

# 18. Alanna Flowers

**Joke Wijn:** Hi everybody. Thank you for listening to another episode. Today we'll be speaking to the wonderfully talented Alanna Flowers. Hi Alanna.

**Alanna Flowers:** Hi.

**Joke Wijn:** So nice to have you. How are you?

**Alanna Flowers:** I'm great. Thank you so much for having me on. I'm so excited to be here.

**Joke Wijn:** Oh my God. So much fun. We've been chatting for a while and it's finally here that we finally see each other.

And, uh, actually have a real life talk. So cool.

**Alanna Flowers:** Yeah.

**Joke Wijn:** Such a big fan. I'm just smiling from ear to ear over here.

**Alanna Flowers:** No, likewise. Oh my gosh. Yeah, definitely. Your work is so beautiful. Geez.

**Joke Wijn:** Oh my gosh. Your work is amazing. Okay. Okay. all right. So tell us, who are you? What do you do? And. The big, scary, hairy goal. Do you have one? And what is it?

**Alanna Flowers:** Oh, jeez. Okay. Well, to start things off, my name is Alanna Flowers. I'm a freelance lettering artist and designer. And I run my own business, AGF Design Studio. I am currently based in Brooklyn, New York. So that's where I'm, like, tuning in from today. And geez, a big, scary, hairy goal.

I mean, to be honest, I think I just sort of like have a running list of goals that I'm always sort of after. And I think my biggest goal, a lot of the time, just generally, is to just not be too complacent or

comfortable, because I've achieved some things, you know, like, you know, I'm, I'm checking goals off, you know, periodically.

And it's just like, okay, now what's the next thing? Like, how are you going to level it up? Like, how are you going to do it? Because I feel like it's so easy to be like, Oh, well, I've done. That thing, that was cool, but been there, done that, and maybe, I don't know, I feel like it can be easy to not remember to sort of challenge yourself and like keep pushing yourself.

**Joke Wijn:** That's so true. Yeah. It's easy. Like, okay, I've been there done that moving on, but it's, it's so cool to have a running list of goals. I love that. So tell me, what are your, um, can you name a few of those running big goals? Or small goals.. All good.

**Alanna Flowers:** Uh huh. No. Yeah. I mean, some that I'm still after, like, Oh, getting my work, like billboard size or something like that.

I want to see my, my work like huge, you know, out there somewhere. and I, I think, I don't know if you have one, but I have a running list of like dream clients, you know?

**Joke Wijn:** Oh yeah.

**Alanna Flowers:** It's like, there's still people that I want to get my, um, you know, get some credits with and like work with them. And yeah, I think.

Sort of seeing my work in like different mediums would be cool too. Like, Oh, like animated in an ad campaign or something, like just sort of thinking continuously of like different ways that I could see my work just sort of manifesting in the world would be kind of interesting.

**Joke Wijn:** Oh, that sounds so cool.

Sounds very interesting. And now we are speaking to the universe. Oh, yes. Get those goals done. Awesome. So, so you've been a lettering artist for how long? You're also in graphic design.

**Alanna Flowers:** Yeah, so Yeah, I'm, I'm trained as a graphic designer. It's what I went to school for and everything. So gosh, I've been doing graphic design for so long.

Like I worked professionally as a graphic designer for like almost five years. And, you know, we went to school and all that. So that was a big chunk of time. So it's been like 10 plus years or something at this point, like being a designer and then lettering has been like. Oh, gosh, what year is it? Maybe like,

just like my, um, fascination with lettering started in college. Definitely. So it's been a hobby for a while, but, You know, professionally, it's still pretty new, like year and a half, like when I started freelancing. So while I've been doing lettering for a while, like definitely have only been doing it professionally for still like, kind of like a little bit of time.

So

it's

**Joke Wijn:** And you're rocking it. You're like, wow, so amazing, all the things you're doing. So you're, you're also speaking at the Typism Summit,

**Alanna Flowers:** yeah, yeah, there's so much going on. So it's, it's been really exciting. and just sort of becoming more of a seasoned, I guess, freelancer as I'm, I'm growing still in that new way, which is pretty interesting.

**Joke Wijn:** Yeah, you keep growing and you keep like chasing those amazing goals. So cool. So doing so many different things like in lettering, there's different areas of lettering. Uh, just what you said, like, Oh, maybe get it animated, get it on a billboard, get it, you know, all those different mediums. Um, do you consider yourself to be a multi potentialite or, or not?

I don't know. Do you?

**Alanna Flowers:** Oh, yeah, definitely. It's so interesting that you're like talking about this. I'm just like, wow, I've never like heard it like, um, sort of expressed in that way. But once I like learned more about it, it's like I totally identify with that because it's so easy. I feel like to feel like, oh, I'm interested in too many things or like, oh, I'm not focused enough and like, right.

I have too many places where my energy is going, but it's just like. I think it's like a great way of just like exploring new things and getting new experiences and seeing what you actually like and what you don't like. definitely, uh, identify as a multi potentialite for sure.

**Joke Wijn:** Oh, cool. I didn't even know the term existed.

And once I realized that. Oh, there's a term for, like, there's a certain label, quote unquote, for people like me. It, you know?

**Alanna Flowers:** Yeah, definitely. I felt the same way. I'm just like, oh, there's a word for that. Like, so interesting. There's a word.

**Joke Wijn:** So cool. Yeah. And, most of all, we're not the only ones.

And, what you said, like, feeling, Oh my God, my energy goes all over the place. I don't finish things. How is that possible? Instead of getting down on yourself, it's like, aha, it makes sense that we, uh, that we do this the way it's just how we're wired.

**Alanna Flowers:** Yeah. Right. Yeah. Definitely as a, as a positive instead of like a negative.

Yeah,

**Joke Wijn:** exactly. Exactly. But have you ever struggled with, um, having your focus? All over the place and having many ideas and going like, Oh, I want to do it all or not.

**Alanna Flowers:** Without a doubt. Oh my gosh. Yeah. Because it's like, yeah, it's like we were talking about goals and stuff like that. Just like, I, I need, because I have so many things that I'm interested in or that I'm focused on and that I'm doing.

I need to make sure 1) that I write them down. Yeah, I'm just like, I have like my planner to like, at least make sure that like all the things that I do want to do or that I'm interested in, like writing them down somewhere. So like one, I don't forget them. And 2), so that I know to like revisit them and be like, Oh, that was that thing that sort of popped into my head the other day.

Like, let me explore that. so yeah, I definitely. Can sometimes feel a little overwhelmed at times, I think, with the massive amount of interest and things that I want to tackle, but, I get a bunch of support. I have a mentor, um, at the moment, it's really helpful to put a bouncing ideas off of her too.

So she can sort of, help me sort of interpret, I guess, these things and sort of help me sort of channel. My energy and be like you can still do all the things but like maybe you'd like focus on this one chunk of things and then before you move on to the next thing. So, I think that's clever. Yeah, I know right overwhelming I think because it's like, I have to do everything right now just like now, it's okay, you can take a moment.

Breathe.

**Joke Wijn:** Yep. Yep.

**Alanna Flowers:** And then go.

Yeah.

**Joke Wijn:** That is so cool because it's so easy to get like, I want to do everything and I want to have it done yesterday. And like, how am I going to do it all? And then I don't know, how about you? Do you feel like your energy doesn't Uh, flow, the way, even though, like, your

brain goes, like, I want to do this, but your energy says, no, not today, you can't, you can't move, you've done too much, do you struggle with that as well?

Or?

**Alanna Flowers:** No, yeah, definitely. It's, it's so, um, important to make sure that we're sort of in tune with ourselves and with our energy and where our, Our energy is focused because you can just like burn yourself out that way. If you're just like, I'm not doing enough. We're like, you get hard on yourself too.

It's just like, Oh, I'm not doing enough. Like you could, you could just be like, Oh, I've been so lazy. When, like, if anyone else looked at your schedule, it was just like, you're actually putting in a lot of work all the time. Maybe you don't.

Yeah. So I'm always trying to make sure that I'm keeping some sort of schedule for myself, especially as a freelancer. I'm just like, yeah, it can be extremely loose and unstructured. I'm just sort of generally guiding myself through the day. Just like, this is where I can sort of fit blocks of time for certain things.

And if honestly, if the day doesn't allow for certain things or my energy doesn't allow for certain things, it's okay. We're flexible. We can move it to the next day or whatever. So.

**Joke Wijn:** Yeah, that helps. That's great. That is a way to deal around your energy or with your energy to put it in a positive light.

That's so cool. So just, just a little bit, like you were mentioning, I put it in my planner. I am a huge planner lover, notebook lover. What planner do you use?

**Alanna Flowers:** Oh. I'm not like committed to any like kind of planner. I just like maybe certain styles of planners.

So things that allowed me a lot of lines and a lot of space, something that's for, um, like daily. So like I can write down my objectives every single day and then maybe just like some extra, like white space, like blank for just like random notes and stuff like that. So yeah, I just like have a yearly planner that I'm writing in now, but I still also have like a digital.

Like yeah, like note keeping app that I use and all this stuff. So I like to write things down, like physically, like on paper, but I'm also like writing stuff digitally and keeping track of that way. Yeah.

**Joke Wijn:** Love that. Love that. Okay. Same here. Absolutely.

**Alanna Flowers:** Yeah. I'm like, so into it.

**Joke Wijn:** So you're, you're, yeah, me too, it's like, oh my gosh, I had, I just got a new planner today.

So that's anyway, so fun. Yeah, lots of things to put stickers in and everything. Anyway, back to the topic. Um, so you, I, I think your first tip would be to write stuff down if you feel like overwhelmed. Is that, is that it?

**Alanna Flowers:** No, yes, totally. Since I'm, I've completed my first full year of freelancing and I think what I learned from that, one of the things that I learned from that year was just like, one, you need a schedule and two, you need to like write stuff down because it's so easy to just sort of blindly be going forward and just like with your head down because you're just like, I need to do everything and just like, you could completely overwhelm yourself and burn yourself out.

So yeah, have some objectives written down so that you know exactly what you're focusing on. So also you can sort of like flip back to like the prior weeks or months and be like, what was I focusing on? What was I working on? because it's like, there's no way we're going to remember everything. Like I'm already in the middle of forgetting something.

So yeah, it's just like write things down. You'll thank yourself later.

**Joke Wijn:** No, I love that. Yeah. If you do a digital calendar, it's easy Remove it. Delete it. Mm-hmm. . But in a physical planner it's different. Like you keep it there, you flip back as you said, and it's like, oh, I get that three weeks ago.

Yay me,

**Alanna Flowers:** Uhhuh, definitely.

**Joke Wijn:** This was so fun. Or something like that. So, um, uh, writing stuff down, having a schedule. I loved your series about your first year as a freelancer, by the way. Mm-hmm. , that was so good.

**Alanna Flowers:** Oh, awesome. Thanks.

**Joke Wijn:** Yeah, it's so cool. Also, everybody who is listening, definitely check her out because she has some really gems to share.

So check it. Um, also your series about the books. Oh my gosh. All the lettering books.

**Alanna Flowers:** Oh yeah. Jeez. I'm just like, I have so many books.

**Joke Wijn:** Can you name your favorite? I know you did like series about it, but if you would name your favorite book on lettering. What would it be?

Oh my God, hard question. I know. Maybe we can come back to it later.

**Alanna Flowers:** No, it's so funny. I think I have my favorite sort of come in waves, but I think a sort of aha moment for me when I got the book was, the In Progress by Jessica Hirsch I just thought it was so interesting seeing, Like her sketches and her process to like, that was like, it's called in progress.



Like, that's kind of like the focus of the book where it's just like, yes, these are the finals that I did, you know, it was out in the world and this is how it looked, but these were all the sketches that I went through. And like, this is kind of like how I sort of, you know, iterate my ideas. I thought that was pretty interesting.

I've, I'd never seen a lettering artists work like that, or even like. Many artists like, the before it was all pretty and fancy kind of thing. So I thought that was really valuable to see, especially as someone who was still hoping and dreaming one day of becoming a professional lettering artist.

**Joke Wijn:** Yeah, I love the book too. So I think that would be in my top two. Um, top three or something. Yes. Cool book to see. So, Thank you. That was, that was really cool. Yeah. Sorry, I'm just a little bit flabbergasted here and just like, oh, so happy we're chatting.

**Alanna Flowers:** Oh yeah, same.

**Joke Wijn:** Smiling. So, okay. In your creative journey, you've been a professional lettering artist for a year and a half.

Have you, we've been talking about it a little bit, but have you been struggling with like imposter syndrome or shiny object syndrome? Overwhelmed, we've just discussed it, but is there any other like superwoman, uh, you want to do at all? As you said, you know, write it all down and trying to. Get it, you know, those struggles, those syndromes.

Are they familiar to you?

**Alanna Flowers:** Yeah, all too familiar. Yeah, it's yeah, it's just like, so I guess common, maybe amongst like all artists of all disciplines. But I think especially as trying something new, it's just like, okay, I put all my eggs into the, okay, let's do lettering, which is what we really want to do kind of basket.

And. I, I mean, I'm really happy that I made that decision, but I think in doing that, I sort of put a lot of pressure on myself to be like, okay, like, this is all you've got. So like, this is it. The light is on you right now. And like, this is your time kind of thing. so like, maybe I didn't need to do that.

Who knows? But I was just like, okay, maybe I would have done it differently if I had a chance to do it over again. Who knows? But definitely just like putting a lot of pressure on myself in the beginning, um, just to like be so ambitious and succeed and imposter syndrome, like all the time, sort of ebbs and flows depending on what's going on.

It's just it's easy to go from, you're one second, you're on a, a high because you just finished this wonderful client project and you're just like, wow, it's so great to be like doing this professionally and getting paid for my work and I'm so happy. And then it's so easy to come off of that and be like, But what if that's the only project I get for like the next three months?

Like, oh my gosh, no one wants to work with me ever again. , oh my gosh. Low. Ridiculous. It's ridiculous what we can tell ourselves, but it's like it, it just happens sometimes, but it's just like the more I go through it, it's just like I have to work hard to correct those thoughts and be like, right. Hey Alanna, every time you said this to yourself, it was fine and you got more work.

Don't freak out. Like it's fine. so I have to constantly check in with myself to make sure that it's just like, don't beat yourself up. You're doing great. You're awesome. Yeah. And yeah, it's just like trying to keep a level head and just continue going on

**Joke Wijn:** Yeah. Well, I, there's not much else you can do, right? Cause it doesn't help us if we keep thinking about ourself in a, in a struggling way.

And you are amazing. I mean, your work is like, oh, like mind blowing. So it's, it's good of you to, to tell yourself like, okay, just keep going. You're doing great. And, you know, Awesome.

**Alanna Flowers:** Yeah, definitely. Yeah.

**Joke Wijn:** So, so basically you would say that, affirmations and, talking positively to yourself would be one way to deal with the struggles.

**Alanna Flowers:** No, yeah, definitely. Like if just saying it to yourself, like we're going back to writing things down, like I have a, I call it my joy jar. I think my mentor calls hers like a brag list. Like she keeps like a list of like things that she's just like, Hey, I did that. That's awesome. Let me write that down.

The next time I'm like feeling, you know, in a rut or like, I'm feeling kind of down on myself. Like I can go back to this list or I can go back to this place and be like, I did all those cool things. It's like, You're awesome.

That is great. I'll stick my

hand in my little joy jar and just like wrestle my little papers around and pull one out and be like, Oh yeah, I did do that.

That was cool.

**Joke Wijn:** That is so good. So good. It does help you. And it's so much fun to have like a, did you letter on the jar? Does it, does it say joy jar?

**Alanna Flowers:** Yeah, I lettered on it. It's like a little glass is honestly a, like a, I, I got like a vase of flowers. And then I, once the flowers were all wilted and stuff, I, I cleaned the vase and I, I let her joy jar on it.

**Joke Wijn:** So cool. So it's a big jar. There's a lot of joy

in there.

**Alanna Flowers:** Yeah, exactly. So it's like, it's just so important to just like, remember that. You know, you are to be celebrated and like you've come such a long way and doesn't matter like how tiny you might perceive whatever accomplishment or whatever you want to celebrate for yourself.

Just like, don't forget to celebrate everything.

**Joke Wijn:** Remembering this. Don't forget to celebrate, no matter how small. I love it. Love it, love it, love it. So, we have been chatting over Instagram. what do you think of this creative community? Not only Instagram, but I mean like the creative community in general.

**Alanna Flowers:** No, I mean, the creative community is like one of my... It's like my favorite thing really it's, it's something that you can just keep going back to, because you know that there are other people out there who are probably struggling with the same things that you're struggling with that feel very similarly about certain things that you feel, especially when they're exactly in the same like focus and niche like, like you and I are like lettering and stuff like that so It's a, it's a beautiful place to just feel very seen and understood.

Yeah. So it's just like people complain about the algorithm, like I'm right there with you, like, or whatever it is. It's just like, I can feel connected in that way. Uh, whether it's virtually or meeting people like online like this, like we're interfacing and stuff like that and like taking things off of Instagram, or I've been able to like connect with people, you know, in my own community and it's just been like really nice.

So wonderful.

**Joke Wijn:** Yeah, no, but the, the creative community is so wonderful and it's so great to finally meet. Um, but also if you don't meet like face to face or through video, it's still really nice to chat, you know, with people all over the world.

I mean, you're in New York. I'm in this little country somewhere else. And it's so cool to have a connection like that. Yeah.

**Alanna Flowers:** Oh yeah, definitely.

**Joke Wijn:** So where can people find you in this creative community?

**Alanna Flowers:** Oh my goodness. Yeah, you can find me pretty much everywhere. I like to say, but I know so I'm @alanna\_flowers on Instagram, Twitter, and Tik Tok.

And then you can find me on, Pinterest and YouTube, @AGFdesignstudio.

**Joke Wijn:** You're almost everywhere. That is so cool. I'll make sure to leave the links in the show notes. So where does the G stand for?

**Alanna Flowers:** Oh, that's my middle name.

**Joke Wijn:** Yeah, so...

**Alanna Flowers:** Yeah, Gabrielle is my middle name.

**Joke Wijn:** Oh, I love it, definitely checking you out on all the, all the platforms. And, is there anything you'd like to share? Like a, a nice little quote since we have so many awesome quotes from you.

**Alanna Flowers:** Oh, yeah. Jeez. you know, I, I, I'm terrible because I don't know who to attribute this quote to, but I've been thinking a lot about, the power of just being yourself. So I think there's some quote that goes something like, being yourself is your superpower. Like no one else is you and that's your superpower, that kind of thing.

and I really enjoy that because again, to like the little bit of the, like the imposter syndrome or you're comparing yourself, it's just like, you are completely unique person to somebody else. So it's not fair to compare yourself. And you should enjoy and celebrate the fact that you're you, because you're completely unique and your perspective and experiences are unique.

So like, lean into being you.

**Joke Wijn:** That is fantastic. So if you were to pick a specific quote from all those wonderful, would that be like, be yourself, that is your superpower? Would that be it?

**Alanna Flowers:** Yeah, I think so. Yeah.

**Joke Wijn:** Okay. We're definitely using that as the quote and that is a wonderful quote because it is true.

Nobody is you and you're amazing. You're, it's your superpower. Fantastic. Thank you so, so much, Alanna. It has been a treat talking to you.

**Alanna Flowers:** Oh my gosh, you too. Thank you so much for having me on your podcast. I'm so excited. Can't wait for everyone to listen.

**Joke Wijn:** Yes, definitely. Okay. Thank you so much. Bye.

**Alanna Flowers:** Bye.