



# How to Get More 1-on-1 Clients with Jenny Shih

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Pat Flynn: So I put a call out on my Twitter account not too long ago and I said, “Hey, who should I have on the SPI podcast?” And a lot of you have said a number of great people who I've had on the show, but nobody had more people suggest our special guest today. Her tribe just showed up. And I don't know what happened, I think somebody in her audience was like, “Guys, we've got to rally and get Jenny Shih on Pat's podcast because he's asking for great people, Jenny is awesome, so let's rally.” It wasn't even Jenny who said this stuff, it was one of her fans, which is a testament to not only how great Jenny is and the kinds of people that she can have as members of her audience and tribe—meaning the value she's offering must be amazing. But also just what happens when you build superfans, like I talk about in my new book.

So today we're speaking with Jenny Shih. She helps mostly women get more clients and start businesses, and we're going to talk a lot about what's working today to grow businesses, specifically service-based businesses. But a lot of these things that we talk about apply to all kinds of businesses as well. And I've got to say, this is one of the coolest chats I've had. She is just such an amazing personality, I can see why people love her, it's so easy to connect with Jenny. But before that, here's the intro.

Announcer: *Welcome to the Smart Passive Income Podcast, where it's all about working hard now so you can sit back and reap the benefits later. And now, your host, he's still looking for that sponsorship from 3M for all the Post-It notes he uses, Pat Flynn.*

Pat: What's up and welcome to Session 389 of the Smart Passive Income Podcast. My name's Pat Flynn, here to help you make more money, save more time, and help more people, too. And somebody that's helped a lot of people is our special guest today, Jenny Shih. Her last name is pronounced like she, the pronoun, but it's S-H-I-H, just so you all know. J-E-N-N-Y is her first name, and she helps people build service-based businesses and get more clients in a genuine way.

We talked specifically about a lot of strategies today, specifically a social media strategy that's going to be very, very simple for you to do. Not easy, but it's simple, right? And we talk a lot about strategies to make sure we do that in the right way. We talk a lot about also prioritization and focus, especially if you're starting out and you're like, "I could go this direction or I could go that direction." Or, "I have no idea even where to start." We're going to talk about that today as well, and we're just going to give you all the things that you need to have an amazing, amazing opportunity in front of you actually come to life. So here we go. Jenny Shih from [JennyShih.com](http://JennyShih.com). Let's do this.

Jenny, welcome to the Smart Passive Income Podcast. Thank you so much for being here today.

Jenny Shih: Thank you for having me. I'm excited and it's a true honor.

Pat: You know, and I have to, before we dive into your story, I just want to give a big shout out to your audience because I had put a little thing on Twitter to just ask people, "Hey, who should I have on the show?" And there were so many people, too many names to name actual individuals, but just your entire community showed up and was like, "You've got to get Jenny on. You've got to get Jenny on. You've got to get Jenny on." And here you are, so big shout out to your crew, and I just want to thank everybody who stepped up. I love getting recommendations for podcasts, I can never get enough, and unfortunately, I can't put everybody on the show, but you definitely stood out, so I'm very thankful that you're here spending time with me today. And I was really excited to learn more about you and your story, which is what we're going to dive into right now. So you help people grow and expand their businesses, but I want to know where this all started. What's the Jenny Shih origin story?

Jenny: Yeah. I, professionally, before I was an entrepreneur, I was an engineer and an engineering manager at a high tech company. And I got into engineering because my parents said you go to college to get a job, and I was good at math, and engineers get jobs, so that and math added up to Jenny goes and gets an engineering degree. I

never really enjoyed it. I didn't enjoy engineering school, I didn't really love the work as far as corporate jobs go, it was a great job, but there was a part of me that was just unfulfilled, and felt kind of dead, and felt like I was supposed to do something more. And I realized at some point that I wasn't all of a sudden just going to be blessed with this whole idea of what I was supposed to do with my life, that I might need to actively go out and figure out what my next steps were.

So long story short, after a lot of soul searching, I thought, "I'm going to quit my job and I'm going to be a career coach for women like me who followed all the right steps and felt unfulfilled by their work and want to do something else." So I quit my job cold turkey as the breadwinner in our household. I kind of look back and think, "I am not a risk-taker. How did I do that? Where did I get the guts to quit my job and bring our income to practically zero?" But wherever that came from, in 2009, just about ten years ago, I quit my job and started this life coaching business to help women escape their corporate jobs and do something else more meaningful.

And as things were going, I thought, "I'm going to quit my job and I'm going to replace my six-figure income within a year, and it's going to be easy because everybody's doing it." And it wasn't easy, and it didn't happen fast like I thought it would, but I was doing other things. I was blogging, and filling my email list, and going to networking events. And to bring in a little extra money, I got this hunch to start working as a virtual assistant for more experienced business owners. It would give me a look into their business and how they were doing and also bring in some money, and I started to do that. And over the course of six months or so, I realized I liked being a virtual assistant more than I liked being a career coach.

So I had some hard questions to ask myself, and long story short on that one, I decided to close my career coaching business, fire all my clients, regroup, and on March 1st of 2011, I launched JennyShih.com as virtual assistance, project management, and coaching to make your ideas happen. And I hit the ground running. I never was excited to talk about my career coaching business, but I was excited to talk

about this business, and I was excited to do the hard things you have to do to grow an online business. And I was getting clients, and things were working really well, and I started to then get people asking me, “Well, how are you getting clients?” And, “How are you building your online business?”

And I started to teach people just the simple things I was doing to bring those clients in the door. And eventually, that became the focus of what I did, I was no longer doing project management or virtual assistance. And since then, my business has evolved in terms of what I teach and the actual tactics and strategies, but that's really what I do today is help people start and grow online service-based businesses, working with clients all over the world doing work they feel passionate about.

Pat: I love that. Now, I want to go back to 2009, though. Because you had mentioned that you're not really a risk-taker, yet something made you quit your job and go in this new direction. I want to unpack that. I want to know exactly what was going through your head because the fact that you took that risk after saying you're not a risk-taker means there was something there. What was that?

Jenny: I thought, one is I was ready to do something that felt more fulfilling, and I was really ready to go for it. So I first had the thought that I can't do this for the rest of my life, meaning work at this corporate job. Not that there's anything wrong with that, there are lots of great people who do corporate jobs, it was just me, it wasn't right for me. I thought, “I can't retire. I can't hit sixty-five and retire from this company as director or VP or whatever and have that be okay with me. I will get to that point and I will be disappointed that I didn't do something different with my life.” So that was the real big motivator. And then, a couple years later when I decided what I wanted to do, I honestly thought it was going to be easy. I really thought it was going to be an easy, smooth sailing road. No big deal. I'm good. I'm smart. I take action. I'm just going to out there and I'm just going to hit it and it's going to be fine. I think there was a lot of naivety in there. But I'm

grateful for it because I don't know when I would have done it if it weren't then.

Pat: Had you done anything to mitigate the risk? I'm curious. A lot of people, before they quit their jobs, who are trying something new, they just kind of go all in without preparing. And then there's others who are on the other extreme who save up for a number of months worth of income and that sort of stuff. What was your plan? Did you even have one?

Jenny: I did. We did two things. One is I saved a year's worth of living expenses. So I basically gave myself a whole year to build my business and get enough money coming in to pay the bills. So I had a year's worth of savings. That was one. And the second thing was we cut our household budget in half, literally in half. And that was everything from compromising, no more new clothes, no more vacations, no out to dinner, everything. We cut our cable, we cut our internet—

Pat: Wow.

Jenny: Not eliminated internet because you need internet to run an online business, but cheaper internet, cheaper cell phones, cheaper everything, and I was willing to make those sacrifices because this was so important to me. And that's really what bought me time, was cutting the budget in half and having a year's worth of living expenses. And I also have realized for myself that putting my rear on the line was huge because I had to. I had to. My choices were, make this business work or go back to my job. And the thought of going back to my job felt so awful that I was willing to do those hard, challenging, uncomfortable, put yourself out there things that we have to do to build a business. I was willing to do those things because I didn't like the alternative.

If I had to, I would have gone back to my job. I don't know if they would have hired me back, not because there was anything wrong, but because the company was downsizing as opposed to hiring, but I

was willing to go back to a job if I had to. But I was also willing to do everything to not make that happen. So having some financial buffer, but also really putting my rear on the line in a major way was a huge motivator to do all the things required.

Pat: Yeah. That's a huge point. I think about my journey when I got laid off—I did things I wouldn't normally do because my rear was on the line, because I had to make it work. And I'm curious, in your business philosophy, when you have people come up to you and say, “Hey, I want to start a business.” Do you recommend that you kind of go all in and quit your job so that you have something kicking at you to get it going, or what would you recommend people do if they don't want to do that?

Jenny: I think everybody has to know themselves. I think it's so great that you ask this because I am definitely not here to say your rear has to be on the line, but I am here to say that's a huge motivator for me. For other people, it can send them into a massive tailspin. There's a flip side of all that pressure, is that amount of pressure I felt also is what triggered me being chronically ill for several years, I think. I don't know. You can't ever know really what makes that happen, but I think that pressure was maybe a little bit too much or I didn't know how to manage it as well, and I'm not sure I would have done it if I hadn't had that pressure. But for other people, that amount of pressure sort of sends them into a ball on their bed under the covers and doesn't allow them to do anything. So I think we have to really know ourselves, but also know that when we don't have pressure, we sometimes don't do things, right? This comfort of a given situation is what forces us to do something that we otherwise don't really want to do.

So I see a lot of clients who don't really have the financial pressure to earn money for whatever reason, whether it's a job or a spouse or just their certain situation in life, and it is sometimes harder for those people to be motivated to do the hard things. Not always. So I think we really have to know ourselves and know what works. And I've had clients who have built their businesses over several years on the side

because they didn't want to take the risk. And they knew that giving themselves a little time on the side to do it, they were going to get there because that was their ultimate goal, and the pressure wasn't going to serve them, they knew this other way was better. So it just goes back to really knowing what's going to serve you with your ultimate goals.

Pat: When you were starting out, you had mentioned that you thought it was going to be easy and it ended up being difficult. People have that approach and others just know it's going to be difficult and that it's difficult. Either way, it's difficult, and I'm curious to know in your experience, in your journey, what were those difficult moments? What were those difficult things that you had to fight through to get to where you're at today?

Jenny: I really thought that I am a great coach, and I've got great skills, and I know there are women like me—because I knew many of them personally—that want to leave this shoehorned career that they're in and they want to do something else. I know these women exist and I know I can serve them, so why aren't they hiring me? Going out and really connecting with customers and talking about your services and really getting them to see the value that you have to offer and how you can change their life—I didn't even realize that I needed to do that. I was completely oblivious to how much of that was going to be required, that online business isn't about really the service that you provide, it's so much about marketing and selling and connecting with people and talking to them in ways that they really connect with what we as service providers have to offer. So I just thought clients were going to fall in my lap when I reached out to everybody I knew and said, “This is what I'm doing.” And they're like, “Go you!” And that was it. “That's awesome.” And, “Yeah, I'm good. Thanks.”

Pat: When did things finally start to change for you? When did things start clicking?

Jenny: They started to change for me when I switched from career coaching to doing virtual assistance and project management, and I think



there's a couple reasons for that. One is that we were then really down to the wire with how much money was left in the bank. But also, I figured out what I really wanted to do. So I went into career coaching because that was sort of the path that if I took my life coach training and the path they sort of lead us down about what we should be doing, that was the one that made sense. But when I got true about what I'm best at, which is helping people who have an idea and want to go make it happen, they're very much ready to move into action, they're ready to create results, that kind of energy is very different from sorting through all of the crap that we put on ourselves as we were growing up about what a career and life should look like. That was not what I was meant to do. I was not aligned.

So part of it, there's so many pieces, as you know. There's online marketing and then there's the skills, what we do, but then there's the alignment piece. And I think for those of us who are here to do more than just a job—and there's nothing wrong with doing just a job, but for those of us who are here to do something we feel called to do, that pulls on our heart—we have to have this internal alignment. And you can't always know what that is.

I always tell my clients clarity comes from taking action, and I wouldn't have come to what I do now with my business if I hadn't done all those other things before. I had to be a career coach, and I had to go to networking events, and I had to sell this product that sold one copy, and I had to go through all these iterations of trying and adjusting to find myself in this place where I am now. So anyway, I say that to anybody who is like, “I don't know what pulls on my heart strings.” Or, “I don't know what to do. I don't really feel called.” Just take the step that's right in front of you. Just look at the thing that you, your best guess right now, move in that direction. Once you get there, you're then going to know more about what comes next. But you can't know what step twenty-seven is if you haven't taken step one just yet.

Pat:

And for those who are on step one who are in that experimentation phase and who are doing trials and errors on a particular thing, how

long would you recommend a person do that? How long is that experimentation phase in your eyes? How long should it be and what kinds of things do you use to measure and keep those metrics to decide whether or not it's worth moving forward or worth stopping and perhaps trying something else?

Jenny:

I love that you asked this question because right now, I teach clients to have this idea of what I call this mindset, to experiment. And they will ask questions. “Well, I put out this offer and nobody bought, so how do I know when it's time to change the offer? I chose the wrong one. Or if I just need to put in more effort?” So I'm going to answer that question in just a second, but to answer how I knew, I didn't. So in my case, every step I took, I took as if it was the step. So I started career coaching and went all in. And then I started to do this virtual assistance thing, and I kind of went all in. So I didn't go into it like, “Well, we'll just see if this is going to work. I don't know.” It was more like, “Let's give it everything.” There's a real commitment to that kind of energy, which then gives us that feedback of this does or doesn't work. But when we sort of say, “Oh, we'll just see. I'll put this offer out there and we'll just see if it works and if people hire me.” There's such a non-commitment, and that kind of energy doesn't create people who are excited to pay you.

What I tell folks is go all in, and with my clients specifically, we have some really clear criteria, like, have you done such and such and such and such with your marketing? Are you excited about your offer? Here's how you can know. We give them a real set of criteria so that they can know, in this case if their offers are . . . if it's not selling, why isn't it selling, and here are some possible reasons. But I think the key is to go in completely, as if this is the next direction, give it everything because then you'll really know if you like it, if you don't like it, if it gets traction or not.

Pat:

I love that. It probably ties in a little bit of your engineering background, which really resonates with me as an architect. We're taking a scientific approach to doing this, which means you have to try, and create hypotheses, and sometimes those things will fail, and

reaching those failure points are an important part of the learning process. You want to find as many failures as possible so you can understand the truths behind things, and I think that's really great. Now let's say that somebody's listening to this and they don't just have one idea, but they have many, and yes, we need to focus on one, but how do we know which one to focus on? How do you determine where you should put that energy into? Because it's not all of them, it's one. But which one?

Jenny:

So great. And I just want to reassure people, just because I'm suggesting that you commit to one now doesn't mean you can't play with the other ones later. Some people who are multi-passionate get all afraid that when I suggest to commit to something, to really give it a try, that means they won't be able to do the other things later, and I think you're such a great example, Pat, of all the different things you offer in your business, and as we know, you now have your tripod, and you're an author, and you have events, and you do all these other things, and we can get there. So for these people who are multi-passionate, I'm not asking you to quash all your passions forever. Just start with a focus on one, and I'll explain the reasoning why and then how to choose.

And the reason really is I like to say we have a hundred units of energy in a given day. You have some units of energy to go to taking care of yourself, or your family, or your work, or your job, or your this, or your that, or exercise class, or reading, or watching TV, or whatever it is, but you only have so many. So maybe, if you're working a full-time job, at the end of the day, you have ten units of energy to put towards your business, and if you have ten ideas and you put one unit of energy towards ten different ideas, the amount of insight and progress you'll get over the course of a year is very minimal. But if you pick just one idea to put ten units of energy towards, within a couple months, you'll start to get a lot more information about if that is the right path or not.

So by narrowing down, just from a math standpoint, we're helping ourselves get clarity faster. And really it's which one are you most

excited about? So forget logic. As somebody who's a planner and an engineer and very logical, I also say, don't go on logic. Go on the one that kind of lights that fire in your belly, gets you passionate, that when somebody asks you about this, you can't stop talking. Do that one. I don't know what that looks like for you, but do that one because this business game isn't always easy, so we have to feel some excitement about what we're doing so that we then have that excitement pull us do the hard things, to learn, to explore, to experiment, and to commit. So follow what gets you excited.

Pat: Do you have a personal example of something that you perhaps have struggled within your business and it was that passion, that drive, that excitement that kept you moving forward through that?

Jenny: I would say early on, when I started JennyShih.com, I had very little money left in the bank, there wasn't a lot. I had fired most of my clients, I had a few VA clients that were hanging on, and I decided that I was going to build my own website. I had never built a website before, I didn't know how to do any of it, and there weren't as many tutorials as there are now, there weren't as many easy templates as they have available now for WordPress, and I just remember banging my head probably literally against the wall in frustration at many points.

But that, "I'm going to do this and this is going to work and I'm so excited to do these things." It got me to the other side of, I freaking learned how to build a website. And then I was able to control all aspects of it, and that really felt like I was in charge of my business. And the idea of creating JennyShih.com and launching it and what I wanted to share and how I wanted to help people at the very beginning in that whole pre-launch stage, it got me to do all these things that all felt hard, and impossible, and I'd never done before. It pulled me to do those things for sure, knowing the excitement and passion I had inside. But that's just one example. It happens over and over again. The best things always come for me and my business when there's just an overwhelming amount of excitement about them.

Pat: That's what keeps us going. That excitement, that drive, and I am driven and excited to learn more about how you do what you do and what you recommend to your clients, and I'm curious: there's a lot of options to grow a business, to get more clients today, what do you recommend? What's working for Jenny Shih and her clients today?

Jenny: I'm a little bit biased here because, well, I want to say there's a lot of things that are working. I think that is the great thing. There's so many things that work right now, and you can be on YouTube, you can go nuts on Instagram, Facebook still works, Twitter still works, blogging, podcasting, events, speaking, hanging out in Facebook groups and serving other people. Those all work. The challenge to that is there's so many more options that a lot of folks getting started in their business are distracted or kind of squirrel chasing by, "Well, Pat says I should do podcasts, and Jenny said I should go be of service in a Facebook group, and James said I should go do YouTube." We hear people who have made it or are successful talking about what they do, and we feel pulled in the direction. "I have to do all of these things!" And really the thing that's going to serve your business the most is choosing the things, about two or three things, that you're going to commit to doing regularly and doing really well.

So I have a terrible Instagram game. You can call it a non-Instagram game. You can go check me out on Instagram, there's just not much there. I don't really post very much because I just don't have that game going, but the cool thing is, I know that I don't have to do that game, even though a lot of other people were. Maybe one day I'll pick it up and put more effort into it, but it doesn't matter. But other people are killing it on Instagram. And I had a podcast for a little while, and it just kind of burned me out so I stopped it and it didn't matter because really, I know that the best way for me to serve my audience is to connect with them where they are. And sometimes that's on other people's podcasts, sometimes that's on Facebook, but what works for each person is going to be the thing that they're willing to do. So whatever you're willing to commit to—several hours a week or more—and do it consistently, and commit to learning to do

that really well, that's going to serve you best. So the best thing for anyone starting out is to think about what they get excited about doing and focus on doing that well. Is that an alright answer?

Pat: Oh yeah, absolutely. And I think there's a running theme here with all the things that we've been talking about so far, and that's focus, right? When selecting a business idea, focusing on one. When selecting a marketing channel, focusing on one. But speaking of focus, there's so much music out there. Noise. I like to call it music. It's great stuff, but it consumes us and it allows us to not have the time to actually take action. I'm curious. Jenny, do you have any rules when it comes to consumption versus production or marketing or a lot of the other necessary things that we have to do in our business. Because there are so many great people out there creating so much great stuff, podcasts, videos, books, et cetera, but where do we find the balance? How do you recommend we tackle this? What are your strategies for that?

Jenny: Yeah. The first thing I want to say is I love that you used the word noise and then called it music because for me I'm like, "Oh, so much noise." But if I'm like, "Oh, so much music." It just changes the whole vibe. So I love that.

Pat: Thank you.

Jenny: But yes, there's so much music out there. There are so many great things to pay attention to. And for myself, I've learned this to be true. I am not a content consumer. I do not do well with lots of content coming at me all the time. I don't listen to a million podcasts, I don't pay attention to the news, I don't really scroll on Facebook for personal. I've learned that content consumption clutters my brain, causes a whole bunch of anxiety, and really stresses me out and makes me question what I do in my business.

Now, I know that there are people who are inspired by content consumption. One of my friends and colleagues, Jackie Johnstone, I know her, for example, she's always listening to podcasts, and I find it

fascinating how she is motivated and inspired and she doesn't feel the need to act on everything she hears. Where I listen to a podcast and I feel like I have to take notes and take action. So the first thing is it goes back to knowing yourself, right? Does content consumption serve you? Truly serve you like it does Jackie, as inspiration? Or does it stress you out like it does me? In which case, you need to meter a whole lot more.

So once you get that part sorted out, I think the next thing is, what is the next goal you're trying to achieve? So I do consume content, but my content consumption is always very focused on the next goal I'm working on. So whether that's a book, or a podcast, or a certain person I'm trying to follow, it's always based on me wanting to learn something to implement it next in my business. So as folks are thinking about what they want to be doing in their business, honing in on, what is the next thing you're wanting to do? Are you wanting to clarify your business idea? Do you want to decide what business model you want? Are you ready to start a podcast and want to learn more how to do that?

Whatever it is, narrow down your content consumption to be focused on your next particular goal. And then—and this just takes practice and self-control—is to stop listening to everything else. And it's hard because we are bombarded by all this every day, even if you try not to be, you still are. And I catch myself, “Oh my gosh, maybe I should start a membership site.” No, Jenny, that's not our path right now. “Yes, that's a great idea. I totally see it.” Not right now. So we just have to notice, again, notice ourselves, what we tend to do, and what do we need to do to manage ourselves and put reminders up: not a membership site right now. It's a muscle, it's a skill to be able to turn out these distractions. And it's one I think we have to develop more and more now with the music becoming louder and more prevalent in the world.

Pat: Yeah, you know, I didn't make this up, but I started using it, sharing it, and a lot of people loved it. You know there's FOMO, right? F-O-M-O? Fear of missing out? Well, I love to practice JOMO. J-O-M-O. The joy

of missing out. Being proud of the fact that you can say no to something because you know and are committed to those other things. And the fact that you have this sticky note up there that says, “No. No. Jenny, you are not going to do the membership website. We’ll save that for later.” That’s absolutely huge.

Jenny: Yeah. Well, we could all use a little more JOMO than FOMO, for sure.

Pat: Yeah, absolutely. And I’m curious, going back to the question of what is working for you, specifically what content platforms, what places are you online that are actually helping you with your business? You and your clients?

Jenny: The main thing that we use for marketing, our main program is called Make it Work Online, and we’re primarily on Facebook. That looks like showing up and participating in groups, something that I started out doing as getting clients in my business and something I still do and actually want to get back into doing more of, to just stay in touch with the people that we’re here to serve. I don’t have my own open, free Facebook group year-round. We do one leading up to the launch, which is incredible. There’s so much energy and inspiration and motivation and action taking that happens there. But when we’re not running that, it’s just going out and interacting with people where they are. On podcasting and Facebook ads. I don’t recommend Facebook ads for people who are just starting out, but I’ve been doing this work a long time, we’ve been offering our program—we’ve offered it nine times now, we’re gearing up for our tenth launch. We know how to target the right people with Facebook ads, so those are effective in the right time. Notice I didn’t say ten things. I just said a few. Because we really can narrow down to those few things that work best for us.

Pat: And when you say you get involved in these groups and they’re not your own groups, what does that mean? How are you getting involved? What are you participating in? What exactly are you doing there?



Jenny: I'm so glad you asked this because a lot of times, folks will hear I go in Facebook groups, and what they think I mean is go in and pitch yourself. But just to clarify for everybody else, what I mean is, I call it being of service, but I keep saying I should change it to show up and be awesome. Really, what that means is go in these groups where your target clients are hanging out and help them, serve them, don't ask for anything in return, don't ask for testimonials, don't pitch yourself, don't make it about you. Go up and serve your fellow human beings. Be the awesome, helpful person who shows up to give and not get, and what happens when you do that consistently and regularly is people start to notice. People start to notice, they'll get curious about you, they'll eventually learn about what you do, and then the referrals start to come.

When I get my clients to commit to showing up and being awesome and serving their target clients to give and not to get, within a month, they start getting people tagging them, "Hey, wait. I think Kate could really help with this question." "Oh, Sandra's got such a great answer to that." People start calling you out. And that's when you know you've made a name for yourself as somebody who's awesome. And people want to know, and be around, and learn from people who are awesome. It sounds super simple, but really, it's incredibly effective. And still effective today, especially with all of this noise, all this music out there, everybody vying for attention. Somebody not vying for attention and just serving others is quite attention-getting.

Pat: Yeah, and I think a lot of us have heard the news recently, and with Mark Zuckerberg's keynotes recently that he's talking about social media going a little bit more private. These groups are going to become even more important. These communities. Less important are the public status updates. But I'm curious, I want to dig a little bit deeper because this is a strategy that a lot of people are going to need to know going into these groups. When you say go in there regularly and consistently, what does that mean? How much and how often are you in there exactly and participating?

Jenny: When I first started JennyShih.com and was helping other business owners as my primary business in terms of being a virtual assistant, project manager, coach that makes your ideas happen, and then slowly as I was getting into marketing, really in those early stages of my business, before I hit about six or a couple six-figures, I was in there in groups consistently at least an hour a day. I had a half an hour block—it was on my calendar. Half an hour, first thing in the morning, and I had these top three to five groups that I would go in, and then half an hour at the end of the day to follow up with conversations I had started before. And the whole goal is to go in and answer people's questions, to show empathy, to connect with your fellow human being, and to make it a regular thing.

Now, if somebody's working a full-time job, maybe they don't have an hour a day to do it, but maybe they have a half an hour four days a week or something like that in the evening, after they put their kids to bed. But the goal is to show up and help and to answer questions, and not to filter. So I didn't go in saying, “What questions can I answer that are people who are my target client who are likely to hire me later?” No filtering. Just answer every single question that I feel like I had value to add.

So one example I love to give—at the time, I was using AWeber, but I was seeing a lot of people asking questions about MailChimp because it was brand new. And people would say, “I can't figure out how to do XYZ in MailChimp.” And I knew that MailChimp had a really great search section on their website, so I would go to MailChimp.com and I would type in “how to blah, blah, blah on MailChimp,” and then I would find the answer, and I would go back into that group and I would say, “Hey, here's the thing on MailChimp on how to do whatever it is you're looking to do.” And they would say, “Oh my gosh, Jenny, thank you. That was so amazing.” And I thought, I just took thirty seconds, and this person remembered that Jenny Shih showed up to help. That's really what it looks like.

So the commit to the time, commit to the groups, and commit to not filter and just serve. Doesn't mean you have to answer every

question, but it's not just about filtering for future clients, it's just about freely loving on everybody in that group in the best way you possibly can and consistently doing it. It's that consistency that starts to create a name for yourself. If you pop in once a month, nobody's going to remember you, but if you pop in every day and are genuinely helpful, people remember really quickly. Or catch on really quickly.

Pat: Yeah. I think that's a perfect solution for making sure you go in there, you're always being perceived as coming from a place of service, you're in there to help, you're going to be loved by the other group members, you're going to be recognized, you're going to be messaged individually, which is going to help your business and all that kind of stuff, which is great. However, I'm curious because this just came to mind, I'm reminded of a friend who has a Facebook group, and he was a little bit annoyed about somebody who was in the group who was . . . they weren't coming in and being super self-promotional, they weren't even mentioning their stuff, but they were kind of taking the spotlight a little bit. And they were kind of overstepping their boundaries. I mean, I looked at some of the language, and it was a little bit sort of a backhand passive slap to the founder, but he was being helpful, so everybody else loved him. It's kind of a weird balance. I just want to make sure because this strategy of going into groups and becoming a member and servicing that group, I want to make sure people know how to balance that versus making sure you don't overstep your boundaries with the admins or the founder of that group. Any thoughts on that or have you ever come across anything like that before?

Jenny: I think that's so great. I'm so glad you asked. I would say the very first thing is check your own intentions. So before you go into a group, just check yourself a little bit. Are you going in with the goal of, I'll just use your words, siphoning off people into your own group, right? That's super tacky. And if you have your own group and that's what you're trying to do, that's icky, don't do it. So first up is to check yourself and make sure what your intentions are and how you're looking to do it. The second one is look at the energy of the group.

So if it's a group of two hundred people and you're commenting more than anybody else, yeah, you're kind of going to look a little bit weird. Show up in the energy of the group. You're not showing up to change the energy of the group, you're showing up to enhance or to support the energy that's already there because it isn't your group.

So be aware of the group size. A lot of the big groups these days are five thousand, ten thousand, twenty thousand or more people, and you'd have to be in there too much to be able to get noticed to that degree. So if you're spending five hours a day serving in one person's Facebook group, your energetic input compared to the group's energy is probably a little bit off. So check your intentions, match your energy with the group's energy, and then the third thing I say is, yes, you might get kicked out of a group or somebody might not like you. And at the same time, when we host our free group and we have a couple people in there who contribute a lot of energy, there are some who I can just feel that they're doing it to get, not to give, but I don't worry about it. Because I don't need to worry that that person is going to take business away from me, so I'm not worried. But if another business owner who runs a group and you're really showing up purely in an energy that matches the group with contributions that are in the mix of how that's all going, and a business owner feels threatened by you and kicks you out, oh well. It's not the end of the world. It happens.

If you've checked yourself and you're matching the energy of the group and somebody who owns the group feels weird about it then leave, there's plenty of other groups, there are plenty of other places where your energy, and involvement, and ideas are going to be appreciated. It's unfortunate to get kicked out of a group, but you can also look at that opportunity when it does happen and talk to the owner, "Hey, why did this happen?" Maybe there's some feedback for you that you need to hear that you didn't even realize that you weren't showing up with the right intention.

Pat: Now, continuing this, I'm just curious. This just came to mind. Do you think it's a smart idea for you as a member of a group to reach out

and introduce yourself and say hello to the admins or the founder just to kind of put yourself on their radar, or would that not be a great idea?

Jenny: You know, I'm not sure what I would say to that. I was going to ask you, Pat, because you have an ongoing free group and I don't have one, and during our launch, if somebody were to reach out and say, "Hey, Jenny, I just wanted you to know that I'm showing up to serve your group." My reaction would be like, "That's great." It doesn't matter. That didn't—in the instances where we have the six-week open Facebook group, it wouldn't matter to me if somebody did or didn't, but how would you feel about that in your particular group?

Pat: Yeah, I mean, obviously it depends on the case, the person, the things they're saying and how active they are, just the vibe. I think it's on a case by case basis. But in most cases, I've had this happen, and I've been very welcome to it, and the fact that, especially if I know if they're helping my people, then hey, some of these people have become admins in my group, so yeah, I would totally welcome it I think.

Now, to shift gears a little bit, I'm curious because you're going into these groups, you are introducing yourself, you are helping, you're answering a lot of questions, you're being involved, but at the same time, we have a business to run. We are marketers. We should go in with an agenda, but we also shouldn't go in with that kind of agenda. How do you go into these groups, are you just hoping and praying that people are going to reach out to you and pay you money because you're so helpful? That has happened to me before as well, even with my architecture website back in the day, but how do you approach this in a way where you balance going in there and being helpful but also knowing that you hopefully are going to get something in return, and to do it in a very genuine, authentic way. I think this is the tough thing about these groups and why people mess it up because they go in too hard.

Jenny: So great. Two things to that. First one is, I truly believe that the good energy we put out into the world comes back to us—

Pat: I agree.

Jenny: —in maybe direct or indirect ways. So if we're truly putting genuine service intentions out there, it will come back to us somehow, through that group or other ways. The second thing is, yes, there are absolutely things that we can do in groups, and I'm always hesitant to make this initial suggestion to people on what to do because they often fork it up. They'll go in and be like, "Okay, I heard Jenny and Pat talk about this whole be awesome in a Facebook group thing, and she also said," and they start taking notes. Like, "Make this reference." And I'll give these specific examples: "Make a reference this way when I post. When appropriate, in a reply, link to my blog post, and talk about this, this, and this other thing." And then what happens is their wanting to do it strategically to make money brain takes over purely show up to serve brain.

So when people are just getting started, I tell them don't worry about that. And they might say, "Well, Jenny, that's all good for you. But I need to make money." Desperate energy for money doesn't attract clients who want to pay you. So show up purely to serve them. Don't worry about doing it right, just make a name for yourself first. Because the more we tell people like, here are the twenty-seven things to do right when you go in a Facebook group, the less likely they are to do it with just pure giving energy because they're also trying to tick all the right boxes at the same time.

So first thing, get comfortable showing up in groups and being awesome. Then, once you've started to make a name for yourself, once you feel comfortable and you've learned how to talk in these conversations—so, for example, you don't verbally vomit when somebody asks a deep question, you don't verbally vomit a bunch of answers. They may say, like, "Oh my gosh, I'm so stressed because my little one isn't sleeping and I'm not sure what to do." "Here are my five steps to get your kid to sleep." Connect them like a real human

being, so get those things working first, and then, after you're making those connections, then it's, for example, what you might say to that reply is, "I'm so sorry that you're not sleeping, I know that's so stressful on the whole family. As a sleep consultant, one of the questions I found most helpful in working with my clients is this." Whatever that question is. "How is that working for you in your life right now?"

So you make this side reference to what you do, but it's just a side reference, so then people—oh, by the way, okay, she's a sleep consultant, or she helps people with this. Or other times, you may say, "Here's my top number one tip. If this sounds intriguing to you, here's a blog post where I wrote a whole lot more about it." And you can link to your website. But always serve in the group. Always serve there. Don't make people go elsewhere. Serving there really starts to create this interest, and I have found over and over again, the more I show up to genuinely serve with less to get in return, those people really do come and they find you. They're that intrigued by how you show up to serve them and everybody else, they want to know more because so few people do that. So few people do it.

Pat:

Mm-hmm. I love that example that you used with the person that was having trouble with the sleep. It's just a hypothetical example, but it reminded me of a book that my wife recommended to me called I Hear You ([Amazon link](#)). She recommended I read it and it would strengthen our relationship, and it has, and it really is all about validity. So when one of us has a problem, for example, we need to just hear that person first. We don't necessarily need to come at it from—this is where I usually come from—a super logical, "Hey, okay. If this, then that. Let's do this now." No. Sometimes people just want to be heard, and that's something that we don't offer our audience as much as we should, and I think that's such a smart thing to do in these groups, with our audience, with our email list, with our client base. *[Full Disclaimer: As an affiliate, I receive compensation if your purchase through this link.]*

And as we wrap up here, before we wrap up, again, first of all, thank you for being here, second of all, how would you recommend, as we're building our client base, as we are building our customer list, as we are growing and expanding our businesses with how technology's changing, social media's changing, algorithms are getting in the way, emails are getting harder to get through, all that stuff. How would you recommend we—especially those who are at the start who might feel like they're a little bit behind—how do you recommend that we build for a future-proof, long-term, successful business?

Jenny:

My number one approach to helping people get started specifically selling services, though folks who have a long term vision to sell courses, or products, or membership sites, this approach really works well. So first, start with a service mindset—what we talked about so far. So what lights you up? What do you want to be doing? Who do you want to be working with? What do you feel passionate about? What do you get lit up by when other people talk about? So that, whatever that thing is that you want to do, whether it's design, or nutrition, or copywriting, or anything, you want to get that out into the world starting with a space of, who am I here to help and what do I want to help them do? What problem do I want to solve for people and what result do I want to help them get? And I recommend people start with just a really small offer.

And because of the noise, a lot of times people are saying, “You know, this person's doing a membership site, so I need to do that.” And, “Oh my goodness, she has these amazing high production value video series, so if I want to launch something, I've got to start there.” No, no, no, no, no. Start right here where you are like we talked about in the beginning, really small. So what's the one small problem that you can solve for your customers? Try it out.

I call it a bite-sized offer. What is this one small thing that you can do right now to help other people, even if your longterm goal is to help people lose fifty pounds or more, maybe you haven't done that yet. What can you do now? You can help them identify the number one



emotional eating trigger they have. Maybe you're not ready to write an entire webinar and email sales sequence, but you can write an initial welcome email for someone as a copywriter. So start to hone in on what problems do you like to solve, what's one small thing you can do right now, and create that—I call it a bite-sized offer—create that offer, serve some clients, test it out. Go all in and at the same time, be really excited to have your clients show you what's next.

And that's how I got from where I was to where I am today because each client taught me a little bit more about what I had to offer, what I like to do, what I didn't like to do, what I said in a particular way that landed, what I said in a particular way that didn't land. And we have so much to learn from our clients so find what result you want to create for your clients based on what problem you want to solve, put together a small offer, serve some clients, let them teach you what to do next. And slowly, just one step at a time, that one step in front of you is going to start to unfold this path for you that you can't with your mind see where you're headed just yet, but that's kind of where all the magic stars to happen.

Pat: Jenny, you're amazing. Thank you so much for this absolute gold. I'm sure my audience is going to love you if they haven't heard you already, and your audience who's listening to this, thank you again for this introduction to Jenny. She's amazing. Jenny, where can people go and find out more about you and what you do?

Jenny: The best place to come and find me is at [JennyShih.com](http://JennyShih.com), and for folks who want to sell online services that are really looking for, how do I get started, how do I start small, how do I start with that step in front of me? I created a special download, a real meaty download just for your listeners at [JennyShih.com/Pat](http://JennyShih.com/Pat), where they can learn more about, how do you get started with these services online? How do you get clients? How do you grow this into a full-time business without working crazy hours? That's at [JennyShih.com/Pat](http://JennyShih.com/Pat). I'm also on Facebook, Twitter, and I have a horrible Instagram game, but if people want to come and help me out, I'm more than . . . I'm ready to crowdsource what I should be doing on Instagram, I think that would

be kind of a fun idea, so if folks have a good idea, they can come on over and coach me on how to do Instagram.

Pat: You're amazing, Jenny. Thank you so much. And that's Jenny, J-E-N-N-Y S-H-I-H.com. And really quick before you go, one more thing just to clarify because you specialize in services. Can you quickly define for us what a service is so that people who maybe they have that kind of business and they need some help, they can go to you?

Jenny: Yeah. A service is any business that works one-on-one with another human anywhere virtually around the world is what we're talking about here. So one-on-one services offered to clients all over the world. That's life coaches, nutritionists, bookkeepers, designers, copywriters, ghostwriters, private yoga teachers, long-distance Reiki healers, anyone who's going to be able to work with a client one-on-one around the world through the use of the technology that we have at our disposal. I am your woman and would love to help you make that happen.

Pat: Jenny, you're awesome. Thank you so much for your time today. We appreciate you so much, and all the best.

Jenny: Thank you so much. Same to you, Pat. And good luck with your book launch, I'm really excited for it to come out.

Pat: Ah, you're amazing. Thank you, Jenny, and take care. Wow, that was amazing. Thank you, Jenny, for coming on, and thank you to your tribe for being amazing. And everybody who is from your tribe listening to this right now, I'm clasping my hands together and saying thank you so much for introducing me to Jenny and all that she is because she's amazing and I cannot wait to dive into more of her stuff. And like she said, if you want to get some more cool stuff from her, all you have to do is go to Jenny Shih, that's J . . . J, right? Yeah. J-E-N-N-Y. I always get my J's and G's mixed up when I'm talking really fast. Anyway. J-E-N-N-Y S-H-I-H.com/Pat. You'll see right at the top, hey, welcome Pat Flynn listeners or SPI listeners, she's got you. JennyShih.com/Pat and she'll take care of you from there.

If you want to get the notes and all the links that we mentioned in this episode, all you have to do is to go [SmartPassiveIncome.com/session389](http://SmartPassiveIncome.com/session389). If you haven't subscribed to the show already, now would be the time to do it, before you go into the next one. We have a lot of great content coming your way, we have a lot of good content in the archive. If you're listening to this show for the first time and you're like, "Alright. I love this show. I want to go back and listen to Episode One." Don't do that. First of all, Episode One was just not the best of me. But it's still up there and you can listen to it, but what I'm getting at is find the stuff that makes sense in my archive that relates to whatever it is that you're doing now.

This is along the lines of what Jenny and I spoke about today. Learning about the things that make sense for what you need help with and getting the best advice for that. It's all there for you. There's nearly four hundred episodes of this podcast, all ranging from different kinds of topics. Find the things that you're working on next, do that, learn, and take action, and make it happen. Speaking of taking action, that's what we're going to do with next week's special guest, but until then, keep crushing it. SPI, Team Flynn, you're amazing. Cheers. Take care, and have an awesome day. Team Flynn for the win. Bye.

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[Make It Work Online](#)  
[I Hear You by Michael S. Sorensen \(Amazon link\)](#)

