

12:01:59 Welcome to this episode of timely topics. an educational program of lotus network.

12:02:05 Lotus network believes it's never too late to rediscover your potential and make the next chapter of your life the very best.

12:02:12 And now here's your host

12:02:26 My name is Vicki Dansky and I would like to welcome you to today's timely topic.

12:02:33 Featuring Lisa D. Foster. In today's timely topic.

12:03:00 Lisa Foster. we'll share how without one scintilla of business experience.

12:03:09 She journeyed from an English teacher to social entrepreneur for a greener world.

12:03:16 A huge thanks goes out to my dear friend Carla Bartell Lisa's sister for making today's presentation possible before we begin.

12:03:25 Lisa's presentation. I want to tell you about our exciting schedule of events coming up mark your calendars for Friday, June third, when we are hosting a hall of fame speaker Marilyn

12:03:40 Sherman. This will be the second time we'll have the opportunity to meet in person.

12:03:48 Not only will you be able to hear Marilyn speak about putting yourself in the front seat of life, but you will also be able to mingle, have dessert and view the amazing artworks from Elaine Asarch and someone I

12:04:03 know very well. My mother sees pearl matter this event is at Liquid Cultural Center, and the link to register is in the chat also.

12:04:13 In June we're holding our first golf tournament at Bear Dance Golf Club.

12:04:17 It's exciting because we're sold out check out our updated website to see all of the events on the schedule for the rest of the year at Lotus Network Dot.

12:04:31 Org now onto our presentation. I first met Lisa when we were in elementary school at the tender ages of 10 and 11, and when I read her book Bad Lady, which is captivating, and so well, told I was reminded of

12:04:51 that quiet confidence, that quiet determination that I saw in her so many decades before.

12:05:03 Lisa Foster is a PHD. and an Acc.

12:05:10 Business coach, whose mission is to help managers become better leaders by using emotional intelligence to create the conditions for high performance.

12:05:22 In 2,005. She founded one bag at a time. a first to Market Reusable grocery bag.

12:05:31 Company, a former high school English teacher. She became a pioneer in the fight against single use.

12:05:40 Plastic bags and a top supplier of reusable bags in the United States.

12:05:45 So when you open your trunk up and pull out your reusable bag when you go into the grocery store, think about Lisa Because she had that much of an impact.

12:05:58 A former high school English teacher, she became a pioneer oops.

12:06:03 I already said that as a coach she shares her expertise in leadership and emotional

intelligence with her clients and inspires others to make a difference in their communities and organizations.

12:06:18 In addition to coaching, Lisa speaks leads workshops and rights about emotional intelligence leadership and storytelling, it's my appeal to introduce this woman I am an awe of and have deep respect for Lisa

12:06:37 Foster let's sit back and listen to her wise insight on the theme of today's timely topic.

12:06:44 It's never too late to change the world one action at a time.

12:06:54 Well, Vicki, thank you for such a lovely introduction.

12:06:56 We have known each other for really going back to those early childhood days, and I am so delighted to be here.

12:07:03 Thank you to Lisa and Leslie and Terry Reuben.

12:07:07 Everybody who is making today possible. This is an amazing network and I'm so excited to connect with all of you and a special shout out to my best friend and my sister Carla Bartell, who's sponsoring today and

12:07:22 it's just wonderful to be here. and I can't wait to start.

12:07:28 So let's start. Are you ready to talk some trash Are you ready?

12:07:33 This the dirt because honestly trash is where it all began for me.

12:07:41 I didn't grow up dreaming that someday I would be a seller of reusable grocery bags.

12:07:47 No, my book is called Bad Lady, but my story is really not about plastic bags or grocery bags at all.

12:07:57 It is about leading from the heart. it's about the transformational power of being purpose driven and people centered.

12:08:08 And this is really what I call leading from the heart.

12:08:12 When I became an accidental entrepreneur because that's what I was.

12:08:18 I realized that good business is not chasing after profit.

12:08:24 Good business is about establishing a mission, a purpose for your business and focusing on your purpose and supporting all the people all the way down the chain up the chain up the ladder everyone in between focusing on the people who help

12:08:43 you achieve that mission, and if you do that, you bring to you the customers you need, and you create real value for them.

12:08:54 And that's when profit follows so let me just start back at the beginning.

12:09:02 I found out about the facts about trash from plastic grocery bags in 2,005 on a trip to Australia, and I did what I thought any good English teacher should do.

12:09:12 I turned it into a story. So, I want to start with the story of the tragic life of a plastic bag.

12:09:21 Consumers who use plastic bags for grocery shopping take on average 10 bags a week per person.

12:09:28 So that amounts to about 510 bags a year.

12:09:36 Let's just round it up and around it off a little bit, and say if a 1,000 bags for 2 people, 2,000 bags for 4 people. This begins to add up very quickly in 2,000, and 5 it amounted to 300

12:09:46 and 60 billion that's 1 billion with a b plastic bags a year in the United States that's a 1 billion bags a day, and most of them are used once 1520 min and then thrown away.

12:10:01 And that is not the end of them but really just the beginning it's easy to forget about them when you put it in a trash.

12:10:09 Can but that doesn't mean even if you put it in a trash, can it doesn't mean it stays there?

12:10:13 They blow out of city trash, cans that don't have lids.

12:10:17 They blow out of the trash can on the curb, waiting for the trash truck.

12:10:20 When the truck empties your trash bin into its belly, they blow out in that tiny little space in between.

12:10:27 They blow out of trash trucks, hey! blow out of landfill!

12:10:32 One third of all the plastic that we use escapes our efforts to collect them into our trash stream.

12:10:40 So at a 1 billion bags a day, we're talking about 2 billion bags a week, escaping into our environment.

12:10:49 And what happens to them there. You probably remember seeing them wafting above the roadways, snagged in a tree on a wire, clogging the gutters.

12:11:02 They were pretty much everywhere. they Sometimes they would blow right up to my doorstep.

12:11:07 And once they're out into the elements they break up into little pieces. they don't decompose it's still plastic.

12:11:17 It's just smaller and smaller pieces until they get washed away by rainwater or snow.

12:11:21 Melt through Rain the way rain and snow had been washing debris into our waterways for millennia and washing them into the ocean.

12:11:31 Once they get into the ocean, the ocean currents swirl around like a big toilet.

12:11:39 But there's no flush. It takes about 12 years theoretically.

12:11:43 If you put a rubber Ducky at the edge of the ocean, maybe Santa Monica or San Francisco, if it wasn't disturbed, it would take about 12 years just swirl around to the center of the

12:11:52 ocean farthest from land in what scientists called the gyre.

12:11:58 You might have heard about the North Pacific gyre, also called the Great Pacific Garbage Patch.

12:12:03 This is where plastic is accumulating at an alarming rate.

12:12:09 Scientists estimate that we have one dump truck worth of plastic entering our oceans every minute.

12:12:16 I'm just going to say it again because it's kind of a crazy number a dump truck worth of plastic entering our oceans every minute, and it swirling around and entering up in the center it's not

12:12:28 really floating island of plastic, as some people imagine.

12:12:33 Plastic is made from petroleum it's a petroleum byproduct oil and water don't mix so it's really a bunch of little bits of plastic more or less sloshing around

12:12:46 with water. it's more like an oil spill than an island. Much of the plastic is thought to sync beneath it at the center of the ocean.

12:12:55 Still, this is not the end of the story with so much plastic in our ocean, and scientists expect that at the rate that we're going, we will have more plastic in the ocean than fish by 2050 does not seem so

12:13:12 far away for us, even with the plastic that we have now.

12:13:17 It is interfering with our sea life. yeah, so what is it doing to our sea life?

12:13:26 Well, first of all, we've all seen those images of entanglement right?

12:13:31 The turtle with the straw in his nose, the dolphins strangled by a plastic bag.

12:13:41 See life with those rings from the 6 pack carriers around their neck strangling them right.

12:13:50 You may have also seen images of whales that have been beached because their bellies are so full of plastic they can't digest their food.

12:13:58 Basically they're dying of starvation and they end up on our beaches.

12:14:04 And this happens to see marine birds as well as sea life.

12:14:09 If it doesn't kill them through entanglement for starvation.

12:14:18 The plastic that they're eating has other effects that we can't so readily see plastic is made with endocrine disrupting chemicals you've probably heard of BPA that's one of them

12:14:28 there's many of them. so endocrine disrupting is just really a fancy word for damaging your hormone system.

12:14:39 So one of the effects is infertility. which has been documented in pretty high rates with arctic seals and polar bears, as if polar bears don't have enough to worry about with melting sea ice right Now, they have to worry

12:14:54 about infertility. scientists have also documented what they call intersex characteristics among large fish.

12:15:05 That means sperm in ovaries, eggs, and testicles, or ambiguous genitalia.

12:15:13 In tuna swordfish, CBAs.

12:15:18 So again. it's not the end of the story right because the fish were eating are eating plastic right?

12:15:29 This is ending back on our plate. Scientists have found microplastic bits, not only in fish beer, table salt, and do not get me started on water in a plastic water bottle.

12:15:44 The plastic is right there, and we might think oh it's just a little bit.

12:15:51 It doesn't really have an effect we have that little, tiny bit constantly throughout our lives.

12:15:58 From the minute we wake up and put a toothbrush in our mouth, drinking out of

12:16:05 Those cartons for milk or orange juice are lined with plastic.

12:16:09 The Starbucks cups that are paper are lined with plastic.

12:16:13 Our food supply comes most of it in plastic, and then we go to sleep at night on a phone mattress made of plastic. right?

12:16:22 So this is constant, and we should be asking more questions.

12:16:29 About this the plastic we're throwing away there is no away.

12:16:34 There is only here and that's something I want us to think about.

12:16:39 So when I found these facts in in Australia on the trip, my husband was there for a for a project for 6 months, and well, my kids are school.

12:16:49 We all went down to Australia. Australia was then in a big push to switch everybody to reusable bags.

12:16:57 Australia in 2,005, was in a historic drought.

12:17:02 They felt like they were the canary in the coal mine global warming it wasn't a tenuous theory.

12:17:07 It was actually happening. they had wildfires. They had epidemic numbers of skin cancer.

12:17:14 The whole in the ozone is right over Australia, and they all wanted to do everything they could.

12:17:24 Adopting reusable bags was one thing they could do.

12:17:26 This the Government commissioned a massive study about the effects of what bags were doing, and that's where I found all of these facts right.

12:17:34 There was hundreds of pages more than I ever thought could ever be.

12:17:39 Written about a plastic bag who knew but I read it all, and I was actually I was an environmentalist.

12:17:48 So I was a little smug when I was reading about the effects of plastic bags, because I knew they were bad for the environment.

12:17:55 I was not so smug reading about the paper bags.

12:17:59 I was a paperback user, and then I started to read making a paper bag 3 min, 4 times more global warming gases than making a plastic bag, and it takes more global warming gases just to truck them around between transportation they're so

12:18:18 big and heavy, and then to truck them back for recycling.

12:18:21 When we recycle them we add more chemicals in that recycling process, and the chemicals end up in our waterways.

12:18:29 Right so. and then I read: They do not biodegrade in Landfill, where 80% of them end up.

12:18:37 I'm going to explain this for a minute because a lot of people will say yes. They biodegrade in landfill are big open pits lined with concrete, where we put all of our trash all the

12:18:49 things. We don't want to go back into our environment. as trash is dumped on top of other trash.

12:18:59 It shuts out air to biodegrade properly and return to the earth.

12:19:03 It would need to compost. It would need to have oxygen, but oxygen is shut out of a landfill.

12:19:11 So what happens to it? If it's wet is it rots, they'll say it degrades anaerobically, which just means it rots it.

12:19:21 It collapses into a heap with no oxygen, and it emits in that process it emits methane, which is another very powerful global warming gas.

12:19:31 If you composted it, it admits no methane so I'm reading about this, and now I started to get very angry.

12:19:41 I saw in my mind all of the stacks of paper bags.

12:19:45 I had ever used for me and my family. I was furious.

12:19:53 I started slamming the drawers in my kitchen, and when my kids came in for a snack after school, I would fly into a harangue about how recycling is just an excuse We have to assuage our guilt from

12:20:06 over consumption. This is how I talk when I get really mad.

12:20:11 Ask Carla I I was just and my kids were terrified.

12:20:15 They didn't the cookie was not with it I it really it was personal to me.

12:20:22 It hit my moral center, and I the hiding of these facts seem to me intentional.

12:20:31 We didn't know about them because somebody didn't want us to know about them, and I thought maybe even evil or nefarious.

12:20:43 So. here was the most ubiquitous item on earth, and we didn't know one thing about it something that I probably you handle every week, if not every day.

12:20:51 We don't know anything about it. Why, don't we well, I became obsessed with this idea, and when I came home from Australia.

12:21:01 All my friends wanted to know about kangaroos and wallabies and koala bears, and I might. No, no, no, it's all about reusable bags and plastic bags.

12:21:09 This is all I wanted to talk about. I talked about it so much to my friends, and I said, we have to go reusable.

12:21:17 When I thought about our waste. Ireland had gone reusable before us 3 years before that, and Australia was going.

12:21:25 Thank a dash was going reusable. When I thought about the Us.

12:21:30 I was ashamed, and I said, we have to do this.

12:21:33 We have to go reusable, and finally somebody said to me Lisa.

12:21:37 We don't have to do anything you have to do something you are obsessed.

12:21:45 I don't know if you've ever had that moment in your life when somebody else speaks your truth to you.

12:21:50 But that's how it felt she was right I had to do something, so I said, Fine! I will do something and I went home to think about what it would take to save the world one bag at a time.

12:22:06 That's what a really started thinking about I thought for a minute.

12:22:10 Maybe I'll start a nonprofit but I really don't like asking people for money.

12:22:16 So that didn't last long for me. and also, the best replacement that 99 sent back that we're now very familiar with was not available at all in the us. believe me, I tried to find them so I thought Well,

12:22:31 I Maybe I can sell the bags to fund my campaign to help America go reusable.

12:22:40 And this is really the germ. This is where I started my journey as an entrepreneur.

12:22:43 I had no idea what I was doing. I was died in the wool English teacher and

12:22:52 I started asking all my friends, and one of my friends said Oh, you should talk to my husband.

12:22:57 He's a business consultant he'll tell you what to do, I said Great!

12:23:01 And I invite him over for lunch. Okay, just to let you know if you have a meeting with a business consultant, It's like a first date.

12:23:13 Lunch is too long. if it doesn't go well did not go well at all.

12:23:17 A few bytes into his lunch. When he realized what I was asking him, he got a very bad look on his face, and he said, this is a terrible idea for a business.

12:23:30 This will never happen in the United States. Americans will never pay for up for a grocery ban, and Americans will never bring their bag back to the grocery store.

12:23:42 That is European. it's a bad idea I strongly advise you not to do it. and he couldn't leave fast enough, and I'm sitting there looking at is really like he took 4 Byte really and I'm thinking you

12:23:57 know what just happened. I was really perplexed.

12:24:02 Was this business take on what I was trying to do? Was this a guy thing?

12:24:11 All of my girlfriends love the idea. So, I kept using on my ideas with my friends, and somebody else said, no, Lisa, you have to go talk to my cousin Michael.

12:24:19 He is a business consultant. he'll tell you what to do.

12:24:24 Now I knew I need to do price, and I was ready to get advice from anywhere.

12:24:28 So I went over to Michael's house and sat there with his wife Andrea, and we were overlooking the ocean.

12:24:33 The Atlantic Ocean, where I am here in Massachusetts, and I started talking about the tragic life of a plastic bag, and he listened very carefully for a while.

12:24:43 He had a few good questions, and then he said I don't know if you will ever make any

money at this.

12:24:52 But if you want to try, you will need to follow a tipping point.

12:24:57 Strategy, and I said, well, what's the tipping point strategy, he said.

12:25:02 It's a book by Malcolm Gladwell Go read it and tell me if you want to take the next step.

12:25:09 So I bought the book, and this is really about how to start a trend.

12:25:14 You don't need a lot. of marketing dollars, you don't need investors. You can just start a grassroots trend, but you do need 3 things.

12:25:23 So one of the things that you need is a sticky idea, and I thought all right.

12:25:29 Reasonable bags were sticky in Australia. they were sticky in Ireland.

12:25:32 Those cultures are not so different here. Bangladesh, I think we could.

12:25:39 It might be it wasn't out of the question let me put it that way.

12:25:43 It wasn't out of the question the second thing you need is context.

12:25:48 Now here in the Us. in 2,005. The idea of global warming was a very tenuous idea.

12:25:55 Not everybody believed in it, and the people who did that it was so far away.

12:25:58 We didn't really have to worry about it was not like Australia all where they were already feeling the effects.

12:26:06 And Al Gore had not come out with an inconvenient truth.

12:26:11 That would be the next year. So that changed the context immediately for me.

12:26:15 2,005 was the year that Annette Bening was going to the Oscars with a list talent. and I thought, if Leo DiCaprio is going to the Oscars in a Prius, the context for reusable Bags may not

12:26:31 be far behind. So, I took that as a good sign and then the third thing that you need is super connectors, and I thought I don't know any super connectors I just have my friends.

12:26:45 Little did I know that almost everybody in my life would become a super connector, including Carla, who's here today.

12:26:51 Carla, when I started this, said, you know we just call it Vitamin cottage.

12:26:56 Maybe perfect for you, and I called them up, and actually they became one of my very first and very biggest clients.

12:27:01 The first you years of my business. super connectors came out of the woodwork. but at the time I was like I don't know.

12:27:09 I'm just going to try to do it so I called Michael back. I said, all right, what would be the next step?

12:27:16 And he said, well, then, the next thing you need to do is acquire.

12:27:20 Expertise and inventory, and I thought Well, I've read hundreds of pages on fats.

12:27:27 I'm, sure I have enough expertise more expertise than ever expected to have it.



12:27:31 My whole life about bad but inventory. How do you buy it?

12:27:40 Also goods on a global market. What do you do you put it into Google, and you start looking around.

12:27:45 It didn't take me too long to find Alibaba com.

12:27:48 I don't know if You're familiar with it it's a little bit like Amazon, except instead of consumer goods.

12:27:54 This is wholesale commodity goods sourced worldwide, and it's a platform for traders.

12:28:02 So there were lots of people selling this bag, and I thought, Whoa, hey!

12:28:06 Maybe I could just buy also reusable bags the way you buy books from Amazon.

12:28:13 So I put a couple of queries into Alibaba com and I just said I want to bring this to the United States.

12:28:20 Everything on Alibaba dot Com had a minimum order quantity.

12:28:25 So the minimum order for bags, some of them were 10,000 somewhere 25,000. some were 50,000 for like a minimum order, and I'm, thinking what I would do with 10,000 grocery bags.

12:28:37 The numbers seemed crazy to me, but I thought I'm just researching I'm just researching.

12:28:45 I'll just keep going, so I put a few notes in and I said, I want to bring these to the United States.

12:28:51 What is the price? What is the minimum order, quantity? And can you arrange shipping?

12:28:56 Because I had no intention of learning anything about international shipping.

12:29:01 I just wanted my bags. The next day I had no response.

12:29:07 I put out a few more queries, and then a dozen, and then a few doesn't o response.

12:29:15 After 2 weeks of trying I'm thinking how I can acquire inventory. If the vendors won't talk to me, I had brought a stack of these bags from Australia with me, and I started to look at them

12:29:29 for the very first time, carefully and in the bottom of one of them I found this tiny little pad with a website, and I put the website into Google, and it looked exactly like all of the other websites that I'd seen on

12:29:46 Alibaba, and it was not very promising but I thought I'll just try again, and put my query in.

12:29:53 And lo and behold! the next day I had an answer.

12:29:56 It was signed simply Amy and it was there was an address for town.

12:30:04 I Couldn't Pronounce it then but I know now it's pronounced Sanjo a couple of hours out of Shanghai Amy became my supplier for the next 12 years and as unlikely as

12:30:16 it may seem, she became one of my best friends, and is to this day I still talk to Amy almost every month, and we check in.

12:30:24 So I get this answer from Amy. She has some answers.

12:30:27 I go back with more questions. She comes back. We go back and forth for a few weeks, and I start moving toward actually getting a minimum order quantity out of China.

12:30:39 To be delivered. There came toward the end of the summer before I went back to teaching.

12:30:49 There was a moment where I realized I would have to put down real money for this, and I kind of got cold feet.

12:30:56 The price for a minimum order. Quantity of bags at that time was equivalent to me to the monthly salary.

12:31:06 The monthly paycheck. but I got as an English teacher, and I was thinking, this is real money.

12:31:12 Can I really Do this? and I wasn't sure I could I ran into another friend of mine, and she looked at she goes. Lisa, what is wrong?

12:31:21 I it must have been all over my face and I said I Don't think I can do it after all like It's just too much money, and it's like I have to take so many.

12:31:28 And she said, well, how much is a minimum order, quantity?

12:31:32 And I said, 8,000, and she looked at me. What else could I be?

12:31:38 She said, I'll take 2,000 and immediately suddenly I realized customer.

12:31:49 Now I have to deliver for my customer I had just made a sale. And so, the next morning I wired money to China and started to think about what I was going to do when 8,000 bodies landed in my living room because I

12:32:04 didn't have a garage so the bags were going to arrive in November.

12:32:11 I started teaching and I found the brown Cal yogurt site.

12:32:18 It had a list of grocery stores that carried brown Cal yogurt, and I thought to myself, if you have organic yogurt, you might want reusable.

12:32:29 bags. so, I put all of those into a little notebook.

12:32:34 I would go teach first, second, first period, second period, third period.

12:32:38 I had a fourth period break every day, and in fourth period I would take this one notebook, walk out onto the staircase overlooking the faculty parking lot behind the English department building and started cold calling small grocery

12:32:53 stores across the us if you've ever done and if you're familiar with cold calling. you'll know 5% interest rate on a cold call list is excellent.

12:33:06 That is considered a high rate of response. I had over 50% of my calls responded with interest.

12:33:15 They wanted a priceless. They wanted a bat. They want a sample bag.

12:33:19 Many of them went on to become to place a trial order of a 100 bags, and then 200 bags and 400 bags, and I started selling grocery bags out of my dining room.

12:33:33 Not everybody said, yes, I did get to the I got bold pretty quickly.

12:33:39 As Vicki noticed. I get. I can pull quickly and

12:33:49 I called so Western Region headquarters for Safeway, and the buyer for the front end of the store took my call to her credit.

12:33:56 I give her a lot of credit for taking my call. She listened to my pitch.

12:34:01 The tragic life of a of a plastic bag.

12:34:05 And I have a new technological product that will help solve this problem.

12:34:10 For 99 cents and she wasn't too, as she said, our research indicates that 3% of Americans use reusable bags.

12:34:19 That number has not changed since 1970 and we don't expect it to change now.

12:34:25 But thank you, and good luck, and she hung up but a lot of people didn't stand out there on that staircase.

12:34:32 I sold a quarter of a 1 million grocery bags, reusable grocery dance that first year in business, and then I quit teaching, and then next year I sold 2 million bags, and the third year I sold 8 million

12:34:49 bags, and I sat down at my desk for the first 5 years of becoming an entrepreneur, and wrote borders as fast as I could rate them, and I got very good at the back end of business supply chain

12:35:03 logistics, cash, flow, quality, control, key account management, managing my own team, managing my vendors, following up on freight as it moved from Shanghai to the port of La to my warehouse and across to

12:35:19 every corner of the Us. and I was off to the races, becoming an entrepreneur like that led me to some incredible places and experiences.

12:35:35 I learned so much, and I grew so much, and I all the stories are in my book.

12:35:40 So please go out if you're interested I encourage you to please go out and buy my book.

12:35:46 Bad lady which is available. but I wanted to one story here.

12:35:52 So from the very beginning, I really I was very clear that I was solving a problem.

12:36:00 The plastic pollution problem. But I didn't want to contribute to any other problems.

12:36:04 So I talked to Amy, and I said, you know we need to have good factories.

12:36:09 I have to have, you know, fair labor practices. and she said, oh, of course all of our factories are very good, but I thought I really needed to do more than trust on this issue, so I hired an inspection. company.

12:36:24 And they went out to the factory in China that was making the majority.

12:36:30 The vast majority of my bags and some things they were a little troubling, terrible.

12:36:38 There was debris on the workplace for the exits weren't clearly marked.

12:36:44 There were some cans in the spring printing area that weren't covered with, you know, chemicals.

12:36:50 Everybody was paid. but they weren't really getting overtime, which was beginning to be required more and more as I ramped up in in my orders.

12:37:01 And so I sent the report to Amy, and I said, you need to address these issues.

12:37:07 3 months later we had another inspection. The easy stuff was cleaned up, the floor was clean, the exits were marked, chemicals were stored properly.

12:37:18 This was a clean, safe place to work practices We're still a little problematic and talking to the Inspector and Diane Amy.

12:37:30 I realized the couple who ran this factory. Well, husband, wife, team, the wife was keeping the books, and they were entrepreneurs just like me.

12:37:37 She would need some help if she was going to come up to my standards.

12:37:42 So I plunk down my money, and I talked to the to the inspectors, and they came up with a program to train her 2 implement proper pay practices for her employees.

12:37:56 6 months later we had another inspection, and indeed it came back.

12:38:02 It was a clean, safe place to work, and everybody was paid properly.

12:38:06 This was not easy to do in 2,008, and yet, to my shock and horror, there was a child.

12:38:17 Labor violation. I called Amy, I said, what is going on?

12:38:24 And Amy very calmly said, yes, we have one worker.

12:38:27 She is a little bit young, but she has her sister's face This made no sense to me.

12:38:35 If it doesn't make sense to you that's how it felt for me.

12:38:39 I was like, what does that mean? No matter what I said to Amy. All she would say is, she has her sister's face.

12:38:45 I call the inspector, and I tried to find out so here's a couple of things that I found out one.

12:38:51 This was China. In one child rule 2 sisters. The second child is illegal.

12:38:58 She would have only been able to get papers for one of them.

12:39:02 They looked alike, and they were sharing one set of papers she couldn't the other one.

12:39:07 The second one existed had no legal standing. The other thing I found out is that in charge, The mandatory age for schooling is 16 at which time you graduate with the equivalent of a high school degree The minimum age for

12:39:27 working is 17, so there's this fun little gap in between, and apparently a lot of kids had once they ended.

12:39:34 School had to start working, and it was a commonplace violation it's not right.

12:39:40 I'm not saying it's right I'm just saying they did it.

12:39:45 And I was also told that this family had come out of the countryside just that year, just the 3 of them a mother and 2 girls, and I'm thinking why they would leave so early before the youngest one was Even ready to work

12:40:00 well in world China it is still common that rural landlords have a first, a second, or a third wife maybe and because she couldn't produce a male air, she was probably not treated very well on the family farm they

12:40:17 were just mouse to feed, and she probably left as soon as she could.

12:40:21 As soon as the youngest one was finished with education and went to the city looking for a better life for her girls, because those 2 girls, if they could So a straight scene and work a show a sewing machine, they would never have to rely

12:40:35 on the graces of a rural landlord for their living they would be independent, and they would actually have.

12:40:43 Those are middle class jobs in China. They would be able to support themselves, housing and feed themselves, and have a decent life for themselves without having to rely on somebody.

12:40:56 What's up understood what was going on the factory offered to fire her, and I said, you can fire her.

12:41:08 But she is, but her existence is illegal. It is not her fault that she is with school, not able to work, and not comfortable enough in her own home.

12:41:22 The homeless. She was born to stay there until she is legal to work.

12:41:24 It is not. This is her fault, I said you can't fire her.

12:41:31 So I found out when her birthday was going to be, and I scheduled another inspection.

12:41:36 These inspections are not cheap, with all the investment in training, everything. This all cost me a lot of money.

12:41:41 But if it was the right thing to do, this was leading from the heart, being purpose-driven, and people centered.

12:41:48 And if I could protect this girl for 6 months she's with her mother, she's with her sister. I can't fire her.

12:41:53 She has to stay with her family, and I protect her for 6 months, and it left me with a blot on my record for 6 months.

12:42:01 But I figure it's better for me to take the hit than for her.

12:42:06 I have more resources to take that hit. interestingly before that next inspection in the fall. I was connected to ace hardware, and I talked to the buyer there, and he said we would love to have reusable shopping bats but I

12:42:24 can't find a vendor with the ethics and the quality that we need.

12:42:28 I was completely transparent. I told him exactly where I was, and that in a couple of months' time I would have a report.

12:42:36 I'd be happy to send him and hardware became my biggest customer for the next decade.

12:42:46 So when I talked at the beginning about being purpose driven and heart centered, doing the right thing for your business, you draw the customers to you that you need.

12:42:57 It was probably the best investment I ever could have made.

12:43:02 I got a great client and a number of other clients who came to me because they were

looking for quality and ethics, and that's what my bags always stood for, and I stood by that for the time.

12:43:14 The 12 years that I ran my business and that's exactly what how we doing on time close to the end.

12:43:24 So I'm going to just start to wrap up a couple of things.

12:43:27 So first of all, you might think that this is like a really sweet and fringe idea, right?

12:43:33 For Re, you know, just to be oh, really, people centered.

12:43:38 But actually this is a movement, and I'm going to tell you a quick little story.

12:43:44 This is not about me. Around the time that I started my company in 2,006, a guy named McHale Lenza was hired by Unilever, which is one of the largest consumer.

12:43:56 Goods manufacturer in the world to be the brand manager of Lipton. T.

12:44:05 Lipton was at the time engaged in a price war.

12:44:08 They were lowering the price, even if they lost money, to push some of the competitors out of business, so that they could maintain market share.

12:44:17 And Mikhail Lenza looked at it and he said, this is a terrible business plan to intentionally lose money, and he argued, why don't we by 100% sustainably Great tea Now they're

12:44:35 in a price war, and this meant raising the cost of T by 5% which seemed crazy to Unilever.

12:44:44 But he argued that consumers would pay a little bit more for a team for a breakfast beverage that was certified, sustainably grown.

12:44:54 It meant certifying, retraining, as certifying a half a 1 million small tea farmers in Asia and in India and Unilever eventually said, yes, and that is what they did and consumers supported it.

12:45:12 Michelangelo also said: If they stop using toxic chemicals and fertilizers on their land to try to get more tea, the land will rebound when you start using compost an organic

12:45:26 fertilizer. your yields come back. And so, Unilever, in 2019, announced that 75% of its group was coming from its sustainable brands, being purpose driven and people centered is affecting business

12:45:43 at scale at the largest companies. Walmart, I could go on with these stories right?

12:45:49 This is exactly what is happening now. and why it's happening Why?

12:45:55 As happy as because of consumers like you, because people like you, the women from the lotus network and beyond will pay that 5% more right, which is what maybe a nickel maybe 3 cents on a cup of tea or that

12:46:13 99 cents for a grocery bag.

12:46:15 That idea that the people like you power this enormous change that we are seeing in our world.

12:46:24 So I want to remind you. if you think, if you remember nothing else from today, I want you to remember that you, as a consumer, have enormous power.

12:46:33 It's the little choices you make every single day that add up to the big changes we need to

see in our world.

12:46:42 You vote not every 4 years in the ballot box you vote every single day with your dollars and your pocket for, and those little choices like reusing a bag like organic produce, like patronizing Those businesses who are pulling out of Russia

12:47:02 I have a whole list here buying an electric car, switching to nontoxic cleaning products in your home, saying, No.

12:47:11 The plastic cutlery for your takeout food, and for your events.

12:47:16 My daughter got married a few years ago, and I said to all the vendors. there will be no plastic at this event, and the caterer said, well, that's a lot of the last shot classes and I said Okay, when you

12:47:31 say, okay to these little things. This is what we need to see.

12:47:36 The world that we want to live in. So that is your power as a consumer.

12:47:40 This is what I do as a business coach. Now I help my clients be purpose driven.

12:47:49 People centered. focus on your values, bring value to your customers, and your customers will recognize the value when you bring it and support you.

12:48:00 And that is the kind of business that we want to see in the world.

12:48:03 So it's people like you who are going to save the world one action at a time, one consumer choice at a time.

12:48:12 And that's my story. Oh, my gosh Lisa thank you so much!

12:48:22 I mean. I hope you can hear the cheering in the crowd right now, because Wow!

12:48:28 Wow, just like, Yeah, that was just awesome. you just spoke from your heart straight into ours, and I can't thank you enough.

12:48:39 I want to invite everyone. if you've got questions we have a few minutes, not many.

12:48:44 But in the chat write something down I'll start off while people are gathering their thoughts and putting things in the chat.

12:48:53 But I just can't even I'm there's so much to unpack with this and I can't wait to unpack it more, and I think in your book you said that you were told to do one thing

12:49:06 Is that right? And I love that if we could all maybe just do one thing, it would add up.

12:49:13 It's very powerful to just figure out what it is that drives your heart right, because if you just pick that one thing that you are passionate about, you will stick with it.

12:49:23 It drives you through the ups the downs and when you read my book.

12:49:26 There's a lot of downs. Well, it was not easy things go wrong all the time in business, and for all of us in our lives.

12:49:34 But when you have one thing that drives you, it keeps you steady.

12:49:39 It gives you a purpose in life, it is really meaningful.

12:49:42 So. yes, pick one thing. that you're going to do and I think that that's a really powerful

message for consumers and business alike.

12:49:52 Okay, thank you. What you know your book I we're those of us that have known about it are reading it or have read it.

12:50:00 What? What made you want to write this book right now? I mean What?

12:50:04 How did that decision to get this, or has it just taken all this time to get it up and published, you know, even when I was going through some of these experiences, I was thinking, Gosh!

12:50:16 I These are great stories, and I've always wanted to do it, but I never really had time.

12:50:27 As soon as I sold my business I launched as a business coach and started building that business.

12:50:31 But when Covid hit in December the twentieth 19, that was a pretty dark winter for a lot of us.

12:50:37 A lot of us spent a lot of time at home by the fire.

12:50:40 We reading, writing, being with our family. My kids are grown, and

12:50:47 I just thought, this is the perfect time to write my book, and I sat down.

12:50:51 I didn't know how ready I was I really was ready I sat down in the middle of December.

12:50:56 The twentieth 19, I had 250 pages.

12:50:59 By the middle of February. it took me 3 months.

12:51:02 It port out of me, and they were pretty good pages.

12:51:07 I read them over a few times and I sent them to my husband who's my husband's a movie producer, and so I was like, all right.

12:51:14 He's going to be a tough critic if it's not good. He's going to tell me so I sent it to him, and he said, this is really good, and he's not he sent me to some ages.

12:51:25 That he knew, so I knew he felt pretty good about it.

12:51:28 But eventually I it took me. It took me until November of the next year to find a publisher, and I didn't even need an agent right.

12:51:37 I had to go to a second-tier publisher, a boutique publisher, and I'm so grateful.

12:51:42 My publisher is an amazing guy, and so dedicated, and they have a whole line of books called Change Makers books, and you can find them.

12:51:54 They are all dedicated to all those things you know, to really making change. one of them that I would.

12:52:03 If you're looking for consumer advice, one of them is called o waste the 80 over 20 way, and her whole thing is getting 80% of the plastic out of your life.

12:52:12 80% of the waste is pretty easy. A 100% is very hard but getting 80%.

12:52:18 And if we had millions of people doing o waste imperfectly, if millions of people reduce their trash by 50 or 80%, imagine what that would do.



12:52:30 Oh, I think what you just said was so important if we had millions of people doing it imperfectly. we would be we're imperfectly.

12:52:41 No one has to do this perfectly it's very difficult. but you have the journey with 1,000 miles begins with this one step.

12:52:47 We have to take that step. right? Yeah. Yeah. we have to take that.

12:52:52 And the 80% is close enough to do most of it.

12:52:56 , really far. If you get 80% and is there Any chance you could get your husband to produce a movie called the Tragic Life of a plastic , we might need for him.

12:53:12 To do that. Okay, there is a and I can't remember what is called, but there is a movie.

12:53:14 It came out years ago. There's so much new I was sending you some information this morning.

12:53:21 There is more and more information about plastic that is coming out.

12:53:24 All these facts that I said we were hiding. they are being more and more visible.

12:53:32 So yeah, take a look. Well, Lisa, you are a change maker.

12:53:36 You are incredible, and I on behalf of everyone at Lotus Network and our whole group today I mean a 1 million

12:53:48 Thanks to you for trusting in your heart, grabbing inspiration, and doing something with it.

12:53:55 What a life lesson for all of us in what you have done!

12:53:59 You have really done something remarkable and profound and I just can't I can't get over it.

12:54:06 It's just something so special and I want to let everybody know that Lisa's presentation will be up on lotus networks website on with her own with Lisa foster's Web page it will

12:54:19 be the recording of it. you can watch it again. So, if you feel like you want to rehear some of this information because there was a lot.

12:54:26 Please go back to that and share it with a friend That's what a beautiful thing to do, and also on her web page will be other links that you can learn about sustainability.

12:54:41 And information it's all going to be there on that page so tomorrow.

12:54:46 We're having an overtime discussion let's talk about a discussion.

12:54:50 It will be at noon. the link is in the chat, I believe, and we you can kind of join this, and we can have an hours' worth of conversation for those of you who want to dig deep You know want to just do a little bit of a deeper

12:55:02 dive into seeing how everybody else feels about this. but

12:55:06 That will be tomorrow may nineteenth. So, thank you again, Lisa.

12:55:10 Thank you all for joining us so much together. I really believe we can create change in our community, and with one bag at a time, one action at a time, one friendship at a time.

12:55:23 We can't do this together. I know we can so everybody thank you all so much.

12:55:27 Stay safe out there. Please stay safe. Stay connected by everyone. Thank you for joining us.