

JEWISH LATIN PRINCESS
NIKKI SCHREIBER, CREATOR OF HUMANS OF
JUDAISM
EPISODE 55

You're listening to Jewish Latin Princess Podcast by Yael. Every week get your dose of inspiration from the world's most uniquely talented Jewish women and from Yael herself. Seeking profound and practical ways to live a joyful, richer Jewish life? Welcome to Jewish Latin Princess Podcast.

And now, Jewish lifestyle expert and bilingual blogger at www.jewishlatinprincess.com, your host, Yael.

Yael Trusch: If you need a good dose of positive energy – and my guess is that we all do – let me introduce you to Nikki Schreiber. Upbeat, optimistic, and full of love for her fellow Jews, Nikki is the creator of Humans of Judaism.

I got the chance to meet Nikki in person a few months ago while I was in New York and I had a great time. Her positivity and her good nature are contagious and if you haven't heard of Humans of Judaism, well, you're going to love it and you should thank me later.

You're listening to Jewish Latin Princess; I'm Yael Trusch, your host. It's Monday, April 23rd, and this is Episode 55. Welcome to the show everyone.

You know what they say about overnight success, it took me ten years to become an overnight success. Well, it seems like Nikki Schreiber might be defying that rule with the creation of Humans of Judaism.

What was the impetus for creating what is now one of the leading Jewish media brands? Did she imagine that it was going to turn into the success that has turned into? Was the world thirsty for something like this and thus, Humans of Judaism became a leader and its field in such a short amount of

time? With over 100,000 followers on Instagram and Facebook, Nikki is creating a space full of positivity, humor and light heartedness where all Jews can feel proud of their heritage and of the things that unite us as a Nation.

But, the internet and social media can be the Wild West. How does Nikki keep a positive and stay away from the infiltration of contagious negativity on human's diverse social media platforms? Does she ever get to unplug? I mean, it seems like she's constantly plugged by the nature of her work. And, is this something that we could all do and decide to just quit our day jobs? How does Nikki do it? What is next for Humans of Judaism? And who does she look up to? All of this and more with the delightful Nikki Schreiber.

[THEME MUSIC]

Yael Trusch: Nikki Schreiber, welcome to Jewish Latin Princess!

Nikki Schreiber: Hello.

Yael Trusch: It is such a fun and exciting day for me because I've been looking forward to this interview since we met. First of all, I'm a big fan of Humans of Judaism, an online space that fosters positivity and highlights the good in the Jewish community. So, first of all, thank you for spearheading this initiative and a big *yasher koach* to you.

Nikki Schreiber: Thank you.

Yael Trusch: And, thank you for being here. Now, Nikki, I already gave a little bit away about what Humans is about, but I understand that you were spreading positivity on social media well before Humans of Judaism, via a previous initiative which was, I guess, somehow of a precursor to this one. So, tell us how Humans of Judaism began. What was the impetus?

Nikki Schreiber: Sure. So, like you said, there is that detail that maybe some of the followers are not as aware of with the history of the page is that, several years ago, I had a good friend of mine, a friend of mine for twenty years, and unfortunately he passed away suddenly in his early thirty.

And he was just an outstanding human being who contributed a lot to the community. He was not yet married, but he was very involved and active on Hatzalah and Kids of Courage. Which is not just an organization that deals with children with cancer and terminal disease and things like that, I mean, he was just one of those, just those people. And in his, once he had passed away, the community had felt there was just an added void to fill, of so much of the *chessed* that he had contributed in his lifetime. So, his family had put together some sort of a pay it forward in his memory for people to undertake just good things to do on his memory basically.

And a friend of mine, my friend Ester in Israel, she and I had decided to learn a page a day. We're not particularly learned gals, that is part our daily schedule, but this was a reasonable undertaking and frankly, it was one of those that helps you as well, because we figured we would learn something, get our day charged with something positive –

Yael Trusch: Right.

Nikki Schreiber: And we chose a book that was doable, that was, I believe it was *Guard Your Tongue*, if any one's familiar with that. It has, you know, just nice small lights of great insights and ways to just refocus your appropriate energy, as I guess, with the way we speak and the things we say.

So, as I've mentioned, she was in Israel, she is a mom and we got it together in a nice rhythm, but life happens, and we were headed towards Rosh Hashanah time and all the holidays that follow, and it just got a little bit lost reasonably to, like I said, to just life happening.

Yael Trusch: Right.

Nikki Schreiber: But, the value to it was not lost, especially during the time where I was also grieving. I mean, this was a pure loss. It was the first one I'd dealt with and it was just a great way to start your day in a better head to deal it during a time like that. And I thought to myself, you know I didn't want to lose this, maybe there's a place on Facebook where I

can just follow a page that would have the great Torah. Something insightful, in small bites, because I always refer to social media, a short attention span theater, at least just for me, because I just... give me the summary! And people will notice that's very often my style on the post is I'm just, you know, two to three paragraphs of the point.

And I looked, and there were Rebbeim and Rabbi's and organizations and pages that shared wonderful insights in Torah but they were rather lengthy. So, when in doubt, create it yourself

Yael Trusch: Create your own.

Nikki Schreiber: Create your own and I decided to just do a page with zero ambition other than let me just share and see if anybody else can. If even one person gets any benefit on the same way I received it, when I was learning that perhaps this is just a nice thing to pay it forward and my friends memory, so I started the page called, Daily Spark.

I figured it's a daily spark of Torah. And that was based – the theme of the page was to provide people with the small nugget of positive thinking Torah on their daily news feeds. So it really took off to a very modest start. It never really took off took off, I mean it has rounded out to a couple of thousand followers on Facebook. Many of them are family members and friends by force, please follow my page, please read this to our Torah. I looked up and they're just very supportive about it.

Yael Trusch: We don't coerce our friends to read our stuff, come on Nikki, we don't.

Nikki Schreiber: Oh that, well, in the beginnings it was my original model. But it was nice because people, they enjoyed for the reasons why you're doing something and people are tend to be rather supportive –

Yael Trusch: Yes.

Nikki Schreiber: On any sort of wholehearted venture that people undertake and it was just very well received, but modest nonetheless. My

father was pretty much the biggest champion and real admirer of the page, but one small detail. He was not a Facebook user, and so, I would email him the Daily Spark, and my father was a real *bal tefillah*. He is a *chazan* and just a really knows Tanakh inside and out, Torah and everything surrounding it, and just it was real moment for us to bond on learning Torah together.

Yael Trusch: Alright.

Nikki Schreiber: And I mean the fundamentals and everything my parent, just truly blessed for my parents to have taught me and raised me in a home just very sharing open and learning environment, but this is just so unique and really shared a bond with us and he really just loved forwarding it to my aunts and uncles who also aren't on social media and just loving the theme of Daily Spark.

And it was very profound, when my father actually passed away suddenly, in November of 2013, and when I was preparing to sit Shiva, we sat with our family Rabbi and one of the instructions from our custom is to not learn Torah during the week of Shiva which I was so overly perplexed that this affected my daily quality life that I was like, oh wow, I have to stop, something that's part of my daily rhythm of learning Torah. And I took a break, enough for the week, of course, and went back to it.

But as time settled into the year of mourning, in a couple of months had passed, I was ready to start to think of something I can do in my father's memory. And I really wasn't about piggybacking on anyone else's memorial of course, so I really wanted to create something new and unique, and special and a little different than this. So I had stumbled upon a page on Facebook and it captured a lot of community imagery and cultures and stories, but I had found that every culture was so well embraced, but when I came to the few Jewish stories, it was just the common section was met was just really disappointing, anti-Semitism and negativity.

Yael Trusch: Oh, that's horrible.

Nikki Schreiber: And I was –

Yael Trusch: Do you ever say what page it is? Can I ask you what it is? Or would you rather not say?

Nikki Schreiber: Well, I mean, it's based on my – the name choice.

Yael Trusch: Okay.

Nikki Schreiber: I just don't like, I just didn't want to say anything just my experience of negative on a page, but that was just my experience to which had me say, you know what, it would be really something special if we could highlight exclusively, images and stories within our community? However, as an editor, I would work really hard to maintain a certain decorum.

Yael Trusch: Right.

Nikki Schreiber: Not to really allow for that kind of negativity and hate speech. Differences of opinion are always welcome, respectfully. But, really, just hate speech and just – I find that negativity on social media and online is contagious and infectious, and it snowballs, and people forget even why they're even looking at the story that they're looking at, they just get so overly engaged in the negative comments that I thought it would just be an interesting position to try out this idea. So, yeah, I'm sorry.

Yael Trusch: No, tell me. Finish.

Nikki Schreiber: So, I was going to say, so I just decided in June of 2014 to just start a page with really that minimal ambition that I just outlined and just started with the model that I previously knew. Let me reach out to people I know who are willing to allow me to profile them, and put them on this little page that I just made and see what happens.

And sure enough, I started to post some profiles and some stories; however that happened to be that summer was the beginning of the

summer of Operation Protective Edge, which began with the kidnapping of the three boys Eyal, Gilad and Naftali.

Yael Trusch: Right.

Nikki Schreiber: It was quite a...?

Yael Trusch: One minute, Nikki. So it was a Facebook page, we're not talking about a webpage yet?

Nikki Schreiber: I started with a Facebook page.

Yael Trusch: Okay.

Nikki Schreiber: And the Facebook page started in June and it was really just not meant to be what it has become. So it just started modestly on Facebook to just share and see what happens, but as the summer was, if anyone really, I'm sure your listeners really remember that summer, was –

Yael Trusch: I remember very vividly.

Nikki Schreiber: Was kind of an emotional time.

Yael Trusch: Yeah.

Nikki Schreiber: It was very vivid because we shared the pain when the boys were lost, we shared the pain when the boys were buried and we shared the strength in our wonderful brothers and sisters who defend Israel and what they had to do that summer to keep us all safe. It was a real time and I think something that's natural within our community is, we really do unify, when it comes to these times and we hold each other and we support one another and I think people were just looking for something on the internet that was positive and reflective.

And it just by the end of the summer and subsequently, just to answer your earlier question, a few weeks after the Facebook page, someone said, why didn't you put it on Instagram so I can follow to an Instagram. Immediately following that summer, on Instagram, it already had 10,000 followers.

Yael Trusch: Wow!

Nikki Schreiber: Which was just so tremendous and unprecedented that it was a moment where I had to stop and say, I think something's happening here, and it just was so well received that ultimately, as things continue to evolve to the place therein today, it started to just evolve naturally, just starting to share things that were happening. Current events, holiday time, just – we're approaching Yom Hashoah this month, and covering those incredible stories and telling stories that should always be remembered and not lost with time to just continue, just learning from the past, respecting it and moving forward.

The response has just continued to be so significant that it just – that was really the landmark time after that summer that things really just took off and started in a different direction.

Yael Trusch: Talked about of being or putting yourself out there at the right time, in the right place, right? I mean –

Nikki Schreiber: Absolutely. It just happened to --

Yael Trusch: Certainly, God had a plan, it was, but you did your part.

Nikki Schreiber: God had a plan and frankly it wasn't just the right timing for the community reseat. It was really genuinely the right timing for me. I needed to, in that same sort of grief model, it was an opportunity for me to focus my energies on the positive, during what's a reasonably tough year for every person in their lifetime, when you mourn the loss of a parent, it's reflective time and it's a time that you do need to work to see the good, even during difficult times, especially during difficult times.

Yael Trusch: Right. You know that before something that I know well that social media can be a place where sometimes, sadly, people are not very nice and as you said negativity is kind of infectious, that goes spreads like a wildfire back there.

And you see a lot of division, unfortunately. It's like people forget to be menciuous when they get behind their social media accounts. I'm not sure what the deal is, but you break the total opposite of that, really do. You're all about unity, positivity, upbeat. . .

How do you keep it clean in there and polite and upbeat and all those things? Other than of course your content is super positive always, but you know, how do you manage it?

NIKKI SCHREIBER: It's always, I'm just a human too. I always mind everyone. I do the best I can. I've grown with the page as well I mean, I've evolved with the times and the changes just around the world. But more immediately, it was just a really simple recipe. Put out good content which then equals a positive environment.

Yael Trusch: Right.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: So it's not like I have any snarky pose. I don't take negative jabs at any sort of anything. So the content alone is the first starting point. Then it's monitoring those comments and also ultimately seeing the followers and any just viewers really adopting to the actual culture of the page if you will, because there are times where, me personally, Nikki Schreiber, would have a lot of things to say, just a person on the internet, but the responsibility that I've undertaken for the page and when you bear the name of the community kind of have to bite your lip and manage things in a professional respectful way, because you are representing the community and people can easily engage and bait you into a conversation or to some negative debate that they're just looking for an argument, they're not looking for the solution.

And so it takes work and the good news is sometimes if I'm a little slow on my monitoring, there the followers are just part of the page, they work for the page, they will respond, they will -

Yael Trusch: They do the job.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: They do the job for me and –

Yael Trusch: That's great.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: I will tell you that the percentage of, with every post about anything, there's always a small percentage reasonably, on no matter what the return is, there's always a small percentage of a negative comment. I always use the example, I can post the pictures of a beautiful sunset and there's going to be one person who's going to comment, you know the sun gives you skin cancer.

So, you have to just also recognize and accept that it's just the internet, but the environments I think really delivers the results for itself in a very fortunate way, but it's not without oversight and help from the followers who will say, hey, there's a dicey comment you may want to look at. It's always very appreciated that I definitely don't feel that I'm going at this alone. I feel like I have a very strong team around me.

Yael Trusch: That's beautiful and I loved what you said that it's a simple recipe, you put out good content, that is it's almost like a recipe for life as well. You put out kindness, you put out positivity and that's really where you going to get back. I mean, it works there too. ..

NIKKI SCHREIBER: Yeah, I think also, it's funny because it's almost at the beginning of our conversation we were talking of the negativity of the social media. It's almost an unexpected sort of underdog, because people naturally, sometimes just like to indulge in the controversial post and one of the things also that I try very hard to be sensitive to is I keep the page nonpolitical.

It's happened for people no matter if we agree or disagree on politics, it shouldn't make its way into the contents because that also presents somewhat of a hostile or disagreeing environment. It's lighter content. We just celebrated Passover, it's just about saying Happy Passover and its moving on.

Yael Trusch: Exactly. Now, Nikki, Humans is in many ways, an ambassador for Judaism and for Torah values and so within that, you strive to cover multiple areas of Judaism and I'm sure to be inclusive. Inclusive but sometimes, inclusivity and promoting Torah values can get a little bit challenging. Have you ever encountered challenges in drawing a line between what you composed that still aligns with that vision and what maybe the greater community might want you to post, and if so how do you navigate that?

Nikki Schreiber: Well, I'm always very fascinated by the diversity of the followers. There was a specific moment where I had a very unexpected viral video post on Humans of Judaism, that was a year ago and the post – it was a Holocaust survivor video, a four minute long video. She was actually speaking in French so subtitled to English. This completely defies every rule I thought I knew of what the recipe is for a viral video.

It was in a different language, it was four minutes long, it was just an older woman speaking, it's not something typically that one would think would be the viral post, but sure enough, I posted it in July of 2016, and only in December 2016, January 2017 did it take off, and it had over a hundred, I want to say a hundred million views or something incredible insane. I haven't looked at it lately, and it changed the trajectory of the page with, when you have a very viral video post, you also got tens of thousands of new followers that are now interested to see what else she got.

And it was a very broad crowd and it was also, I'm learning, so I realized that very often, in posting pictures of someone wearing yarmulke doing something good is very easy to illustrate, you don't have to say Jewish man giving charity, helping woman across the street, it's right there in the picture and it just check out this moment.

Yael Trusch: Right.

Nikki Schreiber: And one of the things is with the expanded base and the various followers was so exciting because the content that was coming

in was also more broad from different countries, from different background and it's easy to share because you're sharing the Torah values, people also tends to see what the page is and send in content that relates to the page.

Yael Trusch: Okay.

Nikki Schreiber: Not trying to push any sort of agenda. I always marvel at the fact that I can have a picture of Hasidic family getting ready for Shabbat and then on the next picture I can have an off duty IDF soldier in a bikini and Tel Aviv beach, and gets the same exact response from the same cross over followers that can appreciate both, and because it's a welcome place I think, it doesn't feel like it's only for people who are observant and understand certain things.

I really, really work hard to include everybody, as long as it stays on the same journey as I'm on and keep working to evolve to just make sure everybody feels included, it just seems to be working.

Yael Trusch: Having said that, I might get a little pushy here, but you have a beautiful, let's say –

Nikki Schreiber: Okay!

Yael Trusch: The tefillin campaign, right? Not campaign, I don't know what to call it, but you have those beautiful posts –

Nikki Schreiber: The Telfies

Yael Trusch: Exactly, the Telfies, thank you very much. See, here's Nikki teaching me stuff, okay, as always, yes. So you have the Telfies, right? So, let's say you get a bunch of readers who tell you well, Nikki, how come you're not putting us women wearing tefillin? Or how come, or just something about the women on the wall or whatever. What do you do then?

Nikki Schreiber: I consider that political, put in the political category with the women on the wall. As far as anyone submitting Tefillin, women

wearing Tefillin, I guess, they just haven't. But it's a funny thing Tefillin is a great example to illustrate the full point.

I look at a Tefillin wrapped around somebody who's got a tattoo on. Now the focus is the Tefie and the Tefillin.

Yael Trusch: Right.

Nikki Schreiber: And it's about a Jew who is davening and praying and wearing these Tefillin.

Yael Trusch: Right.

Nikki Schreiber: It's not about, tell me what the meaning is of your tattoo. So other than as opposed to have somebody to send me a photo of something on their arm that's in a tattoo, that's a different kind of content that just doesn't line up.

Yael Trusch: Right.

Nikki Schreiber: So the answer to that, is everybody is included and if doesn't work, if the Tefillin seems that, oh, it's probably not going to go up a woman wearing Tefillin, well, why don't I send her something else that I'm doing that shows that I'm a very proud Jew.

It's about finding that balance—

Yael Trusch: Right.

Nikki Schreiber: And compromise because everyone is really welcome but the contents, I have to monitor and I mean there's so many things that have even evolved in the last year with world news and politics and just things have changed, and the internet's changed and you just have to always be added sensitivity which is always welcome to be sensitive to others and consider creating a space where everyone should just feel comfortable. And thus far, it seems to have proven successful.

Yael Trusch: Okay.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: But again, I'm still human, I'm always learning and I'm always open to everyone.

Yael Trusch: Right. And at the end of the day, you are the curator, so, no, that was a great answer. Now, one of the things that is amazing and maybe it's amazing to me, as a content reader of your initiative, Humans of Judaism, is that you're not photo journaling like what say, okay, Humans of New York, right?

You were, from the beginning, and you are finding what others have created and providing a platform that curates it all together, you being the curator, the editor of all these things, although there are things that you create yourself, but, so tell us more of how that works. That seems to be –

NIKKI SCHREIBER: Sure!

Yael Trusch: Almost like a newer model, for those of us who are not millennials.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: Yeah, exactly. So, immediately when I was enjoying the page with the profiles and all that, I knew that I'm not a street photographer and photographers are so incredibly talented it's just not one of the things that I do nor do I have, it's just not the model that I was looking to work with.

So, I started to think oh, well this is also just good in general because I'd be just required to sort of lean on other people's assistance and help. And what it started with was either seeing content that's out there.

One of the things that I also work hard on from the very, very get go, is giving people proper credit and tagging and all those things that everybody loves on social media, and not even for the reasons they love it, just because it's the right thing to do.

Yael Trusch: Right.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: If I didn't take that photo and somebody says a photographer or just whatever, and it's their photo, you know it's only appropriate to get permission and to give credit where it's due, etc.

So one of the things that was always fun when this got started, was just people were also just excited to really be contributors and be a part of this journey. And I think created also a safe and comfortable environment to share your own family stories for public consumption. And with that, it expanded the reach which also just allowed me, as you said, I'm also a content creator, there are a lot of things that are original contents and one of the things was a breakaway page that I created just one year ago, right now, actually. It was right after a Pesach of last year; I created a page called Memes of Judaism.

Yael Trusch: Yay!

NIKKI SCHREIBER: Yes. So I was starting to notice that the graphics and the punch lines were just really well received and also a nice environment where you can create a joke in a punch line that's not at someone else's expense or so hating Jewish community expense, the ability to get to a punch line were something is just funny and –

Yael Trusch: And we're not always making fun of ourselves, you mean?

NIKKI SCHREIBER: We don't need too. The punch lines are there without us. So it was a natural synergy to sort of expand to that humorous brand and to create that market place and it just ultimately, is just very well received and it's another way of kind of producing something new. But to answer your question, it reaching out to people, or seeing a story that's special reaching out to the person themselves, asking if I have the permission to share it, having a lot of followers, people would be surprised with the percentage of how many stories I get in, of how much of them get published. It's an overwhelming majority.

Pretty much every story that comes in is always just so genuine, heartfelt, and typically people who, to everybody seems to do their homework. I

mean they really know what I'm looking for when they send things into the page.

Yael Trusch: That's great.

Nikki Schreiber: So it's just always gives me a smile to not just share the story, if not to actually communicating, connect to the people that are just featured and just wonderful stories.

Yael Trusch: That's just awesome! Nikki, at what point did, so it was always initially social media platforms. Instagram, Twitter, Facebook... at what point did you say; now this has to become a page on the internet as well, and why?

Nikki Schreiber: Well, Human of Judaism, even just straight out of the gates, so after I did a small gap of Facebook to Instagram, it wasn't such a small gap after that for just, I got Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr, Reddit, YouTube – I'm on everything. And then the website was just a natural next step for having a home base as every single person on social media today, especially on the business and news, Facebook is an uncertain place right now. They're in control.

Yael Trusch: Right. It was a risky move just to be only on social media, I mean.

Nikki Schreiber: Absolutely and what Facebook has also taught business users is reminded them that's basically an office space that you're leasing, and you still, even though you're the business owner, you still have to play by their rules in order to play in their building.

Yael Trusch: And they change the rules all the time.

Nikki Schreiber: They do. They change the rules. I really have to find another lease, but that's what's important about being on a variety of platforms, but the most important essential thing was for me to have a home base, a place to just really have everything, because it's not just the

breakaway of Memes of Judaism, I also changed the name of Daily Spark to Sparks of Judaism.

There's a Foods of Judaism page and it's all been branched out, but everything is centric to the website. And more recently, as you know is that I also, not everybody is also on social media. There's a whole group of people out there in the wide world, wide universe out there, that do not enjoy Facebook or do not enjoy Instagram, but do enjoy the content and its message. So, to serve that, it's also rolling with what the users and followers and people who enjoy your content are looking for.

So, it's creating those spaces. So another thing that I just took on is a weekly newsletter, which gives a brief summary of what's going on from the variety of different Humans of Judaism channels, and just offering things exclusive to those subscribers, where it gives just those people who enjoy getting the little dose of positivity and good fun into their inbox each week. So it's really just a matter of creating the space.

Yael Trusch: And I have to tell you, I am a subscriber and I love the newsletter.

Nikki Schreiber: Thank you.

Yael Trusch: So here's my plug to you. Everybody who's out there listening should go ahead right now as you're listening to this interview and go to www.humansofjudaism.com and subscribe.

Nikki Schreiber: It's just as easy as that, yep.

Yael Trusch: To Nikki's news letter. So Nikki, you have a hundred thousand followers on Facebook, a hundred thousand followers on Instagram. You've had Seinfeld share your tweet about him, I mean these things are big, they're not like small accomplishments, right? What's next for Humans of Judaism and for Nikki?

Nikki Schreiber: So, one of the other great expressions of mine that I say is, I really feel like, I just work here. The page is just completely

exceeded any and all expectation, and every week there's something new. I'm constantly meeting new people, new organizations, different projects, the good news about the Jewish community and pretty much every community is there's always something going on.

And what's wonderful is, it's just an inviting space to partner and to work together and continue to share things that are important to the community and anything that I can enhance or assist with, and used this channel in that following to share the good things that are going on, it's that's why I'm doing what I'm doing, and it's my pleasure.

So, I really, each week, like I said is just a different adventure and working on different things with new people and continued relationships that just continue to keep you in the know of what's going on.

Yael Trusch: Right to the pulse of what the Jewish community wants out there.

Nikki Schreiber: Exactly.

Yael Trusch: So, just to keep it real for listeners, I always like to tie it down to business and you know, reality for those who might think, well, I'm going to open something similar go start a new blog or a social media page or whatever. At what point did you start monetizing this? I mean, can you say to people, oh, you could quit your day job. I don't know, can you?

Nikki Schreiber: Well, I always tell everyone my father was also an accountant by profession. So I know that he would want me to monetize of course. But with the branded and the partnerships and the different projects you get involved in there's natural opportunity for the monetization and ultimately I do hope to just be able to work on this full time, continue to get involved.

I am otherwise committed people who are always often surprised you know that this started just as a passion project and something I do in my spare time. I do run operations for a business and let's see where Humans takes

me but for right now, it's really just a blessing to have the ability to do everything and continue to enjoy this journey and continue see where it takes me.

YAEL TRUSCH: You've done an incredible job. It's so hard to believe that this is something that it's kind of like a side hustle because of all that you've achieved. It's really marvelous and on all that you're really giving us as a community. So again, I'm a big fan.

Now, Nikki, you're constantly plugged because of the nature of what your job at Human's. You're constantly creating content on social media and so I'm sure that you have a greater appreciation for Shabbat and Yom Tov holidays than most of us.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: Oh, yes.

YAEL TRUSCH: Right? Does –

NIKKI SCHREIBER: I was very sad this year there was no three day Pesach.

YAEL TRUSCH: See, I've never heard that.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: It's new to me too, but the joy of turning off that phone and having a universal understanding that I am just unavailable and that's okay.

YAEL TRUSCH: And that's it.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: Is my favorite time in life.

YAEL TRUSCH: No, I could see that. Does it ever become too much? Maybe for you or maybe for your family like, Nikki, welcome back to Earth, is it ever too much?

NIKKI SCHREIBER: I haven't found it just yet because I keep it managed. My priority in my life is my relationships. And when I have time with my family, I like to give them my time and when I am working on Humans, I'm

very devoted to it, but I do have the ability to unplugged. Not just on Shabbat. I do sleep everybody, but I do, it's about balance. I mean life is about balance.

So, creating those spaces where I can decompress, I actually play like, words with friends or something to sort of unwind and really sort of disengage, I know it's ironic because it's on my phone, but it's not being on social media or checking your emails.

Yael Trusch: Right.

Nikki Schreiber: I'm taking that time to sort of decompress and balance it out, so that I don't get burned out.

Yael Trusch: Yeah. So, are you very discipline with your time? Like when you say, okay today from 12 to 2, all I'm doing is working on Human's and creating posts for it or whatever it is?

Nikki Schreiber: I should be very disciplined, I love my blanket sweeping statements that I make to my mother sometimes when I call her after Shabbat, I'll say, okay, I'm going to take tonight off and if I don't post tonight, it's going to be okay. I was like yeah, yeah, and then I always end up seeing something because I'm just always tuned in and then at my mind, then I'll just laugh and I ended up posting something, I knew.

Yael Trusch: I try, I tried my best.

Nikki Schreiber: I tried, but you know, there are a lot of things that just as time has passed, I'm getting close to celebrating my four year anniversary in June, on for the page and there are things that have been such great places to make peace with the mistakes, human error, and I actually laugh very often if I have a typo on a graphic not a typo that you can edit in a caption, a typo on graphic and I giggle because guess what guys, I'm human and I'm okay with that, and I think you know just all of that.

Yael Trusch: Yep. It happens. It happens. Humans of Judaism represents the – I mean this is like a big statement, but that's really

genuinely how I feel. It represents a totality of Judaism in many ways and of the Jewish people. I feel like it's a tremendous responsibility because and especially now that it's reached such a wide audience in a wide reach, have you ever felt like this is too much to carry on your shoulders?

NIKKI SCHREIBER: It's an extremely humbling position, as I mentioned earlier that I take the responsibility quite seriously. I'm really just doing this somewhat by myself, but at the same time I am surrounded by wonderful support and people who I will lean on, and just that the therapist has a therapist, so I always look for other insights and I always really weigh feedback even if it's feedback that I may not like. Somebody say, oh, this one might not be the greatest and all. And I stop and I weigh it and know if anything even has a hesitation, I really visited and think my initial reaction's let's delete that because I don't want anything that has a hesitation.

So I really try my best and as I just had mentioned, I accept that I can make an error, make a mistake. I think at least the credit and the history on it is clear that the intentions are all well and good. So if I drop the ball once or whenever, it will happen, it happens and it is what it is. But for thus far, it's just been a very guarded, somewhat like I said protected by the followers really look out for me. They'll really tell me of this, that, or the other, and like I said I really do tune into that feedback and I weigh it and I go from there.

YAEL TRUSCH: It's a beautiful blessing.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: Case by case.

YAEL TRUSCH: Beautiful, beautiful blessing to have that. Nikki, you spoke about your father, your late father before. He sounds like we've talked about this before, so I know a little bit more, he sounds like he was such an amazing beautiful person, and you yourself are so grounded and positive and upbeat and sensitive. There's so many beautiful qualities about you. At the same time you're strong and determined. There's so much that I know about you and I see such beauty. Tell us about any women in your

family that you admire, that you feel are role models, because I know a lot of this you also... you must have gotten from your father as well, but any female role models?

NIKKI SCHREIBER: Wow! There's the obvious first. One of the things that's just an interesting is just that, this is page is devoted on my father's memory. It's a passion project it's really a labor of love and I genuinely love the opportunity to do it. But it's also my mother's in pride her lifetime. And my mom, I did well in the parent department, thank God. I really just, I don't know, what I did right in some, I don't know, universe.

Yael Trusch: Past life.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: Thank God for the people who I call my parents and my mom is – my mom is just – I can only wish to be as wonderful as she is. We, fun fact, she's a nurse and she is the person I worked with. It is her company that I run the operation force so I'm quite blessed to work alongside with my mother and sit alongside her for this Humans of Judaism ride that she's been just the most devoted, unbelievable supporter.

She is just an incredible woman who has taught so much to her children and her contributions to the community and everything she does. I don't even know where to start with her, with the accolades because she just embodies a strong, solid, wonderful, Orthodox Jewish woman.

Yael Trusch: Wow.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: I don't even know what better thing to say about her and I could continue to gush for it. We have another hour, because I could do? But she, I will say, she's just been my person, she always will be my person, and having her by my side to the complete journey of this Humans of Judaism experiences just simply a blessing.

Yael Trusch: That is so beautiful. Now is mom on social? I'm assuming she is.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: Mom is on social.

Yael Trusch: She's everywhere.

Nikki Schreiber: She is proud, she is the first liker, she gets very upset if she's not the first liker. I mean she needs to be the first subscriber to the newsletter, she will be the first person to log in to this podcast, make sure you look out for her.

Yael Trusch: Hi mom, I love you already.

Nikki Schreiber: She's just an incredible person. She's great.

Yael Trusch: We're going to go – the three of us are going to lunch when I go back to New York, that's what we're doing.

Nikki Schreiber: She would – I could already think of the words how she mentions it – It would be my pleasure. She definitely... she's just really an all around, I'm lucky to have such great role model, because I'll be honest with you, the fundamentals to the page of course were working hard to strive certain things in father's memory, getting to – my father was a man of good humour and really just a member of the community so just love the good in each person.

Yael Trusch: Right.

Nikki Schreiber: The human in each person. My mother is like the editor who really just is that voice in my head, like this is good, this is the value system that you see playing out on Humans of Judaism, the ethics, the inclusiveness, the Torah values–

Yael Trusch: Sensitivity.

Nikki Schreiber: All of the details are 100% the house I grew up in.

Yael Trusch: Wow.

Nikki Schreiber: I was fortunate to have picked up and I kind also so diminished until one second woman, that's going to be my one and only

sister, who is a mother and our health coach, and I just am lucky to be surrounded by people who really are just good eggs.

Yael Trusch: Amazing. Amazing. Nikki let's do a JLP fill in the blanks and this is the part of the show where I give you an open-ended sentence and you fill it with the first thing that comes to mind, okay?

Nikki Schreiber: Oh, boy. Okay.

Yael Trusch: I'm Nikki Schreiber and I feel most spiritual when?

Nikki Schreiber: When... this seems very generic but I'm truly going to say when Shabbat arrives. It especially meaningful for me like we discussed with being an editor and having just that really exaggerating connection to device and online and opportunity to give people your undivided attention, when you're at your meals, and you're going somewhere for Shabbat and it's just a different kind of energy and spiritual connections, or as they say, you disconnect to connect, or to reconnect.

And it's just they... it's just a really, really warm wonderful concentrated time of just everything I think are where community and bodies.

Yael Trusch: It really is a different energy and it's hard to – I don't think there are proper ways to describe it unless you live it.

Nikki Schreiber: Yeah.

Yael Trusch: Looking at it from the outside is just completely different from what Shabbat is when you are on the inside. What can I say?

Nikki Schreiber: The misconception is that it's about restriction. The reality of it it's about quality time.

Yael Trusch: Yes. A lot more about freedom.

Nikki Schreiber: Exactly.

Yael Trusch: Freedom from all the other things that –

NIKKI SCHREIBER: Exactly.

YAEL TRUSCH: That's fine. All the other things we need to do during our week, but anyway, my favorite mitzvah or one I feel most connected with is?

NIKKI SCHREIBER: I'm going to mix it up, but another potentially popular answer, love thy neighbor. It comes back to the fundamentals and just that simple is, just really loving thy neighbor and just trying to embody that and just be more filled with love than the other stuff.

YAEL TRUSCH: I could see it in your work totally. I have a sister Elle; Yes, absolutely. My fondest, sweetest Jewish memory is?

NIKKI SCHREIBER: Fondest, sweetest Jewish memory? I have to repeat that to stall so I can think of the answer. Let's see, hm. It might be a stumper; I have to think of what's a good answer. I'll give you some answer but I'm sure I'm going to have so many other thoughts after weighing it up.

YAEL TRUSCH: I feel like the fact that you had such a solid upbringing. Such a –

NIKKI SCHREIBER: There's a lot to choose from, that's a good problem.

YAEL TRUSCH: Right, right.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: Exactly, that's right. You know, I do enjoy especially because we're coming off of the holiday. I spent the holiday with my mom, my siblings and their kids and holiday time is also it's different than Shabbat.

YAEL TRUSCH: Right.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: It's a different –

YAEL TRUSCH: It's a different energy all together, too.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: It's customs – It is! It's just the customs, the traditions, the reiteration of our history and the storytelling, you know, Seder.

YAEL TRUSCH: Yeah.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: And things like that, it's just fascinating, timeless. A lot of our traditions are that our father, our father's father, their father's fathers, were eating Matzah just like we're doing still today. And it's being part of a real tradition and legacy, that is, I would say that's my favorite.

YAEL: Something I wished I had learned about Judaism growing up is?

NIKKI SCHREIBER: That you're going to love Shabbat and it's okay if you don't see the television show that's on Friday night, it's going to be okay. And don't worry, they'll come out with DVR so, you're okay.

But I remember as a kid, it was the polar opposites, I was a little kid and I saw Shabbat, oh, we can't even make plans until after Shabbat. You know, I'm so desperate I need to like do all these things, I was really a very busy child, and here I literally watched the last minute of Shabbat takes out and I'm like, no! So, definitely that's what I would say to myself is you're going to love Shabbat a lot.

YAEL TRUSCH: It's amazing. I always make fun with my friends like yeah, for little, for kids it's like, oh – not that they don't love Shabbat, they enjoy it tremendously, but they get to a point that, oh is it over yet? And I'm like uh no, please no, like can we drag a little longer?

NIKKI SCHREIBER: The meaningfulness of it, that's what's always also good with some of the things within the Judaism is it's like a fine wine, and it ages nicely and as you grow you appreciate these things in different ways, as a different place in your life and I've always loved Shabbat, it's like, that's for sure, but in 2018.

YAEL TRUSCH: Yep.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: When a phone is one of your appendages, it's just like surgically attached to your hand; the appreciation in this particular generation is something unique that when I was child, it was just different.

YAEL: Definitely. When I give Tzedakah, I like to give to?

NIKKI SCHREIBER: I like to give to Amudim. Amudim is an organization that, is not an organization maybe many of your followers have heard because of course, I love a lot of the larger organizations to do all this fundamental work, but what Amudim tackles is kind of the things in the community that are tougher and harder to deal with like alcoholism or addiction or abuse or things that people don't even like to talk about.

YAEL TRUSCH: Yeah.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: The works that they do is just a marriage between two worlds; health care and the Jewish community, and I just these are my guides, and if I could do anything to help them, and help them help others, then that's pretty much the summary of it all. So that would be like check them out, Amudim. It's just an incredible, incredible organization and they just also expanded to Israel.

YAEL TRUSCH: It's spelled, A M U D E M?

NIKKI SCHREIBER: D I M. Amudim.

YAEL TRUSCH: Oh. Okay, wow! So it started as a local thing in New York?

NIKKI SCHREIBER: And has expanded just really significantly. There's a need –

YAEL TRUSCH: Wow.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: And they just do things, they work together with the Rabbis and clinicians, and the law enforcement, and all the right things to do everything the proper, appropriate way to really help victims and really help heal families and help keep everything on the straight and narrow, and

it's just a, there are services within every community that the people aren't as tuned into because thank God, perhaps their family doesn't have those needs, but a neighbor, or a co-worker, or someone you know, maybe dealing with something, and it really makes you stop and think, if I'm not dealing with it and I certainly can have tremendous sympathy and understanding for someone perhaps who has a family that is dealing with things like this. What can I do to help? And Amudim provides that space where you can help in a variety of different ways and that's why it's a great place for me to put my dollars.

Yael Trusch: Very nice. I'll check it out and I'll definitely put on the show notes. And finally, I'm Nikki Schreiber, and today I'm most grateful for?

Nikki Schreiber: I'm most grateful for this podcast and our conversation because it's the newest thing today. You know I always tell you it's just new project come up every day and I had the great fortune of meeting you and getting to know you, but before this podcast and I'm speaking with you and the two of us taking the time out of our day today to speak to everybody who's listening and share with them the things that we do and the things that people do within the community and just different services and just the capacity one has with what they can do with anything that they're interest in.

Yael Trusch: Yes.

Nikki Schreiber: I hope it serves its purpose and this is the highlight of my calendar today.

Yael Trusch: Nikki –

Nikki Schreiber: Don't tell my brother who I'm meeting for dinner about that.

Yael Trusch: Nikki, you are such a doll. Thank you so much. We can, everybody, you can find Nikki, pretty much everywhere. Human of Judaism

is everywhere, but, also, everybody should go and sign up for Humans of Judaism's newsletter, weekly newsletter, right, Nikki?

NIKKI SCHREIBER: Yes, we have great, great exciting fun, giveaways and different things on there and the podcast will be in my newsletter, as well. The website and of course but, it's definitely something to check out if you want some nice fun exciting to your inbox and in addition to Yael's awesome newsletter. There's definitely space for we'll be giving away fun items and just different incentives and some things for people to enjoy and participate and get the good vibes from when they go into their inbox. So definitely check it out and subscribe there.

YAEL TRUSCH: Awesome. So, www.humansofjudaism.com and Humans of Judaism pretty much everywhere in social media. Nikki Schreiber, thank you so much.

NIKKI SCHREIBER: Thank you so much Yael.

YAEL TRUSCH: Thanks for Nikki Schreiber for stopping by. Again the website is www.humansofjudaism.com. Head over there to subscribe to Nikki's weekly newsletter and to be entered on to a raffle for a fun give away. And of course you can find Humans of Judaism in every single social media platform in the planet. The ones you know about and the ones none of us has ever heard of.

As always, thank you for being here. I hope you enjoyed the show. Send me an email, let me know and let me know if you know of another uniquely talented Jewish woman that you'd like to see featured on the show.

And go ahead and head over to www.jewishlatinprincess.com to read my latest blogged post and to subscribe to my newsletter. It is the best way to stay in the loop on everything that is going on around Jewish Latin Princess and to get special discounts and special offers.

By the way, also if you're on Pinterest, I finally have the podcast episodes on Pinterest. Well, I've been on Pinterest for awhile; I think you knew that,

but the podcast wasn't there. So now you can go check that out and pin away. I'll be traveling soon for a speaking engagement, but I'm not letting the cat out of the bag yet. So you'll have to wait for that. In the mean time, if you want me to come to your town, or your Jewish organization in the summer or in the fall, drop me an email, yeal@jewishlatinprincess.com. Stay tuned for next week, where we'll have another big influencer in the world of Jewish media, Allison Josephs of Jew in the City. Until then, I hope you all have a great week.

[THEME MUSIC]

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