

EPISODE 19

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:00.9] NA: Welcome back to La Vie en Code. A podcast dedicated to the self-educated web developer. I'm your host, Nicole Archambault. Thank you so much for joining me for another episode. Today's episode could probably just easily be me rambling. I instead like to present the issue at hand in the form of problems that I faced. Then, I'll be talking about the solutions that I found to those problems in the form of a pivot in my tech career goals.

Many web developers out there imagine that there are really only two things to do with your web development skills. You can work for a company on their projects for a salary or an hourly wage. You can freelance, providing your skills to individuals or businesses for a project base to an hourly wage. That's fine. It covers two of the most popular and probably readily accessible options upfront.

Have you ever wondered what you can do with your new web development skills that doesn't involve working for a big company or a small company for that matter? Or freelancing for other people? What would it be like to have complete control over your own schedule and only work on projects that you really deeply felt passionate about? These were lingering questions for me that certainly started bubbling up as I was learning the skills required to become kind of your company brand web developer.

I was following a lot of job descriptions, it didn't come together. What happens when you really don't like either of those options and you don't think that they fit you? What if you still don't feel like going to work in the morning because you're bored by the projects? Even after you've made this career transition? Or maybe you just don't like having to be somewhere at a particular time.

What if you're struggling to get engaged by the client or company projects, you know? You're still doing web development so it can be like "Hey, why am I not in love with this?" What if you have like a ton of great ideas but you feel like you can't do anything about them?

Or you just accept that they're going to be nothing more than an idea? Or you know, you don't want your income componential to be tied to an hourly rate. Or maybe you just really want to be your own boss?

Some people just don't fit in to the traditional categories of web development jobs. I was one of them. Over the past two years, I received a lot of signs from the universe pointing to this very fact and as I moved, you know, I moved from a web development job, a front end web development job to a front end freelancer, to tech entrepreneurship, specialized in educational technology.

I really want to talk about why I made those decisions for my own career and what my career looks like now. Because it honestly might just help somebody else to see those signs and understand what they might mean for them and make a decision that's better for them.

Today, I'm going to talk about why exactly I decided to take my tech skills and align them with education and psychology to begin creating online courses for new web developers. I'll discuss my struggles and my successes openly and talk about some of the wonderful and often unexpected things that have come from the experience of finding entrepreneurship in the web development industry.

Finally, I'll offer some resources for anybody who thinks that they might be a good fit for entrepreneurship. Okay, let's go.

[EPISODE]

[0:04:04.3] NA: Let's begin by talking about some of the issues that I faced finding my place in the tech industry. My background story is a little involved. I'll just provide a quick timeline overview of milestones that are relevant to what you guys need to know.

Then we can get to talking about the why behind all of this. The TLDL, you know, too long, didn't listen version of my career movement over the last two and a half years looks something like this. I lost my job as a customer service manager at a software startup back in 2015.

On literally the day I lost my job, I affirmed myself that I wanted to become a web developer. Using Tree House, I put the pedal to the metal and began teaching myself enough skills to be able to interview and prepare myself for getting a job. I mean, I wasn't even intermediate level exactly.

I was familiar with a lot of stuff. I got that job a little bit over nine months after starting my education which really wasn't bad at all. Three months later, after leaving that job to help my family move out of their home, I reflected on my experience and decided to try out freelancing in front end web development specifically.

A lot of WordPress, so that was a bit better although I did have a couple of difficult clients that showed me I was still lacking a lot of control in my career.

While working with a third and final client, I realized that I didn't really love freelancing either. Effectively nothing seemed to really be fitting my personal needs in a job, I was starting to feel kind of like a brat like maybe my expectations weren't realistic until I finally found something that fit.

That something was entrepreneurship. From the outside, this could look like a lot of jumping around and I was even afraid to talk about it for quite a while because I thought the people might think I wasn't able to commit to anything in particular. I mean, anxiety, just worried about everything and that was silly.

Because developers jump around and pivot their careers all the time. The industry moves fast and we need to be able to as well. What I want to do now is go through each of those stages of my career path and go a bit more in depth regarding my decision-making process.

As a listener, you might be able to identify with some of the thoughts that I had or the issues that I encountered. That's really what I'm going for here. To help others to see that this is a path some folks take and it's totally valid, it's a lot of fun, it's sometimes very scary honestly.

But overall, it's totally a match made in heaven for a very certain type of person. We'll talk a little later about what kinds of characteristics indicate that you might be a strong fit for

entrepreneurship yourself. But for now, we're going to start with why working for a company felt like you know, the first bed that goldilocks tried out, to me.

There are a couple of important factors to point out here. First, often, new web developers don't end up getting their first jobs at big companies like Google and Amazon. If you think that's the case, forget what you know.

If you're new to web development, you can certainly aim to build your skills around the job descriptions of a company like I had done or even get hired by one of those companies. But before that, often time, people end up working for local businesses, nonprofits, smaller companies to get some experience.

Then, with that experience on their resume and some work in their portfolio, they can move on to something bigger and better. The place where I worked was a three person, myself included, web design and development shop in a small town.

Their clients were local real estate businesses because they had developed a web app using Cold Fusion that helped them manage their leads, the real estate agents leads, and clients from their websites.

That product was actually pretty cool and I had some knowledge already of real estate having, taking the Massachusetts state real estate exam, after college. I think it was mostly – I was made a bit of a snob inadvertently.

Because I saw their tech as old and outdated, even though I really wasn't that old. I didn't know very much about Cold Fusion, I just knew that I had never heard anything about it. A couple of developer friends were like "No, I've never used that before."

I mean, that was about it. I might have had some bias but I think, you know, it just kind of deterred me into a bit of a snob. As far as best practices were concerned though, there were definitely some issues, some valid issues. You know, they weren't really up to date and they didn't use version control.

Overall, I mean, if I had to rate it, I wasn't a huge fan of that first job but it was a great initial starting point. Truthfully, it didn't matter much to them if I was a fan of it or not and it shouldn't.

Any job that we have is our responsibility to make the most out of it that we can and take the most out of it that we can. Getting that job showed me that people believed in me and equally importantly, they believed in my ability to learn the skills needed to work in my new industry of choice.

I "made it" so to speak. Completing that career transition part of my journey and I was officially in the career navigation phase. Though I felt a lot of relief, it came with some really important decisions to make regarding my career. You know, where was I going to go from here?

Often, it can take having to try different things and evaluate the outcomes, good or bad to determine what could be a good fit for you. For me, by trying out working for a company, I received a big signal and that signal said to me, "Hey, this is making you feel anxious and pretty unfulfilled still."

"I don't get it any more than you do, we'll have to work on this. I feel like I'm not getting to expand and maximize my skills and I still have to commute and work on someone else's schedule which I really don't enjoy."

I heard it, I recognized the signal and I dug deeper. I found that most of those preferences were actually rooted in really important things, they weren't just superfluous. They were rooted in important things like my mental health, my availability to my family who are super important to me, having some control over my time and my energy.

Generally, being happy with what I was doing and where I was. I realized that I'm happiest when I'm working on projects that I choose and that I'm passionate about. Not projects that are just given to me or that I have to take in order to make a paycheck.

If I had to estimate even, I'd say that probably 90% of what I felt about jobs, had way more to do with me than it did about the job itself. I wasn't really sure if that was a good thing or a bad thing.

It's also worth noting that when I experience anxiety and depression, it's historically very difficult for me to imagine myself in any kind of a successful career scenario. If I need to take days off, for myself for self-care for example.

Needing to ask permission or fearing the repercussions of it, or the effect it may have on my career potential, it isn't healthy for me. It really isn't healthy for anybody truthfully but all I can do is worry about myself right this moment and help others through sharing my story and my experience.

I mean, on the other hand, to be really truly honest, I think that my mood disorders have actually landed themselves to my entrepreneurial strengths. I can't exactly explain how but you know, perhaps constantly having respraying thoughts and coming up with ideas are connected somehow.

You just have to be sure to catch them. It's like catching butterflies sometimes. As you can see, for a multitude of reasons that were unique to me and my personality and my mental health and my overall goals.

I just wanted to try something else and the next something on the list was freelancing. Let's dig a little bit more into what happened with freelancing. I really thought that freelancing would be the answer that I was looking for.

It was pretty much the only alternative that I even knew of. I felt like if it didn't work out for me then I was seriously starting to doubt if I wanted to work in web development. Now, obviously that wasn't the right line of thinking. Just bare with me.

However, my more emotionally intelligent self knew the whole time that I can't just throw things away if I don't find the right fit. I kind of have to make it work for me. In fact, that's really kind of been a strength of mine for most of my life.

I'm extremely resilient and equally persistent. When I want something, I don't give in until I get it. I think that makes the best self-taught web developers. I'm also able to recognize when something just isn't a good fit, why and then what I can do to fix it.

Freelancing seemed like a good fit until it really wasn't. My first clients in 2016 hired me multiple times for small work as well as some larger website projects in PHP and WordPress. I was mostly anxious at first but I eventually just kind of met the challenges once I built up a solid reference material list and you know, a network of developers really helped me too.

That I could hit up if I need any help. By the time that I completed my final project for my final client who I didn't know at that time was going to be the last client when I took them on.

I was exhausted man, they were demanding and a couple of them took advantage of my generosity and my willingness to help people which eventually I had to stay at my ground on which they didn't like.

Ultimately, I still relied on these people for a paycheck, whether they liked me or not. I really had no control over whether or not they liked me, that's the problem with perception. A large amount of it has nothing to do with us.

My working hours weren't respected a lot of the time and that's incredibly important to me because I needed that time to decompress, to take care of myself. In order to be able to work effectively later on.

Like all of my proposals were nitpicked and some of the hourly rates were questioned, refunds were requested. But when you're still new, you let a lot of that stuff slide because you need the money and the experience.

Long story short, I ended up getting taken advantage of which is something that we're talking about in depth in a future blog post probably. I ultimately had to get out of there but again, with me, I didn't just ditch the problematic clients.

I ditched freelancing all together. Here I was, kind of feeling bitter about both the company life and the freelancing life. What's left? I kept asking myself. I had some ideas because it turns out, I'm a pretty natural entrepreneur.

I always have lots of ideas and fallback ideas and I want to talk about those ideas because this is really where things start to get interesting for me.

Now, there are a lot of angles to consider when evaluating entrepreneurship as a career option. What was my idea that I was coming into the arena with? These ideas that I want to chase, they were to make an online course. The course goal would be to prepare people who intend to teach themselves web development for the challenges ahead.

Identifying how they best learn, knowing the often-overlooked hacks and ways to maximize their time spent learning. Understanding mindsets, you know, what a developer mindset really looks like with lots of help and input from others mind you.

It wasn't just my experience being reflected in the course. Also, preparing a solid tech resume and attracting the attention of perspective employers and just so much more.

The transformation would be a more confident and capable learner and programmer and a far greater asset to anyone who hired or contracted them. Basically, it was like the course that I wish somebody had given me.

Before I even stepped foot on Tree House or Free Code Camp and literally wasting weeks trying to figure out what to do and where to go. It's what I would have looked like sooner if I had a bit more guidance.

Because I didn't know everything myself, you know, I began reaching out to my network when I first had this idea to create the course. I was talking to recruiters to get input from them on what they needed from candidates which also brought up a lot of issues, you know, concerning realistic expectations on the side of employers.

We already know that's an issue but I was a little afraid of whether or not I even have the knowledge to create an online course yet. But after talking to a whole lot of new web developers as well, in the process of validating my course idea.

My idea seemed to be pretty unique after all. A lot of people were already making web development courses, you know, courses that taught the tech. There were also courses out there on the internet for learning how to learn, but a lot of new web developers weren't even aware that they had to understand their learning process before trying to teach themselves to code.

I was one of those people, I'm raising my hand. When I told people my story, they really began to open up more about their own struggles and insecurities in response. I mean, there were also courses out there for preparing people for boot camps.

But we all know that teaching yourself using educational technology of any sort, eLearning platforms, books, videos, podcasts, it's a very different experience from being in a traditional classroom environment, even if it is a boot camp and not for a traditional CS degree.

There are like endless articles to read on the state of the tech industry, how to build a good resume, how to make a portfolio, how to get noticed by employers.

It's all scattered around the internet. Nobody has been getting all of that in one place and folks that I talk to seemed to be really desperate for a solution to the pain points that come along with not learning effectively.

As a result, some of them were – it's sad to say but they're spinning out, spending hours on end learning web development, doubting if they were a good fit and they didn't even realize that they were literally losing a lot of the information they were even cramming.

You know, by cramming so much into their head all at once, that's not the way that our brain works. We can't blame the actual coding resources either for the spin out. You know, they're out there and a lot of them are pretty damn good.

I wasn't interested at all in recreating the wheel there. I don't teach actual coding in any particular language, yet. But maybe the resources folks are finding are just not a good fit for how they learn best.

They don't know how they learn best. I still have a lot to learn on the actual tech front but what I focus on is getting to the actual point where you feel confident in learning and both confident and capable enough to beat out the other candidates and get the job.

The end line for all of us is that career transition point. When you finally get the job in your new industry or you get your first client and you can officially say, "I'm a developer."

The deeper goal of this course that I had in mind would be to get people there faster. Without burning out and hopefully with a smile on their face, so that they could wow their future employer or clients and move forward.

A lot of people come in, it looks like to me with the best of intentions when trying to learn to code but it's just too much to keep seeking out everything they need to know when they need to know it.

With my idea in hand and validated, I had to figure out how I was going to make money from this endeavor and because you know, we definitely need to consider our ability to survive when evaluating any career decision.

Let's look now at some of the factors that helped me really seal the deal and decide to move forward with my idea. First, as far as entrepreneurship is concerned, as I had talked about in episode 13, *When Mental Illness Affects Your Coding Goals*. I've been really deeply affected by mood disorders for most of my adult life.

It's all rooted in anxiety really. Since that episode aired, I was actually diagnosed with bipolar two disorder, which is a huge relief honestly. Any type of diagnosis or something to give you some direction is a good thing.

I get up and I fight it every day though because that's what I have to do and some days, I win big and other days I win small but every day that I show up to fight, I win.

At the same time, you know, when I had my job, I had no diagnosis and no idea that I might be struggling badly. I always dreamt of being able to buck that hours for pay and the overworking

standard that exists in tech. I mean, in pretty much everywhere in my own career life because it's simply not a good fit for people with mental health issues.

When I had my first dev job, I was handling roughly a billion things at once. Caring for other people, all while still adjusting to being on the east coast after seven years in Portland Oregon. I wasn't feeling particularly healthy.

One of the big things that I also don't talk about often is that back in 2015, right before I had decided to learn to code, I lost my mother unexpectedly and it was a major trauma that was bad but it also helped spur my growth.

Then in the middle of my job, we were faced with an offer to sell my family home so right after that, my grandmother's cancer diagnosis came along. This obviously created some issues at work of course, you know, I had to dip out early to tend to my mental health or I had to attend to issues surrounding the house sale.

It didn't matter if there was no work to be done, you know? People generally do try to be as accommodating as I can. But they also start to whisper when you can't be around while everyone else is.

As a main first point, I really don't work well in a typical workplace environment. Because workplaces really tend to be more rigid about working hours than I'm able to handle with my need for self-care and with my obligations to myself and others.

In the workplace, when you're highly efficient, they will just pile more work on you. Being in that kind of environment wore me out really fast. I just knew that I didn't want to be in that position anymore.

The folks who can make it in a corporate or a startup environment, you know, they can thrive and you know, they often do so unfortunately though at the expense of the good health that they do have.

Even being a freelancer though, I felt a lot more pressure to be available during the hours that my clients were. If they need you, you have to be there and that's the expectation. That's a lot of pressure.

It's a lot of pressure that I think some people are just able to easily accept. I don't want to accept it because it isn't good for me. I'm not going to try and force myself into that type of that role. As an entrepreneur, I could work the hours I need to work while still earning the money that I need to earn as long as I put in the time.

And we'll talk more in a second about how I took that a step further with passive income. Another huge issue that I had to face was how I really felt about jobs. I identified that when I thought about going into work.

One of my biggest fears was a being let go and losing the security of my job. During the process of evaluating entrepreneurship, before I actually took the big leap. I talked to my closest and my wisest relative, my 85-year-old grandfather.

Entrepreneurship isn't really a thing in my family. My grandfather was a company man, he was one of the first African American executives working for polaroid for more than 30 years. He believed really strongly in the security that the company life provided.

Now today, we know that this company life mirage, you know the experience that he had working for a company for 30 plus years, it just isn't a reality in tech. Again things move fast, company goals pivot, new directions are identified and sometimes existing employees just don't fit into the picture.

First off, the idea of loyalty being expected from me than being betrayed by the other party, terrified the hell out of me. As I've learned through a lot of therapy from my anxiety, I have some trust issues and I have a very distinct fear of the uncertain and the insecure. So you might be wondering why the hell I'd ever want to be an entrepreneur then.

The truth is, I want to overcome that fear very badly, probably more badly than anything else I want in my life. It's been holding me back and keeping me in place for years. Entrepreneurship

gives me an excellent outlet to do so, while still aligning my career life with this general kind of life pivot toward being more fearless. Companies are basically the definition of insecure and uncertain nowadays.

Especially companies in the tech industry, even companies with open door or transparency policies don't expose the most critical details of company experiences to their lower level employees. Even ones that don't typically, that actually affects them. So again, maybe I have some trust issues coming in here but without –

You know smaller companies offer a great experience too and they offer usually greater job security I found, in my experience but most smaller companies also can't afford to hire a web developer full time. They'll contract out, so without freelancing and targeting those companies which I had already mostly decided I didn't want to do.

I felt like none of my options were really secure at all including entrepreneurship and obviously entrepreneurship is the opposite of secure. In the most traditional sense of secure though where somebody else is directly responsible via a promise or a contract. By my own definition of secure though, I have a lot more security now.

In the form of how much of a role I play in how secure my own career is now, if that makes any sense. So you've never felt so much motivation to figure out smart, efficient ways to work is when you know that everything is resting on your shoulders and as long as you work hard and you work smart, you'll not only never be out of a job but you are probably going to be getting an awful lot of promotions too.

I am assuming even more risk as an entrepreneur than I would be working for a volatile company even but I play a bigger role in now than I did in my success or my failure. And that's exactly how I want it because I operate in my highest level when I am operating on that level. As a final major point, I had to look at what skills also I brought to the table as an entrepreneur.

If I wasn't going to be working in the traditional way, what was my work flow actually going to look like instead? I knew that I burned out easily and I just had to make the situation work for me

somehow. Some of the listeners and readers know that I initially tried to launch the pre-sale for 30 Days to Web Development, my online course on my own.

I'm not a marketer or an expert in Facebook marketing or copywriting and it flopped. So I really started meditating on and talking openly about my frustrations after that. You know having this idea that really met the pain points of others but then I just couldn't seem to muster the energy to do everything in my power to create. And furthermore, that lack of expertise on my part really meant that I was going to end up being mediocre at a lot of things.

And that my business probably wouldn't thrive as a result. See, building a product isn't like learning how to program for example and I had to change my thinking really quickly and really early on. I was just watching a really interesting TED Talk on full stacked anxiety.

I cannot remember who did it but I'll link it in the shownotes and he talked about a concept of the T-shaped and W-shaped designers because he was at a design conference but the concept also applies to web developers.

Basically with a T-shaped developer, the horizontal part of the T or the top part that goes left to right represents the shallow level of knowledge in a wide variety of different topics. The vertical or top to bottom line represents one area of deep knowledge in a topic of one's choosing. He also explained that a lot of recruiters were not seeking W-shaped designers.

Which in a developer light would mean not just one, but two areas of expertise and all kinds of levels of knowledge in other areas in between. How does one person possibly going to know that much information? And honestly, we're fortunate in this life to even develop a deep understanding on one topic and by deep, I mean to where you're beyond the basics.

You are building off on the core concepts that you have and exploring your own lines of questioning and finding your own answers. But like one person possessing all of this information, I recognize that I am going to have one major asset in my business and that's going to be me. And to maximize that asset, I not only have to learn new skills but I also have to leverage the skills and the strengths that I have from my previous jobs.

So I've worked as a manager in my former customer service life and I can honestly say that one of the greatest things I did there was hire some fantastic employees. I felt like I was able to connect with and really see talent in people because I knew I had talents that were overlooked by employers for years. I learned to ask the right questions of interviewees.

And really got them to tell me what they got excited about. If I felt like their excitement would be best used in a different capacity or different role or different company, I would tell them that because I never really got that kind of feedback myself and they appreciated it. If I felt like they would be a great addition to the team, I told them why I felt that way.

What I perceive their strengths to be, I didn't wait for them to guess what I felt about them after the interview stage at least have been past and I have made a decision. And that set the stage for a relationship that really allowed us to have a positive energy loop between us because I had offered some transparency.

I think they wanted to make me/the department/ the company proud and it went beyond mere likeability or power dynamics of being in a higher role than them, like a lot of managers rely on and down to a really deeper core level of understanding them as a human being. So where I'm going with all of this is that I had some really powerful talents here at play that took me way too long to identify.

First just hone in on them, I am a very empathetic person towards other people. I took the time to put myself in their shoes, feel what they are feeling, ask them questions, to really encourage them to reveal their true self. And it's helped me to become a more authentic version of myself and the connections that I form with people are far, far deeper than they ever were before.

This is a huge asset to me as an entrepreneur because the core of creating products that people need and find value in is in solving their pain points. This is why products that project the problem or that assume that everyone faces a problem simply because the creators did typically end up flopping. Just talking to web developers more has given me incredible insight.

To their struggles, their anxiety, their fears. I wouldn't wish the struggles that I faced with learning to code before I finally figured it out, I'm my worst enemy. So I am committed to helping

others get past themselves and onto their dreams. Second, I have an innate ability to recognize talent as a result of that empathy. I understand that people are more than what you can put in a box.

And that they have complex and diverse backgrounds and experiences. I didn't have my own talent recognized by people that I depended on to recognize them and pay me accordingly. So it was really important to me that even if candidates didn't have the particular skills that I needed for the role and that they needed to do the role, that I was still able to give them feedback.

To steer them in the right direction and even to recognize skill in being able to learn and giving them a chance to show me what they had and they never disappointed, which was amazing. Because I don't think that I really had all that much to do with it. It was all them.

As an entrepreneur this lends itself to being able to identify what people actually bring to the table as oppose to what a particular line of questioning pulls out. Or merely what they offer in response to standard interview questioning. And I am able to hire contractors to help me that are really at the top of the line, whatever I can afford at least.

But I am able to get people who know what they're doing and that can take that pressure off of me to have to know everything related to being an entrepreneur. Third, I am a valuable asset to any company and I've realized that now. So if it's my own company maybe I am better off. So you can see, finding entrepreneurship was a major blessing in disguise.

I stumbled onto this unknown new territory and I was ready to make it mine while and by helping others. So here's another big reason that I really deeply wanted to switch to entrepreneurship and ultimately decided to do something about it. I wanted to do something meaningful for my career work. Now I see a lot of issues for people in the tech industry kind of creating problems.

And then creating solutions to those problems so there were none problems to begin with. We have enough problems out there already to solve. Education is one area that's facing tons of problems right now, real problems with the greatest potential return on investment. I mean investing in education is always meaningful work.

I never imagined myself being a teacher but I did have some background in college working in instructional technology on campus. I also spent most of my life helping my grandfather and other friends and family members use their computers. So even though I didn't see myself as a teacher, in reality, I totally was. We can all be and often we are teachers.

We tend to forget that we also learn by teaching. So we have a natural incentive to teach. The more people that contribute their knowledge and their perspectives to the world, the more high quality the learning experience for everybody. I am really excited to be one of those people now using technology to make great contributions to the education world.

I am not even there yet doing the work that I want to be doing. This is just one small step in the right direction. The courses are really just a small part of the big picture for me. I eventually like to get into gaming and gamification on a more specialized level, since gaming played such a huge important role in my life as both a kid and an adult.

So another huge part that played in my decision making for becoming an entrepreneur was that I really deeply wanted to be myself. I've been learning a lot more about who I am over the past few years. The Nicole that you know in the tech industry today is fun loving, silly, funny, a whole slew of other adjectives that don't always fly in the professional world.

Whether or not anyone else is affected by it and I began to see this prototype of women feeling the need to be kind of stoic and really bland in order to have their male coworkers take them seriously because they were writing about their frustrations on platforms like Medium just very – the brave ones were. So working without my humor and the things that make me-me, turns Nicole into a joyless drone.

I don't think I have ever worked in a company where the people who made decisions determining my worth appreciated or leveraged my personality as much as they did my skills, which still isn't saying much. They leverage my skills and even it was one extreme or the other. They under-leveraged them or they over-leveraged them in fact while underpaying. But they aired on the safe side.

You know the boring side and didn't fully leveraged my personality. Even in customer service roles, metrics often prevented me from being able to show my personality. You'll have scripting, we weren't scripted in the last place that I worked, but it was really hard to really show everything. Now, I can leverage my skills and my personality as much as I want to without tapping myself.

And really use them as a powerful tool to build connections with people and understand their needs and their pain points and that's a freedom that I just haven't had to this point before entrepreneurship, even with freelancing. So on another point, I wanted more control over my income. I've always felt like my worth was in somebody else's hands.

And feeling that way often also lend itself to a variable cornucopia of stresses. You know how can you ever be enough and once you're enough are you still really you? I mean you can go pretty deep with it but how can a company claim to support its employees, while cracking the whip and providing women in an unequal wage in tech.

So when you have anxiety all of those worries are magnified too. I was constantly worrying about money and whether or not I was going to be able to make enough as a woman in tech to not only support myself but move ahead and plan for my retirement. I wonder whether the opportunities for advancement would ultimately be within my control.

I just had all of these concerns. So really being an entrepreneur allowed me a lot more control over my income. It was more strongly tied at least to how much work I put in, in a direct relation to effort. It's not a guarantee obviously. Harder work does not always guarantee success but again, that's where the working smart part really comes in and that seems to be one of my talents.

Related to that, I wanted to buck the nine to five hours for pay income model. A lot of folks may not even know what this means but I am a huge fan of Pat Flynn's Smart Passive Income Podcast. I started listening to Pat last year and he was actually a huge factor in my decision to start the La Vie En Code Podcast.

Basically what you need to know about passive income is this: It relies on the internet to exist. You have to have some place that's open and available 24/7 worldwide where people can learn about and purchase your product or products. It's centered around creating assets that are valuable to your chosen audience. In this case, that's you my dear listeners.

So models that don't involve an hourly or salaried rate don't have to be sketchy. Online courses are basically revolutionizing education and passive income and passive income is changing the way that people think about earning money and building a business. It really just takes a highly entrepreneurial individual with a lot of independent drive, as entrepreneurship in general requires.

So entrepreneurship and passive income are an awesome combination. If you are interested in learning more about passive income, you can feel free to contact Pat on his Smart Passive Income Podcast. Well not contact him but listen to his podcast at least. I have included it in the show notes. You may be able to contact him via Twitter too but his website has a ton of information on how to get started with passive income.

A lot of the folks out there on the web development world if you have ever downloaded some type of checklist or something related to a podcast, often times that's intended to bring you into a community. So that we can create products for you that are really targeted to your needs and your pain points.

So those emails that you get, they can be really important to helping people understand what you are going through in order to create better products. So are you curious about entrepreneurship for yourself now? This episode is already pretty long because the topic is so damn interesting. So I've made a checklist of the top qualities and the top resources that I've identified for aspiring tech entrepreneurs.

It's by no means extensive. I did put in a little bit of an additional research but it's mostly the research that I've just done for myself, in keeping track of everything that I came across. So you can download that little goodie at the episode page which is up at lavieencode.net/19. Generally speaking though, people who are highly independent tend to make great entrepreneurs.

Those that can take the reins to make the best out of a bad situation, that understand the ups and downs and that they don't mean dilly squat for long term growth. The people that those two things are true for will do exceptionally well with entrepreneurship. Really think about the feedback that you've received on yourself or as Pat Flynn instructs in his book, *Will It Fly*.

Go out and ask your friends what they consider are your greatest strengths or your super powers to be. For me, the one that really resonated was one friend's response that she felt my super power was, "Deep empathy and the emotional intelligence to use it wisely." I really love that.

So am I worried or anxious about my own foray into entrepreneurship especially with the mood disorders and the anxiety and all of that? Nah, I feel like as long as I choose to focus my energy on the talents that I have and the things that I can do that nobody else can do, to create products that nobody else can, I am going to be just fine.

[OUTRO]

[0:48:28.4] NA: We made it, you folks are always a great audience, even though it has been pretty quiet on your end this whole episode. You must be on mute – if that's not how this works then I guess I have been doing it all wrong. Sorry, I love being corny. That was almost that level corny but I hope you enjoyed the episode and you have a better perspective at this point of my journey to entrepreneurship.

Your mileage is going to vary pretty greatly, as a disclaimer, if you try out entrepreneurship for yourself. I'm quite sure of that and can promise you that. You may find that you encounter some of the same crossroads that I did. And perhaps this episode will remind you of the ways that someone else was able to resolve them and get past them.

My question to you for today is, what comes to mind when you think of entrepreneurship in tech? Did my experience and my ideas match up with your perception of it or any ideas that you've had or were they pretty wildly different?

What comes to mind for you when you think of entrepreneurship? Let me know in the comments on the episode page, @lavieencode.net/19. On the Twitter, @lavie_encode or on the Facebook page, @lavieencode.net/Facebook.

That link actually goes to the Facebook.com/lavieencodeblog. But I found it's less confusing for people to type out. We're going to take a couple of weeks break after this episode which will be airing on the third while I prepare for the 30 Days To Web Development pre-sale course launch, attend two panels at you know, participate on two panels at the Grace Hopper Celebration Of Women In Computing in Orlando this week.

Record some new interviews for all of you all. Take the time please to go back and review some of my old episodes. There's a lot of great stuff in there, interviews with Ryan Carson of Tree House, Dr. Barbara Oakley, a two-part episode actually with her.

My first self-taught student talk with Casey Bartholomew and a lot of different solo long form episodes that you might find helpful. If you're going to be at Grace Hopper this year in Orlando too, hit me up on Twitter and let me know. I mean, I'd love to get some photos for listeners.

So, keep building and keep rocking it folks. You've 100% got this. Until next time, peace, love and code.

[END]