



RAY EDWARDS

LIVE WITH JOY. LEAD WITH PASSION. PROSPER WITH PURPOSE.

Kimanzi Constable How to Get Featured on Big Sites like The Huffington Post Episode 153

Welcome, my friends. Welcome aboard. My voice is a little weak I've been battling something. I don't know what it is, some kind of cold or allergy, something. I'll tell you this much, it's disgusting. Let's just leave it at that. Yeah, I'm going to leave it at that. Why did I tell you that? I don't know. It's just life, that's how it is.

I'm getting ready to hit the road and head to San Diego for our Permission to Prosper live event there. It's going to be a small group of folks getting together to do something remarkable. A small group of people doing something really big, that's what's about to happen in San Diego. So by the time you hear this it will be the day before the event. It's actually the week before it as I'm recording this episode and it's going to be a little bit different. This episode and next week's episode will be a little bit different.

Somebody asked me recently, are you turning your podcast into just an interview show because it seems like you're doing lots of interviews lately. The answer is no, it's just what I feel like doing right now. I have so much to say to you, that I want to talk to you about, that I'm not able to get to this week or next week, but we'll go back to something resembling the old format in a couple of weeks. I've got some great interviews for you, especially this one today.

I think we can all agree if you could get your writing published on The Huffington Post or on a site like Good Men Project that would probably be a good thing. Yes? Can we agree on this, that it would help build traffic to your site, maybe get you more subscribers, more listeners, perhaps more people buying your stuff? Of course it would. Well, in today's episode I'm going to interview the amazing Kimanzi Constable and that is just one of the many fascinating lessons you're going to learn from him. I'm telling you, this is one of the most inspiring interviews I've ever done. So buckle up, this is going to be a fun, fun ride today.

Spiritual Foundations

Now, since it's an interview episode and it's a little bit truncated, shorter would be a different way of saying that than normally, I'm just going to skip right to the Spiritual Foundations and we'll get back to our normal format in couple of weeks. I've got something that I want to talk to you about today that I think has big meaning for you and for me right now in this day and age, in this time, at this particular point in your life. I think it's not just for me, but it's for you, also.

Recently, one of the places that I love to eat breakfast, a little restaurant we have breakfast at often on Sundays here in Spokane, has on their wall this Scripture. I just saw it one day. I didn't even realize that this was a Christian-owned business until I looked up and saw on the wall in giant letters, "COMMIT YOUR WORK TO THE LORD AND YOUR PLANS WILL BE ESTABLISHED". Of course, that comes from Proverbs 16:3. I just was struck by that.

I was doing some house cleaning, simplifying my life. It's one of my goals that I developed during the Best Year Ever Program from Michael Hyatt, simplifying my physical environment. As I was doing some cleaning and rearranging some things, I found this gift that I was given a couple of years ago. It's a clear block of glass and etched inside the glass is this: Work willingly at whatever you do, as through you were working for the Lord rather than for people. That's from Colossians 3:23-24.

Just the two of those together as I was thinking about them today I realized, this is what it's all about when we talk about business in and of itself as good, that it's not business as a ministry, but business is the ministry. This is what we're talking about: committing your work to the Lord and then your plans will be established. Sometimes we get it backwards, we think if we will just pray the right prayer or somehow be super spiritual. In some way, it is mystifying to me what it is we're thinking inside of ourselves, but this is what I know.

We need to focus on what is God doing and we need to participate in that, instead of figuring out what we want to do and asking God to bless that. I think that's the key to having our plans be established because our plans become to do what He's doing. In other words, we can often go wrong when we just ask God to bless what we're doing, but we will never go wrong when we start doing what He's blessing. That's what I'm trying to say. Let that soak in...it's good.

Feature Presentation

All right, we're going to get right to this interview with Kimanzi Constable. You are going to love this. There is so much good stuff in here. I don't know if I need to tell you this, but this is one that you definitely want to take notes. Yeah, it's that good. You definitely want to take notes. Let's get right to it.

Ray: Kimanzi Constable is an amazing producer of content. He's a great writer. He is becoming famous. He just got a book deal. He's published on The Good Men Project on The Huffington Post and many other big sites and he's here to tell us about how he went from a bread truck driver who was busted at 170 pounds overweight to being the success that he is today. Kimanzi, why don't we start at the low point?

Kimanzi: Yes. Well, when I was 19 I delivered bread for Sara Lee and every day I'd deliver bread I would see this guy who wasn't wearing a uniform. I asked him one day, I said, why aren't you guys wearing a uniform and he said he was an independent contractor. I didn't know what that was at the time, but he kind of explained that they bought a territory and they had all the grocery stores on that territory. They would get paid 20%, but they were responsible for all their own stuff.

Now, this was big money. They were investing \$250,000 to buy into this and they were making big money, as well. The lowest guy there, at least in Wisconsin, was making \$100 grand a year, but there were people making half a million dollars with this bread distributorship. He said the problem is we don't have somebody to cover our routes when we want to go on vacation. Since we invested all this money, we're not just going to ask any Joe off the street. He said if we have somebody good that person would work forever and that's kind of when the light bulb went off in my head.

I said hey, I'm good and I'm very familiar with the bread industry, why don't you give me a shot and the guy gave me a shot. He trained me for free. He didn't pay me

anything, but he did give me all the knowledge and the tools that I needed and he became my first customer. I did a good job for him and then somebody else said okay, let me give you a shot. I did a good for for him and it went like that for four or five people and before I knew it at 19 I had a business that was bringing in like \$75,000 a year.

It grew so fast, word got out that I did a good job. Nobody else was doing this, Ray. There was no other person doing vacations like this, so in a year or two I had to bring on two guys because there was that much business. By year six, I had five guys and the business was bringing in half a million dollars a year. It was good; the problem was that I didn't know anything about business. I didn't study business. I didn't have any mentors or anything like that, so I just ran this thing into the ground.

The money would come in and I didn't know anything about keeping money for taxes, about paying your quarterlies, about keeping your receipts. I didn't know any of this kind of stuff, so the money would come in and I would just spent it. We had nice cars, several cars. We owned two houses. I owned two houses at 20 years old, which was ridiculous. The person that was renting one just kind of ran it to the ground, didn't pay rent most of the time, but I was making so much money that I didn't care.

Ray: Now, you said you owned two houses. Did you own them or where they mortgaged?

Kimanzi: They were mortgaged.

Ray: Okay.

Kimanzi: Yeah, they were mortgaged.

Ray: I've been there, so I get you. Go ahead.

Kimanzi: So that's what the problem ending up being, I'd just run this thing into the ground. All those years I would go to my accountant and I would get these crazy tax bills. It was bringing in a lot of money, but I wasn't smart with the expenses and stuff like that and so six years into this business I had like \$100,000 in debt to the IRS and other places. I just kind of limped on for the next six years and it got to the point where at the end, in 2011, the IRS was garnishing our bank accounts. I couldn't even open a bank account in my name. Creditors were coming after me. They ended up reposing both of our cars. It was a really rough year.

I remember sitting down in the living room at a friend's house because my wife and I were separated. The money problems had led to so many fights and when there are money problems there are just relationship problems. So we were separated, I was living with a friend and I remember just sitting on the ground realizing I was \$180 grand in debt, I was separated from my wife, this business was in shambles and I had no hope. I just sat there on the ground, Ray, crying because I didn't know what else to do. After crying for about an hour, I sat there.

I'm a Christian, Ray, and I had been away from the Lord for a while, but at that point I just cried out. I'm like look, I need help. I don't know what to do, I just need help. I need to find my way back to you. That's what I did and I just kind of felt a little bit of peace, but then it was a matter of going and getting some counseling. I had a good friend that I grew up with, he was actually the pastor's son at my church and I said

look, this is the situation. He's younger than I am, but he walked me through it and gave me such good advice. I got a plan and I told my wife, I'm like look, I understand if you don't trust me you don't want to get back together, but I wanted to let you know that I'm working on this.

At that point, I just started doing what I had to do. I knew I needed more income, so I started some side hustles. So in addition to doing the bread, I would go in my neighborhood and I would cut my neighbors' grass, wash cars, clean houses. I did whatever it took to make extra money and by the end of that summer I had raised a good amount of money and I was well on my way to start paying down some of this debt. We had got on the Dave Ramsey Journey, I had found him. While I was delivering bread late at night, I found him and started listening to the Total Money Makeover stuff. It all seemed kind of crazy, but I started my debt snowball and, sure enough, paying some of those little bills I'm like man, this actually works. This is great!

Of course, listening to Dave Ramsey he always talked about a guy named Dan Miller and I'm like who is this Dan Miller guy that I keep hearing of. So I went to Half Price Books and I looked for Dan Miller and a book that Dave had always talked about and I found it. It was *48 Days to the Work You Love*. I read a little bit of the book on the way to the counter and I was shocked, so I got home and I devoured that book in probably like two hours. I couldn't put it down and I couldn't believe it. That book, it felt like it was talking to me. It was describing my life, describing where I was at and by the end of it I had hope, Ray, hope that I could have a better life and so that's what kind of started this journey.

Ray: Well, you know, a couple of things I just want to highlight that you just said that I think are so profound. First of all, that moment of brokenness when you just said to God, help. I think He just waits for us to be in that condition. I don't think He puts us in bad situations, we put ourselves there and then He's just waiting for us to finally realize God, I need your help. I think He loves it when we have that moment when we just surrender to Him and then he loves to help us. Look how he sent help your way with the pastor's son, who is younger than you.

That's the other thing I wanted to highlight. You were wise enough to take counsel from somebody, even though they were younger than you, even though externally it maybe would look weird to other people. Like, you're older, more experienced, why would you listen to this other person? Well, because you're a student. You had reached a point where you were just like I want to know how to get out of this situation that I'm in and I'm ready to listen to whoever can show me part of that path.

Kimanzi: That's exactly what happened.

Ray: I've got to tell you, when I hear people talk about how they don't have any money can't get a job and can't find any work it drives me absolutely nuts because I think there are so many things you could do. It's so rare that I run across somebody who's willing to do it and you were willing, you were cutting people's grass for crying out loud.

Kimanzi: It was a pride thing, I was embarrassed. People in the neighborhood see me, people that I knew saw me and it was embarrassing. It really taught me what humbleness is.

Ray: Yeah, but you're not embarrassed now.

Kimanzi: No, and it got us the money that we needed.

Ray: So talk to me a little bit about the weight loss thing.

Kimanzi: Yeah, while I was doing the bread we had odd hours. We would start at midnight and we'd go 'til about 9:00 or 10:00, whenever we were done. When I would wake up at midnight that was like the morning time I was waking up, so what do you do in the morning? You have breakfast and for me breakfast consisted of McDonald's, Taco Bell, whatever fast-food restaurant was open at that time to stay up because I had young kids.

I have three kids and they were young and they had all kinds of school activities, soccer and Tae Kwon Do, all kinds of stuff. This stuff happened later at night, so I was getting two to three hours of sleep probably, honestly, for like 10 years. It was not a lot of sleep at all. I would take naps during the day, but I didn't get sleep at night. So besides the McDonald's, after I did the McDonald's, I would go to our warehouse and get the bread and then the first thing I'd do is drive to the gas station and get a 44 ounce Mountain Dew.

Every day I did this and so it didn't take long over the years for the pounds to start coming on. I had gained 130 pounds, I was up to 332 pounds and then my brother was getting married and asked me to be the best man at his wedding. When I saw myself in the pictures I was just horrified at how I looked, so I went on this crazy extreme diet where I was only eating 1,200 calories a day. I would literally only eat lunch and that was the only meal I'd eat. I was in the gym four hours a day. I lost the 132 pounds in six months, like really quickly, but I didn't learn what it meant to live a healthy lifestyle and healthy lifestyle choices, so in the next year I gained all that weight back plus another 38 pounds.

Ray: You're kidding me.

Kimanzi: I'm not kidding. So that brings us to 2013 and about June 2013 my best friend was getting married and, again, he asked me to be his best man

Ray: Oh, no.

Kimanzi: It was the same situation. I couldn't fit in the tux. They had to special order my tux. I was 370 pounds and I hated myself for it. I had done this before, but this time I said I want to lose the weight but I want to do it in a healthy way. I want to learn what it means to make healthy choices and live a healthy lifestyle, so on June 17th of 2013 I started eating portion-control meals, just smaller portions. I cut out all the fast food and all the soda. I still haven't drunken soda since June 17th of 2013. I still haven't had a drop of soda, I cut out all the candy and sweets and then I started running.

My mom is from Kenya, I lived in Kenya for two years, so running is just something that comes natural to me. I couldn't even run for a mile that first day. I felt like I was going to have a heart attack, but I was determined and I did kind of run-walk combination and just built up my endurance until I could run the whole time. From June 17th of 2013 to about June 17th of 2014, in that year I had lost 170 pounds.

Ray: Wow! You know what you are? You are the end of excuses for a lot of people, that's what you are. That's amazing, 170 pounds.

Kimanzi: Yep.

Ray: Wow.

Kimanzi: And I've kept it off now since June.

Ray: Do you crave soda and that stuff at all?

Kimanzi: I do not crave soda. I was a vegetarian, actually. For most of 2014, I was a vegetarian. I just started eating chicken and turkey, but I'm not going to eat red meat or pork. I definitely missed the chicken, I'll say that, but the soda I don't miss and the fast food I don't miss. I don't even think about it anymore.

Ray: Wow. That's amazing, that in itself, if anybody struggles with weight or those kinds of problems. Do you feel that was rooted in other stuff inside of you?

Kimanzi: Oh definitely, I think it all works hand in hand. When I was depressed and things were going bad I just ate horribly. I spent money horribly on fast food and stuff like that, but when I finally just started to get my life together and making progress the weight loss was something that I wanted to incorporate. As I've lost weight, I feel like I have more energy. I have more focus. I have more discipline to get up every morning. Today, even after the weight is gone, I still get up every morning at 4:00 a.m. and I go out there and run at least four miles.

Ray: Out there for you is in Hawaii.

Kimanzi: It's in Maui, yes, so the weather is a little bit better than what I did in Wisconsin.

Ray: Oh, no kidding. So when did the writing start for you?

Kimanzi: The writing started in the end of 2011. That summer when everything was going really bad I had wanted to journal what was going on. I had found peace in the journaling and getting thoughts out of my head and on paper. I had always loved to write, Ray, as far back as I can remember. I was in second grade writing girls love letters and stuff like that, so I had always loved to write,

We grew up in a religious home and when I was 17 I rebelled against my parents. They said if you don't want to follow the rules you've got to get out of our house, so I left and I was homeless at 17. For six months, I was living on the street and friends' couches and during that time I had to work just to survive, Ray. I had two jobs and one thing that ended up getting sacrificed was high school. I just didn't have time for it, so I dropped out of high school and got these jobs.

Shortly after that, I was working at Burger King, met my wife and three months after I met her we got married. So we got our place, started getting our lives together and she said you need to go back. You need to get your GED. So I went back and got that, but I still gave up writing. Then fast forward to 2011, when all this was going on I rediscovered that love of writing again when I was journaling.

Looking at this journal and all this material here, I had read the story of a very inspiring young woman named Amanda Hocking. She had written 19 novels by the time she was 17, so I was just incredibly inspired by her. She self-published and had sold over a million copies of her self-published books on her own, without a huge following, without all the things you would think you would need.

She inspired me to take this little collection of thoughts here and put them into an eBook, so August 11, 2011 was when I self-published my first book. It did not sell. It sold five copies in the first six months, but in 2012 I was determined to learn the strategy behind all of this.

Ray: Wait a minute. You sold five copies?

Kimanzi: Five copies in the first six months and three of those were to friends.

Ray: And you did not quit.

Kimanzi: I got pretty close. The one thing I'll say is my wife has been incredibly supportive, so she was kind of there in my corner and then I have a little mastermind, I'll call it. We weren't a mastermind back then, but that's what we were. It was two friends and my brother and we had always just talked. We'd talk through things and we were there for each other, so they had said don't quit. Figure this stuff out, don't give up.

Ray: Were you still living in Wisconsin at this time?

Kimanzi: We were still living in Wisconsin, yeah.

Ray: Okay, so go on with the story.

Kimanzi: So 2012, that's when I really started writing. I saw that guest posting, which you're audience I'm sure is going to be familiar with, and it was a really good strategy to get traffic back to your website. I had no traffic, so I figured with no traffic I was going to get no book sales. So 2012, the beginning part of that, that's all I focused on was guest posting. I had written 80 guest posts those first three months and I sent them out to different blogs and bloggers, everybody out there.

Actually, that year, over the course of the year, I landed 50 of those guest posts. I landed them for my heroes. Dan Miller was the first one to accept my guest post, which was surreal. I landed it from Michael Hyatt, Jon Acuff, Jeff Goins and a bunch of other bloggers that I really, really respect I had landed guest posts on their blogs and I finally got some traffic. On the first time I guest posted for Michael, that month I had gotten 6,000 email subscribers between him and the Dan Miller guest post.

So I finally got an audience and over the course of that year I had done the guest posting and I had done a bunch of podcast interviews. It was like 80 or 81 podcast interviews I had done that year. I have that somewhere on a PDF, but I had done a lot of interviews so I started getting traffic, people started buying the books, which were a shock because I had self-published a second book.

I had gotten an invitation to come speak at a social media conference in West Virginia in the middle of that year. Even though I'm an introvert and speaking is not my thing, I went out there and I spoke at this event and I was horrible, Ray. It was a bad talk, but

people had said they liked the content. It was just bad. I erased the video off of YouTube, but it was just bad.

Ray: Why do you say it was bad? What was bad about it, people loved the content.

Kimanzi: They told me that I was a terrible speaker, but they loved the content.

Ray: No. People actually said you were a terrible speaker?

Kimanzi: Yes.

Ray: Oh, ooh!

Kimanzi: Yes.

Ray: Okay.

Kimanzi: I was just so nervous, so scared and it was so new, but I loved the traveling part of all that and so I was determined that you know what? If I can travel for free, go help some people out with this message, why not. I had gone to Experts Academy that year and I had met some pretty amazing contracts, one of the being my publisher. Some guys at Experts Academy said they were throwing a conference in New York and they asked me to come out there and speak. I thought man, New York, Time Square, New York Pizza, yeah, I'm there.

Ray: Yes.

Kimanzi: One of the speakers there, he was like hey, have fun. You're here, you're in New York one of the greatest cities in the world, just have fun. He was like realize that these people are sitting out there in the audience to hear you. You're the expert, so act like it. He's like have fun. So I went out there and I had fun. I had a blast and I enjoyed myself.

A person that was sitting in the audience was an organizer from a conference in Sydney, Australia and she asked me to come speak at a conference in Sydney. I thought she was punking me at first, Ray, I'm like did somebody put you up to this? Who are you? I didn't even have a passport, but they offered to pay me to come out to Sydney. I got the passport fast-tracked, I flew out to Sydney and I hadn't done my research right so I got off the plane at 6:00 a.m. in Sydney and I wasn't able to check into my hotel 'til 3:00. I hadn't checked on the weather, so I'm in shorts and a T-shirt and it's winter in Sydney.

Ray: Oh man.

Kimanzi: So I'm freezing, I don't know where I'm going, I'm hopping on trains trying to get somewhere, but figuring out that portion just gave me a confidence in so many other things, like being able to be in a strange land, not know anybody, not know anything and figure out okay, let me get to this coffee shop, let me get to some Wi-Fi, let me go on AT&T and turn on my international plan for my cell phone so I can call somebody. Figuring all that stuff out really gave me a lot of confidence in a lot of areas of my life and since then I have spoken in 12 countries, I've spoken in 12 states. Last year I spoke in Jerusalem, Ray, which was surreal. To go to Jerusalem and see all the

spots in the Bible, see those come alive. Where Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River that was right there.

Ray: That's amazing.

Kimanzi: To see people getting baptized in there was surreal. So 2012 was really the year where I made real income. I made \$22,000 from speaking. I made a ton of money. I had sold like 45,000 copies of my two books. I had made a ton of money from my books. I started taking on some coaching by the end of that year and made some money there. All of that money, Ray, all of it, went to pay off all that debt, to pay off that \$180,000.

Ray: So you're not living the rockstar lifestyle on this money, you were still paying off the debt.

Kimanzi: I was paying off the debt. So by the end of 2012 we had a decent savings, we had probably like 95% of the debt paid off, I had a business that was bringing in, consistently, about \$5,000 a month, so at the end of 2012 is when I felt comfortable to take the leap.

Ray: To take the leap?

Kimanzi: And quit my day job.

Ray: Ah. How is your wife handling all this as you're going through this process?

Kimanzi: At first it was kind of weird to her because I was a blue-collar worker, she was a worker and the concept of making money from the Internet, making money from a book, coaching people, traveling and speaking, this was all very foreign to us and it was actually kind of unbelievable. I had read the stories, I had seen what people were doing, but I just didn't believe it.

That first time when Amazon had sent a check for \$2,000, it was like \$2,336, was the first big check. We had seen this and we couldn't believe it. Like is this real? Really, from these books I had written? That money is when it kind of became real for me and especially for her. When she saw that money she said, we've got to see how we can make more of this. We've got to see how we can take this to the next level.

Ray: Wow! How did you go from selling five books in six months to selling tens of thousands of books?

Kimanzi: For me it was just a matter of the guest posting being everywhere, doing the podcast interviews and really just building that audience and building the audience in the email list. Once people came into my world they saw the content, but I also said, hey, I have these books. People bought the books and they shared them. They said yeah, these books are decent. So it was a combination of that, it was a combination of social media.

Social media was a little bit different back then where your organic reach was a lot higher. So there was a lot of sharing going on in social media and then one kind of strategy that I played around with back then was using a book promotion list. I didn't

have a lot of money, but the little money that I did have ever now and then I would pay and run my books on a book promotion list.

Ray: Nice, I know lots of people who've written books and can't seem to sell any copies. Do you think that somebody could take your same approach today and make it work?

Kimanzi: Absolutely, I think books are one of those things that as your audience grows your book sales grow. As you get more exposure in different places, back then for me it was blogs, blogs where people saw me, saw what I was doing and they could buy the books. Now its sites like The Huffington Post and Entrepreneur magazine and some really big sites. When people see me on these sites now the first thing they do is buy my book, so I think as you grow your audience and your exposure the books grow.

There are little tips and tricks that you can do every now and then. You could run a promotion on your book. There are huge promotion lists, Ray. There's a place called Buck Books, for example, we just interviewed the founder of that. Buck Books is a free promotion site; you can put your book on there for free. You do have to reduce it to \$.99 cents, but they have an email list of over 200,000 people and they're adding 600 names a day.

Ray: Wow!

Kimanzi: These are all targeted people that buy books, so we've had several friends, clients and people we've worked with that have done a Buck Books promotion and sold 1,900 copies of their book just on this one free promotion they did.

Ray: Amazing.

Kimanzi: After that, once you start selling books and you start getting exposure, then Amazon's algorithm kicks in. Your book starts becoming more relevant, it starts putting in things like hot new releases or movers and shakers, which is pretty much the same as new and noteworthy on iTunes. It's that way for books, so more and more people start seeing your book, it starts kicking up in the ranking and the organic sales increase well after the promotion.

Ray: How did you come to write for these big sites like Huffington Post and Good Men Project? How did that happen?

Kimanzi: Twenty-fourteen was going to be a different year because a lot of the sites that I had written for before, guys like Michael Hyatt and Jeff Goins, stopped taking guest posts. They started blogging a little bit less and they stopped taking guest posts. They only take them from certain people, I believe, people that are in their programs, the teachers of those programs.

So guest posting was something that I knew I was going to have to figure out a different way and I had thought about the fact that all these large sites all have what they call contributors. These are people that aren't on staff, but they write for all these places. I started doing some reach and thought, how can I really be a contributor at one of these places? There was some information out there, but it was very vague and it wasn't helpful, so I did what I knew how to do with guest posting.

I found the editor of the place that I wanted to write for, like Entrepreneur magazine. I went on their site, looked up their editors, found the one for the section that I want to write for and I just started following him on Twitter and I would re-tweet his stuff. He had a blog, I would go to his blog, read his content and if something was good I would comment. It wasn't a fake comment, it was hey, this is really what I enjoyed about this or hey, maybe you can think of it this way and kind of built up a little bit of a relationship with that editor.

I read their site, got familiar with their content, the style that it's in, the length that it's in, the type of content they like and when I felt like I had a good grasp on it I wrote something that I thought would be good on the site. I went to this editor and I said hey, I know we're not best friends or anything, but you know I'm a fan of your work, I'm a fan of Entrepreneur, I have this article that I think would fit, can I send it to you and he said yes. I sent it to him and he said work on this, this and this and then we can run it. That's what I did and he ran that article.

Once that approach worked there I thought where else could this approach work and I started hitting up a lot of other places. I went to Mind, Body, Green, I sent a post there. I had done my research well and I had talked about a trending topic. It was something about weed belly or something like that. It was something that was really trending and I wrote about it. I sent it in on a Friday and they ran it on a Monday. Then I went to The Huntington Post and I did the same process. Found one of their editors, built up a little bit of rapport, sent them an article and got the article on there. Then I did the same thing with the Good Men Project, Business Insider and a few other sites.

Ray: Now, this next question, I'm going to softball you here because I know what the answer is. Do you think people can still do this?

Kimanzi: Absolutely. The difference between a large website and a blog is a blog can only put out so much content. I mean I guess a blog could put out several posts a day, but I don't know many bloggers that really do that. A large website like The Huffington Post, for example, they'll put 300 posts in a month. I edit now, I'm a business and sports editor at the Good Men Project, so I see our editorial logs and we put out 32 posts a day. I can look at the editorial log right now for like Sunday and see all these open spots that have to be filled on that log,

So I know how much content these sites are looking for and if we're at 32 posts and we're scouring for content. Even though The Huffington Post is a really large organization, I guarantee, they look for content, as well. They base their decisions solely on the content. How good is your content? Is it on brand? Does it fit with what The Huffington Post is all about? That's what they're looking for and if you can catch that formula you can definitely become a contributor for them.

Ray: What I love about what you've done, this pattern you've repeated over and over again, you simply notice what works and you go and execute it. This is what I think happens to people. They get the big idea, but they don't want to get down and do the nitty-gritty and do the work part. Finding out who the editor is, building that relationship over time, studying how the articles are structured for the different publications or sites and then writing in a way that serves their people and their enterprise, that's all the nitty-gritty hard stuff. Wouldn't you agree? Isn't that really the "magic" that makes it work?

Kimanzi: It surprises me, Ray, since I started writing for these places how many people email. It could be people I don't even know and they'll say hey, can you introduce me to one of the editors over there?

Ray: Oh man!

Kimanzi: Yeah. It's like man, I put in all this work to get in here, I have several free guides that I have on my website, I talk about this all over the place, I've given the formula to do this, but it's the hard work, like you said, that turns people off, Ray. If you think about it, it's not hard work. You're just doing a little bit of research, writing something, especially if you love to write, this shouldn't be hard for you. Just write something that fits and send it.

Ray: This is what is so amazing to me and I love this about you because I think you see this, too. It's much harder to do what most people do, which is just be mired in mediocrity. That's harder.

Kimanzi: Yeah.

Ray: It's easier to just do the work, at least that's the way it seems to me.

Kimanzi: Oh, it absolutely is.

Ray: I heard you on Pat Flynn's podcast. I'd heard about you and sort of been paying attention to what you were doing for a while. Good Men Project is one of my favorite websites. Anyway, I heard you on Pat Flynn's podcast and you were talking about how to write for bigger sites and I went and bought your course, as you know, because that was the first communication we had. I couldn't figure out how to download it and then I saw the big, giant button that said 'click here to download' and I was like never mind. I missed the big, giant button that said 'click here to download' and so we end up having this conversation.

The fact of the matter is success is available for people who are just willing to do the work. I heard Chase Reeves recently talking about this and his observation is that success isn't usually somebody comes up with a startlingly-brilliant new idea and that catches fire and suddenly they're rich. It's usually the person who takes a normal mundane idea, but actually keeps applying it over and over again until they get success.

Kimanzi: Absolutely. I wouldn't tell somebody that you have to blog 50 times to be successful or do 80 podcast interviews or before I started coaching I coached 127 hours for free, Ray, before I ever got one paid client.

Ray: Wow!

Kimanzi: I'm not telling you that you have to do all that stuff, you can take just what we've talked about on this podcast and you cut your learning curve down and go start writing for large sites, go start building your business. The information is there, it's just a matter of putting in the legwork.

Ray: Yeah, I mean you've proven it, for sure. So, let's see, let me make the list. You lost 170 pounds, you restored your marriage, you paid off your debt, you quit your day job and then there's one more huge thing you did that's very exciting, you left Wisconsin and you went to Hawaii. How did that happen?

Kimanzi: We had come out here in 2010 as a belated honeymoon and we had just fallen in love. Have you ever been to Hawaii, Ray?

Ray: No.

Kimanzi: Yeah, you just come out here and you get off the plane and you feel something. It's in the air. It's the energy. I don't know what it is, but we just felt something. So we stayed in this little hotel by the water and we loved it, every night the ocean breezes. So we had a good time on that trip and then coming home on the plane we joked. We were like, man, we should retire in Hawaii someday. I'm like that would be cool. I'm like, yeah, we're going to need a lot of money for that. We got home, we got back into life and we completely forgot about Hawaii, the chaos of life took over.

Then in April of 2010 my father died at 54, he died suddenly and unexpected. He and I weren't close, he divorced my mom when we were younger and he wasn't in our lives, but during the last few months of his life he was trying to rekindle our relationship and I didn't want to do it because I was bitter at him. I didn't want to have anything to do with him and then he died.

I was sitting there at his funeral thinking, you're not going to get another chance. He's gone, this is it. You'll never hear his side of things. You'll never understand what he was going through. It was kind of sad because at the funeral I found out that his mother, my grandmother who I'd never know, had committed suicide using his chemistry set.

Ray: Oh...

Kimanzi: So he was messed up emotionally, he had a lot of problems. I never knew that, but the one thing that I did know about him the few times we had talked on the phone he said, I wish I had become a paramedic. I wish I was a better father. I wish I had traveled. He had so many regrets. He said son, I know I'm not in a place to give you advice, but let me tell you, don't die with regret.

After his funeral was when just the brevity of life hit me. It hit me and I realized that life is short. We could live a comfortable enough life and I'm sure things would be fine, but I didn't want to die with that regret in my heart and Hawaii was something that so strong for us, so I started talking to my wife.

I said was this a fad or is this something we really want to do? She said something we really want to do, let's pray about this. So we prayed about it and we felt a peace. After that, we just started planning this trip, this move to Hawaii. We said why move there when we're older and maybe can't enjoy it as much, why not take our children there so they can see it and experience it.

So it took a long time to save up even more money because it's not cheap living out there. It's very expensive to live out here. It was even harder to sell all of our stuff, to convince family that we weren't crazy because they thought we were. Then to even

find a place out there was extremely difficult, but we ended up finding a place in a little town called Kiha, which was the same town that we had stayed in when we came out here in 2010.

So we made the move in April of 2014, we moved out there with 15 check bags and that was it, we sold everything. We came out here with nothing, got ourselves established and have just been loving it ever since.

Ray: That's a fantastic story, so inspiring. All the things you've shared are inspiring. I mean you've transformed every area of your life and it's just remarkable.

Kimanzi: I don't want anybody listening to this to think this was like an overnight success thing or to think that there weren't failures along the way because there were many failures along the way. Before I had started successfully selling books and stuff like that, I tried everything. I tried membership websites, multilevel marketing, paid masterminds. Everything that was out there I tried and I had failed at all of it. There were a lot of guest posts that got rejected. I spoke 36 times in 2012 and I sent out 180 proposals, so that was a lot of rejection.

So I don't want anybody to listen to the story that we're saying in this short amount of time and think it was smooth sailing. It wasn't, it was rough sailing, but the one thing I determined that I'm not going to come to the end of my life with regret and I'm going to keep going no matter what.

Ray: Yeah, that's so important. So many people Photoshop the story of how they got where they are and they Photoshop out all the hard stuff, all the failures, all the false starts. I've had those, too. It seems like for every success I have to tell I've got three failures or more that go along with it. I think it's encouraging for people to hear that because it's easy to get the idea from listening to some people tell their story that well, that person lives a charmed life. Everything they touch explodes into success.

Kimanzi: Yeah, that's not reality at all.

Ray: No, it's not and it does take work. Again, my opinion is it's easier to do the work and to experience the failures that you have to experience along the way to get there than it is to just be mediocre and die with regret. You mentioned something else earlier, too, and that is about shortcutting some of mistakes and avoiding some of the pitfalls by learning from the right people. How has that played into your journey?

Kimanzi: I had found Dave Ramsey and then Dan Miller and then Pat Flynn just listening to those podcasts and I didn't even know what a podcast was, but to me it was just like a radio show on my phone. I had all these hours to kill in the morning and if I hadn't found that podcasts and then some others, I don't know where I'd be today. If I didn't read those blogs regularly and learn and not only learn, but apply what I learned, I wouldn't be where I was today.

If it wasn't for the mastermind groups that I'm a part of and the coaching that I have paid for and the programs. Going to Experts Academy wasn't cheap, that was an investment, but it was an investment that's paid dividends.

Ray: Yeah, it's been an important part of my journey, too, and you don't stop. I still buy training material. I still pay to be parts of mastermind groups. I still pay to go to events. When I saw your material I realized, here's a guy who's done something I

haven't done. I want to do it, so I'm going to pay for his stuff and learn how to do it because that works.

There's something about making a financial investment in a training. Free information is good. Free podcasts, that's all great. There's a place for that, but there's something about investing that changes the way I think you process the material. Have you found that to be true?

Kimanzi: Absolutely and this brings up a good point. We've had this discussion in our mastermind group and you know some of the members of that group, so they're going to be very curious to hear your answer on this. What do you say to the people that say hey, Ray, can I pick your brain or can I get your advice on this? People that kind of just want that free advice. We've been going back and forth on this in the mastermind, what do you say to those people, Ray?

Ray: Now I say there's a page on my website called Pick Ray's Brain and I would encourage you to go there. That's where you can get access to all my free advice. Outside of that, I get paid to do this and it offends some people to hear me say that.

Kimanzi: Yep.

Ray: If you don't value what you have to offer enough to be able to take that kind of stance and maybe you can say it more gracefully than I just did, but if you don't value yourself and what you have to offer then nobody else will value you either.

Kimanzi: Absolutely and I think you hit on a good point earlier. When there's money involved, when you invest in something, you just have more skin in the game and you take things a little bit more seriously.

Ray: Yeah and I explain that to people, as well. Again, I don't want people to think that I'm trying to say that I'm brilliant and I always had this answer because I didn't, I listened to people's sob stories. People that knew me, like people at church, I felt like oh, this is a church. I should probably give it to them for free. Every time I did it, it resulted in nothing good. I realized okay, there's something at work here. There's a principle at work here and the principle is if you don't have, as you said, skin in the game then you don't value the game.

Kimanzi: I totally agree.

Ray: Yup. Okay, so for people who are listening to this and want to know more of what you know and shortcut some of the mistakes that they might make along the way and learn from your experience and your success, how do they find you and what you're up to?

Kimanzi: You could head to KimanziConstable.com. You can Google Kimanzi Constable, there are not that many of us, or could go to LivingorExistingBook.com and that will redirect you to the site. Like Ray said, there are a bunch of free guides, one of them is Writing for Large Websites and some other guides over there that are completely free. Yeah, I put it all out there, I don't hold back.

Ray: I'll put a link on the show notes so that people can just click on the link. By the way, Kimanzi Constable may be the coolest name ever.

Kimanzi: Well, I didn't think so growing up, Ray.

Ray: It's funny because I was sharing with my wife and my son that I was going to be interviewing you. I said I've got a couple interviews this afternoon I'm doing and they said who are you interviewing? I said well, this one guy, you haven't heard me talk about him, but his name is Kimanzi Constable and they're like what? Kimanzi Constable. Did he make that name up? No, it's his real name. Isn't it cool? We agreed it is one of the coolest names we've ever heard.

Kimanzi: Yeah, it's definitely original.

Ray: I want to thank you for how you are so generous. When I heard you on Pat's show you shared a lot of stuff that people would normally hold back and then in this interview you've done it again and shared things I didn't hear you share with Pat. You are such an inspiration to so many people, me included, so I just want to thank you for that.

Kimanzi: I want to thank you for having me. I've been a fan for a long time. Thank you for sharing your story with me, as well. I've heard you here and there so it's good to get the full picture. I really appreciate that.

What to Do Next

That wraps up another episode of the Ray Edwards Show. Listen, if you want to help us out if you got any value from this at all, if you didn't get any value you weren't listening, but if you got any value at all then do us a favor. Go ahead and subscribe to the show in iTunes right now, give us a star rating and give us a written review. These things help other people find out about the show and bring new people into the tribe. They can find out what God's doing in the marketplace and wants to do in their business.

Until next week, I pray that the God of the Universe will pay special attention to you and bless you like crazy until you have to ask, what is going on!

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