



THE PROCESS OF DISCOVERY AS A JEWELRY DESIGNER WITH HEATHER B. MOORE

THRIVE BY DESIGN WITH TRACY MATTHEWS

"All of these memories that we have as we kind of go through life... everything that is in your past has created who you are today." - Heather B. Moore

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Tracy: Hey there, it's Tracy Matthews here, the chief visionary officer of Flourish & Thrive Academy. Thank you for joining us today on the Thrive by Design podcast. I just love bringing you some very special guests especially world renowned jewelry designers like my guest today. So you are in for a serious treat because I have Heather B. Moore here. I first met Heather probably about 10 years ago, maybe it was a little longer, I'm not really sure. The New York Gift Show which is now called New York NOW, it was my first show doing it, and Heather and I had booths across from each other. Heather at that time was doing enameled jewelry. We got to know each other over the years and it has been really, really fun to see her evolve as a designer and to see her move in kind of new direction. So I am super excited to have Heather here today. So welcome Heather.

Heather: Thank you so much.

Tracy: Yay! [laughter] I am so excited for this interview because we were talking a few weeks ago and we had a really interesting conversation about your evolution as a designer. So I wanted you to come and speak today a little bit more about the process of discovery and how you evolved into one of the world's most recognized designers of collectible personalized jewelry. So before we kind of dive into the content, are you cool if just do a little formal bio of you?

Heather: Sure. Go for it.





Tracy: Okay, awesome. Heather B. Moore began designing jewelry in 1994 using her extensive glassblowing and metalsmithing backgrounds. In 2004, she brought the finest personalized collection to the market and began selling Heather Moore jewelry in stores throughout the country. Combining her passion for art and talent for storytelling, Heather has built a company to create the product that truly allows you to cherish who you are. Using a freehand technique where each character is individually hand stamped, this line is about documenting your story and remembering what shaped it along the way. Well, now if that's not a powerful bio, I don't know what is because that's really about what the process of discovery is all about. So I'm very excited to talk to you today.

Heather: Thank you. Yes, it's going to be fun. It's fun to listen to the bios. You know like there are so many – as I travel around and I just got back from Seattle and seeing a bunch of my glassblowing friends, I'm like oh my gosh. It's just fun to be able have all those experiences and see how I got where I am today. It's kind of funny.

Tracy: Absolutely. [3:00] So do you just want to tell me a little bit about your story and how you kind of got into designing jewelry?

Heather: Sure. Okay. Well first of all, I grew up in Cleveland, Ohio and that is where I live now and that is where everything is made. I grew up with my father who is an entrepreneur and works in metal fabrication for car parts. So I grew up going to his factories on the weekends and stuff like that. I was the little girl, tom boy who would jump on the line you know in the factories and help do counts and fill boxes. It was- it was pretty consistent with how I would mess up the counts and drop things and would be like “Oh God”.

So on weekends I would be “Dad where are we going today?” we would always go to the factories and he would go and work in the offices. I know being around that I – it was just kind of something that was in my DNA so to speak. I started collecting tools when I was 13. My first tool that I got was at a garage sale because my





Mom and I always went to garage sales. I borrowed \$10 from her and I bought this stamp set from a tool and die guy or family.

Tracy: Cool.

Heather: Yeah, and it was a big one. It was actually a size 4. You know how size 4 stamps are these pieces of steel that are maybe a half inch by half inch.

Tracy: Oh wow.

Heather: So they were very big and then over the years I collected some smaller ones and then I ended up - I went to boarding school and when I went to boarding school I remember that my parents were generous enough to be able to pay for college. My Dad was very concerned about a ski racer and I wanted to kind of pursue that because I was really good on the east coast. He was like it's crazy and I was also into the arts. He was like how are you going to make money in the arts? You got to work for me and all of this stuff.

So I ended up going to do business and technology in Chicago in college. My sister was in anthropology and she went to Katmandu and she lived in Nepal in Katmandu. She lived and worked with a jeweler's family. So let's see I'm trying to think how I can blend this. She was doing jewelry in Katmandu and I was doing business and technology. We took a drawing class together in the summer. I would go upstairs into the glassblowing area and watch the glass artisans make things and I thought it was so fascinating. **[6:00]**

So I went back to college to do the business and technology. The following summer, this is so funny but I went with my boyfriend and we drove across the country because he lived in Ojai, California. The idea was to start a company there. The previous summers I had stone restoration companies and I also had a seal coating company so it was like tarring driveways.

Tracy: Right.





Heather: We went out there and he didn't seem like he wanted to start a company and I didn't know what to do with my time and I really needed to make money. So my Mom was like, "Heather, why don't you come back home and take that glassblowing class that you were talking about last summer." So I ended up doing that and when I came home.

I will never forget I was working. I was supposed to go to a party but I was working on some goblets or wine glasses and I looked at the clock and it said 12:00 at night. Oh my gosh, I had to close the shop down and the building is closing. I totally forgot about the party. I thought that was a really interesting moment for me because I was like wow this is -this is - I'm loving my time right now.

Tracy: Yeah.

Heather: I don't need to be around people or at a party. I wasn't feeling sad or lonely or whatever. I was completely driven on what I was doing to the point of I lost total track of time and as soon as I recognized that - I was like okay wait a second this is actually a powerful thing to recognize; now I know what I should be pursuing. So starting from there, then I ended up leaving the college that I was going to in Chicago and I wanted to apply to the arts school. [laughter]

Tracy: Of course, as we do.

Heather: Yeah, like oh my gosh, I did ceramics in high school and that's it. So I knew how to throw a pot so I went to the interview and I said well I took a drawing class last summer and it was basically a model that sits there and you would draw the person that's all I had. He said oh why don't you bring me a sketch book because I really need to see what you've done. I was kind of stuck like what is a sketch book, what do you mean, where do you get them. [laughter]

Tracy: Oh my God, that's hilarious.





Heather: No, you do a drawing of a bike, a drawing of some flowers, I want to see what your capabilities are and I was like well I don't think I have - well I don't know but I know I'll be good. [9:00] He's like that's not how you get into college. You can't just say I'll be good. I was like but I will be. So I came back two weeks later with a sketch book and he was like this isn't good enough and I was like it doesn't matter I understand I'll be good. I think it's about when you start recognizing when envision yourself as doing something good, you'll get there. You know what I mean.

Tracy: That's like the power of like visioning. That's amazing I love that. [laughter]

Heather: I was like yeah, I can't draw a bike and you know what I probably still can't draw a bike.

Tracy: Oh my gosh.

Heather: That doesn't mean that I'm not going to good at what I want to do. So anyway, I ended up getting into the arts school which is awesome.

Tracy: Just by telling them that you are going to be good?

Heather: Yeah.

Tracy: Alright, we trust her.

Heather: I was just like give me a chance. And then I remember also having - I felt bad, I was doing business and technology. I loved my economics teacher. He was so funny and he was so excited about micro/macro economics like I thought he was going to throw up in his trash can. I really did. [laughter]

For me, I wouldn't want to take that away from my memory bank because that's what drives you into understanding your numbers when it comes down to owning your own company. My micro/macro economics of wholesaling or direct retail all of that stuff is the same thing so I just remember thinking gosh you know I feel - my parents helped pay for this school and now I'm going to school that I really want to go to and I figured out how many





days of school was open and what the hours were and I figured out it was \$45 an hour.

Tracy: Oh my gosh.

Heather: So I broke down the tuition by the hourly rate of opportunity and I was like Dad I can definitely – it will be good. He was like oh God, okay whatever, know what you are doing and learn those tools as much as you can. I went to focus on glass. I did a minor in metals. I took one jewelry class. I was really into the glass. I dressed like a Mennonite. In the summer time, I worked at an amusement park, Cedar Point which is over in northern Ohio. I literally had to dress like a Mennonite and blow glass every day. It was awesome because that allowed me to get paid to do what I loved at the time and get better and better.

How can you – you know if you rent a space in a studio, [12:00] it's expensive. This was a great opportunity for me get paid and get better and better. I also did pass glass and one of the things that I was doing, you know you go through art school or life in general even now and you dabble in different art pieces and some you like and some you question like what am I doing and what is it that I like about what I just made. I am at the art school and Wendy was now at Pratt; she also went into the arts. She is more of a philosopher. My other sister, Halle was a brilliant writer. She got a top award at Dartmouth for her thesis on Bob Dillon. Everybody got upset about it because people were writing about Chaucer and this and that and who gets the top award but someone who is writing about Bob Dillon.

These guys were constantly you know Halle was bringing up quotes and Wendy is kind of talking about stuff all of time so I was doing these pretty glass frames and asked Wendy for a quote and other people for quotes too. Wendy's quote was "I said to my sister and she said to me come let's play laughter together". I took my stamp set that I got when I was 13 and I stamped it into a piece of silver and I riveted the sides and I put this elaborate glass frame around it and I did that to a number of others too.





When we were going through my thesis, I was like talking about the process of pieces that I was making and what I got the most out of and I was talking about what is it when you buy art or you make art, you have to put it somewhere, you have to maintain it, and stuff. I was like yet and I always felt like I was – I kind of like giving someone the burden of holding on to a piece of art, you know. [laughter]

Tracy: When it should be their pleasure, right?

Heather: Exactly. But then when I thought like I really got a lot out of asking something of someone, asking for a quote and not knowing what they were going to give me and then when they did give me something I worked the frame around that quote.

Tracy: Yes, it's almost like working backwards.

Heather: Yeah. So I'm like give me a problem and let me solve it. I love that. Then that was right when I was graduating and because I – then of course you have got to get a job. You are out of college.

Tracy: Yes.

Heather: And what are you going to do? So I had reached out to a bunch of artists to see if I could get jobs and I also had contacted Pilchuck, a glass school, a famous school out in Seattle where all of the [15:00] – Chihuly started it. It's really an amazing, just creative environment. At the time, they hired me to come out and be a – it's almost like I was on the marketing team for glass. So they brought out famous artists and my job was to look at their work and then say how can we implement glass into your work. It's almost like introducing a medium to someone that doesn't know anything about it.

I was placed with Judy Pfaff and Judy Pfaff is an artist out of upstate New York now. She worked at time she was working at Columbia. She is in all of the history books for kind – she went to Yale in the 70s so kind of geometric artist, very collage oriented with her drawings and then her installations, they are more about turning a space into a discovery so if you walk through her





installations and there are found objects and twisted steel and all of that stuff. Really cool stuff. Wendy when she was at Pratt, she introduced me to Judy Pfaff and I didn't realize that was who I was going to be placed with three years later.

Tracy: That is so cool.

Heather: The whole thing was really cool how everything was intertwined, it took me a couple of days to realize even that once I met her that this was my favorite piece of art that I saw in New York with Wendy. But at the same time, I was so immersed in glass that I was completely unaware or not even – it's so funny about how famous she was or how important she was as a woman artist and reading through the dossier of men artists in the 70s and 80s.

Anyway in light of that, I was like this is what we are going to do. We are going to do [inaudible 0:17:04.7]. We are going to duh, duh, duh, dah and I got the glassblowers together and we all worked together and made this amazing amount of work for her. She was blown away. She was like this is crazy. We filled a semi-truck.

Tracy: That's awesome.

Heather: Meanwhile I had another job to work with Flora Mace and Joey Kirkpatrick out in Seattle so I got an apartment and everything and I was all ready to go. After that stint, I had to go to D.C. to go get my dog who is staying with my glassblowing partner who I just saw last week in Seattle when I was at a jewelry store. Then I went to get Chutney and I went up to New York to my cousin, Tyler and see Judy and then I was going to drive to Seattle. So when I got there to New York, I picked up my cousin. We then went to Judy's apartment, she said Heather [18:00] I am going to give you this studio which is two blocks from the Trade Center. It's like down in Tribeca. I'll give you this studio for free if you stay here and don't go to do the glass, just stay here, and work on your photos and drawings.

Tracy: Shut up.





Heather: Yup.

Tracy: Is that how your first collection was born?

Heather: Yeah.

Tracy: That is so cool.

Heather: So I was like wait a second. She was like no I don't want you to do glass. You are good at glass and you know that, you got the job you wanted but why is that mean that you need to take because you could learn more or whatever, I don't know. I was like she is insane. So I said no. I drove home and as I was driving through Pennsylvania, I was like you know what. I did get the job I wanted and I'm good as I want to be but there is so much more to learn so I ended up calling Flora and Joey and saying you know you guys I think I'm going to take a hold on that bad idea, I appreciate the offer but I'm going to go to New York.

So I went to New York and I worked in the studio in Tribeca for like four months. Then Tyler, my cousin was breaking up with her girlfriend and I was like let's get an apartment together. So we went to Greenpoint Brooklyn which is near Williamsburg. We got a place there. It was a 2000 square foot store front right across from the Polish National Hall. There was a peach tree in the backyard and it's awesome. We end up moving there and I lived there for like 9 years.

Tracy: Awesome.

Heather: Yeah, and so I was working with Judy and when Tyler and I moved in together, we ended up going to - she was like well can you help me with some of my drawings and I was like can you help me with some of those pieces we made out in Seattle and help me incorporate them into art pieces in D.C. and Denver and all over. I was like I can help her. In the mornings, I would help her with her drawings and then with installation art it's really kind of fascinating just an avenue of art where when you have a government building 1% of the building cost so 1% of the full cost of the building has go towards artwork to fill the building.





So there's a little selling district, people who do pitches to government building for their artwork. So you would make the building little mock up, you know a mock up of the building and then show your art piece in it and then photograph its interior angles and then send it to them and there would be a review board [21:00] and then you would either get it or you wouldn't get it. So I started working with her on those projects. She had to weld a lot of things. Have you ever welded before? I was like no, not really. She showed me how to weld and because I'm so good with the glass and viscous material, like a fluid material, I was really good at welding.

Tracy: Oh awesome.

Heather: Yeah, I became her principle welder for her large scale sculptures across the U.S. with a bunch of people underneath and it was amazing. It was a great experience but then on the weekends I was like - you get so dirty when you are welding and working with big pieces.

Tracy: Yes.

Heather: My sister, Wendy, lived in out in L.A. and she was doing fashion, doing fashion show stuff and she was doing movie things. She would call me and I need earrings, I need this and I need a long necklace for these fashion shows. I was like okay. I have the weekend off, I'll make it. So every paycheck I would get a new tool just to help make jewelry for myself. So I would send her stuff out. This stuff is so small and so easy and so fun, like I needed satisfaction. Some of these projects took months; one took a year and a half. The last project I did, it's actually the largest hanging installation in America. For all of the young ones that are doing, starting jewelry companies or anything in the printed crafts, there is the New York NOW. There is also the show in Philadelphia, the craft - what's that show called?

Tracy: ACRE?

Heather: What?





Tracy: ACRE?

Heather: No, it was the gift show but it was in Philadelphia which show is that? I wonder if it's- it's like the American Craft's Show. Well anyway.

Tracy: Yeah. The show in Philadelphia.

Heather: The show in Philadelphia. We can just call it that. [laughter] There is this show in Philadelphia that has similar to the New York NOW show. It's usually at the Philadelphia Convention Center. It's an old train station. Have you ever been there?

Tracy: I haven't been. No. I never did Philly.

Heather: It's a really beautiful space connected to the Marriot right downtown and but it's the old train station and so that sculpture that we did hangs from the ceiling and that - it's the largest one in America. It's a 100,000 square feet of just awesome just...

Tracy: Oh my gosh.

Heather: So yeah, I welded that whole thing [24:00] and then when we had it installed we had to weld upside down. When we working on that project that's when Wendy was always asking for jewelry. I brought up the Polish National Hall because I didn't have a TV. Tyler and I didn't watch TV and there was the ski Olympics, the Olympics were on and I went over there to watch the skiing and I was making chain. I had - some of my glassblowing buddies had made like glass tubing and so basically them made this pretty glass beads so what I was doing I was taking the chain and soldering it shut with a glass bead and then I made this long chains. It was really pretty.

So I was cutting the links of the chain at the bar at the Polish National Hall while watching skiing. This old man was next to me and he was like what are you doing. Then he asked if he could help. He owned all of these taxi medallions in the city so he didn't need to work. He might have drank a little bit too much and obviously he seemed like he needed something to do so I was like





why don't you come over to my studio and you can help me make chain. He was like okay I would like to do that. It was great. I felt like I was helping him because he clearly needed to do something with his time.

This one day, he showed up and he would show up intermittently so I was like yay you are here. I didn't pay him or anything.

Tracy: Yeah. He wanted to make some chain.

Heather: Yeah, he just wanted to be productive, you know. He came over this one day with a kiln. He was like I don't know what to do with this. That's an old metal tempering kiln but I was like we could use it with enamel.

Tracy: This is it.

Heather: Yeah, I was like wait. I ran to 46th Street – oh okay I have to tell this other part. But when I ran to 46th Street because I don't even know how to enamel so I had to get some books on it, we are talking like the '95-'96 so we didn't have the internet so I couldn't quickly Google it. [laughter]

Tracy: Yeah, right.

Heather: So but I wanted say before when I was making all of that chain that is when I was kind of wrapping up with Judy saying okay I really do want start this jewelry company. I went to Soho to a store called Steven Alan and the owner is Steven Grant, a really great guy. Actually a friend of my cousin, Tyler. So I was immediately comfortable with him. But I remember walking in and I remember what I was wearing. [27:00] I only went to thrift stores for my clothes. I had this great blue shirt was like a button down that reminded me of my Pop, my grandpa.

I remember thinking well I need a good look so I put my best shirt on and I went into this store with my necklace on with the glass beads within the chain and I just walked right up to Steven who I didn't know or met him yet. I said hi, I think you would make a lot





of money if you sell my chain in your store. He looked at me and he was like okay.

Tracy: I think you will make a lot of money if you sell your chain - sell my chain in your store. You have got to love how easy it was to convince him to buy your jewelry.

Heather: Yeah, I was like I think it will go well with what you have here. He said yeah. I agree. So then he started selling the chain and then meanwhile that old man that I met him and then I started learning about enamel and then I brought some other enamel over to the store and then he said he blew out the entire second floor of his store. There was a balcony and you would go up this little back staircase and then look down. He made me a whole studio for free. He was like I want you to work here all of the time. I was like okay.

Tracy: Steven Alan?

Heather: Yeah.

Tracy: Oh my gosh.

Heather: Yeah, at Steven Alan, it was on Broom and Grand maybe.

Tracy: That's so cool.

Heather: Yeah, it was like over where Jonathan Adler started his first store. Do you remember that store?

Tracy: I don't, I wasn't in New York then but of course I knew the store Steven Alan but I don't where.

Heather: Yeah, now Steven is six stores down in...

Tracy: In Tribeca right?

Heather: I want to say it's in Tribeca. Yes. Anyway so it was really fun because I just loved how my studio was upstairs.

Tracy: I love that.





Heather: I know the Meg Ryan would show up and all the models. They would be like Heather, Heather. There was this really funny girl that worked there, her name was like – I want to say her name was Judith and she was from the Bahamas. She was beautiful girl with like really pretty – she was black but she had a beautiful like blond hair – I don't know how her look was – she was like this gorgeous girl.

I will never forget the girls would come into work and they would put on pretty outfits and I was working upstairs. This one time, I hear – Judith was crying – she was like whimpering. It was really early morning. I am like and she goes <sigh> again and I was like Judith are you okay? She goes I just look so good today. I was like ...**[30:00]**

Tracy: Oh my gosh, I love that.

Heather: [laughter] We just laughed. It was so funny. I'm totally getting sidetracked but it was such fun and warm environment to be around, you know full creativity.

Tracy: Yes.

Heather: And what not. I showed Steven my enamel and he at that time was really selling mostly a majority to the Japanese stores. I kind of launched this enamel line with Steven's, really with his blessing so to speak. Then Wendy of course, tripping in the background with all the colors that were in with what is going on in LA and this is what duh duh duh dah. So we immediately got some Japanese clients but then that was the year that I did my first tradeshow.

Tracy: Was that when I met you, right around the time that I met you at New York NOW?

Heather: Well, it was actually, I think it was the ENK show.

Tracy: Okay.

Heather: But it was ENK show when it was at the Plaza.





Tracy: Okay.

Heather: So that was the last year it was over at the Plaza and then it moved to the Piers. So I was like how am I supposed to do this, it's crazy. Like literally my blind sheets were drawings. I didn't have a scanner.

Tracy: I love that.

Heather: I would use the copy machine. So I'm going to make these links right of cast enamel pieces and so I would draw it like three or four times and then copy, copy, copy. Then I would literally cut it out and stick it all together and make a necklace. Those were my blind sheets. [laughter]

Tracy: We got away with a lot back then. Huh? [laughter]

Heather: Oh my gosh, I found - I have a catalog of all my blind sheets or like a box.

Tracy: Oh my God that would be so fun to look at.

Heather: Oh it's so funny.

Tracy: I have mine somewhere in storage. So I want to stop you there because your lines have evolved so much. Really briefly, can you tell us a little bit about the epitasis, you had this great enamel line, you have a mentor who got you sort of into welding and into art installation and blowing glass and then you talked about your entire evolution so but the evolution doesn't stop with the enamel jewelry - why don't you tell us a little bit about how you started to transition into the hand stamped more personalized stuff?

Heather: Okay, basically what we ended up doing was I kind of launched that enamel line; I want to say it was like '96 or no it was in '97. I had just gotten married and I went to this tradeshow to kind of launch it. I hadn't figured out pricing yet. [33:00] The show was starting the next day and I was like okay this is the material, this is how long it took, I think this should maybe be the price and I'm handwriting it. I was kind of winging it because these shows are expensive.





Tracy: Yeah.

Heather: But the day before the show, I found out that my sister had gotten in a ski accident.

Tracy: Oh geez.

Heather: So that makes you wonder what is it – what on earth are you doing – likes what’s the importance – what are your priorities and all of that stuff. I remember my uncle coming to the show and talking about perseverance and the value of taking this hard information not like just wallowing in it but more like using – it’s almost like – I think he said it was like a Tai Chi kind of theory where you take these – maybe it’s negative information but you absorb that information and turn it into a positive.

Since she was such a big part of my enamel line, it made me want to keep it going but it also made me kind of you go back to your parent’s house at Christmas or Thanksgiving or whatever and look at your old stuff, your artwork and I did find that piece of art that had Wendy’s plaque on it. I tore it off the piece of art and I put it in my wallet. The one said, “I said to my sister and she said to me come let’s play laughter together” and it is literally stamped on a piece of silver. It is just like what we do today.

So the kind of transition of how did I discover what I was doing. Then I went into – I started designing – you know when you go to the ENK show. The gift shop owners are like what’s new, what’s new and duh duh duh dah. Banana Republic came up and they asked me to design for them, JC Penney and so I started doing more fashion, fashion, fashion stuff.

Then fast forward maybe three years, I move back to Cleveland having had my first son, Henry then I had Leo and then I had Oliver. When I had Oliver there was this store – when we moved back to Cleveland. We have this beautiful Christmas tree and I was like oh my gosh, I don’t have any Christmas tree ornaments. So I made all of these Christmas tree ornaments and I started





selling those. That was amazing. It was just opening your doors to a new environment -

Tracy: Yes.

Heather: Museum stores and all of that stuff. They were metal so I kind of made them with a glue gun, a hot glue gun. They were drawings and then had them cast. Because I need ornaments that I knew the kids would pull off the tree because they are crawling around on the ground, [36:00] you know how kids are. They were pulling the ornaments off. So I needed them to be durable. It was just my solution but that kind of blew up too. That was a really lucrative business.

Then at one of the shows, trade shows, the magazines come around and they ask for - a magazine comes to your booth at a trade show, your goal is to be awesome. I would be awesome if they did an editorial but then to be a solution provider for the person who is writing the article. You have got to say what are your projects, what are you working on and then you can better direct them. You can just go well here is my stuff and if something looks good just pull it or whatever. You really need to engage in them and say well what are you looking for and why then direct them to the best piece that would be best for their editorial.

As I was having a conversation with someone from Real Simple, they were like you moved in Cleveland? Why did you move to Cleveland? I said well that is where my parents are from and I bought my great grandmother's house. It's a nice place to have a family. They asked me if they could send a crew to Cleveland and photograph my house and just like our lifestyle, the shop and how we make - I was having all my jewelry still being made in my basement.

They came and I had just had my third son, he was three weeks old. You are a young mother, you haven't slept at all, not feeling very good about how your body looks, and they are like wanting to photograph me. They did an eight page spread in the article in





the magazine. The stylist was really cute. He was like this beautiful Brazilian gay guy that literally went into my closet and was like pulling out clothes and trying to figure out what I should be wearing for the photo shoot. I wore this black thing and it was so silly, what am I doing.

They said okay tell us the story of why you moved in Cleveland. They have sidebars questions in the magazine and one was like what kind of skin care products do you wear, what's your favorite shampoo and then another one was like what's in your wallet and I was like these are such silly questions but I took out my wallet and I pulled out that plaque.

Tracy: That was your sister's?

Heather: That was my sister's and the stylist guy was like "oh my God that's so pretty". That's a quote from your sister? **[39:00]** And all of this stuff and I was like that so funny that he's so interested in that. You know that's mine; that's only for me. I didn't think anything of it but they photographed it in my hand and they put it in the magazine. I'm still doing enamel and two years go by. I'm getting a little bored. You are like gosh what am I doing with my life, I have got these kids, and it's awesome and I found a mission statement. You know how you do about us on your website?

Tracy: Yes.

Heather: Well it was one from like 2004 or 2003 and it was like I wake up, I work in the mornings, no my husband works in the morning, he's with the kids in the mornings and then I am with them in the afternoon or something like that. It was like how we broke up our day and how we as parents we were working equally and spending equal time with the children and all of that stuff. It was just kind of funny - anyway so then fast forward - so now you are starting to question yourself, you've been doing enamel for like nine years and great run with it but I'm getting bored and for me I was designing for Banana Republic and JC Penney, it was really fun. I felt like I was like bragging. Oh I design for blah blah blah.





But at the same time, the process was so arduous was like really a 75 page work order for one item and if you made a mistake they would charge you back. If something wasn't packaged right, they would send you a \$150 bill. I was like oh my gosh my margin is just like vanishing before my eyes. I was still doing my fine enamel but I was just getting tired frankly. I don't know what I'm doing. At one point, I think I had maybe - it was dwindling down to like people do want to see new things and stuff like that but I was so involved with my kids and I was just having trouble I don't know figuring out exactly what I wanted. I definitely felt like I was stuck.

I had my fourth child, so Coral was born. Then this one day, Henry got the RSV virus so it was a very weird virus that was going around and he was like four or five. So I spent the day at the hospital and in the clinic with him going through the MRI machine and a doctor coming up to me giving me a hug. I was like okay that was really weird. I don't want a hug. Oh my gosh, what am I doing. So I came home and Henry was fine. He just had to have IVs and he was totally fine after a couple days.

[42:00]

I went up to the offices in my house where the people were working and I said you know how when someone quits they give you two weeks' notice, I gave everybody two weeks' notice that they needed to find a new job.

Tracy: Oh my gosh.

Heather: I was like I think this isn't working for me. Like literally, I had - you know how when you have a job you get three months off for having a baby, you know?

Tracy: Yeah.

Heather: With my fourth child, working fulltime, I took 15 hours off then I had to ship a 6,000 unit order to Banana Republic somewhere I don't even know. This was like gosh what am I doing, this is crazy, granted I was in my house so the kids were still around and





stuff like that I was just really tired. When I had Coral, I remember – so people left and I was doing it by myself. It was totally slowing down. I found that article from Real Simple. I was cleaning out the attic and I found the article and I was reading it and I saw the picture of the plaque. I was like God you know that's what it is all about. It's like your story. How can you make something – here I am now it's 20 years later almost and I still have that plaque in my wallet. I remember thinking gosh where are those stamps?

Tracy: Yeah.

Heather: I went down to my basement and was looking around and found them and I found some little pieces of silver and some gold wire and I stamped my kids names in it and I did it just because I wanted to make something for myself. I was so tired of fashion and I was like how can I – just make something for yourself. You are taking a time out. You need a time out. [Laughter]

Tracy: Right, right.

Heather: So I made these charms and I had to go to the New York gift show for the fall show. I was showing my enamel, I was showing my ornaments and having my regular customers place reorders and I was kind of bored. I love walking around and seeing all the great things people are making and hearing about what they are into and why and someone was like tell me about your necklace. I was like oh it's just got my kids names on it. They were like whoa that's so cool.

Tracy: That's awesome.

Heather: Yeah, why do they think this is so cool, this is just for me.

Tracy: I'm not making this for anyone else, this is just for me.

Heather: I know I remember actually flinging the charms behind like my collar and being like I don't even know what the price of gold is. I couldn't even tell people like how much this thing would cost. If





you think back and you looked at the gold chart, I bet you gold was like only \$400.

Tracy: I now I bought so much gold – this is a sidebar but [45:00] so much gold at \$400 and I held on to it for a long time and I ended up getting a great return on investment because ...

Heather: Oh huge. Yeah, oh my gosh, me too.

Tracy: This is how you evolve as a designer and really discover what you're meant to be doing. You walk through the fire, you kind of fire all of your employees, [laughter] then you scale down, start over and then rebuild. [laughter]

Heather: Yeah, but I think that when you think about what the process of discovery is, it's about being brave enough make something and just figure out, learn about the process and see if it's something that is interesting to you.

Tracy: Right.

Heather: You have to stumble to get up. When you stumble you obviously have to like get yourself together and get up but if you trip over something that's awesome. If you trip over something that's cool and then you turn around and find out what you just tripped over that might be an awesome new opportunity. My Dad always says Heather is always taking a left and right turns more than anyone else I know but I think that with deciding not to take a glassblowing job and then going to New York and then from New York taking in a person that needed to do work and he brings you a tool and then learning from that.

My Pop used to always tell me, you are as good as your tools that you have. So when I was little, every Christmas I remember Wendy was really into the fashion and movie stuff so she got scanner and I got a welder. She got computer and I got a casting machine. It was always like he wanted us to invest in the tools that would make us grow. I think that is really important too, kind of always try to think outside of the box and be brave enough to make that step, I guess.





Tracy: It sounds like this process for you has been just sort of been a process of investigation almost like hmm I'm going to dabble in that, let me see if that's going to work and then you know your story is so interesting because you started in a traditional college environment moving into art school, trying to convince the art school people that you are going to be good enough without a portfolio. I mean it's crazy then going into glassblowing, and then meeting this artist and you know working as a sculptor for many years [48:00] and scaling down to literally to like small form sculpture which ended up being your jewelry, meeting the Polish dude who helps you make chain. It so incredible to hear your story because it's really like to me as an outsider listening to you talk about really more like you went through this process of discovery by just like going with the flow and trusting your intuition and your gut.

Heather: Yeah. When hiring people, just hiring people you know then you are creating a culture within the walls that you are working and hiring people who are smarter than you and even better than you at making things and stuff like that then you can play off of each other and go that worked. Then here we are with this line of personalization and for me then the discovery was more like how do I make this available for everyone. This is actually really cool. I always say like the value of personalization is higher than the material that that it's on, right?

Tracy: Yes.

Heather: It's like how lucky are we now to be able to kind of learn from our experiences and you know with my sister passing or my cousin passing or watching people succeed in awesome things and be proud. When someone does a marathon, let's do your time, that's bold, man. I could never run a marathon. I really wanted to in college but I didn't. [laughter] I got to 14 miles and I was like this is crazy.

Tracy: I have no desire to ever run a marathon, let's just say that.





Heather: I know but it's like so now what is so awesome about this collection is that I'm able to go to stores across the country and meet customers who have awesome things that they should be so proud of like from just the family that they grew up with, like I have a charm that says my sisters and my mom and dad and the longitude and latitude where we grew up. Then you have the new baby, you have got good things and sad things and all of these memories that we have as we kind of go through life. Everything that is in your past has created who you are today. So whether it's good or bad, you have to be able to be empowered by it, right?

Tracy: Exactly.

Heather: Yeah so now I really feel like I just love - I love the opportunity to be able to highlight those traits in every individual person. I think that for me having designed fashion for so many years, what's in, what's out duh duh duh dah. Now I'm doing something that has longevity and you still have that creative outlet because someone just like when I was in art school would give me a quote and I'm like give me a story and here we have a foundation of design in the shapes that we create but then their story we have put it on the charms.

You know we have different layouts and like a spiral design is really good for a quotes or linear you know we have all of these different designs which is so funny because when I first started it was just names straight across, boom that was it. Then we hired this girl, Mallory, she was so funny. She had just graduated from high school. It was a summer job for her and she worked for us in the summertime. [52:00] She would help us with the mailer or this or that or the other thing. End of summer, I'll make you a charm for your graduation gift. She was like okay. She said I'm going to do all my best girlfriends.

Tracy: [laughter]

Heather: Yeah, I want all the initials of all my best girl friends around the edges the charm and then I want my monogram in the middle. I





was like whoa that's such a good idea. So that's where it's fun because I have the opportunity to have people's interactions, you know like create a design so we are kind of working together as a team.

Tracy: You know what's so cool too, and there is a parallel between what you do and I what I do in the sense that you are really creating and designing heirlooms based on people's experiences and developing a product that is like highly sentimental and is going to be cherished. We were talking a little bit in the pre-interview and you were telling me some of the stories about how you had to like step away for a moment when you were at these trunk shows travelling because the stories of your clients were just like intense. I think the cool part about it is that through your process of discovery and I mean this is just what I'm observing you've been able to really impact people's lives on a super deep level which is like you are creating meaning for them.

Heather: Yeah.

Tracy: Maybe in a world that like a lot of chaos or sadness even or you know unknown, uncertainty or whatever it is or even happy moments obviously like people are celebrating life or remembering someone who has passed.

Heather: Yeah.

Tracy: It's pretty incredible and it's been really fun to sort of see the evolution of Heather B. Moore as a designer, you know from back in the days we were just starting out at our little pipe and drape trade show booths.

Heather: Oh my God, I swear to God, if I think of all of the different ways I used to display jewelry [laughter] like I would be like I'm not buying those traditional jewelry things. I remember designing an entire display out of linoleum, floor tile. Then I got so...

Tracy: Linoleum?





- Heather:** Yeah, I will have to send you pictures. It's so funny. Then I got so distracted by the linoleum, I started embezzling linoleum and I made linoleum rings, that line, it didn't fly.
- Tracy:** That reminds us of our dirty kitchen floor from childhood.
[laughter]
- Heather:** Yes. I know I was like okay so that was a line that maybe wasn't so successful but that's okay. [laughter]
- Tracy:** You have to test, right? Everything is about testing.
- Heather:** You have to test the waters. Okay embezzling linoleum isn't maybe the best idea. We'll call it an exercise. For every good design, there are probably two bad ones, right? You have to pick yourself up and wipe yourself off **[55:00]** and say okay that one wasn't so good but you should still be proud of it because...
- Tracy:** Yes.
- Heather:** I think you might have thought of something maybe just going through that exercise, you created a solution for something down the line you don't know about yet but there will be good reason, you know what I mean?
- Tracy:** Yes. It's so true.
- Heather:** I don't know what that means but...
- Tracy:** No, I think it is so true. I mean when I think back to like my evolution as a designer what I'm doing now is like so different than what I started with but also I can see a clear pattern of that evolution and how it changed and the things that I tested that worked and the things that I tested that didn't work.
- Heather:** And what you maybe circled back to and then incorporated and that's the importance of the process of discovery. That's the importance of okay doing something and then you bring something maybe that little maybe 1/10 of that exercise you are going to bring back and it'll make a big difference in something forthcoming.





- Tracy:** I love that. I mean Heather your story is just fascinating. Before we go, are there any parting words of advice that you would like to give to the jewelry designers listening today?
- Heather:** Oh my gosh, I think it would be to not beat yourself up. [laughter]
- Tracy:** That's good.
- Heather:** To live everyday as if it's your first and to be ready and I think when someone says can you do this and maybe something that is in your comfort zone, I say tell them you can do it.
- Tracy:** Try it.
- Heather:** And figure it out because you know I mean if you only offered what you knew then you wouldn't be pushing yourself hard enough.
- Tracy:** And it's all about learning and this continual process of learning and discovering and the process of discovery.
- Heather:** Yeah, I totally believe in that.
- Tracy:** Alright darling, so great speaking with you today. Can you tell our listeners where they can find you?
- Heather:** Yeah, they can go on heathermoorejewelry.com and we have got a fun, that is kind of like our website so it's classic. But Instagram, I love Instagram because it is more studio shots and stuff like that.
- Tracy:** What's your Instagram?
- Heather:** It's heathermoorejewelry.
- Tracy:** heathermoorejewelry - awesome. Check out her Instagram and stalk her. [laughter]
- Heather:** Yeah, exactly. Then let's see what else are we on - we do Square and Pinterest is always fun because other people post their stories and stuff like that. Right now, we're working on compiling videos of people's stories because that is just a must. It's fun listening to what people collected over time because every





person that I've met – I have never met one person that has the same necklace as the other. They all kind of portray their own individual [58:00] style and so hopefully we'll get those videos up.

Tracy: That's so cool. I love that.

Heather: Sooner than later. Yeah. It's tough keeping up with today's technology. I mean you know...

Tracy: So many things.

Heather: I know Wild Wild West of opportunity within social media marketing.

Tracy: Really, it's crazy.

Heather: Yeah, so. I think the only other advice I would say based on the words of marketing is marketing is huge and I think that a lot of people don't value it enough and need to know that designing is like 10% of your business.

Tracy: Yes.

Heather: It's the outreach and it's the photography and it's the follow up and good communication with your stores, being a solution provider for every store because every store is different. It's like the store owner has a canvas and you are one of the colors of the canvas. So every individual store has their own – you have to be able to kind of work with them and help them and you know that is real important too.

Even sometimes when I have a design, we are looking at the numbers and we are like wow we didn't sell many of those and then I'll say let's look at our marketing of that one piece because I still stand behind that but I don't think actually gave it 100% on the marketing end. When you are doing the process of discovery, we were saying when we talked a couple of weeks ago you have to be a casual observer of yourself.

Tracy: Yes.





Heather: And constantly critic and look at – hold yourself accountable for your presentations and for you follow up, and for your communication, you know all of that stuff. You are not going to have good outcome if you are not giving the whole package 100%.

Tracy: Absolutely. Gosh thank you so much for sharing all of these insights today with us, Heather.

Heather: Sure, my pleasure.

Tracy: Thank you all so much for listening to today. If you enjoyed the show, we would love you to do us huge favor; make sure you subscribe to the podcast, rate the show, and write us a little review. I'm super excited to keep bringing you very valuable content and inspiration every single week. I'm Tracy Matthews, take care until next time.

