

A BETTER LIFE WITH RACHEL ROFÉ

**A CONVERSATION WITH
BECCA
PIASTRELLI**

**IF YOU HAVE A
CHOICE, CHOOSE
A BETTER LIFE.**

Rachel: Hello everyone. Today we're here with Becca Piastrelli. Becca is the woman behind the The Dabblist. Her manifesto: To rid the taboo around the term, dabbler and instead to infuse it with a sense of alchemy and wonder. Why? Because she knows that when we bring an inquisitive heart to the process of creating with our own two hands, to get our hands dirty, share stories and creations with each other, we remember the ancient wisdom within.

We can tap into what our great, great, great grandmothers once knew: That given the freedom to dabble, we can be the creators of our own joy. I asked Becca to be on our podcast today because I think she has a lot of wisdom to share with you. I know she's been through a lot of life changes including leaving her stable six-figure job to work fulltime on her business. Her business highlights a message that I love, which is that it's okay to play.

Becca gives people permission, in a sense, to have lots of passions, to try lots of things and to not feel like you need to have some major end goal in everything you do. There's a real lightheartedness to what she teaches coupled with a lot of wisdom. I think that everyday stressed out people can just learn so much from her. So, thank you so much for being here, Becca.

Becca: Thanks, Rachel. It's great to be here.

Rachel: The intention behind this podcast, as you know, is to show people that if they have a choice, they can choose a better life. In that spirit, I would love if you could take a minute to just brag with us about some of the things that you have going on in your life that you're most proud of.

Becca: I love starting with celebration. That's awesome. Right now, I just crossed over eight months since I left my corporate job that you mentioned and started this new life for myself. I'm really just celebrating every day that passes since I left that job because every day has been it's own sort of triumphs and epiphany and struggle and it's all just going towards this beautiful direction that I am creating every day and it feels really awesome.

Rachel: Congratulations.

Becca: Thank you.

Rachel: I know right now you're eight months in and I know that it hasn't been the easiest every day. You've said, "Every day is also like a triumph, struggle." Can you describe a time that comes to your mind that you felt like things weren't going the way you wanted or you felt trapped that happened before you got to this point?

Becca: I just think a year ago today, I was feeling those feelings of being trapped and I realize now I was sort of acting the victim, but I really believed I was a victim of this economy, of my situation. What did it look like? It looked like everything was great on paper, like I had gotten everything I ever thought I was supposed to get. I had a six-figure job; I was really good at it. I was loved by the people I worked with and for and who worked for me.

I had my MBA. Just everything looked good and I had a lot of guilt, really. The trapped feeling felt guilty because I felt like I should be more grateful for what I had because ultimately, I wasn't really content. I wasn't feeling those feelings of fulfillment from getting all those sort of check boxes marked off. That's what I was working towards, right? That's what my entire life was about—like working my way towards “success.”

Then I got it and it didn't feel how I thought it was going to feel because really, it came down to feelings. I felt like it was a big secret and I couldn't tell anyone because, you know, children are starving in Africa and I needed to be grateful I even had a job and all these stories that are in our communities. I also had the golden handcuffs of stock options. Because my company had gotten acquired by a big corporation, every year I sat at my job, more money was accruing that I could get, so it was like this never ending journey that I had to stay on in order to get more of what I thought I was supposed to get in order to have “a successful life.” So, that's what that looked like.

Rachel: Wow, I can feel that when you're talking about it. What kind of helped you finally make the decision to walk away from that life?

Becca: That's really the beautiful thing. I believe a part of me had already known this wasn't right even though maybe in my intellectual mind I was still trying to rationalize that life. Three years ago, I started a blog called, The Dabblist and I called it The Dabblist because a lot of my friends had called me ADD. Marie Forleo calls it multi-passionate. Who is that author that writes that awesome book, [Refuse to Choose](#)?

Rachel: Oh yes, Barbara something, right?

Becca: Barbara something, right. She calls us scanners. There are basically people in this world, (I believe there are a lot of us and you may be one of them, Rachel) that have a lot of passions in life and want to explore those. I knew I was one of those people. I was working my corporate job during the day and at night and on the weekends, I was getting creative. Part of me was unapologetic about being a dabblist.

Part of me was saying, “I like this and I want to show and share.” I felt truly compelled to share what I was working on and this was anything from infusing vodka with rosemary to making my own face lotion to learning how to sew a pillowcase. I was doing these things and I felt compelled to

share them with the world. I believed dabbling saved my life because I was working with my hands again. This sounds so simple and yet, it's actually quite revolutionary that I was playing again.

I had free play, but most of my days, I was behind a computer screen doing what I was told to do. When I was dabbling, I was self-directing what I wanted to do. I literally just thought of something and said, "I want to make this." I created it with my hands. I was getting into my body, into my heart. I was making choices about what I wanted to make and I was sharing them. That was the revolution within me to help me realize that dabbling and playing helped me come alive again and made me realize that I wasn't trapped in my job and that actually, there was a world of possibilities beyond the golden handcuffs and the six-figure salary.

Rachel: You discovered the dabbling—such a beautiful realization—that there's a world of possibility. What happened after you started the blog and after you decided you wanted to leave your job? What did it look like? How did you decide that you were going to quit?

Becca: It took a lot of saying, "I will," like at some point, "I will leave my job. Maybe I'll just try to make some money from ads on the blog," or all these things that really were just delaying the leaving of my job. I ended up going to the [Live Free Retreat](#) in Sonoma last October. It was led by Nisha Moodley and Sarah Jenks. I just felt compelled to go. This whole idea of personal freedom was just singing a song to my heart.

I went there and I heard the quote, I think it was Sarah Jenks who said, "The future is made up of the choices you're making right now." For some reason, in that moment, in those words, there's sort of like that moment where everything aligns and locks up and you just know, like shivers through your body, I have to make a change. That was my moment. She said those words. I was also in a room full of women who I felt so supported by and created these feelings of safety and belonging which I think is super crucial.

In that moment, I said, "All right. I'm going to do it. I don't know what this is going to look like," because you could make plans and plans and say, "Things have got to be perfect and then I'll do it," but I just said, "Nothing's ever going to be perfect. The future is made up of the choices I make now. The future I'm heading towards right now doesn't look the way I want it to look. I feel safe. I feel unconditionally loved." I came home the next day and I gave my two weeks.

Rachel: How did your husband respond?

Becca: In those weeks leading up to going to the retreat where I knew I wanted to leave, whenever I talked to him about it, I was totally in victim mode. I was like, "I want to leave," and it was sort of a save me mentality like, "Tell me

you'll take care of me." Of course, he picked up on that, so he wasn't going to say, "Okay, I'll take care of you while you figure out your passion." It wasn't ever a good conversation.

When I came back from the retreat, I knew I had to have a conversation showing him that I had a plan and that I was capable of doing this. I ran financials and created a budget so that this would work for us, so my logical, masculine husband could say, "Okay, this makes sense from a logical perspective and we will be safe and taken care of and you aren't going to just be a woman of leisure," because that was his biggest fear. Then I told him in such a place of confidence and I remember I was shaking and crying, but the energy between us was like, this is yes. That made it okay to go forth and pull the trigger.

Rachel: That's such a good idea. I think that so often it's not that people don't want to support you, but they can't see how it's actually going to work, so for you to be able to bridge that gap for him and to show him the plan and what we're going to do and to really get his buy-in is just so powerful.

Becca: It was powerful and I think it was good for me to prove that I could make it work. I believe now, through that process and what's happened in the last eight months, that there's always a way to do something. You just have to find that way. That was like my first little mini experience doing that. It's proven to me and to him that this could be done. We could figure it out and if I had to wait tables, I would wait tables. If we had a trust fund, I'd dip into that—whatever it was, where you are in your life, you can figure it out. That was my first moment of, "Oh, I can figure this out." Then the energy between us was one of trust and confidence.

Rachel: Beautiful. Now you're in this place where you have amazing coaching clients and you have this blog and you're just being featured all over the place, it seems like. I know that it's been just eight months since you've quit and I'm wondering what are the mind shifts that you have in your everyday life now in order to be where you are? Obviously, you're telling yourself different stories than you were eight months ago.

Becca: Totally, totally. Every day is a new discovery and mindset. I have to say initially, there was a metaphor that Amber Rae told me. She was at the Live Free Retreat and she told me, "Eagles have their babies on a nest on the side of a cliff. When the babies are ready, they have to basically jump out of the nest and off the side of the cliff and they either fly or they plunge to their death."

She looked at me and she said, "You either fly or you die, girl." It's an intense metaphor but it was exactly what I needed to motivate me. In those beginning few months, I said, "I'm a baby eagle and I have got to keep flapping." I told people sometimes and they laughed, but it was so perfect for what I needed at that moment.

Rachel: That's a beautiful way of looking at it. What are some of the things that happened that could have been seen as a struggle but you told yourself that you had to keep flying?

Becca: There's the self-doubt and the fear. I think a lot of that has to do with the way I grew up and the way a lot of us are conditioned. A way to put this is for most of my life; my fuel was the approval of others. So, from an early age, I believe in school, we are taught that adults know what is right and good and we align our behavior to match that. That's my people-pleasing way that I'm slowly unlearning, which is do what is rewarded and what is considered "right."

Conform and you will be good and you will be right. When I took this complete 180 in my life where I said, "Instead of having my reality dictated for me, I dictate my own reality," which I believe free play sort of plays into. When I started playing again and realized I could create my own reality, I have been in the process of shedding and unlearning this whole idea of, am I doing the right thing? Is this according to the map that's laid out by successful entrepreneurs?

Does everyone who is successful do it this way? What's the blueprint? That self-doubt really is that little girl who just wants to get an A+ on the test. That's a constant battle and that's when I tell myself to keep strengthening the muscle that is my inner compass and to rely on dear friends and colleagues who encourage me to basically keep flapping because my path is my path and I'm in charge of it. It is going well and I don't need anyone to give me an A+ on my report card to tell me that.

Rachel: Totally, totally. So, when you're in a moment of self-doubt, you just kind of remind yourself and you reach out to your friends if you need it and then that helps keep you on track?

Becca: Totally, yes.

Rachel: I love it. That keeps on coming up in the podcasts is people talking about having that support system around them.

Becca: Totally, I mean there's a funny phenomenon that is we have to do this alone and asking for help is weakness. I know, somehow, that has been imprinted on me at some point in my life, in my 28 years. Really, no one should do anything alone. We all used to live in tribes and supported each other and one person's genius can be another person's challenge point. Really, just through this support and the tribal nature of coming together can we all find our own leadership and find our own calling and our own joy in this world. It's funny how it comes up as a struggle from time to time.

Rachel: It is really fascinating. It is definitely recent with the advent of the nuclear family that was just invented and everything. It's very fascinating to me. I'm glad that it seems like we're all kind of shifting back towards community. It's great.

Becca: Yes, it is. It's feeling right.

Rachel: Yes, absolutely. I'd love to hear, too, just a little bit more about the dabbling and how that's been able to make your life better. I've been asking people what's a specific action step that you take to make your life better, but I know a big one for you is dabbling. I'd love to hear how you feel when you're dabbling and what that looks like for you.

Becca: Yes, totally. Yes, my action steps are to dabble every day, for sure. I've actually been delving more into the science and statistics behind dabbling and play because just using myself as a test subject, I can see how dabbling and play has created more self-direction and contentment and pleasure in my life. So, I think there has to be studies on this. It turns out, there are a ton of studies.

I just watched this great [TED talk by Dr. Peter Gray](#) who studies play. He's a playologist, so to speak. He really has some astounding statistics about how over the last 50 years, there has been a decrease in the freedom and opportunity to play from an early age through adulthood. If you look at play as it usually looks for children right now, it's on a field, they're wearing uniforms, and there are adults managing or maintaining rules.

This concept of free play, which is self-directed, has been replaced with adult-directed or authority-directed play. What that does is it takes away this whole idea of you can define your own future and it creates this we are not in control of our own future. I find this to be fascinating because as I was talking about earlier, my fuel has been the approval of others for so long that I am sort of a product of this measured, decrease in freedom and opportunity to play.

Dabbling or play or tinkering or whatever it is that we have an interest in and we are self-directed in doing, ignites something, I believe. It's like a dormant part of our brains and hearts that teaches us how to solve problems, gives us more empathy, creativity, really more self-discovered and self-fulfilled joy so that we can move forth in the world and discover more of what that brings up for us.

It's an internal sense of control that really helps battle things like anxiety and depression and those feelings of being trapped and being unproductive or fatigue, and all these things that happen when you lose that ability to play in your life.

Rachel: That's so interesting that you say that. I remember reading about depression and how one of the reasons people get depressed is because they experienced a loss of control in their life. One of the best things that they can do is go and help other people, then they get the acknowledgement from other people, and it shows that they do have some kind of reason for existence. I can really see where when you're in this place feeling like you don't have any control and thinking, "This would be fun to create," and then to be able to create something out of thin air, how that could really help you.

Becca: It's totally empowering. You know how I said in the last 50 years there's been a linear decrease in freedom and opportunity to play? In that same time period, there has been an increase—five to eight times increase—in children suffering from an anxiety disorder. To me, that so points to this opportunity for children, but also for us as adults to reignite that desire internally to explore and create and play and do whatever it is that internally we desire to do in that realm because our lives depend on it.

Rachel: Absolutely. What does dabbling look like for you?

Becca: Over the past several months I've become really obsessed with herbal remedies and creating my own natural beauty and natural care products. That's what it looks like right now. Some people thought that maybe I was pursuing herbalism. I said, "No, no, I'm not an herbalist. I'm a dabblist." That was the season of my life. We all have seasons to our lives. I really dislike be defined as one type of a person.

Lately, it's been really about reconnecting with my body and with nature and seeing them as part of the same system and creating a beautiful face lotion or body scrub created by nature's elements that also benefits the skin and talking about that openly in my dabbles. I think that's sort of ending. I'm really getting back into making gifts for people. This whole idea of handmade gifts, whatever it looks like—infusing, taking herbs and putting them into salts or taking fruit and putting it into alcohol or whatever it is because I love giving gifts that I have created and I love when people give me something that they've created.

Whether they sewed it or glued it or created it, there's something that's so much more meaningful than a piece of crap you get at the dollar bin at Target because, "Oh my God, I forgot to get a gift for this baby shower," or whatever it is. I feel like there's less meaning and less connection in that than when you hand make something.

Rachel: Totally. One of the things that I so love about your message and that you were just talking about is that you're not just one specific title. I know, even last year in New York, I was kind of doing my own version of dabbling where at first, I was learning to knit and I was making scarves. People were saying, "Oh, you should do some information products on knitting."

Then I got interested in selling, “Oh, you’re going to go on Etsy and sell stuff.” It was like everything had to have some kind of end goal around it instead of just being fun to knit and then I’m over it kind of thing.

Becca: Yes, I have gotten into that so many times. I have a feeling I will continue to do that and I think that just means I need to keep spreading my message on making it okay to have any interests. I was just talking to my sister-in-law this weekend and she was like, “I think it’s really cool that I can love my Kate Spade bag and also make my own lotion and also be into essential oils but have my *Vogue* magazine right next to my essential oil book.”

I said, “Yes! That is dabbling.” That is this idea that we are not defined by one interest. We are not defined by one passion and that it doesn’t have to be in our lives forever. We are one with the seasons and when we can tap into that creative flow, there’s so much more that’s possible.

Rachel: Absolutely. I can just see from a space of just being able to bring more creativity into anything you do, once you’re working on something new and seeing what you can make out of something that you’ve never done before how you can take those lessons into the other aspects of your life is just so much fun. It’s just like a whole new relationship with the world.

Becca: Yes, it’s that self-direction piece. It’s that belief that if you can create this, what else can you create? What can you create in other realms in your life? Then you can define your own future.

Rachel: Yes. I’m curious because I know how it has worked for you with the dabbling and I know you take coaching clients. I’m curious with clients or maybe even just people that you’ve talked to, how have you seen people’s lives changed through the dabbling?

Becca: Usually, it starts with one of my dabbles that I put up on my site. For instance, I make an herbal tea made entirely out of dried flower petals. The beauty and the whimsy of that dabble draws in women who then just try it. It’s one small thing that takes them an hour out of their Sunday afternoon. They create it and think, “Oh my gosh, I’m able to create this.” They make it for their friends. Their friends say, “This is so beautiful. Where did you buy it?” She says, “I made it.”

With that little spark, usually they want more and usually that starts bringing up a lot of the things that they’re dissatisfied with in their lives. There is the inkling that things could change, but they need someone to sort of guide them on that journey. Usually it starts with the dabble and the creation and then it turns into more of a relationship where I can guide these women. Usually they’re high-performing women in corporate jobs into dabbling their way into a life that feels more aligned.

Rachel: Love it. Now you've come so far with what you're doing and I'd love to know just what your life is looking like today. You've told us some things that you're proud of and for the people who are listening, I want them to know that just constantly just making choices to make your life better and better doesn't ever really stop. I'd love to know something that you're currently working on and maybe something that you're struggling with or something that just doesn't feel super pleasant and how you're getting through it.

Becca: That's an awesome question. I so appreciate the transparency of this podcast. That's great. I just shared with my audience a few weeks ago that I'm now working with a health coach. That's because right before I left my job, I had this vision of a laptop on the beach. I was going to lose 20 pounds. I was going to get up every morning, meditate, and have a green smoothie.

I was going to be this glowing model of a woman six months in. As most entrepreneurs tell you, in the beginning, you're finding a whole new rhythm. I'm now 100% responsible for my entire business and my income and because I'm a former people pleaser and corporate manager, I just dove in headfirst. I have a tendency to overwork and to forget to eat or when I get a little scared or anxious, I emotionally eat.

I'm still working on my caffeine addiction. I openly share this with my audience because I totally believe in talking about what you're struggling with and when you share that, your community can come and support you and give you tips and you can experience that unconditional love that I believe really supports transformation. I finally am working with a health coach. I've been wanting to for a long time.

We're really working on more body love, loving the body I'm in no matter what she looks like or feels like and seeing her as an animal and then being really gentle with her. Also having the flow of my workday really honoring her more and not pushing in a masculine way like just push through like the work until 3:00 a.m., you can sleep when you're dead mentality that has also been imprinted in me. I come from the start-up tech world in San Francisco. It's really masculine with lots of programmers, lots of work hard, play hard. Really, that wasn't serving my body. That's my next challenge and my next journey that I'm sharing with everybody.

Rachel: How has that been working so far?

Becca: It goes well and then I have the little moment of regression. I'm learning to not see that as a failure, but see that as being curious about why that happened. Usually it has to do with feeling anxious about something. Maybe I'm feeling a little fearful about this next step I'm taking in my business or I'm just plain tired. A lot of the time, I just need to take a nap or just need to stop working, close the laptop, and go to bed. Otherwise,

I'm going to eat a cookie or ten. It's touch and go but it's really just about loving myself throughout the whole process and being gentle.

Rachel: I love what you said about just being curious about it instead of shaming yourself or making yourself wrong. "I wonder why this is here?" This then becomes such a more lighthearted process of being able to grow yourself.

Becca: Yes, it's a practice, definitely.

Rachel: Totally, totally. I love just how free you were about touch and go, sometimes I'll get ahead and then I'll take a step back and it didn't sound like you were making yourself wrong about it at all, which I think is just so helpful. A lot of people listening right now might be feeling inspired by you, but still kind of scared to make changes in their own life, so I'd love to know what advice would you give them?

Becca: The best advice I ever got when I desired huge change and transformation in my life is to start small. I would say think about this next week and just make one little shift. What is one thing that every time you do it or you encounter it, it makes you feel contracted or icky and how can you transform that? Is there a friend or an acquaintance that every time you talk to her you feel icky? Maybe you can talk to her over email instead or avoid talking to that person.

Every time you have an iced coffee at 3:00 p.m., because all your coworkers are going for a coffee break, then you have the jitters for the rest of the day. Instead of getting an iced coffee, just get some ice water with lemon and walk around with that. It sounds so small, but those small little moments where you make another choice just empowers you to make another one of those choices again the next day.

Rachel: It's beautiful. Have you ever read the book, [The Slight Edge?](#)

Becca: No, I've never heard of it.

Rachel: It is such an awesome book. It's a great book because it just talks about the power of incremental little movements. The guy who writes the book—I don't remember exactly what his title is, but he's very far ahead in his company, and he talks about all these things he's able to accomplish because he just commits to a little something every day.

It's all about these decisions that are easy to make or easy not to make. Basically, you can easily grab that piece of chocolate because it's just a small, little piece of chocolate. But every day, eating chocolate a little bit every day adds up. The same way, if you don't eat it, then it adds up to having a healthier body over time, so everything accumulates.

Becca: There's another great book called, [The Power of Habit](#), which talks about that too. I really like talking about that when you look at your brain as reprogramming it. I remember hearing that small changes add up. I think, "I know, like obviously, I know." But, I still wasn't doing it. Your brain is going to want to find habit because it's a beautiful machine that automates for your survival, so if you can make those small incremental changes, you are literally rewiring neural pathways towards a new reality. So, that's how the transformation in life works. That's really how dabbling works, too. It's giving your brain another possibility to rewire it and then the shifts happen.

Rachel: Yes, when you were saying that, I was thinking about the dabbling and just how much you could take the new things that you learn and take those new patterns and bring those into other things. I'm thinking like the exponential, the more you dabble, the more your creativity will get higher and higher. It's just incredible to think about.

Becca: Oh, yes. I have one client, who, in December, I was talking to her before she was a client, but she was following me and she said, "I really like your lip balm. I'd really like to try to make it but I think I'll just buy it from you." I said, "Okay. I will get you the ingredients. Just try to make it." Then, in February, she made the lip balm. By March, she had made over 50 different products and started making her own makeup. I didn't teach her how to do this, she made it herself. Now she's one of my coaching clients and she's printing her own labels and giving handmade gifts. She quit her job and she's starting all over again. That's how it works. It's just a snowball effect.

Rachel: Wow! That's wild. That is such a fast change.

Becca: It's amazing what's possible if you just start.

Rachel: I think that a lot of people listening to this are just going to really resonate with what you're saying and really get a lot from this. Thank you so much for being here. I'd love if you could let people know where they could go to find more about you.

Becca: Yes, you can find me on <http://www.thedabblist.com>.

Rachel: Fabulous. This will also be in the show notes so you can always just click to Becca's site that way too. This has been awesome, Becca. Thank you again for your time and for speaking such epic wisdom.

Becca: It's all my pleasure. I loved talking to you, Rachel.

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I really appreciate you.

With love,
Rachel Rofé

