

A Coffee with Makers - Episode 18 | Treasure of Nikki & Mallory

Kimberly: Do you have a coffee? Are you ready for another maker story? Well, join me for today's episode of a coffee with makers? Today's guest on the podcast is Treasure. And Treasure is from Nikki and Mallory and if you are not familiar with Nikki and Mallory, I'm going to give you a minute to go over to Instagram and check out her business because it is amazing. She creates custom leather goods; the purses that she makes are honestly, the nicest looking leather purses I have seen. And I am at the point where I'm just trying to decide which thing I'm going to purchase because it's hard to pick just one. So I am going to send it over to Treasure to tell you a little bit more about her. And I cannot wait to hear her maker story.

Treasure: Hey, everybody. Hey Kimberly, so I am the owner and the sole designer of Nikki and Mallory. I started this business about, three years ago. It kind of was something, that just fell into my lap. I had worked in the television industry forever. So let's just say as soon as I graduated from college, I started working in entertainment. That was like my dream job until I got laid off. But honestly when I got laid off it was, it was like a blessing in disguise because I had been fed up, with the whole day-to-day, nine to five. Entertainment was amazing, but I was just like this can't be life. You know, I'm coming into this job every single day doing the same thing. I'm doing my bosses work and my work. And I was like, super young and making great money, but I was miserable.

And so when I got laid off, I literally hit the ground running and that was my opportunity, to figure out exactly what it was, that I was interested in, besides entertainment. I pursued acting, modeling, I did everything creative. I was still contracting for all these, you know, entertainment production companies. I was booking different TVs, not TV shows but I booked a commercial, I booked a movie, like I was doing a bunch of stuff. But, then it got to a point to where I was like, okay, I'm doing all these different things that I'm interested in but I'm struggling like I'm literally struggling, trying to make ends meet and pursue all these things and I was just stuck. And so I remember I was at the verge of, you know my losing my apartment.

And being that I've been on my own since I was 19, I was like wait, what is this world? I don't, understand this. I'm usually that person that has crazy savings, a one-credit, like it was always, you know, like put together and taken care of. So when things started to crumble I was like this can't be it like. So I remember, you

know, really being super down and out and kind of losing everything around me. Like I wasn't booking as much I was not making the type of money that I was used to making and so I remember talking to a friend and they said, you know when you're down to nothing you have to become innovative. And so I started you know, playing with my, thoughts a little bit. Like what is it? What else could I do? Like, I feel like I've done everything, you know, and so I remember seeing this commercial for the Arts Institute and they were talking about fashion design and you don't you can have a career in fashion and I'm like, yeah, it's crazy me. I'm just crazy. So I was like, that is the one thing that I've done on the side.

That, I didn't really take seriously. I was always altering purses and shoes and clothes and creating and just doing all these creative things and like styling people on the side, but I was like, no that can't be a job. So, I thought about it for a while and I was like what if I don't have the money. I really don't want to get another degree and have all these this long debt racking up. But hey, I've done everything else. Why not? So, I went and rode started fashion design program and literally. Within like the first few months, because you know, when you first start classes, you're not doing like the fashion design the sewing all that is like, the basic stupid classes.

But I was like, whatever I'll figure it out. And when I took my first sewing class, I don't know what it was but I started illustrating and I kept illustrating this girl with this nice outfit, but she had to have a bag. I don't I was always like the bag and shoe girl, everybody knew me for being the bag and shoe Queen like my outfit could be sweats and a hoodie, but I will have some crazy shoes on and a cute bag. So after a while, you know getting into school and into the flow of things. I wasn't just making clothes. I was using those Aesthetics to teach myself how to make bags. And so every time in the back of the class. I would just be making bags while I'm making these clothes that I have to present, you know for school.

And after I was only there for two years so after like a year and a half, I knew, I was like this is it I think this could be, a business. I met this lady because I was still working in television. I met this lady on set and I told her like I think I'm going to start a handbag line. And she said do you have a bag? I said I made one. She said let me see it. I showed her my bag and she said. You better Market this one bag, like you have a hundred. You have something and I think you should turn it into a business. So long story short, you know, it's time to graduate. We have this huge showcase where we have to present all these clothes that we've made over time and I sat with two teachers and a counselor president somebody and they were like, so let's see your clothes and I was like, I don't have clothes.

And literally, like all their faces were like a blank. They said what do you mean

you don't have clothes? I said I didn't find my desire to make clothes. So I made bags and they were like, so you've been doing this whole time and I'm like, yeah, so this is what I want to present. Can I present it? They saw my bags and literally they had to have a separate meeting to figure out because I was the only person in the school ballsy enough to do something that, you know wasn't required. I'm just not that person. I don't really follow rules. So they after they met they were like, yes, you can present your line of bags or whatever. And at the, showcase instead of, people just coming by to see my stuff. I had a line of people asking, like are you selling and that was it for me? So as soon as I graduated I was like, I don't have any money. I have no business experience, but I'm turning this into a business and that's literally, what happened? I'm a big researcher. So I researched, I studied, I watched a hell of tutorials. Like I just figured it out and I started making Mallory with a line of fabric clutches, you know, everybody it's easy to work with fabric. And after I got bored with what I said, you know what I want to learn how to be a leather crafter, like that's an art to me that. You know not a lot of people know about and so I studied, I research and that's literally been my process with this business. I research and study like crazy. I taught myself how to become a leather crafter and I started making leather bags.

Kimberly: That is so cool. I knew you were going to have a good story. That was so much, better than I thought. I love that, you took this, as a low point in your life, to say this is not working like whatever, I am doing is not working, so I need to do something different. And I also love that even, in you trying out this fashion design. You were like, yes, that's not it, that is not it, what this is and you ran with it and you learned as you went because that is so me. So I think it just makes me happy because I'm like, I'm the same way.

Treasure: Right.

Kimberly: I don't know, what I'm doing but watch some videos and practice.

Treasure: Yes.

Kimberly: Oh, that is so cool. You said you watched a lot of tutorials so for leatherwork, like what has the process been like with that?

Treasure: You know what? That was the hardest thing for me to figure out because you know where I am it's easy to make a fabric bag, but then when I started getting into leather, I don't know why but I didn't ask questions at first. I had some bunch of questions, now. I didn't ask questions. I just watch these tutorials and started reading stuff and then I found a leather place, you know, like a leather supplier locally, and I was just buying leather. Not knowing the different

ounces and weights and you know, what leather is used for what I was just so curious to figure it out. In my process of figuring it out, I made a bunch of mistakes, but I'm grateful for those mistakes because that's how I figured out. My needs for Nikki and Mallory. And so I didn't start doing leather crafting at first. I was just making basic leather bags, you know with a sewing machine and as I grew up I was like, the detailing from a sewing machine to actually hand stitching leather is completely different. It's like night and day. But the quality is so amazing and so, pristine I was just like that's me. That's my Niche. Like that's everything that I stand for. I'm big on how things look visually. I'm big on quality. I'm not perfect. I would never say that but I pride myself on making it look as good as I possibly can, you know, so it's just been a process and I'm actually I'm still learning. I mean you could see my bags and think wow like, she is amazing at what she does but I'm still learning every single day. There's something that I don't know that I'm trying to figure out constantly. So it's a constant growing process. It's definitely evolving but I feel like all of that just comes with time just practice, practice, practice.

I tell people all the time. I don't do anything but to practice I feel like we can always be, better at what we're doing in the only way to be better, It's just to freaking practice. It's like, you know instead of scrolling Instagram and doing stupid stuff sit and practice if you really want to be great at what you're doing. You got to put in that work. So it's just been a process for me.

Kimberly: Yeah, I think that's the case with a lot of makers. I think a lot of makers, they start in one place and then every year it just gets better and it just gets more refined and. Look back on, you know, three or four years ago and think oh my gosh, I was a mess.

Treasure: Right.

Kimberly: But then where am I going to be, you know in three or four years from now? And I get to look back at what I think now is really pretty fantastic.

Treasure: Yes.

Kimberly: It's really fun for me to know that I will never know everything right I can keep learning and growing and fixing the way that I do things.

Treasure: Yes.

Kimberly: And trying new things too because you know, you started maybe with sewing leather, but with a machine and then it's hand sewing and you are mixing

materials too.

Treasure: Yes.

Kimberly: Your bags are not just leather. It's like leather and I believe there's some was like fur, or is it fo-fur?

Treasure: It's ten small fur, it is a little bit of everything.

Kimberly: So, that you know each new element that you add, you have to learn how to work with that element.

Treasure: Exactly.

Kimberly: So I know for me I really like to feel like I'm constantly learning and growing.

Treasure: Yeah.

Kimberly: And otherwise, I get bored and it sounds like you're very similar.

Treasure: Oh yes.

Kimberly: You're like doing the same thing over and over?

Treasure: Yes, I'm a mess. I'm a mess. But it's like a beautiful mess because I just sold a bag to a friend the other day. And I told her I said this is the only one of this bag. And she was like, "Wait, what like you don't want it?" And I'm like no once I'm done with a design, I'm done. I get very, very bored quick. So I love the growing process of it. I'm, like I let's do something new all the time. Why not?

Kimberly: Yeah, well and your brand might get sort of boring too if you're always making the exact same bags.

Treasure: Yes.

Kimberly: So, you know, your customers are going to like new and different things.

Treasure: Exactly.

Kimberly: Now, do you release as collections or do you just sort of like when you've got something new you're like, here's the newest bag.

Treasure: When I first started out, I was just released, whatever I made, whatever bags came to mind. But then I wanted to get a little more, I guess

professional about it. So, I was like, okay, let's try to do this like the fashion industry. You know, let's work on some collections. I'm glad I went that route. It gave me a different pressure. It gave me like a different type of kick in my butt. You know, you have this deadline. So, you know, you need to get these pieces done and out for the season. And I have not been perfect with that which I appreciate because now I know I don't want to mimic the fashion industry. I kind of want to do it my way. That's the beauty of it being my business. But yes, I have done. Now I think three or four collections so I'm actually in the process of changing things. So it won't be collection based anymore.

Kimberly: It's fun to try new things and see what works, see what sticks and make a mix of like what you like, and what you don't like, and make it work, like you said for your business.

Treasure: Yes, definitely.

Kimberly: Now, do you have a type of product? That is the most popular like your little waist packs? I'm obsessed with your waist packs.

Treasure: I felt like everybody is and I promise you I like what is it with these little things.

Kimberly: I don't know what it is.

Treasure: I don't know what it is. But when I first release those and it was for me, it was like, okay. Everybody can't afford a super big bag, you know great. So let me throw in some little pieces. So I did those little things honestly, I take that back. Nobody was doing at the time. Nobody had brought back. Fanny packs, right so I decided to do some fanny packs of my own which I was like, I don't want it to be the same name as everybody. So, I called them Lily packs , Little packs Century.

Kimberly: Oh, okay.

Treasure: So I actually started doing the pouch version in different like cow hair and cowhide and nobody big, nobody. I think I sold like 8. And I just knew they would be a good thing. You know, nobody did it. Nobody really thinks bought them. I did a couple of craft shows and that's where I sold them out and I was like, that's it. I'm not doing those anymore. But then as I started getting into leather crafting and hand-stitching I said, well, let's just try this one style. I literally just did that off the top of my mind. I kind of threw it out there. And the sales went bananas. What is this, now fast forward to I don't know a year and a half later fanny packs are like the huge thing, but I'm like that just goes to show you that

people. They're so into the mainstream. Like a lot of people don't have their own identities, but it bugs me like I was doing this. What are you guys? You know, what's the big thing now? But yeah, that seems to be like the top seller. I would have to say, besides the fanny packs. The biggest seller was the Hand Stitch Tote bag. Mary Steenburgen is an actress and I used to work on the show, the Last Man on Earth and one of my standing friends bought, Mary one of my hand stitch tote bags and that bag just kind of took off. So that has been another favorite and top seller of mine.

Kimberly: That is really cool. Like did you ever see her with the bag?

Treasure: Yes, she brought it to set a couple of times. But after that, she said it would be her vacation bag. So ,yes.

Kimberly: I think that is really fun. I think that seeing people with your product is one of the most exciting things ever.

Treasure: It is so gratifying and you know for me I bust my butt on each piece and they don't always come out perfect to me because I'm such a stickler and I'm very hard on myself. But then even now, like when people take pictures with my bags. I'm so excited to repost them because it started out like a freaking dream.

Kimberly: It's probably the most gratifying thing about my business as well seeing somebody who's, you know, wearing a pattern that I've designed. It feels like you've got that validation whether you want outside validation or not. It's still really nice to have somebody say, I love this. I'm wearing this for I'm carrying this bag and it just feels like okay. I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing.

Treasure: And it's something that it took a while not everybody cared and nobody was purchasing and nobody was reposting and just you know, so it's been a process but to see it now. It's like okay. I'm on the right path and I don't think I should be doing anything else. But this I tried super hard-headed. I'll do a whole bunch of other things like okay, maybe not maybe I should try this but it always brings me right back to Nikki and Mallory.

Kimberly: That is really cool. Do you have some, new and different designs that you're getting ready to do?

Treasure: Oh, yeah.

Kimberly: Are you mixing it up with any new materials?

Treasure: I'm trying to but because of the change I want to gradually, you know

to move into the newer things I do have, something other than bags, that I'm working on. So that's super exciting. I'm really happy about that.

Kimberly: Now what people may not know is that you hand make every single piece correct? Or do you have other people working?

Treasure: I wish oh my goodness. I am on the crowd. I'm looking. I wish I had a team of people. And every time, people ask me this question. I'm like, wow people really don't believe that I make every single piece and just recently I had over 30 something orders that I had to finish and I was like how, and I was working. So I'm like, how am I going to do this? I make every single piece by myself. I've never had help. I want help but I'm never had help.

Kimberly: Now do you ever do any like ready-made pieces or is everything once the order is made then you make the piece.

Treasure: Yeah, everything is essentially made to order. I just recently had a sample sale or it's actually still going on and those things are ready to go. But because their samples essentially but yeah, everything is made to order but the way I'm changing things now. Be they'll be readily made.

Kimberly: Oh, well, that'll be nice. It probably helps because you aren't doing Nikki and Mallory full-time.

Treasure: Correct, I'm back working a little bit because I have some other goals that I'm trying to accomplish; my biggest goal is to be a homeowner. And I'm in California, so it's no joke out here. If I went to any other state, I would probably be considered rich. But in California, it's a different story. So that's my goal, to be a homeowner and so I'm changing things around a little bit. But also because I've gotten to the point where creating on demand has taken my passion away from creating and like you mentioned, you know, when I'm doing one style 20 different times. It doesn't give me the opportunity to work on, the craziness that's going on in my brain and I'm like, that's why I started creating, not just to make a bunch of money that I mean, that's great. But I'm an artist I have to get out this stuff that's in my head. And so that's a big reason why I'm changing things because creating, on Demand is just it's too much. It's not fun. It's not fun for me. So I think the way that, things are going to flow from here on now it'll also, educate people on how to make their own bags. I'll be able to create any and everything. I want to and you know, it just won't be so demanding. It'll be a little more, free spirit which is who I am in general.

Kimberly: Anyway, I think it's great that you are looking at ways to continue your business, your vision for your business, but also recognizing that you are the one

person doing everything and you can't do everything. I always talk with people about how you hit this point where it's like painful. Your business is painful you feel like your whole life surrounded by this business and you can't keep up at that rate.

Treasure: No, I cannot.

Kimberly: You, have to make a change and I think that every business gets there. I am so deep in that painful point of my business right now that, I feel like I can't even give myself the space to figure out what I need to do.

Treasure: Why?

Kimberly: I can't, I mean I've got orders downstairs that I need to be doing and but then the orders I'm just like ah, I appreciate it...

Treasure: Yes.

Kimberly: But I didn't want to crawl in a hole and not actually do it.

Treasure: Oh my gosh, you are speaking to me. Girl if this is not Sunday. You better preach. Yes, it is. And I never thought it would get to that point because I felt like this is what I asked for. No what do you, mean it's painful. You better get up and do it, but it's like not I can't progress like this. I have to do things differently. I have to continue feeding myself because I'm the only person doing this. So if I'm not happy doing it, it's going to show and that's what it cannot do it cannot show in my pieces and I got exactly where you are. Like, oh, no, I have to redo things. I cannot continue at this flow. My goal is also to have my own team of people to assist me. But until that time comes I have to, make it work for me, and not freaking kill myself. Because I won't sleep, I won't eat, I won't take care of myself, I'm just that type of creative. So I had to reel it in.

Kimberly: Yeah, but it's hard to when you are looking at your business and you're saying if I stop doing these things money is not coming in. For me, I feel like okay, maybe paper patterns need to stop because.

Treasure: Right.

Kimberly: So much work. I don't think people realize and a lot of that's on me and decisions, I made but I keep thinking. Well, maybe I just stopped selling paper patterns, but then I'll get you to know a bunch of orders in and I think well if I stop doing paper patterns, then I wouldn't have gotten all of this income.

Treasure: Right.

But you start to feel like you're working for your business instead of on your business and you can't grow because you're so bogged down in actually, you know doing the business.

Treasure: Right. No, that was on point. I can't explain it any better. That's it. That's was the dark cloud that I just came out of. It was way too overwhelming and, taking me to a place that was not positive. And so for me, I don't thrive in that environment. I couldn't progress like that. I had to change things around and I did, I thought about the money. But then I also have to remember that it's not about the money. It's about happiness. And the reason why I wanted to be a creative and to have my own business was that I didn't want to be subjected to somebody else's plan working for everybody and their mom and helping them grow their business when the objective is to make myself happy and to live for me. And so even though the money was a thought I was like I have to do this for me my customers my clients. People that believe in they came out early. They're just going to have to understand it either I burn myself out and shut this business completely down because I'm over it or I re-strategize and do things for making them conducive to me having a healthy lifestyle.

Kimberly: Yeah, I think about that sometimes too. When I think okay. I'm feeling the struggle but my customers are going to be there with me. Regardless of what changes I need to make for my own like mental health and the health of my family.

Treasure: Right.

Kimberly: And so if that means that there are some growing pains in there the people that, are a part of this business with me, because I feel like all of these people are sort of in it with me, even if they're not buying every pattern but there any like they want the best for me and they're going to be okay with the changes. I need to make for me. I feel like they're going to appreciate that I'm saying I have to take care of myself for a little bit here. I need to focus on my life. My business and there's going to be changing. Yeah, because like you said the alternative is that the business is done. Yeah. Nobody wants that,

Treasure: Right and I don't want that and I was getting to that point. I felt like that's where it was headed. I was so, burnt out and beating myself up, but then bored because I'm doing the same thing. I was just like okay that I'm either going to shut this thing down and live my life fully or I'm going to stay true to myself. And just revamp everything and do it differently. And I feel I have honestly when I

made that conscious decision; it was like a weight was lifted off my freaking shoulder. I come to this design room and I'm like, let's create. You know, I'm like this new Life Energy now, it's different. It's definitely on the next level.

Kimberly: And that's when you know, the decision was correct.

Treasure: Yes.

Kimberly: So can like to walk away and feel like oh my gosh, I can breathe.

Treasure: Yes.

Kimberly: My gosh, I can go in here and create and I'm not feeling like, I would so much rather be doing anything, but this.

Treasure: Yes.

Kimberly: And sometimes that is a long process like for me. I feel like I've been having these conversations with myself for probably eight or nine months,

Treasure: Right.

Kimberly: And sometimes it's like either this happens or we're done. Like I need to just make this decision.

Treasure: Right.

Kimberly: And I think that for every business it's going to be different and even for people that don't have businesses or official businesses, you know, I can imagine as sewing bloggers go through the same crisis of life and output, and all of that. I think that regardless of where you're at some point you're going to have, to have this conversation with yourself.

Treasure: Definitely, I believe that.

Kimberly: Yeah and be okay with what decision you made.

Treasure: Be, okay with it, that's the thing.

Kimberly: Yeah, because you can't make a decision based on what you think everybody else would do because every person is different. Every person's life is different, their business is different, they as a person is different. What, you can handle might not be things that other people can handle.

Treasure: Exactly.

Kimberly: So they might hit a breaking point before, you did.

Treasure: Yes, exactly. And I feel like it's even or it's become even worse now would like the pressures of social media because people are constantly watching, what are you doing? What is she coming out with? Why has she not been on here in a week? Oh, is she falling off? It's like all these different things so you kind of I mean mentally, you have to keep yourself from caring. You have to really just live for you and look at it. Like look whoever is rocking with me is rocking with me, and if you're not peace out, because I have to fulfill myself and you know, I feel like you said it's probably across the board, especially. If you're on social media and you're constantly trying to keep up with this image, it's just like no it's not about that. You really just have to feed your soul and make sure that you are happy at the end of the day.

Kimberly: Yeah, because if you're not happy then. It's going to show in your business, in the way that you're interacting with customers, in everything and nobody wants to like to hate their job. That's the only reason I started this business in the first place is that we were like I am not going to that job every day, anymore. But you don't want to despise your own business like, how you may have felt about your 9 to 5 job.

Treasure: Yes. And that's what it felt like to I was like, okay, this is starting to feel like I'm coming into work for somebody else, which is not my deal. If I do it. It's for a temporary time, and I know I have an exit strategy but. My business can't feel like the exit strategy like this know, this is my life.

Kimberly: Yeah. Well, I'm really excited to see the changes in your business because you have the I don't know the courage to like say yes. This is a successful business, but it is not working for me anymore, and I have to change it.

Treasure: Yes, definitely. I'm excited. I can't wait for everybody to see it's going to be a little process and I'm trying to you know, take my time with it and not rush because at first, I was like, okay, I'm going to do this change I got to do it fast. So, you know, I don't lose people but then again I'm like no if I lose them. I lose them. There will be another group that comes along and it'll be what it is. But I'm going to take my time with it and make sure that it is right.

Kimberly: Yes.

Treasure: And that I know, I do everything that I want to do with it so that it stays great.

Kimberly: Well, and I think that that's sort of a normal process. I think of creative businesses. Is this idea ok, a lot of times we didn't start a business with everything figured out? So like you it was sort of like I'm going to do this, and now I'm going to do this, and I'm going to do that and to be able to take the time to say I actually now I'm actually going to think out everything and get a bit more perspective on me and my business and my limitations and then say and I'm going to take my time releasing this new version of Nikki and Mallory.

Treasure: Yeah, it's imperative. We just always have to just take that time with ourselves. I think it's vital, you don't want to lose yourself in the process and you don't want to just do something just to do something, you know, like. That's stupid. Let's be smart about this.

Kimberly: Yeah, and your people that want to support you are going to be there. And if they weren't then they're not your people.

Treasure: Exactly. I always say that to people and you know, and my biggest thing is because I am an entrepreneur and a small business and I've done this by myself. I try to inspire people in a way that they understand. I'm just as human as you. You know, don't be so tough on yourself, like I am kind of like to learn from my mistakes. I'm going to try to give you the best blueprint as possible. It'll still have to work for you. But that's what I want people to understand that this is for you, you know, take your time with it. Make sure it's right for you.

Kimberly: Yeah, well, I think one way that you do a really good job of showing that you are a person like you're not just sitting there slaving over these leather bags is your car chronicles.

Treasure: Oh, my God.

Kimberly: Your car chronicles are actually when I first started following you. I don't know how it all happened. But one of the first things I saw was one of your car chronicles and I was like, yes, this girl is amazing. And I feel like every time one pops up. I'm just like okay, let me get my drink. I'm just...

Treasure: Oh my goodness.

Kimberly: Like let me see what Treasure is up to today.

Treasure: I love that because I promise you it just started out as this random thing because as you see I'm in my car like 90% of my time, but I was like. I'm usually in the car and I act a fool by myself because I have to entertain myself for these long ass ride. So, let me do something to make myself, you know, and so it

just started out as this random thing. And then I also wanted to show people you know how I source my materials and get my product and stuff. I did it and I did not think I would get a response. I'm just silly like I don't really need, validation I don't need a response to just do stuff because it's me. But then when I started to get the responses that I was getting there have literally been people like, where is car ride chronicles? Are you going to come out with another car chronicles? And I'm thinking like I haven't even been in my car but to hear that is so crazy and I love it. Because that's the part of me that people, didn't see at first because I was so business. I wanted to keep everything business and I was fighting myself trying to figure out if I should do a logo versus but I'm like, no, I'm a human and if I learn anything from anybody else, I need to know that I can connect with that person and that they're just as human as me. I'm not a talking logo. Let me just present this business as treasure. The owner creator of Nikki and Mallory because I want to connect with people and that's been my biggest thing. So car ride chronicles is a way for people to see. My personality because if you just see my pictures you'll think I'm just this serious person, I'm all about my business, but I am a fool and I just love to live life and have fun.

Kimberly: Well, I love them. So I hope you keep doing them.

Treasure: I will.

Kimberly: Because they, honestly just like make me laugh. So hard and well it's funny too I recently was in LA and I was in traffic and while I was in traffic I was thinking I need to do something to like distract myself because of the rainbow horrible and. So I kept thinking of you while I was driving like I see why she does these.

Treasure: Exactly right? You don't want to go crazy. I love that.

Kimberly: Yes, I think it really is important when you are a business to show especially for those of us who are the entire business like we are everything in that business.

Treasure: Yes.

Kimberly: and for people to see that you're also a person. Yes, and that you have to run errands and you have to do these things that everybody else is doing it's not like you have a team of people who are sourcing the materials and people are sewing and you're like, no actually I need to go to the Fashion District and pick out another and I need to go to the Post Office and I never do all of these things and it really helps. Your business looks like more than just a business, It is

a person.

Treasure: Yeah, and that's what I wanted people to see it. I feel like, from my car ride chronicles and showing more of my personality and just being a human and letting people know. Hey, I'm human too. Like this didn't happen overnight. I know a lot of people have these businesses and they want to have this certain image. I don't know why but I'm just like I don't have time. This is what it is. Let's connect if you have questions ask me, you know, and so my car ride chronicles and me showing a lot more me. Has opened up my customer base and I've heard that before from you know business people that do business strategy and marketing and all that. They've always said you want to be as relatable as human. As you possibly can because that's where people trust you. That's where people connect with you. It's not about how great your product looks everybody's product can look great. It's not about how much money you can make. It's about how you reach people and from me doing that. My customer base just went up like. I mean my sales increased the interactions with people I've had increased my collaborations just different things and people know I can DM her or email her and she'll respond. She won't act like she's too good or that she has it all figured out. She's a human and people appreciate that.

Kimberly: They do and it's funny that you say that because I feel like at some point I commented on that's how we sort of started talking was I think I commented on one of your car ride chronicles.

Treasure: Yes, I remember.

Kimberly: I felt like I could say, oh my gosh, this is hilarious and thank you for sharing this. And that you were actually going to respond because that's me...

Treasure: Yes.

Kimberly: A lot of times, not only does that show your personality that shows that you're not saying. I'm too good to talk to people that DM me. I just think that it shows who you are, but also what your business is, that your business really is a part of like making people, products that they're going to love and you love them while you're making them but you are also a person.

Treasure: Definitely ,definitely but I get a lot of DM's and emails from people just saying thank you, you know, I didn't really do this with the intention of, having this like persona, but I guess that's just who I am. So I get a lot of messages from people that are like, thank you. Like you've inspired me to do this or to try this or that makes me feel so amazing because I wish I would have had that throughout my business. There were people that I reached out to that. I never got a

response from there were people that said they would help. But when I asked them for help, they weren't there, you know, and so I'm always trying to be the person that I don't like, you know, the person the people that I just don't understand why they are so to themselves and you know, selfish I try to be the complete opposite of that and it has really been like a blessing in disguise. I've made some really great, connections and I embrace them all like I tell people I don't care who you are. I don't care about the count of your following like. We're all human nobody's perfect. We're all trying to figure it out and life is just too precious. So why not, you know to value the interactions that we make.

Kimberly: I feel the same way. I could questions often about like making patterns.

Treasure: I know I asked you.

Kimberly: Or every time I'm always like, let me tell you what I know. Yes, much when I even started it felt like the secret club that nobody wanted to tell me and every time I'm just like I'm not trying to steal your business.

Treasure: No.

Kimberly: All I am trying to do is understand how I can make my business and. It just doesn't make sense to me why you wouldn't be open? And so just like you, I am the opposite of those people. I like to tell people anything. They want to know I will give them anything specific companies. I will give them contacts from those companies. I will tell you whatever you want to know.

Treasure: Right.

Kimberly: By helping you, you're going to be able to have a business. Or be able to be a part of your business and it's not like that impacts me in terms of your business.

Treasure: No, not at all. I've never, I've never understood it. I don't know. It must be like an insecurity thing. It has to be, an insecurity thing. It has to be like this level of competitiveness, but I don't I've never understood it. I've never understood. I don't even want to understand it.

Kimberly: No me neither.

Treasure: I'm happy to share, it completes me and it makes me feel. And I'm the same, anything that you have a question about I'm going to give you a straight answer with all the details probably too much.

Kimberly: Yes me too I always give too many details. I'm like do you want to talk

on Skype?

Treasure: People love it.

Kimberly: Let's talk.

Treasure: Right. Yes, I'm the same.

Kimberly: And I think it shows, like how I feel like it through your personality that you've been able to show. I think you have done a great job of showing people that you're here and you want to help if you have a question and if you don't have a question, that's okay, too.

Treasure: Yeah, I appreciate it all.

Kimberly: Yeah, so have you always been creative? This is one of my favorite questions to ask. Like as a kid, were you like always into something creative?

Treasure: Always I was a mess and you know what it started out with fashion for me. That was where I discovered, you know, my personality as a creative. I used to wear these jelly shoes with socks like knee-high socks and these dumb skirts. I used to call myself like the black Punky Brewster I was that girl, so from and it only started because I hated my mom picking out my clothes when I was young super young, like five. I used to cry and like put up a fit when she would pick out my clothes and she was like that's it do your own thing and I was like, aah. And from there, it's just been this creative being, I was always doing like puff paint shirts and these sticker murals and, trying to make different things and it evolved to like me working on jeans and making jackets. And now that I'm an adult and I have, you know the tools to make other things. I've made like wooden pieces like my handbag rack that I use for my craft shows I made that. Crates, I do a lot of different things. I just love to create it's like it gives me peace of mind but it's also like meditations like I love to cook as well. So it's kind of like that. It's like it allows me to meditate and sit with myself and just come up with this randomness that I just love.

Kimberly: I feel the same way. I always joke that I'm a hobby picker-upper because I'm constantly like, okay. Well, you know, I might knit but, I think I should try crochet. Maybe I should do some cross it and I would like to do woodworking. But yeah, you know like so there's constantly things that I want to try and I think a lot of that is just like you said. With a creative mind, it's a way to like to calm your brain at also still be creative.

Treasure: right. It keeps me going.

Kimberly: Yes, exactly. Exactly, and you know, it's funny because I ask this question I think on every episode and I don't think there's anybody who has said no. I am not creative.

Treasure: Yeah, I feel like if they said that then you're not really creative because it doesn't stop.

Kimberly: Yeah, we're all a similar type of person and that's yeah what I love about talking to other creatives because you don't have to explain your crazy, like they totally understand.

Treasure: We all get it.

Kimberly: Yes, you're like you don't have 10 other creative things going on around the same time.

Treasure: Like, what's wrong with you?

Kimberly: Yes. Have you ever thought about teaching? Like teaching your leatherwork?

Because I want to learn how to do and I feel like a trip to L.A, might be in my future. If you...

Treasure: Don't tell me that.

Kimberly: If you will teach me, to do some of this. So is teaching something you've thought about doing?

Treasure: It is definitely it's like the number one thing on my list which is and you've probably noticed. I've been like hitting around and asking questions in my stories and on Instagram just to see you know, what type of audience is interested in learning and a large percentage like my the responses have been insane. And this one lady, DM me and she said I would come to LA to learn if you're teaching and that's when I was like, okay, that's it. Like so yes, that is a part of the new wave. That's what's coming. I have to shout out Tabitha because she's helping with what I'm working on and. Her enthusiasm behind what I'm working on is why I'm like, yeah. This is it. This is what Nikki Mallory needs to do but she's a huge part of why I'm going to teach it is something that I've been wanting to do and I feel like you know, if I'm so big on inspiring people and giving people advice and resources, why not show them. How to do it as well, you know, I really want to help people figure out how to one start a handbag line if that's what they want to do. But a big part of that is teaching them how to make Handbags and a lot of people that are even requesting, you know, Classes and

tutorials and stuff they make handbags, but for them, they're like I want to make them like you. So I'm like nobody's really doing that. So yeah, let me do it.

Kimberly: Oh, I'm so excited.

Treasure: Yes.

Kimberly: I think that what is really fun? Is that yeah. There aren't a lot of leatherworking like workshops out there. And yeah, that is an interest for a lot of people, sewing or hand sewing or machine sewing with leather. I have done it one time and it was a disaster because I was like, it's punching holes like this is permanent.

Treasure: Oh yes.

Kimberly: So I think that there's a level of confidence that people. Do not, and almost can't get on their own like unless it is going to be a disaster, the first time. But being, able to be with somebody who does it who can walk you through the steps and show you. Yes, you can do this and then leaving with a finished product.

Treasure: Right.

Kimberly: Is the biggest confidence boost, for any sewest or any person who's interested in doing it. So I think that it is going to be incredibly successful.

Treasure: You just inspire me even more. I'm ready to start classes today. Let me see who I can call. My mentor is Minian George. She is a leather crafter in Portland, Oregon and, she also had a handbag line, but then she decided you know, I think it's best for me to kind of shut down the business and just teach, you know, teach leather crafting out here. That's what fulfilled her. And so I've learned a lot through her. She's taught me a lot. She is one of those people that I go to for answers and she tells me. But, watching her process, I was like, you know what that's a good idea. That was the initial inspiration to start teaching because I'm like; I know I don't want to just make bags forever. So what would be the next step and I think teaching would be amazing. So yeah, I'm excited.

Kimberly: And what's fun about it as well? Because I teach and it's probably my favorite thing about my business is teaching people, you know, you're interacting with different people. As opposed to customers who are buying your bags, that is a different, person then maybe the person who is coming to your class to learn to do it. Yeah, a lot of times usually it's other creatives. And so there's this like desire to learn and there is excitement around that, that I have never been in a

sewing class where. I haven't like felt, electric with all of the excitement of the people surrounding me because they're just like I mean, you tell them some little tip and it's like you have blown their mind.

Treasure: I love that.

Kimberly: So I think that it really also helps you get excited about your business again.

Treasure: Right.

Kimberly: And things that you're like, oh, you know, it's just this and then you tell somebody and they're like I had no idea and you're like, oh, okay. Actually, that is really cool.

Treasure: You know what? I really needed to hear that because I've been approached by like a makers class locally to get a generalization of how the system works and teaching they have these different makers classes and after the girl, you know looked, at my stuff. She's like you should really teach and I ended up taking a class there. She told me when I left, shehe said let me know when you're ready. There's a huge part of me because I haven't done it yet. I'm actually nervous and I'm like why this is what you do, but I'm big on trying to like fight through my fears. So I'm going to force myself to do this, but I'm nervous and excited at the same time. But I feel like after I do my first class I'll be okay.

Kimberly: That's all it takes. I actually had never taught and the organizers of Craft Keishon reached out to me and said, "hey, will you come and will you teach. And I was like, oh, yes, I'll come I had never really done it. I was like how hard can it be? I've like taught some friends, but I haven't taught a room full of strangers.

Treasure: Right.

Kimberly: So the whole way to LA I was like, I'm going to throw up.

Treasure: Oh, is that why you came to LA?

Kimberly: So this was last year, but this year was my second year, but last year I was like what in the world did I agree too? I'm, here like you have this knowledge in your brain, you know how to do it. But you also need to be able to like interact with people and I was really nervous about like what if they ask me a question and I don't know the answer.

Treasure: Right.

Kimberly: And then I did that very first class and I was like, oh my God, I can totally do this and. I'm freaking amazing at it. So clearly this is something I didn't know that I could do but like you said it took that first class for me to like get over the butterflies and realize that they don't expect you to be an expert at everything.

Treasure: Right.

Kimberly: So yes, they would like you to be able to teach them. But I have never had a student expect me to know how to do everything and when I don't know, I'm like honestly, I'm not sure.

Treasure: Yes.

Kimberly: Either. I'll look for your answer. Like while people are sewing I'll pull out my phone and see if I can get an answer for them or we just sort of like leave it as I'm going to do my best, but it's not going to be perfect.

Treasure: Right. That makes a lot of sense.

Kimberly: You kind of feel like a badass, after because I'm like, I'm amazing. And I totally just did this and I can do it again. So you can add one so I'm going to just throw myself in there and do it. I have to like it's burning me to do it and I feel the same. I'm like, well what if it doesn't it's not perfect or what it but I'm like, are you serious? Like the type of bags that you made why would you not be able to go and teach this? Yeah for sure.

Treasure: Wow.

Kimberly: And the reality is if you think about it like you were the student and you're like, okay if I was in this class and someone was teaching me how to do this. I would never expect the class to be perfect.

Treasure: Right.

Kimberly: So why as the instructor. Why are you expecting that of yourself?

Treasure: Right. I love that.

Kimberly: I'm just going to be here as your cheerleader like you can totally do it.

Treasure: I am totally going to do it.

Kimberly: Because it is so like the energy in a class. You can't get that anywhere

else and people just get excited and your excited. You know, it's it just feels like you're in a room full of friends. I always say that like in my workshops. We are going to just like dig in for those five hours that we're there and like if you need to take off your shoes, like get comfortable. We work together. We are learning from each other over the next five hours and you really just feel like you're surrounded by friends. You just hadn't met before that day.

Treasure: I love that now. I'm ready.

Kimberly: Now you are ready.

Treasure: Okay. That's it. That's it. And I'm already I've been I used to do public speaking. So that is not even the problem. It's just you know teaching what I know, I guess.

Kimberly: Yeah. Well, I think there's this feeling of like are they going to expect me to be an expert at everything? And so I think that as long as you can let that go, go in with I know a lot of information about sewing leather.

Treasure: Right.

Kimberly: So, I am going to pass that information on and everybody's going to be really excited to learn it.

Treasure: So, yes, okay.

Kimberly: Treasure, this has been so much fun.

Treasure: So much.

Kimberly: I loved talking to you and learning more about your story because I knew there was a really good major story in there. And I really appreciate you agreeing to come on. I'm so glad we were able to find a time.

Treasure: Of course. Thank you for even considering me. Are you serious? Thank you.

Kimberly: So, it's just it's been amazing and before we go through. I want you to tell people where they can find you.

Treasure: You can find me on Instagram at Nikki and Mallory and that's N.I.K.K.I and M.AL.LO.R.Y and as well as my website Nikki and Mallory.com. I am going to start doing a lot actually I have a lot of tutorials and stuff lined up for YouTube ready to go. I just have not put them up, but you can also find Nikki and Mallory

on YouTube as well.

Kimberly: And I will put all of this in the show notes. So, you guys can find all the ways to follow Treasure and the amazing things that are going on in this business.

Kimberly: Thank you so much. This was fantastic, and I cannot wait for everybody to hear your maker story.

Treasure: Yes. Thank you so much, Kimberly. I appreciate you.