

Pre-Production Planning Document (PODCAST)

GENERAL INFO

- 1. Your Name:** Kellsie Phillips
- 2. PROJECT:** Beyond The Cosmos

CREATIVE BRIEF

1. What must it be?

This podcast will evolve over time through our audience's input. I plan to start as an audio-only podcast that would supplement Space Cadet's social media platform output. At about the 2-3 month mark, I will start to introduce video to the podcast's audio and monitor the analytics to see if that is what my audience wants.

2. Who is it for?

Beyond the Cosmos is intended for curious, open-minded adults primarily between the ages of 20 - 40 who enjoy learning about topics outside of their everyday experiences. The audience may include young and mid-career professionals, college-educated listeners, creatives, and lifelong learners who are interested in social and cultural issues, personal growth, creative skills, and discovering new perspectives.

They are likely to listen to podcasts while commuting, working, completing household tasks, or pursuing hobbies. Rather than seeking content that simply reinforces what they already believe, these listeners enjoy being introduced to unfamiliar ideas, experiences, and skills in an approachable and conversational way.

3. How long must it be?

Starting out, I want the first audio-only episode to be 10 minutes max. After a few episodes I can test 30 minutes. Once the show includes video, it can range between 30 mins- 1 hr.

4. What is your objective with the piece?

The objective of Beyond the Cosmos is to encourage listeners to explore beyond the ideas, experiences, and skills that are already familiar to them. The podcast will introduce different perspectives, social issues, creative skills, and experiences that encourage curiosity and reflection. I want listeners to leave each episode having learned something new, considered a different perspective, or become inspired to explore something for themselves.

5. When is it due?

The deadline for my the first episode is October 25th.

6. What is the overall idea?

We do not have to stop being curious just because we have a set level of understanding. Exploring past familiar boundaries is how we grow and live fulfilled lives.

7. What is the storyline summary?

The episode begins by asking the audience to look back at childhood, when trying something new often came naturally. Children ask questions, make mistakes, and repeatedly attempt things they have not yet mastered. I love witnessing kids figuring things out wildly and not caring about what anyone thinks about their process.

As children grow older, however, being inexperienced can become uncomfortable. Fear of embarrassment, comparison to others, and the expectation to immediately be good at something can prevent adults from exploring unfamiliar interests.

The episode will explore what may be lost when we become afraid of being beginners. It will conclude by reframing what it means to be a beginner. Instead of viewing inexperience as something embarrassing, listeners will be encouraged to recognize it as evidence that they have stepped beyond what is already familiar and given themselves an opportunity to grow.

8. Elevator pitch:

"Beyond the Cosmos is a podcast about getting outside of what you already know. One episode might challenge the way you think about a social issue, while another might introduce you to a skill you've never tried. Each episode isn't trying to tell you what to think; it simply gives you something new to think about. Sometimes you don't realize how much you're missing out on until the words meant to unlock your potential come your way".

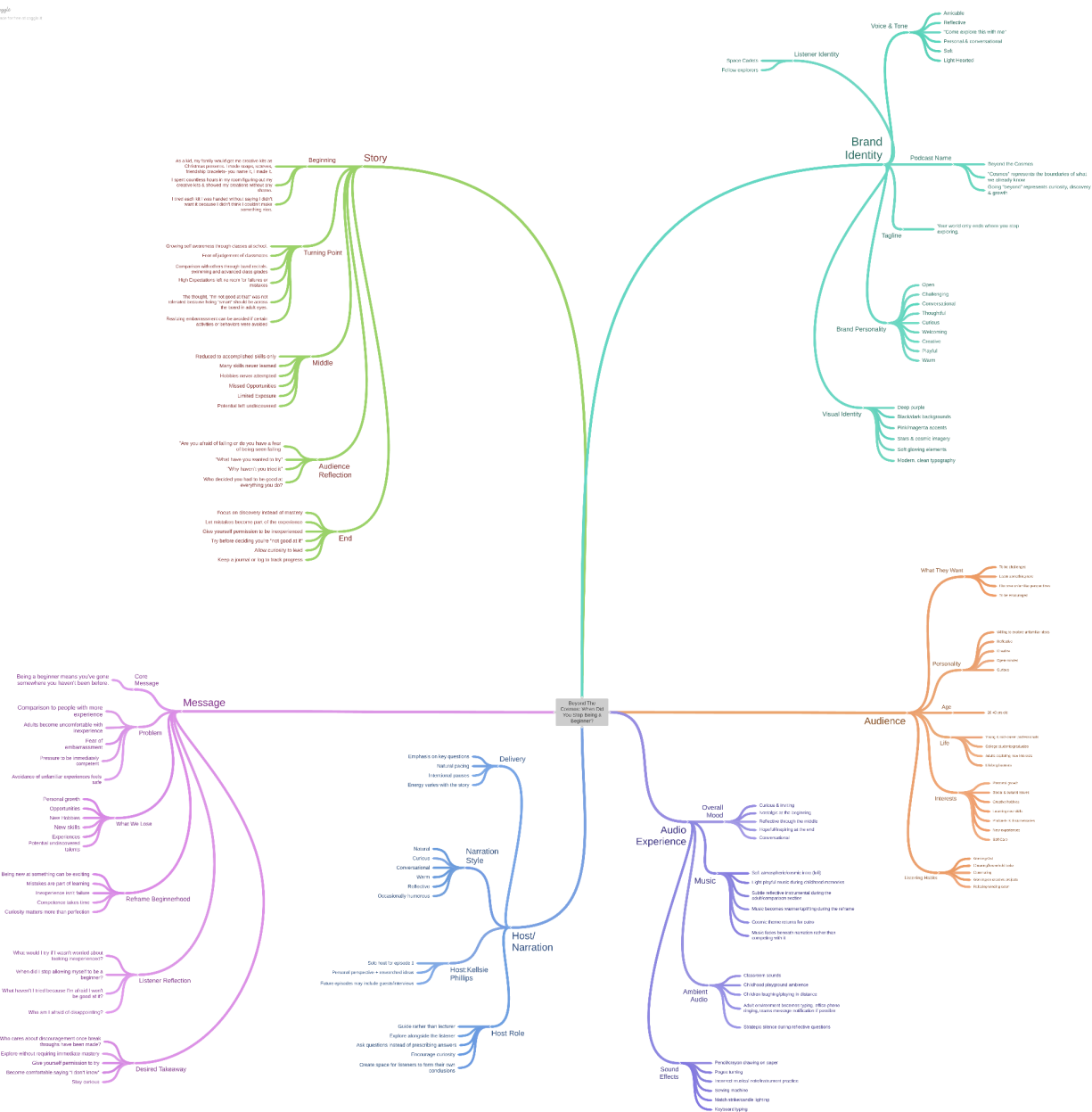
9. Tagline:

"Your world only ends where you stop exploring"

10. Look and feel description:

Beyond the Cosmos will have a modern, creative, and cosmic-inspired aesthetic using deep purples, pinks, dark backgrounds, stars, and soft glowing elements. The space theme represents exploration rather than focusing on astronomy. The overall experience should feel curious, welcoming, conversational, and reflective. Listeners should feel as though they are exploring a topic alongside the host rather than being lectured. Music, sound effects, narration, and visual branding will work together to create a sense of discovery while maintaining a warm and approachable atmosphere.

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QUESTIONS / NOTES

HOOK

1. What will grab the attention of the audience within the first few seconds:

- “Welcome to Beyond the Cosmos, where we go beyond the surface and explore the ideas, experiences, and stories that shape our worlds.”
- “There’s always more beyond what we can see. Welcome to Beyond the Cosmos.”
- “When did being a beginner become something to be embarrassed about?”
- “Are you actually afraid of failing... or are you afraid of being *seen* failing?”

MESSAGE/STORY

1. What message are you trying to deliver to the audience?

This episode’s core message is that being a beginner means you’ve gone somewhere you haven’t been before. The problem that adults face is the push and pull between comfort and discomfort. Adults become uncomfortable with inexperience; they fear embarrassment and avoid unfamiliar experiences in order to feel safe (not judged). Choosing to be comfortable or safe means losing the opportunity to experience new things that we will grow from. A lot of undiscovered talents lie under the blanket of comfort.

2. Clearly describe the following parts of your story:

a. Beginning: When Trying was Normal

As a kid, my family would get me creative kits as Christmas presents. I made soaps, scarves, friendship bracelets- you name it. I tried each kit I was handed without saying I didn’t want it because I cared about trying to make something nice more than the possibility of failure. I spent countless hours in my room figuring out my creative kits & showed my creations without any shame.

b. Middle: What Changed?

School was the environment that killed a part of my growing curiosity. With each class I took I grew self-aware. I was exposed to the judgment of my classmates, and it surrounded me in every hallway too. Comparison appeared through grades and competitions. There came a point where I learned what was for me and stuck to it. Years later, during the pandemic I found myself dusting off my chemistry, math and physics skills while creating self-care products for my small business, Space Cadets. This full-circle moment helped me understand that skills or interests we once dismissed can reappear in unexpected ways when we give ourselves permission to explore.

c. End: Audience’s Turn

Are you afraid of failing, or is it that you have a fear of being seen? Listen, you can’t be afraid of flaming out; it’s going to happen. It happened when you first learned to ride a bike,

when you tried to make your first meal, when you tried to love someone for the first time. Your failures do not define you, once you learn from them and keep going. Everything in life is perspective, so today I challenge you to focus on discovery instead of mastery. Give yourself permission to be inexperienced and give yourself permission to laugh... extend grace to yourself and be patient with the answers you uncover

NARRATION/HOST:

1. Who will lead us through the piece?

For this episode, I will host it solo.

2. Narration ideas:

The narration will be warm & conversational. It will invoke the audience's curiosity while making them feel comfortable, as if they are listening to a friend.

MUSIC:

1. What is the overall “mood” and “feel” of the piece?

I want the audience to experience a carefully curated episode that not only invokes deep thought but it leaves them open and vulnerable through its inviting nature. The episode should never feel like a lecture, it should always come off as a conversation that can be paused for any reflections that may appear along the way.

2. Music track ideas:

To stay on brand with Space Cadets, I will continue using licensed lo-fi instrumental tracks. My established audience will recognize the sound as another extension of Space Cadets

Lofi Artists I currently use for my content:

- The Machinist Beats
- Jobii
- Gregory David
- Frook
- Psylone
- Henyao

AMBIENT AUDIO:

1. What is the “location” of the piece? If we close our eyes, where should we imagine that we are?

In a private room with me, probably a living room. It is a cozy space where two friends can spend hours catching up and chatting.

2. Ambient audio ideas:

- Childhood playground ambience
- Classroom sounds
- Adult environment becomes quieter/more controlled
- Office phone ringing
- Strategic silence during reflective questions

SOUND EFFECTS:

1 & 2 What sound effects (SFX) would help tell this story? Why?

When discussing the childhood portion of the story, using noises associated with children would be best (ie., pencil/crayon drawing on paper, children's laughter, pages turning, classical notes, school bell). When discussing adult life, noises associated with office work should be used (ie., Microsoft Teams ping, punch-in sound, money sounds). Each part of the story should be supported by a sound effect; they do not need to overwhelm the ambient audio or narration.

SCRIPT

Name: Kellsie Phillips

Title: When Did You Stop Being a Beginner?

VIDEO:(NO VISUALS FOR AUDIO PROJECT)

AUDIO:

[FADE IN: Childhood ambience — children playing in the distance, crayons moving across paper, bicycle wheels/bell, light playful sounds.]

HOOK

When you were a kid, nobody had to convince you to try something you had never done before. You just tried it.

[School bell rings. Childhood sounds gradually fade away.]

So... when did being a beginner become something to be embarrassed about?

[PAUSE — SILENCE]

[FADE IN: Beyond the Cosmos lo-fi theme.]

Welcome to *Beyond the Cosmos*, where we go beyond the surface and explore the ideas, experiences, and stories that shape our worlds.

Hello, everyone. My name is Kellsie Phillips, and I will be your host.

Today, we're exploring one question:

When did you stop being a beginner?

[FADE OUT: Lo-fi theme.]

CHILDHOOD — WHEN TRYING WAS NORMAL

As a kid, my family would get me creative kits as Christmas presents. I made soaps, scarves, friendship bracelets—you name it, I made it.

I tried each kit I was handed without saying I didn't want it because I cared more about trying to make something nice than I did about the possibility of failure.

I spent countless hours in my room figuring out those creative kits, and then I showed my creations to everyone without any shame.

I wasn't asking myself if I was naturally talented.

I wasn't wondering if someone else could do it better.

And I definitely wasn't worried about whether I looked stupid learning how to do it.

I just wanted to see what I could make.

But somewhere between childhood and adulthood, that becomes harder for a lot of us.

ADULTHOOD — WHEN THE RULES CHANGE

Becoming an adult means that our childlike curiosity can slip away if we're not careful.

There are a bunch of voices telling us what we need to do to be accepted. Playing by the rules means we can fly under the radar of other people's judgment.

That's why some people go to school to obtain a degree they're not personally interested in because they've been told it will lead to a well-paying job.

I've met people who wanted to jump off a cliff into their favorite alcoholic beverage because of their school experience.

And others who probably wanted to play tag in traffic while learning correct dosages for patients because the overwhelming weight of their cognitive dissonance was taking over their brain's capacity to retain information and grow.

There are so many other quote-unquote "safe" possibilities I could name, but the gist of it is this:

Sometimes we find things that are socially acceptable because they provide coverage from the judgment of others.

And it's so ingrained in our society that, for some people, what they're doing isn't even a question anymore. They've simply accepted the belief that they're doing what they're supposed to do.

Surprisingly enough, the same thing can happen when adults want to try something new.

So how do we get here?

How do we reach a point where exploration becomes less about curiosity and more about whether we'll fit in, survive, be accepted, or be loved?

For me, understanding that required some introspection.

COLLEGE — FOLLOWING THE SAFE PATH

[FADE IN: Pomp & Circumstance]

Fast-forward to my college years.

I had survived the craziness of passing my SATs. I was going to a school I loved, and at the time, I studied psychology as my major and pre-law as my minor because my entire family had convinced me that I would make an amazing lawyer.

[FADE OUT: Pomp & Circumstance]

Let me tell you something.

Life came in HOT when I started those pre-law classes.

I am the epitome of someone who is right-brain dominant, and I was surrounded by left-brain-dominant sharks.

I mean, these kids—you could tell their brains were wired for law.

Me, on the other hand?

I knew I needed to figure out what I actually wanted to do because going for my LSATs and then to law school would've been the death of me. Not because I can't read laws or understand how to use them, everything was just dry. There was no joy waiting for me in those studies.

So I graduated and used my psychology degree for high-level customer service positions. It gave me an edge, and I was thankful for that because Lord knows I didn't know what I wanted to do once "lawyer" was removed from my mind.

I graduated in 2014.

Then, for the next five years, I was tossed into the corporate sea.

And slowly, something changed.

THE COST OF COMFORT

[FADE IN: Punch In Clock sfx, Microsoft Teams pings, typing sfx]

Corporate America can extinguish creativity with each shift.

And listen—we're going to have to discuss corporate America on a completely different episode.

But I'm talking about the amount of shallow work that can fill a corporate position. By the end of the day, your mind is done.

You get placed into this predictable cycle of wanting to watch TV, scroll social media, go for drinks—anything that lets your brain rest and get over whatever that week's experience was.

And without realizing it, I stopped reaching for the things that used to make me me.

I no longer grabbed my flute.

I no longer lost hours crocheting gifts.

I stopped sketching.

I stopped painting.

During my off-hours, I became a consumer.

And over time, my creativity started backing up and pushing outward from within.

Then our world stopped.

[OFFICE AMBIENCE FADES COMPLETELY.]

[PAUSE.]

THE PANDEMIC — BECOMING A BEGINNER AGAIN

[Fade in radio tuning/static]

When the COVID-19 pandemic began and I could no longer run to all of the distractions hidden in plain sight of society, I was left with the very things that once brought me happiness.

So I started creating again.

I began making body and hair products.

Life is hilarious because some of the skills I had decided weren't really 'for me' showed up again. Suddenly I was dusting off chemistry, math, and even physics while figuring out formulations and creating products. The things I thought I'd left behind weren't useless—I just hadn't discovered where they belonged in my life yet.

Then something started happening, I kept hearing:

"If I pay you, will you make one for me?"

And I mean...

Persistently & loudly, this question was asked.

Making products that my customers genuinely enjoy has been one of the richest parts of the experience. Even now, everything about it still feels surreal...

We lost a lot as a people during the pandemic—things that, to this day, I don't think we can fully quantify or even name.

But one thing I'm thankful for is that I was reconnected to exploration and my creativity.

Since then, I have thrown myself into every creative project you can think of, and I share many of them on my social media.

I'm also currently obtaining my master's in communications, and this has been a completely different experience from my undergraduate education.

This time, it feels like I'm being rewarded for being myself.

And I love seeing other people experience that for themselves—really enjoying what they do with their lives.

WHEN DID WE BECOME AFRAID TO TRY?

But now it's your turn.

When did you stop being a beginner?

PAUSE

When did you stop exploring?

PAUSE

Were you like me—did you grow up, build the adult life you believed you were supposed to have, and eventually realize that something had gotten lost along the way?

Or was it something completely different?

Maybe it's as simple as not wanting to be embarrassed by a failed attempt.

Because for a lot of us, that starts early.

[FADE IN: indistinct playground/school chatter with distant laughter]

Kids are brutal.

And I mean starting from pre-K and working your way on up.

Children signal back and forth what they've learned at home, online, or from the people around them about what's acceptable.

And nobody is safe.

There's a saying that you can graduate from high school, but you'll never really leave it.

It's because adults are no different.

The stakes just get higher.

[SCHOOL AMBIENCE FADES.]

So think about something you've wanted to try but you've been dragging your feet on.

Really think about what's stopping you.

Is it money?

Is it time?

Do you think you're too old?

Do you think everyone else is already better at it?

Are you worried you'll fail?

Or...

are you afraid of being seen failing?

[PAUSE — SILENCE.]

BECOMING A BEGINNER AGAIN

Maybe the thing you're thinking about trying won't become your career.

Maybe you won't be naturally good at it.

Maybe your first attempt will actually be terrible.

That's okay.

Think about the kid you used to be.

You didn't need proof that you were going to succeed before you started.

You were curious.

Somewhere along the way, many of us started treating being bad at something as evidence that we shouldn't be doing it.

But being a beginner isn't evidence that you don't belong.

Being a beginner is evidence that you've gone somewhere you haven't been before.

So maybe the question isn't:

“Am I good at this?”

Maybe it's:

“Am I curious enough to begin?”

Because you don't have to know where exploration will take you.

You just have to be willing to start.

[FADE IN: Lo-fi/cosmic outro music.]

OUTRO

Well, guys, it was great sitting down and speaking with you all.

If you enjoyed the podcast, please show some love!

I've resurrected my Discord so we can continue talking about the questions and conversations that come out of each episode. It'll be nice to hear your take on things, too.

I'll have the link to my Discord, along with all of my social media, listed with this episode.

Until next time, Space Cadets—remember:

Your world only ends where you stop exploring.

[MUSIC CONTINUES FOR APPROXIMATELY 8 SECONDS.]

[FADE OUT.]