Kelly: Hi and welcome back to the Legal Nurse Podcast. This is your co-host Kelly Campbell and we're in for a treat today. We have Stephen Hart. He is the leader of "Stephen A. Hart", the founder of Aisles Media and the creator of "Brand Your Academy".

Welcome Stephen!

Stephen: Thank you for having me.

Kelly: We're going to be talking about steps to building your amazing personal brand. Before we get started, I want to tell you a little about his accomplishments. His passion is to guide professionals, entrepreneurs and creators through the steps to build a market and grow their own amazing personal brand. Stephen is also the host of "Trailblazers", the number one podcast that interviews today's successful black professionals.

Stephen, thanks so much for spending some time with us this morning.

Stephen: I really appreciate you having me and being here with you.

Kelly: You know as nurse entrepreneurs we all are learning and growing. We can use some advice on some branding, so let's jump right in.

Stephen: Sounds good.

Kelly: What is personal branding?

Stephen:, Your personal brand is also going to encompass your personality, your voice, your mission, and unique experiences that as nurses you will share with your colleagues, with your employer and with your patients. All of that encompasses parts of the brand called "You".

Kelly: So today we're going to be talking more than logos and that sort of thing?

Stephen: Absolutely.

Kelly: Okay. My next question was going to be "Why is personal branding important?", but I think I'm already catching on. Let's go for it.

Stephen: It's really important today, and I'll share this story. As a podcaster, I interview successful professionals every day and all too often I come across talking with people who say, "Stephen, I would love to be a guest on your podcast." I will Google their name and more times than not nothing comes, or what comes up leaves me indifferent. What I realized in this "Aha" moment I had was that there are people that are Googling you every single day, and what comes up will either encourage or discourage someone to hire you or to work with you, and in reverse you have control of that. You have the power to be able to control what's coming up for you within your digital footprint.

In 2018 and beyond we have to be aware of what is going to be presented about you or me when someone Googles us, or someone searches us online because people are. It's really important.

Kelly: Yes, so I'm already thinking Facebook.

Stephen: Absolutely. I'll tell you a Facebook story. I told you I'm a young dad. I have two young ones, an 8-year-old and a 4-year-old. My wife, I call her the "Facebook Mom" who jumps on Facebook and always will ask her mom network for a recommendation. This is a perfect personal branding example right here. She would jump on and there will be an issue with the plumbing, an appliance, or we will need an insurance or some type of professional.

She will jump on her Facebook page in our community and she will be like "Who do you recommend for…" and if she says, "Who do you recommend for fixing an appliance or fixing our fridge" there's going to be 15 to 20 responses from different people in our area saying, "Call Joe, call ABC HVAC or call so-and-so."

The different results that come up just in that Facebook post in those comments will separate you from the rest of the people who are coming up. Now if you have taken the steps to create a Facebook page and it's set up where that person can start writing the name of that business, the page comes up and they can just drop that link right there versus another person saying, "Call Jose at 301-555-1212." The

difference with the first person who has a link to their Facebook page is Christine can immediately click on that page. She sees this person's brand. She sees reviews. She immediately begins to develop a know, like, and trust. The credibility question is checked. She can immediately see a path to their website and see a path to their phone number. Before she calls that person, she has already been able to do her vetting and feel sure.

This is part of you. As your personal brand, it's great for companies but it's also absolutely essential that we as individuals look at the same pieces to making sure that someone can establish that know, like, and trust for working with us.

Kelly: Know, like and trust. Those are some keywords right there.

Stephen: Absolutely. People in 2018, there's so much noise and there's so much lack of trust. We're in this fake news where people aren't sure and so we have to establish that comfort. That's why Yelp, Zillow, and websites like that thrive, Angie's List. It's that third party verified piece that shows that credibility or establishes that trust. In the same way Facebook is great. You have someone who you trust in terms of your family or friends recommending someone, but you're taking it one step further and making sure that's clear.

Let me stop this show for a moment to tell you about online training that will help you define your brand. This is Pat Iyer. Stop living in the shadows of your competition, make more money now, and attract more of your ideal clients. Do you want a brand that shines?

Branding is the true foundation of any legal nurse consulting business. You need a clear brand that shines. (This is not just a logo or marketing strategy, but a BRAND). Without a brand that shines, then

your legal nurse consulting marketing efforts and sales efforts are not as efficient. You must have a brand that shines to stand out from competition and to build IMMEDIATE trust, likability, value, and confidence for your prospects.

- Do you question whether or not your brand is strong enough?
- Do you have a brand that shines? Is it clear and consistent?
- Do you feel disconnected from your brand?
- Do you reluctantly hand out your business card because it just isn't YOU?

Do you wish you had a step-by-step guide to creating a brand that can compete with the best of the best?

Jena Rodriquez, who is a brand specialist, created this one-hour online training: **Discover, Define and Deliver a Brand that Shines**. In this training you will learn:

1. How a clear definition of branding relates to your business
2. That the strategy Jena outlines will help you attract more ideal clients and secure repeat business
3. the 6-step process for getting results in discovering, defining and delivering a brand that shines

Get instant access to this training at http://LNC.tips/brandshines and use the code listened in the coupon box to get a 25% discount.

Kelly: What are some of the steps to start building our personal brand?

Stephen: A lot of people again come back to design. I think the absolute first thing you have to do is be very clear on your mission, on your vision, and what you have to offer. When I say mission, understand what's your "Why".

"Why are you doing what you're doing?"

It's not because of money, because when you lose your job or your business falls apart and there's no money there, are you going to continue?

Understand your mission. My mission is to help 10,000 professionals over the next five years to establish their personal brand and digital footprint. I see that as something I'm really passionate about wanting to do because I see the importance and value of it as we move forward, especially for professionals and entrepreneurs. Really get clear on your mission.

Your vision is really your legacy, so you are looking at your destination 20 to 30 years out from now. "What do you want your 75-year-old self to have accomplished?" Once you are clear on your vision, I like to say your legacy or the seeds you're planting in a garden you will never see, you have to be very clear on your legacy and your vision and paint that picture.

Then you begin to reverse engineer your path there. Create a route to get to that final destination. You will create your 10-year goals, your long-term goals. In each year instead of loosely writing out your year's resolutions, you're clearer on what you're working to get to in 10 years from now. It becomes tasking, setting up a plan, setting up tasks, and beginning to do the work. You will be able to cut away.

Your mission and your vision are really important. When you start talking about grand elements, once you're clear on that, then we begin to frame that. Our messaging becomes really easy. It's a package because we know what our mission is. We know what we're trying to

accomplish. Your messaging is going to become really important. Once you're clear on your mission as well, you know who you're speaking to. You understand who the audience is you're trying to serve. It becomes easier if I know I'm trying to serve professionals that I'm speaking the language of a professional. Or if I'm trying to speak to teenagers, it's a completely different approach in the messaging that I am communicating to that target audience.

Does that make sense?

Kelly: Right, malpractice attorneys, personal injury attorneys, workman's comp attorneys.

Stephen: Right, if you're speaking to attorneys, there is a different language that you're speaking that connects to what they're looking for and what they value. From here you have your messaging and now it's time to make sure that things look really clean across your digital footprint.

Before you develop a logo, you're going to develop a clear understanding on what a couple of brand elements are that are going to wrap into this. Your color palette is really important. Ninety percent of people create a judgment of you based on color alone, so color is really important to get right. The other thing is your fonts.

You create a color palette. You have one or two active colors that you're going to use in your brand. You're not just going to say blue. Color can be defined in very specific colors, and you have different codes. Some people refer to color codes. The most common one that we use online and you can use in a Word document or you can use in Photoshop or you can use on Canva is called a hex code. You don't need to understand what a hex code is.

Kelly: I was just going to say what are we getting in to here?

Stephen: That's a lingo no one really needs to dive too deep in and get down a rabbit hole. Just know there's a six-number code that defines that specific color, so 002663 is an exact color of navy that I use everywhere. It's just a number that makes sure that whether you are creating a digital piece or you're creating something for print, know the color is going to be the exact same no matter where it's used.

A brand like McDonald's, McDonald's has a color palette that is clear no matter where you see McDonald's whether it's online on social media, their signage, or in a store on a menu. That person developing those pieces has to look at a brand guide for McDonald's that tells them the exact color code to use to make sure they get those colors the exact same every single time.

It's no different with you. You will create a couple of colors that you use. I like to tell people to have one or two colors that are your go-to colors so that when you create your logo, it will be shown in your logo. When you create other assets, be it apparel, be it signage, be it your website, or anything that you touch, you're telling your graphic designer, "Look, these are my colors that you will use across whatever you're designing." That allows your look and feel to be cohesive no matter where somebody sees your footprint.

The other thing that ties in really well is your fonts. From the moment you wake up and you open your iPhone or your Android, you're reading something. You're jumping on Facebook, you're on Medium, or wherever you are you're seeing a font. You jump in your car and you're seeing a font on the signs on the side of the road. Fonts are really important, and so you want to make sure that you also are very consistent with your use of fonts. You can pick out a single font and say, "I only want to use Roboto."

Google has a font library that you can download for free. Again, this is sometimes a little bit over someone's head because you're used to opening Word and using Calibri or Times New Roman, and that's so boring because there's so many fonts that are available to help you stand out. We're in 2018 and we have to stand out from the crowd to separate ourselves from others. You can download fonts. It's really easy. You can install it on your computer. You can save that font and send your color palette and send your fonts to a graphic designer and say "Look, when you're designing stuff for me, you're only going to use these fonts and you're only going to use these colors."

Guess what, if you did nothing else but just make sure there's consistent use of your fonts, consistent use of your colors, and you develop a logo, everything begins to look very clean. You get people coming to you and saying, "I love the look and feel of your brand, of your presence. It looks very professional." It's just because you took

that step to make sure that those things are at your core, at the foundation, of what you develop in terms of your visual.

Those two things I'll tell all of your listeners is to make sure you're very clear on your colors, and you're very clear on your fonts. From there, it's really easy to design your logo. With your logo again, I was talking earlier about some of the different applications on where your logo might be seen. Sometimes we just think of our logo going on our websites or on our Facebook, but guess what, you might end up printing your logo or embroidering your logo on a polo shirt or apparel. Your logo can eventually be put on a banner, on signage, or on a brochure.

You want to be sure that when you have someone design a logo if you're using Fiverr, Upwork or a freelancer of some sort, you don't just want to take a JPEG or have them send you a single file of your logo. You have to be mindful that your logo can have different places it's being placed. You want to make sure that you get the source file, which is the file that they used to create the logo. Sometimes you send a logo to a printer, and they're going to ask you for the source file. The source file is basically wherever that person created the logo. They want to be able to edit or take hold of the elements inside that. A lot of times we take a picture off of a website like Google (editor's note – after making sure it is not copyrighted), and that's a JPEG or a PNG file format and you can't edit that. It can be compressed, and it's not the suitable file for someone to use. You always whenever you're designing your logo just ask for the source file.

Again, I'm not going to get complicated and use lingo that is difficult to understand, but it's important that you have that JPEG and PNG. Those are what you will use when you're developing your website or you're putting an asset on social media in a post, but always make sure you get the source files for important things like your logo.

Kelly: Okay the source file. I'm trying to mentally picture where I keep my logos right now and do I have a source file?

Stephen: I'm sure you're familiar with Photoshop?

Kelly: Yes.

Stephen: Something created in Photoshop is a source file because that is where it was created. You can edit that file or that asset inside Photoshop. For logos specifically, Adobe is the creator of Photoshop. Adobe is also the creator of another product called Illustrator. Adobe Illustrator is typically where most graphic designers will create a logo. An Adobe Illustrator created asset or file will always have that file format of .ai and a Photoshop will always have that extension of .psd. Those .ai or .psd files, that's what I am talking about when I talk about a source file.

You have that file because God forbid something happens to that graphic designer. We hire somebody in India on Upwork or Fiverr, and then they just disappear. If you have that .ai file or you have that source file, you can give it to another designer, or you can give it to a printer and they can pick up where that last person left off. If you give them a JPEG, they can't do anything with it. You will have to start over.

Kelly: Oh goodness.

Stephen: It's really important.

Kelly: So source files?

Stephen: Yes.

Kelly: All right well what social media platform do you think would help our brands the most?

Stephen: I absolutely think it's imperative that as professionals we're all on LinkedIn. I was sharing with someone just last night the importance of making sure that your profile has the proper keywords and we were talking about keywords earlier. If you know that you want someone to search you for a particular keyword, you need to pepper those keywords in on your LinkedIn profile.

Not only are your keywords important on your profile, but something a lot of people don't quite understand the importance of is how many connections you have. You need to be welcoming connections on LinkedIn. As many connections are extended to you, accept them. Here is why. With LinkedIn's search engine, it's a very robust search engine.

If I am Googling… give me a term that you want me to search? You're searching for someone specific.

Kelly: Okay: legal nurse.

Stephen: If you're searching 'legal nurse', there are a couple of things that LinkedIn is going to do to provide results for legal nurse. It's going to look up all those keywords on profiles for legal nurse, but that is not what provides the top results. What provides the top results are your connection to legal nurses, meaning the way LinkedIn has their profile set up. Direct connections are your first-level connections. You see that first-level connection. If you and I are connected on LinkedIn, but you have a connection to Mary and I don't, I see Mary as a second-level connection and it goes on from there, first, second, third, and beyond.

LinkedIn search is going to look through all the people that you have some type of first-, second-, and third-level connection to and that have the legal nurse keywords embedded in them. If I have a whole lot more connections and I also have the keywords 'legal nurse' in my profile, I'm going to come up more times than you in search results for legal nurse. If you don't have as many connections, and you have legal nurse, you are not coming up in search results on LinkedIn for legal nurse as much as the other person with a whole lot more connection points.

Does that make sense?

Kelly: It does.

Stephen: It's really important that we invite those connections. It's not like Facebook, where you're trying to lock out crazy people from your personal profile. This is a business network and it benefits you to have more connections on LinkedIn than not. I would say this, make sure that you still are professional about those connection points. If you're inviting someone to connect, be professional. Do as you would do in a face-to-face interaction is what I'm saying. Make sure that you're still connecting with that person and trying to figure out who it is that you're connecting to and the value of that connection. Invite those connections because it will help you in the long run.

Kelly: Okay that makes sense.

Stephen: There are other platforms. I think being on Facebook is important. Facebook's organic reach is not what it was in years past, so if you have a Facebook page you will have to advertise, and you will have to spend if you're trying to get in front of specific people. The Facebook ad platform is still probably one of the most robust and one of the most targeted platforms for advertising for spend. You can be very deliberate about who you want to get in front of with a Facebook ad, so Facebook is really important.

Probably the fastest growing platform and I don't know if it's ideal for legal nurses but it's where the eyes are and that's Instagram, so having a footprint there and showing your personality is important.

I use my Instagram to show my personality as a dad, a family man, and a podcaster and a speaker. It's not just the professional side of me, but it's all sides of me, and people are able to embrace my journey as an individual more so than just a professional side.

Kelly: I was able to meet you at the podcast convention and you do have lots to share, and you're a great person.

Stephen: Thank you so much.

Kelly: It's so enjoyable. Let's use this opportunity to share with our audience how they can stay in touch and continue learning from you.

Stephen: Absolutely. My website is www.stephenahart.com. I am getting set to launch my beta course for "Brand You Academy". You have heard me talk a lot about branding. I do branding as a service for individuals and professionals all day every day. What I found is there are a lot of professionals who are in that place where they maybe can't afford to spend $3,000, $4,000 or $5,000 to develop all sides of this, but they still want the instruction. They would want some type of hybrid of a DIY, and some hand-holding, and some guidance.

What we've done is I've packaged my years of expertise and knowledge in this space to create a six-week online course that's designed to walk you through the step-by-step process to develop your personal brand and your digital footprint. We're so excited about it. We're going to be opening the door to this program on October 8th and the first module goes live on October 22nd. If somebody has an interest in wanting to be on the list for our beta, they can hop on over

to www.stephenahart.com/brandyou and sign up to hear more when the cart opens.

I am on social media. You can follow me on Twitter and on Instagram at Stephen A. Hart, so again that's another tip for you right at the end. Everything is Stephen A. Hart. My website is www.stephenahart.com and you can find me everywhere on social at Stephen A. Hart.

Kelly: Thank you so much. It was so informative today, and I'm going to be following you on LinkedIn.

Stephen: Yes, please do. Please engage, message me, and tell me what you found of value in this episode and how I can be of assistance.

Kelly: Yes and thanks so much. All right, audience, don't forget to tune in next week. Thanks again, bye-bye.