outcome. So it wasn't an erroneous promise, but a lot of people didn't. And I felt at the time that it wasn't quite right for us to present it saying, 'this is a business in the box, just pay your money and turn the key'.

From my experience and what I've seen in all different areas and different businesses, this is a great example of why we need to get real clear about who we are, accept who we are, and understand that we are all different and we operate differently, we see the world differently. We do that business in a box differently to everybody else. So even if that business is identical. It's not because it's you.

The way you present your business, the way you do business is all flavoured by you. Your colour, your style, your energy: it's you!

Does this become more mission critical for certain types of businesses?

Any service based business, definitely.

What role does intuition play in uncovering your genius?

The more that someone stands in that hall of mirrors and faces the mirrors and allows the layers to come back, the more that they trust in themselves. And when you trust in yourself, then you're not doing the spinny wheel in the head. You're not standing there frozen in indecision, fear, self judgement. So when that all goes and you're not in your head, guess where you are? You're in your body. And what happens there? It's intuition. So when someone is in tune with who they are, they're connected to their business and they've understood who they are to a large degree, and they're loving who they are and they're loving their business, those voices or the whispers of intuition are louder because you're not in your head. You're not being driven by the mental chatter and the whirlwind going on.

The more that you can hear that intuition and listen to it, we've all heard it, everyone has had a hunch, or gut feel about something. We're energetic beings in physical bodies. So this intuition is always there. It's often just clouded over by the clatter in the head. The intuition to me is the energetic, universal pull. It's the internal knowing that there's something you must do. Every time I've listened to that - I'm always learning and getting better at listening to it - but every time it's a good decision.

Stories are the realm of the body, too. Stories make you feel something in your body. Content and information deals with logic and the brain. So it's a similar thing. And actually what we're trying to do by telling stories then is make people feel something, make people vibrate in the same way that we are vibrating.

Exactly. And I have to say that if you're getting to that point where intuition is telling you to do something, it's a really good thing. It's a great thing.

Last year you sent me the book Unlearn, by Hanno Burmester. What a great book! In it Hanno talks about the Ikigai. I realised how important the Ikigai was, it was so aligned with what I was doing with my clients. Anyway, you can look the Ikigai up. It's a Japanese concept. It's about this alignment and is used as a way for people to figure out their internal purpose. So I think that is a great place to start. I've created a lead magnet, and it is how to do the ikigai. It's introducing the concept of the ikigai, and it's taking it to another level, and that's what we do in the program that I have with my clients.

Brilliant. I think on that note, let's leave the conversation there. How can people find out more about your services and about the Six Star Leaders program?

Oh, great. So they can look at the website, which is Journeypoint.com.au. I'm also [on LinkedIn](#). Also check out the [6 Star Leaders podcast](#).