Marissa Levin (00:06)

Hello everyone and welcome back to Motivational Mondays. I am Marissa Levin and I am your new host for this podcast. I am also the Chief Human Resources and Chief Culture Officer for NSLS. And so I am thrilled to be able to work inside of NSLS and help all of the leaders there step into their highest potential. And I am also one of the external voices and faces of NSLS where I help our

two and a half million members reach their potential as well as all of our listeners. So I am just thrilled to be here today reintroducing Motivational Mondays. Through our own research, we've learned that condensing the format down is a lot more effective and we're able to really convey hard-hitting, helpful information in a much shorter period of time. So moving forward, our podcasts are gonna be a total of seven minutes.

So that allows you to log on, get what you need and get on with your day and you're not sacrificing any quality. So with that, we are gonna move straight into our next episode. And I am so happy to welcome a rock star entrepreneur and her name is Mary Beach. And I'm just gonna take a little peek at my notes because I don't wanna mess anything up. So Mary Beach.

is the chief growth officer of a company called Thorn, and they are a science-driven wellness and performance management company delivering premium health and wellness solutions. Mary ⁓ is a total rock star. She's got decades of experience in leadership, brand building, wellness, health, organizational performance, and how...

fortunate we are that she has chosen to spend some of her time to impart her knowledge that she has gained along the way of her journey. She has served as the chief marketing officer of Scholastic and prior to that she worked with brands such as Kate Spade and the Walt Disney Company to help them with their branding as well. Mary's story is a powerful example of reinvention, bold leadership and staying grounded in purpose.

through every professional chapter. Mary, welcome to the podcast.

Mary Beech (02:30)

You know, I have been so lucky to work really with iconic brands, as you said, everything from Ralph Lauren at the start of my career to the Walt Disney Company and Pixar Animation Studios, Kate Spade New York, and really brands and in spaces that people feel a lot of passion about. We're passionate about fashion. We're passionate about entertainment. But the opportunity to join Thorne to be their chief growth officer really came at this.

amazing moment for me. had been thinking about health and wellness really because I don't know if it's age. I don't know if it was the fact that my children are old enough now to really be engaged in my career. But I began realizing that I'm going to give 150 % to whatever I do. So I would love to be in a space where I can actually make an impact on consumers lives.

And the opportunity at my last role to move from the board of Scholastic into Scholastic ⁓ in a leadership role showed me that ⁓ the satisfaction you get from working all day and knowing that you're helping kids in that case learn to read and love to read is just different. It feels different to work for a company that has a purpose that impacts people's lives. And for me, finding my way to health and wellness space in Thorn came through my own health scare.

When I was 34, I had a heart incident related to some underlying conditions, but really I wasn't taking good care of myself. I was a working young mom, very busy, not really prioritizing health and wellness. And I realized I needed to make a change. And in the journey to find that change, I realized how hard it is to make a change. So when the opportunity come to a wellness company that is helping consumers make that change in a smart,

informed way and to make their lives better. I couldn't pass it up. I came to running after my health scare. I am not an athletic human being. I did not play sports. ⁓ My mother was reminding me this weekend that I was the only child she'd ever met who you could stand right next to them and toss a ball and I would still drop it. But I came to running because I was time-starved with two young kids and it just meant I could literally

put on tennis shoes and leave the house. And so it was hard to have an excuse not to do it for five minutes or 10 minutes. ⁓ And as I started running more and I've run about 13 marathons since I turned 40, I ⁓ got introduced to this idea of a negative split. And the idea of negative split is that you can run the second half of a race, whether that's a marathon or a half marathon or a 5k, that you run the back half faster than the front half. Now that's very hard because you're

tired at the second half of the race, you mentally are broken down a little bit more. Your body is in pain ⁓ if it's a longer race. And so it also requires timing and pacing so that you don't go out too fast in the beginning. And I began applying that to my personal life of, you know, as I was becoming in my 40s and now in my early 50s, ⁓ knowing that it's the

best part of my life isn't behind me. It truly isn't ahead of me. And that's how I raise, I rise every day saying what is great is coming before me. And I have so many great, so much great potential. I've learned so much from the first half of the race that I can make sure the second half of my life is even better. And I also apply it to my work. It's incredibly important. We do a lot of big initiatives in a marketing team and taking that moment to say,

Okay, that was amazing, that was tiring, that was a sprint. How do we take a moment to reflect, look back, celebrate, learn, so that the next time as we move forward, we can be better, stronger, ⁓ more committed, more informed as we do that. And not just kind of just keep running and doing the same thing each time. It's really about that look back, that pause, that how can I do this next stage even better?

⁓ And what do I need to do from a resource perspective, a people perspective, a strategy perspective to change that? Because small things can make a big change in outcome. So ⁓ I love the negative split. I love thinking about it in all aspects of my life. And ⁓ I encourage others to do so. The one piece of advice I would give is ⁓ bring your whole self and all of your passion to work. I think a lot of times when you're walking into a first job, you want to show up and you want to be

professional. want to ⁓ kind of see how everybody else behaves at the company, how everybody else behaves at the firm, wherever you're starting out your career. But know that they're hiring you for unique reasons of what you bring to the table. And you need to reveal that and allow that to come forth. And a lot of that is passion. People want passion in their industry, in their company, because passion ⁓ fuels growth.

And so I would just say, bring it. You have it or you wouldn't have gotten the job. So come in with confidence, show up with confidence and bring your whole self to work. And I think I would tell myself that there's so much fun to be had if you just relax for a second and enjoy the ride. ⁓ I was so lucky, the places I worked and the people that I worked with ⁓ throughout my career, including today at Thorne, that is what I will always value and remember.

I don't remember the stats of ⁓ the numbers that I first hit in my first job or the size of the brand when I passed it on. What I remember are the people that I worked with, the experiences we had together. So ⁓ I value that every day now. I often say to people about Thorn that ⁓ I love my job and I love that I'm.

kind of at this point in my career where I know that how lucky I am, I know how much I enjoy it. I can appreciate that. And I wish I had appreciated some of those experiences earlier because it is, ⁓ there's a lot of just fun that can be had in creating great brands, in building great brands and impacting people's lives, in ⁓ working together as a team and creating something. ⁓ Take a moment and enjoy.

because it is an incredible experience. And if you're just moving on to the next, you're going to find yourself in a little bit of a rat race versus really saying, I have an amazing body of work and I'm really proud of the people and the experiences that I've had.

Marissa Levin (09:07)

So that is it for this episode of Motivational Mondays. I hope you enjoyed Mary's insights as much as I did, and I also hope that you really enjoy this new format. Now, we at NSLS value progress over perfection. That is one of our core values. And so if you have ideas or suggestions on how we can continue to refine our podcast, we would love to hear from you. This is your experience as

as much as it is ours. And we really view our relationship with all of our listeners as a two-way conversation. So I not only invite you, but I encourage you to please visit our website and look for the link that will allow you to weigh in on how this new format felt for you. That website is nsls.org slash mm dash.

Survey and we'll also put that link in the show notes, but we really want to know what works for you as the listener This is your experience and as I always say I am NOT the sage on the stage I am simply the guide on the side to be able to bring you the experts and And create really magical moments for you during motivational Monday So thanks again for listening great to meet you all and I'm so looking forward to having this time with you as the host