



Ray Edwards Show episode 522 Monetize Your Message with Jonathan Milligan

Announcer ([00:01](#)):

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Announcer ([00:10](#)):

The Ray Edwards Show. This is the podcast for prosperity with purpose.

Ray Edwards ([00:18](#)):

Welcome back to the Ray Edward show. I appreciate you taking time to listen even to a little bit of what I have to say. That's not a small gift. It's a huge gift. And I thank you. And I'm hoping to give you a big gift in exchange. And that is if you are the creator of online training, if you build digital courses, if you have a membership site, if you do anything like any of that, then I want you to understand the power of something- it's not really new, but it's new-ish. It's certainly seeing a big revival in the online teaching training and coaching world. And that is the idea of cohort-based courses. Now, what is a cohort-based course? In the simplest possible explanation, it's less of a digital course where you know what I mean? By digital course, you deliver a bunch of videos that people watch and worksheets and stuff, and you hope they do the work. It's kind of like you give them hours of material to go through. Give them action-checklists and you hope they do the work. A cohort-based course is different in that we work through the course material together, live, day after day or week after week or however your program is structured. And then we work on the project together. So as an example, we've done a couple of workshops lately about messaging and we had people pay sizable amounts of money to be part of our messaging workshops. And then we spent two to three days of working on writing out your messaging for your business. Coming up with what your core message is, what's your core thesis of your businesses, what's your distinguishing difference. Writing some sales copy, working on the pieces of your communication that are most crucial to selling your products and services. So we did that together. We'd have breakout sessions where you'd go write in small groups. We'd come back, give you feedback. You'd read out loud what you wrote. I'd give you feedback, some of my coaches give you feedback, and this has been game changing. We've seen more people getting the actual work done and getting results than ever before. And so we are continuing to push forward in this. Now, people who do this kind of education include Seth Godin. Maybe you've heard of his altMBA program. We'll be talking more about some of this in an upcoming special episode of this, this here podcast. Seth's altMBA program is universally praised. He's had thousands of people go through it. And it is a cohort based course where you're learning in group with other people, all doing

different things than you are some doing similar things to what you're doing all in a spirit of cooperation and mutual benefit. It's, it's really a fantastic environment. Another course that I've recently took that's based on this model is Tiago Forte's building a second brain. Another fantastic course, especially if you're interested in the area of personal knowledge management, this is the cutting edge and it's, it's less about, I mean, Tiago does do some teaching and he does some really deep, insightful teaching. But most of the benefit from the program is in the small groups and the cohort based discussions that happen around that teaching as we do the work together. My friend Pat Flynn has just done two different courses using this methodology. He and I have been in deep discussions about this method of teaching and training and working with people online. And so we, as you can imagine, this is all build-up, I guess, to the cohort-based copywriting program we're opening up very soon and this is called Be Your Own Copywriter. So, in the past, we've taught about copywriting. As in, we have a big copywriting course called The Copywriting Academy, which covers all things copywriting, which has been widely praised. Many people love it. Many people have used it to create six and seven-figure businesses, and we love that. I am very gratified by that. I also know a lot of people need more of a direct connection to their own business and what they need from a copywriting teacher is just help me write the sales page for the thing I'm trying to sell right now. So our new program be your own copywriter. We do this together. We go through a short, concise program where we, together write all the material to sell your next product, your next product launch, or offer, or to sell the old product you've been selling in the past. And you need to revitalize sales. We jump in together, write the copy together, give you feedback. You get to go back and rewrite and resubmit until you get it just the way you want it. You get the best possible copy that'll help you make the most possible money. You save a bunch of money and save a bunch of time. If you want to know more about our cohort-based copywriting program, it starts soon. So you don't have much time to get in the next round, go to Rayedwards.com/cohort. That's Rayedwards.com/COHORT. And get the details, now.

Announcer ([05:28](#)):

Does anyone want to live a life that is long and prosperous? Spiritual foundations.

Ray Edwards ([05:34](#)):

Let's talk about the perils of prosperity for just a moment. There are many who teach and preach something called prosperity gospel, which basically says if you're super spiritual and you're a super Christian, especially, then God will bless you with riches. It's kind of like, Jesus wants me to have a Rolex and a Lambo kind of thinking. And I think that is abhorrent. It doesn't mean that you might not actually get a Rolex or you might not actually be able to buy yourself a Lamborghini. Maybe so, but if that's your aim, if your aim is to build up wealth so you can lord it over other people, I suggest there's something spiritually unhealthy about that. So Wayne Grudem wrote the distortions of something good must not cause us to think that the thing itself is evil. Money is good in itself and provides us many opportunities for glorifying God. I'd like you to think about that over the course of the next week or so. How can you use your money to glorify God? And here's one little twist to this exercise. As you think through that question. What if I told you you're not allowed to give any of it away, at least for the next week, other than giving away your money, how can you use it to glorify God? Think about that and put it into practice in this next week. You're creative. You'll figure some things out.

Announcer ([07:02](#)):

Now, simple hacks that make life cheaper, easier and faster. Ray's tip of the week.

Ray Edwards (07:07):

Hey, my tip of the week this week is something called- it's an app called Pixel cut. Have you ever had a picture that you wanted to use online, like for your social media accounts or maybe you want to make a graphic or a logo or something and you want to cut out the background and photo and use it and you just couldn't figure out how to do that. You tried Photoshop maybe or some similar app and it just didn't work for you. Pixel cut will solve that problem for you. It makes creating great content easier than ever before. You can cut out the background on any picture, almost instantly. It's like magic. I'm sorry, Android users, this only works on your iPhone, but check it out. Pixelcut.app. You're going to like this one.

Announcer (07:48):

And now our feature presentation.

Ray Edwards (07:51):

Today's interview is in keeping with our passion for talking about your message. It's your message that gives you the opportunity to make money. It's your message that provides you a direction for your mission. And according to Jonathan Milligan, the author of the book, I want to talk to you about today, your message matters. In fact, that's the name of Jonathan's new book. It's called *Your Message Matters- How to Rise Above the Noise and Get Paid for What You Know*. Welcome my friend, whom I haven't talked to in way too long, but it's good to be talking now, Jonathan Milligan. And Jonathan and I go way back. When did we meet? I don't remember what year it was we met, but at that time you were quote, just a blogger.

Jonathan Milligan (08:33):

That's right. That's where I started just a blogger and met Ray Edwards. And uh, yeah, that was gosh, five, six years ago, at least.

Ray Edwards (08:41):

Yeah. And so how did you, how did you get into blogging? That's not what you grew up wanting to be because when you're growing up, I presume there weren't blogs.

Jonathan Milligan (08:48):

Exactly. In fact, uh, I couldn't have gone to college for what I started doing, which was blogging. That's how I got started. But, um, yeah, it started as a high school teacher. Not really knowing what I wanted to do, um, wanted to do something entrepreneurial. I just knew that I had this, um, unsettled desire to do something creative and started going down that path, uh, stumbled across blogging. Started it as a career coach type blog, sharing career advice. And over the course of a couple of years, as a way back at 2009. So I feel like a dinosaur, I'm a blogging dinosaur, but around 2011 started making enough income from the blog, doing courses and different things and, um, was able to go full time. And so then I started wanting to teach that, obviously, and that's what got me teaching about blogging.

Ray Edwards (09:41):

So, and you were teaching stuff to people online before there was a pandemic. So it was before everybody had Zoom on their phone and before one of the biggest problems, it's just become a meme now, you're, you're on mute. There's t-shirts that say you're on mute. There's hats that say you're on mute. Before, it was just us, us chickens inside the online learning world that knew that stuff. Now everybody knows what it's like to work online- most everybody. So how does that feel? Does that feel eerie to you that we've come to that point so quickly?

Jonathan Milligan (10:05):

Well, it's funny because it's almost like, uh, I can see, and I can already sense that some of the messaging's even changing. Cause you know, one of the things I used to say a lot about blogging is the opportunity to work from home. Well, everybody's working from home these days and a lot of people that I know, you know, people from my church who used to never work from home, they've got an arrangement where they can work from home. So even some of the, the language is changing. I know you can appreciate that as a copywriter, um, that you, you got to get to some of the more, what's the deeper, what's the deeper thing that people are desiring or wanting. And so I think that's, what's been interesting is seeing how the world has evolved in, um, a lot of these places you used to think that you can't have people working from home or saying, you know what, this actually works for most people, not for everyone, but that's, what's changing.

Ray Edwards (10:54):

Yeah, and I've seen, I've got a client who was working for a big company and she was actually advocating for them to let her work from home before this all started and they were like, no, that cannot be in this business. Nobody can work from home. You have to work in the office. And then it was like three months later they were saying, okay, you're all going to work from home now. Like the whole company started working from home. So the very paradigm of what's possible and what's not possible shifted. And now I think a lot of people are actually they're past the technological part of it. And they're like, but what kind of work am I doing? Does it matter? Is it meaningful to me? And that's where I think your book comes in.

Jonathan Milligan (11:26):

Yes. And so one of the things I really try to drive home is let's start with who you are. Um, it's something I learned from a book called *Acres of Diamonds* years ago. It's an old book, and you know, essentially it's about you don't find your purpose out there in a thing and in a title, in a position, but your, your purpose is actually inside of you. It's how God made you. It's how He gifted you. And it's, it's what He's designed you to do. And so, you know, some of us are more introverted. Some extroverted, some of us are or charismatic. Others are very, very smart intellectually. And so start the process by joining who you are with what you do, which should be a common sense, right? But for so many of us, you know, I think it was find the stable and secure job, get the education, do this thing without ever connecting it to is this actually who I am?

Ray Edwards (12:23):

Yeah. And I should probably mention the name of your book is called *Your Message Matters*, and your, you have a presumption that everybody has a message, but I've run into people all the time who say, actually say these words to me. I don't have a message. I just got some stuff I want to sell. What do you say to those people?

Jonathan Milligan (12:40):

I think they that's where you, you do some self-discovery. You look inside and say, what is my life really about? What is the thing that ultimately I want to spread out into the world. And because I just believe that everybody you meet has a story to tell, they've got a lesson to share, they've got a gift to give to the world. They have something, they may, it may be buried. It's like a diamond. You might have to go digging around to find it. But I just believe that that, you know, God has made each of us unique and he is, we are here for a reason and a purpose. Yeah. It, it really starts. If you're wondering if you have a message, it starts by looking inward.

Ray Edwards (13:21):

Let's, let's back up a step or two because there's, there are people who are saying to themselves as they listen right now, they're saying, I don't really, I wish I had a message, but I don't really have one. How do I find one? Do I go out and find it somewhere? Or you you're saying it's inside of us. And that makes me think, maybe we should hear that story about the Acres of Diamonds. I know the story, but many people maybe have not heard it. So maybe you could share a quick version of that story, so people understand what it is you're saying.

Jonathan Milligan (13:46):

Yeah. So, Russell Conwell was the founder of Temple University before, you know, way before that it was, this was, this book was a series of lectures, but one of the more popular stories he told in the book was about an African farmer who was hearing about everybody that was getting rich with, uh, finding diamonds. And so he really wanted to pursue wealth and riches. He wanted that and he felt like he wasn't getting that being a farmer. So he sold his land, went on a journey to try to find diamonds. And the story ended, sadly for him, he died, broke, despondent and drowned in a river. Meanwhile, the person who he sold the land to was walking across the land and walked across the Brook and saw something shiny in the river and looked down, picked it up, thought this is interesting, set it on the mantle. Days later, someone said, Hey, what is this thing that you got here? And they started looking at it more and realized it was diamonds come to find out it was the richest diamond field in Africa. And the moral of the lesson is that your purpose or what you're really after could be right under your nose all along. And you'll miss it if you're not careful

Ray Edwards (14:57):

Or even under your feet.

Jonathan Milligan (14:59):

Or even under your feet.

Ray Edwards (15:01):

All right. So how do we, how do we take the first step if we, if we hear you talk about having a message, having a gift to share. And if I, if I accept, okay, that may be true in some sense. And I, I would add, well, let me ask this question. Does it have to be like a life shattering, like you've had some brilliant revelation about something that nobody ever thought of before. Could your message be something that big or could it be smaller than that?

Jonathan Milligan (15:23):

I am so glad you brought this up and the answer is no. It's sometimes the obvious thing. It's sometimes right in front of us. And, uh, you know, the truth is that sometimes it evolves over time. Uh, I mean, we've, we've seen this with lots of people that we know. Um, I know we both know Michael Hyatt. It's been fun to see his journey going from, look at the evolution of his message with his blog. He was really geared toward, uh, helping people who wanted to write books. Then it became platform. And then it was about productivity. Today, it's a really about helping leaders inside of companies with his Business Accelerator Program. And so your message can evolve, um, but the best place to start, and one of the things that, um, I talk about in the book, is really honing in on three things, your purpose, your people, and your passion. And when you understand those three things, it's, it's just like, you need three ingredients for, for a fire, right? You need heat, oxygen and fuel. All three, you have to get right in order to, to form a powerful message. And so purpose is something we just talked about for me. I define purpose as understanding how you show up best for others. And I have some assessments, some tools, uh, in the book that I used to share in my coaching program that I put in the book. One of them is how to determine what type of a influencer voice you

have. Are you more of a writer, teacher, speaker, or coach, and that's one example, but once we get off purpose, then it's people who is the specific people we feel called to serve, who are we going to serve? And then finally it's passion. And the way that I define passion, because this can be a one of those big, scary words that a lot of people have difficulty with. I got to go out there and find my one passion in life. The way that I like to define it is it's, what problem are you passionate about solving for the next two to five years? Let's just start right there and make a difference in the next two to five years. And then we'll see where it leads. And so once you know how you show up best for others who exactly you are looking to serve, and the problem you're trying to solve for the next two to five years, you have the clarity that you need to move forward.

Ray Edwards (17:37):

When you've figured all that out, how do you, how do you know you're right? Cause, cause I, I know people who think they have it figured out, but I was just talking with a client earlier this morning who thinks she's got it all figured out, but then she's like, I don't know for sure. How does she, how does she test this to know she's on the right track?

Jonathan Milligan (17:53):

Well, I mean the, the place, part of it is you just got to test it. You got to do the things. And I think that's what happens is, um, you know, we try to get full clarity standing still, and it just doesn't work that way, right? Clarity comes from movement from moving forward, from taking steps. And so sometimes you just have to get started. Honestly, you just have to start getting out there doing the thing and seeing and assessing how it feels. And so, for example, just to give you a practical example, I just talked about, you know, an assessment that helps people determine if, if they are more motivated to write, speak, teacher, coach. If it is writing, you know, blogging is a great place to get started. How does it feel to blog or to write? Maybe if you're a speaker, maybe you need to look at a podcast. Or a YouTube video. If you're more of a teacher, you may, maybe you need to try live streaming, just start putting yourself out there in live stream and start sensing what it's like, what that feels like. And I think ultimately you've got to go out there and you've got to test it.

Ray Edwards (18:56):

How long does it take somebody to go from doing that? They're they, they think they figured out their message and their purpose and what they're passionate about, who their people are. And they're maybe publishing something. Maybe they're doing some live streams, maybe they're posting it to a blog or putting posts on Facebook, whatever it is. There's so many different ways you can do it, but how do they turn that into? I mean, how do they turn it into a living? We've, we've gotten past, for most people they understand about getting on a Zoom call doing a Zoom conference or getting on Clubhouse, something like that. They can, they can get that, but that doesn't get them an audience. How do they turn it into money? How does that happen, Jonathan?

Jonathan Milligan (19:29):

Yes. And so that's the second half of the book is it's really about that piece. Uh, the first half of the book I tell people is it's, it's, it's like a self-development book, right? You're learning more about who you are. And then the second part of the book is the marketing piece. And so there's something that I like to teach called the hourglass funnel. And essentially it's, it's four habits. And I, I noticed this years ago when I was admiring people who were at the next level than I was as what they did to be successful. And so it comes down to four things. If you want to do something online, it's create capture, compile, and connect. So the create is about creating some kind of free value. We're doing it right now on a podcast. Podcasts, blogging, YouTube videos. It starts spreading your message, but it brings people into your world, but we

don't want to stop there. We want to go to the capture habit and that is getting people on an email list. That's the skinny part of one of those old hour glass, old hourglasses, right? The top is the grains of sand or the people coming into your world. You're capturing them into an email list, which is the skinny part. And the bottom half is what you're talking about. That's the compile component. Now the compile is when your packaging your knowledge and your experience into products and services. In the book, I talk about 12 different ways, but again, I think you can match these up to, if you're more of a writer, you've got opportunities to self publish, you can do Kindle books, paperback books, you can do audio books. If you're more of a speaker, obviously there's keynote speaking your own live events. If you're more of a teacher, there's online courses, membership sites to share your message. Uh, so there's, there's plenty of different ways to do it, but those are some of the primary ways today people are doing this online.

Ray Edwards (21:22):

I can hear one of our seven listeners asking the question now saying, but how long does it take, Jonathan, until I start making enough money I can quit my job? Because even though I don't have to go into the office, they still irritate me. I want to quit. When can I do that?

Jonathan Milligan (21:35):

Longer than most people are willing to put the effort into it, if I'm being honest,

Ray Edwards (21:42):

I prefer you be honest. So say more about that.

Jonathan Milligan (21:45):

For me, the, the approach that I think the mindset that finally helped me in the beginning stages was, I told myself if this takes two to five years to build so I can enjoy it for the next 10, 20, or 30 years, it's going to be worth it. And so I think what happens and I actually allude to this in the book is I give this illustration that you have to become a farmer. And the, the, the principle here is let's take a farmer. So he just bought a land, I know we're talking a lot about farming today, but it works for this. If someone just bought a brand new farm and they went out there and they tilled the land, came in from a hard day's work, went to bed all excited, woke up the next morning, rushed over to the window, pulled back the blinds, looked out the window and the field looked exactly the same as the day before. And then the farmer says, "see, I knew I wasn't cut out for farming. I knew this wasn't for me. I knew I couldn't do this."

Ray Edwards (22:43):

Farming's a scam.

Jonathan Milligan (22:45):

That's right. Farming is a scam. But what we have to do is we need the mentality of a farmer. What's a farmer do? He gets up every day. He plows his field. He works his field, even in the hot summer because he knows, and he trusts that a harvest is coming. And I know that's the difficult part here, but that's how we have to treat this. We have to treat this by everybody successful started in obscurity. Everybody you admire, they start a podcast. No one knew who they were. They started a blog. Only mom wrote a blog comment. It all starts that way. You have to be willing to take the mentality of a farmer and it's gotta be something connected. You have to have a deep well to draw from. It's gotta be something that you just, you feel like this is a message. I really want to get out there.

Ray Edwards (23:34):

Something you'll stick with, even while you're waiting for the first crop to come in.

Jonathan Milligan (23:37):

Absolutely.

Ray Edwards (23:38):

That's good advice. What do you, what do you wish you had known before you started your business?

Jonathan Milligan (23:43):

There's two things. One of them is I did not catch on to the power of having an email list soon enough. Um, but then I had a mentor who finally told me, he said, Jonathan, and this is the best advice I ever got. He said, Jonathan, there's only two things you can take with you to the grave with this online business thing. He said, "number one is your reputation. Number two is your email list. Everything else can come and go. Your Facebook fans, they could decide, you know what? You're not doing Facebook anymore. Facebook ad count can get shut down. But if you have a way to communicate to people and if you treat people right, you will be fine." And that was the best advice I wish I would have heard it a little bit sooner on. The other thing I wished I would've done sooner is I wish I would've had the courage to niche down sooner. Um, I, at one point had like four different blogs going. I look back now and I think, really what that was was I was doubting myself. I was doubting myself going all in because I didn't believe my message mattered, right? And so, because of that, I was doing all this sideways energy, trying to keep up all these different blogs and all these plugins on all these different WordPress blogs. And meanwhile, it was distracting me from having a singular focus. And once I finally discovered that's what I had to do, that's when things began to work for me.

Ray Edwards (25:14):

So let's, let's soak that up for a moment. You you're hedging your bets cause you had like four different things going, you're betting on one of them going. You'd rather at this point, you'd say start with the one thing that you're passionate about. You know, you're going to stick with, you're going to be able to dig deep on it. Even when the, in those months go by that you only get one comment for your post, for your podcast. You're going to stay with it because it's important. I saw Gary Vaynerchuk recently, somebody asked him if you started from zero today and you were posting these videos and nobody was responding, unlike it is now, Gary, would you still do it? And of course you have to take it with a grain of salt. Cause how does he know? But he did it when he started and he pointed this out. He said, this is what I did before I became known as Gary V. Yes, absolutely. I would keep posting because it's important. What I have to say is important and it'll stand the test of time. That's the kind of thing you're talking about, right?

Jonathan Milligan (26:03):

Absolutely. In some ways, if you think about this, Ray, we are the first generation in human history to leave a digital legacy. And I first realized that when I started, I used to be, I still am, a huge Zig Ziglar fan. And he, his mentality was just, was something nice, soaked up a lot. And I remember after he passed away, you know, I still had the habit of listening to Zig Ziglar on his podcast. And it's like, you know what? The podcast we're recording the videos that we're recording, the content we're producing, we are leaving a digital legacy. And um, I think that's something that could be said of this whole thing as well is yeah, you might not have millions of people following you. They might not be like, you may never be a Gary Vaynerchuk, but how can you influence and impact the people you do have around you? For me as a Christian, that's the stewardship part of this, right? I just need to steward my gift,

trust God for the results and that's the part that I have to be willing to settle in on. Because it's so easy to compare ourselves and to look at what other people are doing instead of settling into the farmland we've been given that we just need to toil here.

Ray Edwards (27:19):

So you said something about stewarding a gift and let's talk about that for just a moment, because that implies to me, it sounds like you're saying if I have a gift and I know I have a gift, I have a duty to discover what it is, to cultivate it and share it. Is that right?

Jonathan Milligan (27:35):

Yes. You have a responsibility, right? I have a responsibility. It's a responsibility. And so it's, it's almost like, and I know this always comes across maybe different, but it's almost like you are being selfish if you don't share it. Because so many of us, we, we feel like, oh, well I don't want to promote myself. I don't want to put myself out there because then, you know, it'll appear that I'm just being selfish. Well, if you've got truly a message to share something that can transform someone's day or life, then I believe you have a responsibility to share it. I'm so glad that the mentors who I look up to were willing to step out and to share their gifts. Uh, right before we hopped on the podcast, Ray, I told you about something that I quoted in the book that, um, that was your quote. I was doing a summit, a virtual summit and you, uh, I was interviewing you for my summit. And you said something that grabbed a hold of me. And you said, the more specific you can be, the more powerful your communication becomes. And I realized, whoa, that is something I want to hold on to. And so it's like, I'm thankful for, uh, mentors, people like you and others who went ahead and put their gifts out there. They went ahead and shared and it's made a difference for me. And so the same can be true for every single one of us, if we have the courage to share it.

Ray Edwards (29:01):

Yeah. And it's so important that you remember to not compare yourself to other people because stewarding your gift and sharing it in the digital age may feel like you're being self-promotional. I mean, I know when I hear people say things and I've said it myself many times, that if you don't share what you have to share, then you're being selfish. You're keeping it to yourself. And that can almost feel like we're being a little, um, self-aggrandizing or feeding your own narcissism. Uh, first of all, I think if you have that concern, you're not a narcissist, cause narcissists don't think that way. They think like, no, of course everybody needs to hear from me because I'm smarter than they all are. If you think that way, that might be a warning flag. But even if you only share with a dozen people, even if only a dozen people listen to what you have to say, how important could that be? Well, there was one guy who shared his message with a dozen people. One of them turned out to be a bad egg. His name was Judas, but those 12 people turned the world upside down. And the person I'm talking about of course is Jesus. And I remember reading an interview with Billy Graham not long ago. I don't know when the interview took place, but I read it not long ago. And somebody asked the journalist asked him, "what would you do differently? You've influenced all of these people, millions of people. You've been associated with presidents and actors and very famous individuals, influencers in the society, what'd you do differently?" And Billy Graham said, I would find 12 people. I would invest deeply in them and teach those 12, how to find 12 people. Now that's not being self-aggrandizing or seeking your own glory, although there's certainly nothing wrong with becoming known and building a business because of your expertise. But we're really talking about stewardship. Taking a gift you've been given and sharing it. So if I'm going to do that and I'm going to make my I'm going to, I think I'm going to make a business out of it, Jonathan, how do you make the transition from doing important work that's meaningful, like we were just talking about into turning it into income? How do you make that switch? And then how does it happen? How to, how do I know how to make money with what I know, what I'm teaching?

Jonathan Milligan (31:05):

Well, for me, I think again, it goes back to your strengths. So, uh, you know, again, for me, it's, I'm more of a teacher. That's, that is how I best express myself. And so, uh, for me, resourceful teacher is the thing that, you know, getting the outside people to help me understand where I show up best for others. And so, because I know that resourceful teacher is how I show up best for others, I can then begin to, to start with some products. And so for example, I run a membership site because I love teaching and it gives me an opportunity to always look for what else can I be teaching? Uh, for some people it intimidates them to think every month I got to have something new to talk about, to teach to people who are paying to be part of a membership. Online courses has been another thing for me. Uh, so I still believe that you go back to, to the best place to start is to go back to who you are. Um, because that's, that's where you're going to add the most value and help the people.

Ray Edwards (32:13):

So then I hear you saying, you've got your membership site where you teach something monthly, you've got online courses, that's a couple of different ways of making money. What about this concept of having more than one stream of revenue? Is that, does that work for everybody? What if I'm not a teacher? What can I do then?

Jonathan Milligan (32:30):

Yeah. So, you know, you can develop these different income streams over time. And I believe that everyone, uh, can develop skills in different areas. Um, just because you might be more of a teacher doesn't mean you could never become a speaker because some of these are skills that you can still develop, even though you might have, um, some more motivation in, uh, areas other than some. But there's kind of, I talk about in the book, there's like three tools or three ways to grow a business. And really this comes from, I think it's Jay Abraham, he talks about the three ways to grow a business. And he talks about the way that I define it though. I use a little bit different terms, activate subscribe, and monetize. And so if you can activate people that's- how do you turn someone into a customer. That could be a book. That could be a simple course. It could be a product of some kind. And then the other way is subscribe. So what do you have a subscription model that you could potentially do? More than just a teaching membership site? There's lots of membership models these days. Uh, we're in the membership economy, everything's membership based and then you have the monetize. And that typically is, you know, you're, you're coaching, your masterminds. That could be a, uh, higher end online course. It could also be potentially like a, uh, let's say a high ticket mastermind where you get people in it as well. So it could be a lot of different things. Keynote speech could be in that. And so that's one simple way that you can create three kinds of products. That's just, what are you doing to activate people, subscription and then monetizing.

Ray Edwards (34:12):

Yeah. I love that. And I love the fact that there's, there are all these different ways. I was thinking about our own subscriptions that Lynn and I have. We have a bark box. So we have a subscription program for our dogs. We get treats and toys for them.

Jonathan Milligan (34:23):

We get that, too.

Ray Edwards (34:23):

They love, I mean, when we opened the BarkBox and the toy comes out, they're just like going crazy. Cause they know what's about to happen.

Jonathan Milligan (34:29):

It's funny.

Ray Edwards (34:29):

It's like they know that I've got mail. My dog gets mail. Both of them. Um, we've got nutritional supplements, we've got food, we've got household items that we subscribe to. We've got digital content. And you as a business person, if you've got a mission, you might say, well, if I have a message and a mission to take that message out to people, but I don't feel like I'm a writer or a blogger, but do you like to, or you're a designer, you're an artist. Do you want to make shirts, do you want to make stickers? I've got a friend who started drawing just because she likes to draw. She hadn't done it since she was a child. She started getting really good at it. Started drawing these sketches of characters from fantasy novels. Next thing she knows the author of this series of novels that she loves. That's a New York times bestselling series. The author started looking at her sketches on Instagram and fell in love with them. Now she's worked out a deal with the author or she's licensed to draw his characters and they've got a whole deal going and she's building a whole business because she liked to draw pictures from fantasy novels. Think about that for a minute.

Jonathan Milligan (35:24):

Yeah, that's awesome. That's a great example. Here's another one. My son, so he, he is into coding and creating video games. He's only 17, but he started at 15. He has created some simple video games, but he's using like one of his video games to build his email list. It's it's like his lead magnet, right? So he's got a free game that you can get for an access for an email address. And meanwhile, he's working on this bigger game that he wants to sell. And meanwhile, he's learning from other people on how you go from being an independent game developer to getting a publisher, just like we would in the, in the book, writing world, getting a publisher to sponsor you, to help create a game. And so this model exists in a lot of different facets, not just in the information age, as well. Yeah. So don't just decide this is only for people who have something to teach necessarily as your first go-to position. It might be you're into video games, you're into nutrition. You're into to diet, you're in to exercise. Maybe you're into drawing. It could be literally anything that you feel passionate about that you know benefits people. I mean, think of Bob Ross, the guy who did the paintings, you know, happy little trees. There are no mistakes, only happy little accidents. This book, *Your Message Matters*, the subtitle is *How to Rise Above the Noise and Get Paid For What You Know*. Say a little bit about the subtitle, because I think that's really important- rise above the noise. There's all these people out there competing for attention. How would I ever be able to get enough people listening to me even, Jonathan, to, to make money doing something I love? Well, I think the thing that I always hear from people is they're looking for the niche where there's nobody. And I think that's a mistake. You need to find that the market's been validated that there's some validation out there. And so competition is actually a good thing. I mean, what we, what we don't realize is how many millions of even billions of people are online on the internet and how many of them are comfortable now spending money on the internet. There is plenty of room for us. And not only that, but you're still in a small minority of a lot of people go through life as consumers, very few ever move over to contributor. And even though it feels like you're in this bubble of there's contributors everywhere, how could I add to the noise? The truth is there is so much more room available. I was told back in 2011, by several of my blogging friends when I decided to start blogging your passion, Jonathan, don't do that. There's too many people already talking about blogging. You don't want to do that. There's there's so there's so much competition out there and I just ignored it because I just felt passionate about doing it in a different way, my way, which is a more laid back easygoing teacher kind of style. Uh, I don't have a mansion and the Lamborghini, in the, in the shots, on my sales page, unfortunately.

Ray Edwards (38:14):

Wait a minute, Wait, wait a minute. You don't have a mansion and a Lambeau? No jet?

Jonathan Milligan (38:18):

No, no jet. Oh, that's right.

Ray Edwards (38:22):

How did you get booked on this show? I got to talk to somebody. I love it. I love it. I love what you're saying because there's there's room and there's a need for everybody, whoever you are, that's who we need. We who you are to show up and share what you have. And that means it could be anything that you're passionate about, that you know, that you've been given as a gift. We're given gifts to share them with other people, right? Not just to keep them to ourselves.

Jonathan Milligan (38:45):

Exactly. Yeah. And here's another illustration. So in Jacksonville, Florida, we have like 400 churches here and I've heard people say over and over again, uh, there's too many churches here. But did you know, Cause someone actually did the painstaking duty of, of, of doing the research. Uh, uh, a study came out that if everybody in Jacksonville wanted to go to church on Sunday, they would not be able to. There's no room. There's not enough room and space to fill everybody. And so there's an example of like, oh, there's a church on every corner, but yet churches are still reaching people. Yes. There's churches that do die off, but that may be more about mission and what they're doing and leadership. But that's just an example of, um, you don't just say, oh, there's already an Italian restaurant in Chicago. It doesn't need another Italian restaurant. no, there's 6 million people there.

Ray Edwards (39:37):

Yes. Yes. So the book is called your message. Let me say it differently. *Your Message Matters*. That's how it needs to be said. *Your Message Matters- How to Rise Above the Noise and Get Paid for What You Know*. You don't have to learn some new, weird thing. Just get paid for what, you know, what you're passionate about. What you've been gifted with. So, Jonathan, where can they find this book?

Jonathan Milligan (39:59):

Yeah. So I have this book available at yourmessagemattersbook.com. If you live in the U S, we're actually giving free copies to people. So that's a place you can pick it up, but you can also get it at any bookstore. Amazon is where a lot of people go. So yeah, that's where you can grab a copy,

Ray Edwards (40:17):

Your Message Matters. Jonathan Milligan is the author go to yourmessagemattersbook.com. We'll have the links in the show notes. Any final thoughts you want to offer people? If they're kind of intrigued by this topic, what would you say to them? What should we do?

Jonathan Milligan (40:30):

What I would say is just be willing to go on the journey. It is a journey and be willing to just take that step and go on the journey. Yes, you don't have everything figured out, but here's what I want you to know. There are people waiting for you to have present courage and you need to have present courage in this moment because their future help, the people you want to help depend on your present courage right now. All the people that Ray Edwards is impacting today years ago, if he could hop in the DeLorean and go back to the younger Ray,

tap on his shoulder and say, Ray, I'm come from the future. And you would not realize how many people are going to be impacted by you. You need to do this. You need to start the podcast. You need to start sharing your message. And if it's true for Ray, if it's true for me, then it's true for you as well.

Ray Edwards ([41:22](#)):

Also, I would say to the younger Ray, buy Bitcoin when it's \$10.

Jonathan Milligan ([41:30](#)):

That that would be the other one, right? That would be the second piece of advice.

Ray Edwards ([41:33](#)):

Jonathan, always a pleasure to talk to you, my friend.

Jonathan Milligan ([41:36](#)):

Thank you, Ray. I appreciate you having me.

Ray Edwards ([41:38](#)):

Check out Jonathan's book. I think you're going to love what he's up to. Don't forget if you have an interest in working with us in getting the sales part of your messaging dialed in and getting my help and the help of my team and a cohort of your friends, then come along for the journey with us on Become Your Own Copywriter. When you decide to be your own copywriter, you will save money, save time, save frustration, and you'll make more sales, which means you'll make more money. Check it out, go to the link in the show notes or go to Rayedwards.com/cohort, but do it now. Till next time, God bless you. Remember I love you very much. And as my friend, Michael Port says, not in a weird way. Peace, live long and prosper.

Announcer ([42:30](#)):

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