

KnitFreedom Podcast Episode 1: Interview With Liat

October 9, 2014

Interview Transcript

Liat Gat: Hello, my knitting superstars. Welcome to this interview. This is Liat Gat from KnitFreedom and I am here with Stacy Stone who is, who works with me on KnitFreedom to help me write all of the, uh, promotions for all the new products that I come out with and she's here to help me do this interview and show a few, um, lots of stuff that, that's going on. So hi, Stacy, welcome.

Stacy Stone: Hi, thank you. Uh, I'm –

Liat Gat: Where should we start?

Stacy Stone: Well, I, I think first what I wanted to talk about is why we're here and why we're doing this interview and what you wanted to accomplish and what you wanted to share, um, with your readers.

Liat Gat: We are doing this interview because we, we are doing a webinar, um, coming up shortly in just a few days and we wanted to get people excited about the webinar 'cause I'm really excited and it's gonna be really good and so we thought of, uh, I thought of doing a, a way to connect with, um, my listeners and readers in a little bit of a different way other than a blog post which we'll do some, we'll do some good blog posts but I thought that this might be a wonderful way for me to connect. I, I don't get to connect with my readers as much as I would like to so that's why we decided to do this audio interview format. This is sort of the first one where I'm actually in charge and not being interviewed by somebody that I don't know in some faraway land.

Stacy Stone: Yeah, Liat and I know each other really well so we should get some good stuff. Um, so let's jump into just a little intro about KnitFreedom and what it is and who you are just for people who, you know, may not have been longtime readers or haven't read your blog before, so tell me a little bit about, um, what is KnitFreedom and why did you create it and what is your mission?

Liat Gat: Um, okay, well, my mission is to help people become knitting superstars which, to me, means confident, happy, curious knitters who can knit anything their heart desires whether they know how to knit already or not, they have the confidence to know that they can and we will, actually, we're gonna talk

about how to get some of these skills during the webinar when I give my favorite tips, um, but, um, so that is my mission and the way that I have set out to do that is I created this web, by web site, KnitFreedom, um, which is, uh, a place for people to watch high-quality knitting videos that shows the techniques that, I think, the most important techniques that they need to learn and I'm adding more videos all the time, um, so it's a, it's a place where you can look up your techniques that you don't know how to do when you come to a pattern and you don't know how to do, for instance, a wrap and turn, and you can go on it free and look it up –

Stacy Stone: Why did you –

Liat Gat: Yeah.

Stacy Stone: – why did –

Liat Gat: Go ahead.

Stacy Stone: – you choose video? Was there a specific reason that you chose video as the main format?

Liat Gat: I chose video because I started out teaching live classes at the different knitting stores that I was working at and I was having a hard time showing everybody my hands –

Stacy Stone: Hmm.

Liat Gat: – and I was running around 'cause I really like to give people like one-on-one attention. Everyone has different questions when they knit and they all have different, uh, mess ups and stuff and so I was sort of running around being like oh yeah, no, it's okay, just fix it like this, here, like this and, and I was like man, if could just have a huge screen and a camera then like a jumbotron and everybody could see what I am trying to show them and, and I could answer everyone's questions, and, um, and so when I set out to actually make that my business, that was what I, I, that was like the way that I thought to transform my classes into a format that everybody could, could see.

Stacy Stone: Hmm.

Liat Gat: Yeah.

Stacy Stone: And do you think that and I know you told me before and I think the readers, the longtime readers will know, um, from seeing your videos that you felt like there could be a higher bar to, you know, giving instruction.

Liat Gat: Well, I, I get really frustrated when I go and do too, I mean there is stuff that I don't have videos on yet and, or people will say can you make a video on this technique and I'll go look it up on YouTube and I just like, I can't even watch.

Stacy Stone: Yeah.

Liat Gat: And I know that my customer, my, my students that were coming to my live classes that I was teaching like on Magic Loop and Continental knitting and cables, they would be like I tried to look this up but I do not get it and I would go on YouTube and be like oh, it's a, because the video is blurry or –

Stacy Stone: Mm hmm.

Liat Gat: – you know, or just other funny things like the person's feet are in the video or whatever, their dog or –

Stacy Stone: Yeah.

Liat Gat: – you know, and it's just not clear and the sound quality is not good and it's, it's, there's too much going on to just settle down and focus on that actual technique, so I thought that it wouldn't be too hard to do it myself and I actually started out, the first videos that I made were on Magic Loop and double knitting. Like I, I discovered – air quotes – Magic Loop when I was working at a yarn store. I found a little booklet, um by Beverly Galeskas where she writes up the technique that, uh, was discovered by, that was invented by Sara – I do not know how to pronounce her last name – Sara H., um, and I thought it was so cool that I made a video for it. I don't know why and, and, and it was not a very good quality but it was, it still had, I think it still had the ingredients that people were wanting –

Stacy Stone: Mm hmm.

Liat Gat: – um, so maybe I misspoke when I said that it was because the, the videos that are out there are, are blurry or whatever, maybe it's the, um, the way that I happen to explain it was the way that people were hoping to, to consume it. They were like this is what I wanted to see –

Stacy Stone: That's a –

Liat Gat: – and that just –

Stacy Stone: – I think that's –

Liat Gat: Mm hmm.

Stacy Stone: – a really good point because there are certain qualities in your content and in your videos, um, that I think the, your students really, um, are attached to or excited to see and –

Liat Gat: Mm hmm.

Stacy Stone: – and –

Liat Gat: I hope so.

Stacy Stone: – yeah, I mean think there are, there are very specific ways that you teach things and, and from the comments that we see all the time on the site, um, people are always saying like I never thought of it that way –

Liat Gat: Hmm.

Stacy Stone: – and I never, I never knew that you could do it or that it was that simple and I think for me, that really sums up, um, a lot of your content, that it's really easy to follow and it, and it teaches people things that they didn't really think about before in a simple way.

Liat Gat: Hmm.

Stacy Stone: So –

Liat Gat: Well, it's important, I mean people are busy and they're just, they're in the middle of a knitting project, usually, when they look, look up the techniques, so it's important that I just cut to the chase and I explain how to do it and it just so happens that the way that, that I explain knitting stuff, it seems to be a good fit, you know, for other people and I love that 'cause it's really easy for me. I love to do it. Um, you know, when I, when I learned how to knit, I didn't have anyone helping

me, I learned from a book and so I had, you know, do up my own understanding about how to think about these different techniques and it never occurred to me to be confused or afraid or frustrated, um, but I see a lot of people come up against those different feelings, like different hang ups –

Stacy Stone: Mm hmm.

Liat Gat: – that they have about learning and what, what they expect of themselves. I know, if you're listening, like you'll know if it, if this is you, if you, when you mess up, you go, ugh, I knew this was too hard for me or, or what –

Stacy Stone: Mm hmm.

Liat Gat: – whatever, or maybe you're a, um, you know, someone else was like the star knitter in the family or something, or your mom was the star knitter and she never like helped, you know, bothered to explain stuff in a way that you could understand, made you feel dumb or whatever. There is, and so I, I get a lot of joy in, in telling people, you know, everybody can do this, like I'll show you how, it's okay, you know. Uh, just watch, I made this video just for you –

Stacy Stone: Mm hmm.

Liat Gat: – you know, and there's nothing else going on in the video and they can actually see my hands like from the perspective that, that they would be looking at their own knitting, so. So anyway, KnitFreedom has a bunch of videos like that and then it also has classes, like you would, like you would get at your yarn store only like, it, different 'cause I'm not actually there but you can replay 'em over and over and –

Stacy Stone: Yeah but that's –

Liat Gat: – um –

Stacy Stone: – actually not true because I hear and see people saying like I feel like you're sitting right next to me –

Liat Gat: Yes, that's –

Stacy Stone: – so.

Liat Gat: – the goal. That’s the goal and you know why, because I have taught a lot of people in person and so I know what people are gonna run into. I, the, at, at least, you know, the top, the top mistakes that are gonna happen and so I do make videos on those too, so it’s, it’s more of like responsive than just a, hmm, instructions about how to do something. It’s like yeah, here is how to do it and, and here is also what’s gonna happen with the, when you mess up the first time and the second time and, and where you’re gonna get confused, so, um, so that’s what KnitFreedom has and that was a pretty long answer to your question, so let’s –

Stacy Stone: Yeah.

Liat Gat: – get to the next one.

Stacy Stone: Um, so what have you been up to? I know that your readers really want to know like what’s going on in KnitFreedom land and what’s going on in your world personally, like what sort of, um, projects are you working on and what’s coming up next?

Liat Gat: So what has been going on in KnitFreedom land, exciting things? I know that a lot of people, I haven’t been blogging hardly and people are asking me what are you up to, we miss getting your blogs and I totally understand, um, and this, it will be an easier way for me to, to update people, so the two things that I’ve been, that have, that KnitFreedom has been working on and I have been working on for KnitFreedom and for on, only for my readers and students is a huge web site, web site update, like –

Stacy Stone: Yah.

Liat Gat: – we, we, yes, redo –

Stacy Stone: We –

Liat Gat: – probably –

Stacy Stone: – can hear everybody, uh, listening now just cheering ’cause they’re so excited.

Liat Gat: Um, a huge update, probably bigger and fancier than I now, you know, I understand maybe it, it didn’t need to be such a big process but, uh, I’m learning, you know, so a, a, a huge redo to address all of the issues that people have that

make it hard to find the videos they're looking for, you know, and, and hard to sign in and find your classes and just it's a, so I learned how to design web sites and, um, to like designed this new one and, and we, our, making it happen very slowly and I'm learning how to ask for what I want which is like for people to go faster.

Stacy Stone: And my readers are waiting.

Liat Gat: Oh, everyone is waiting, but it's okay, it, it's really nearing to completion now and I'm, I am so excited so I was working up, but I was working on that for, I don't know, maybe a year and a half now, so. Um, but that has, that, that's been happening and also, I have been working on my book, which is due out in September of 2015, which is, I think tentatively titled, Become a Fearless Knitter or the Fearless Knitter and if anybody listening has a vote either way, you can post in the comments of this blog post 'cause I have, I'm really on the fence, but, um, and so that is a book that's for, um, beginning to intermediate knitters, like for people that are right after they've learned how to knit, basically, and it's, it's a print book that's gonna be sold in like Barnes & Noble and yarn stores and so it, it doesn't have video, it has photos, step-by-step photos, but –

Stacy Stone: They're –

Liat Gat: – I am –

Stacy Stone: – amazing. Anyway, 'cause you, tell them, can you tell them a little bit about what you did to make those?

Liat Gat: Yeah.

Stacy Stone: Like your –

Liat Gat: I'm might even –

Stacy Stone: – process?

Liat Gat: Yep, yeah. I would love to. Um, I definitely wanted, just like how I wanted to make my videos more like what people needed when they were looking to learn the techniques, I wanted to make my step-by-step photos in my book the same way, like I wanted to make them so easy to learn from, um, because a lot of the books out there, they just have a big photo and then, but the, they have a big photo that takes up a lot of room but the hands are small and the yarn is small and

like hard to see and then it has like a line of text and you don't even know like which photo it's talking about, and then it has the net photo and you have to like imagine in your head what's actually happening which is totally counterintuitive 'cause that's, they're supposed to be showing you what's happening, so –

Stacy Stone: Like I'm not even reading that book and it sounds terrible.

Liat Gat: I know, I know. And I mean I learned how to knit out of, out of knitting books and, and I know that, that, that's just, I think, the way that it's always been done, a photo, line of text, photo, line of text because like well, how many photos can you put in. Oh my gosh. And I was like I am gonna put in as many photos as it takes for people just to be able to look at the pictures, like scan their eye across the picture and see the movement happening like a, like a stop motion video or like flip, or like those old flip books that you used to –

Stacy Stone: Yeah.

Liat Gat: – make. Like that's how easy it's gonna be and they're not gonna have to picture it in their head, um, and, and I'll, you know, I'll point out some relevant points with, with words as needed but I, and maybe it's because I was learning about designing web sites and usability and all these exciting things that you can get really right or get really wrong and make the experience really frustrating, and so I, I decided to apply that to the book too, like people don't have time to figure out what it was that you were trying to say, they don't have time to figure out where you put stuff, they only have time to like look for what they're looking for and if they don't get it, like they'll move on.

Stacy Stone: Mm hmm.

Liat Gat: And so I wanted to make the book the same way, like you open it, you look at it, you're like oh, I get it. And that I will, I'll spend a long time on my end making it happen so that the reader can not spend a lot of time on their end like figuring it out. So the, I'm really happy about how the, I took 8,000 pictures –

Stacy Stone: Oh my.

Liat Gat: – 6,000 of which made, made it into the book, um, and but they're all in like little, they're all together, maybe I'll put, in the blog post I'll put a little example –

Stacy Stone: Yeah.

Liat Gat: – of, of –

Stacy Stone: That'd be –

Liat Gat: – what I came up. Okay, so you guys can see what I mean, but, um, so the photos are gonna be great and I was, I, and I, I was working hard to meet that deadline in August and I'm still working on it on the photo shoots and, and, and the, putting actual photos together so a lot of my time has been occupied with the, with that book and the web site and not so much with, um, with, with blogging and coming out with new videos, unfortunately, um, but I've been logging a lot of hours in front of the camera.

Stacy Stone: Well, so logging a lot of hours in front of the camera, but also, you're taking pictures of things that you've knitted, right? So to show people in the book, um, what to do, so have you knitted anything like interesting or are you working on any personal projects that you can tell the readers about that you've, uh, liked or that you've taken good lessons from?

Liat Gat: Yes. Well, personally, I am always knitting a pair of socks.

Stacy Stone: Hmm.

Liat Gat: Um, always. Like the, the, what I love about socks is that you, if you, if you have the Fleegle heel formula, which I can link to in the post, you can and if you, you know, and if, and if you're listening and you don't know how to knit round tubes and you don't know how to knit socks, like don't worry about this, it's actually not as hard as you think and I will teach when it's time. I have classes on it, um, but it is, um, it's, it's, it's definitely well within everyone's reach, um, and all, I get so many comments from people being like I can't, I can't believe I'm actually knitting socks, like I'm so happy, you know, because it's –

Stacy Stone: Mm hmm.

Liat Gat: – it's a fun project and it's like you think it's a lot harder than it actually is but you can buy whatever yarn you want and knit socks out of it without checking your gauge or anything because you just put 'em on your feet and like there's a little formula –

Stacy Stone: Hmm.

Liat Gat: – and so what I love is you can go into a yarn store and, you know, you have all this impulse, like I love this yarn.

Stacy Stone: Yeah.

Liat Gat: And so, um, it happens to people that aren't even knitters, it's crazy –

Stacy Stone: Yeah.

Liat Gat: – people, you could –

Stacy Stone: I know. Uh, I know. I have –

Liat Gat: Yeah.

Stacy Stone: – I have tons of yar, yarn and I'm like a very beginner, beginner knitter.

Liat Gat: Yeah. Um, well, you're gonna love my book, but, um, you can walk in and buy the yarn and, and wind it up and start a pair of socks and like, um, just start knitting and you don't have to think, which is so, so, I, I, we went to go see *Gone with the Wind* yesterday and I was like oh man, this is gonna be a haul. I need to bring a project, so I brought my socks, um, so all you need is some, uh, like soft merino wool that's preferably washable, machine washable so, but other than the socks that I knit, you know, for my for, to have something to knit for fun, one of the projects that I did for the book and I, I can put pictures in the blog post, um, we wanted to do some, uh, uh, my friend, Julia, who has helped, she, she helped put together the bind-offs eBook, did bind-offs until she was blue in the face, um, uh, she told me, um, that a lot of beginning books don't have, introduce some of the more advanced techniques soon enough, so stuff like knitting with colors or knitting with two yarns, like it's saved until way later until people are like, feel like they can't do it because it, they haven't done it yet or something, and so we decided to put in, um, in one of the pretty early chapters, we did knitting with charts and we did knitting with two colors and a really easy way to knit with two colors is mosaic knitting –

Stacy Stone: Mm hmm.

Liat Gat: – where you don't actually have to hold both yarns as you go in the, at the same time. You do one row with one color and then one row with the other color, but it makes a really beautiful design and I, and so the projects that I designed for the book were all throw pillows –

Stacy Stone: Hmm.

Liat Gat: – because, 'cause that's actually really basic, it's just a square and then you do it yourself or you go to the upholsterer and you sew a fabric back on and stick a pillow insert in.

Stacy Stone: Right.

Liat Gat: So it's just something that's more exciting than another scarf of a potholder.

Stacy Stone: Sure.

Liat Gat: We didn't do, I don't have any potholders in the book or not pot, like dishcloths. Oh no, there is, there is one dishcloth. I –

Stacy Stone: Oh no.

Liat Gat: – 'cause they're such good, they're really good teaching tools, like for some basic stuff but, but it, instead of doing more and more dishcloths, we did throw pillows and there are these mosaic throw pillows and they look, I'm so proud of how, how they look. They look like really advanced projects but they are like –

Stacy Stone: Huh.

Liat Gat: – in the, you know, they're in like the first half of the book, um, and, and you learn how to read charts, I think, at the same time so I actually just finished knitting the actual pillows myself, um, and they're gorgeous, uh, so I'll, I'll post some pictures of how those turned out, um, with this interview, I think. Uh, so mosaic is a little, sort of a little known technique but one that I was having a lot of fun with and –

Stacy Stone: Amazing.

Liat Gat: – yeah.

Stacy Stone: So, um, you said you were going to watch and you said we were going to watch, uh, *Gone with the Wind* yesterday, so –

Liat Gat: Mm hmm.

Stacy Stone: – tell us a little bit about, like I know that, um, everyone has seen your adventures, um, in Argentina and, and elsewhere so what are you doing personally right now?

Liat Gat: Well, right –

Stacy Stone: Where are you living?

Liat Gat: – now, I am, um, I'd love to say oh, I'm on the Island of Majorca, you know, but –

Stacy Stone: Yeah. — Doing this interview via hammock with a daiquiri in my hand.

Liat Gat: Exactly, exactly. Um, but, but no, it's much more mundane but I am down in Southern California. I'm from Northern California and everybody who gets my emails can see my little address at the bottom of the emails, but, but I live down in Southern California. I was house sitting for my sister and, um, and house sitting her, playing with her cats while she was gone and then she came back and I like didn't leave. Um, I'm, I'm having such a nice time down here with her. She's a, a, uh, much older than me so we have, we don't, we never lived together.

Stacy Stone: Hmm.

Liat Gat: And now, we're both grownups and learning how to, how it is to live together as grownups and I learned how to surf.

Stacy Stone: Awesome.

Liat Gat: I, yeah, I, um, I tried to apply my knit formula, which I'll cover in the webinar, to my surf, 'cause surfing is hard.

Stacy Stone: Yeah.

Liat Gat: Um, and, uh, but I decided to really, like after a few months, I decided to make the most of living down here 'cause I had felt, I was feeling like all, all alone and so –

Stacy Stone: Mm hmm.

Liat Gat: – um, I learned how to surf and I also learned about, like getting out in, for healthy amounts of sun exposure so that I can like have my Vitamin D and so now, I'm like all tan and –

Stacy Stone: Nice.

Liat Gat: – yeah, so, so and I brought everything with me, my lights, my camera, all the tripod, all the yarn and needles and, and suitcases so, um, so that's, my sister works, she's in the movie industry and so she's sort of helping educate me retroactively for, with movies.

Stacy Stone: Ah, I see. Okay.

Liat Gat: So –

Stacy Stone: What's next –

Liat Gat: – we saw –

Stacy Stone: – on your list then, do you have one?

Liat Gat: Movies?

Stacy Stone: Yeah.

Liat Gat: Uh, Camelot. I have, we're supposed to see Camelot, the musical, next.

Stacy Stone: Oh.

Liat Gat: That's one of her –

Stacy Stone: Okay.

Liat Gat: Yeah.

Stacy Stone: I haven't seen that either. Maybe I should go with you.

Liat Gat: Well, we're gonna see it at home. I don't think it's in the theater.

Stacy Stone: Oh.

Liat Gat: This whole –

Stacy Stone: Yeah.

Liat Gat: – Gone with the Wind on the big screen was like a special thing –

Stacy Stone: Ah.

Liat Gat: – so. Yeah, we're doing like Hitchcock and, you know, all sorts of classic movies.

Stacy Stone: Amazing.

Liat Gat: Oh, and I learned how to indoor skydive. It's so –

Stacy Stone: How did, was –

Liat Gat: – fun.

Stacy Stone: – it fun? Yeah.

Liat Gat: Google it. Yeah, it's really fun. It's not scary at all. It's expensive though, so you, I can't really do it very much but, um, there's been a lot. I, there's been a lot to enjoy. I learned how to like work hard on KnitFreedom and also go do fun things at the same time, so that –

Stacy Stone: —That's a huge accomplishment. I know as a, as a business owner and I'm sure a lot of our readers can, uh, understand that too, it's hard to work hard and play.

Liat Gat: Yeah. Yeah, but I'm, I'm getting better at it, so like you can't surf all day anyway, it's too tiring and it gets hot, so I'm just doing, you know, my life in little pieces around, around KnitFreedom and these deadlines that I'm just, I'm, I'm loving the work I'm doing on KnitFreedom right now, although, I want to say that in, in the near future, we're gonna be coming out with this new web site for all my lovely readers and then I am hoping to be able to get back to doing more eBooks and more blog posts. I know people are waiting on me to do classes about sweaters and about lace knitting and, um, I just have to give that stuff my undivided attention otherwise, it's not gonna be excellent.

Stacy Stone: Mm hmm.

Liat Gat: It's not gonna be up to the standard that, that, you know, I expect and that my readers expect.

Stacy Stone: Yeah.

Liat Gat: So.

Stacy Stone: That's definitely a KnitFreedom secret sauce is focus.

Liat Gat: Um, yeah. But just from my, I did this, I don't know if you, if you've heard about StrengthsFinder, probably from the Gallup Poll –

Stacy Stone: Yeah, uh huh.

Liat Gat: – people. Yeah, I did, I did that a few years ago. Focus is my No. 1 strength –

Stacy Stone: That does –

Liat Gat: – apparently.

Stacy Stone: – not surprise me at all.

Liat Gat: It's called focus, so as soon as I can turn my focus onto like lace knitting and, and it just has to be really good. You know, there's lots of stuff out there about lace and it's a big topic and I just want to really break it down in the right way, so it just takes a little bit of focus.

Stacy Stone: So speaking of, uh, focus and, and where we're going next and what we're focusing on next, we have the webinar that's coming up on October 11th.

Liat Gat: Mm hmm.

Stacy Stone: And really excited about that. Do you want to tell everybody a little bit about what we're gonna be talking about?

Liat Gat: Yeah. I'm gonna be teaching, um, some specific things during this webinar, actually, slides with pictures and stuff like that, and basically, the topic of the webinar is the three things that every knitting superstar needs, needs to know. It's like the three things that I think, like what did you ask me? What if, if you could pick three things that you think everyone, every knitter should know to become a knitting superstar, like what would that be?

Stacy Stone: Yep.

Liat Gat: What were they for you and, um, should I tell 'em what they are or should I –

Stacy Stone: Um.

Liat Gat: – wait for the web?

Stacy Stone: How about tell 'em one and then we'll save the others.

Liat Gat: Okay. One of them is, one of them is attitude and it also has to do with fixing mistakes.

Stacy Stone: Mm hmm.

Liat Gat: So key, so. That's all.

Stacy Stone: You'll have to come to the webinar to hear the rest.

Liat Gat: But it's gonna be actual, it's not gonna be like this, like this interview with stories and, and anecdotes and stuff, it's gonna be pretty specifically related to learning to, to some really good takeaways, some learning, uh, tools and, and things that you can take away and, and apply to your own knitting –

Stacy Stone: The way I look at it is like it's a supersize version of one of your blog posts, like, you know, the very tactical, um, practical tips that people need to be better knitters.

Liat Gat: Yeah. Yeah. Exactly.

Stacy Stone: All right. Well, thank you for this and I'm sure, um, your readers will be really happy to hear your voice and hear what you're up to and hear that the new web site is coming soon.

Liat Gat: Yes, I hope so, if, if you are listening to this, um, let me know what you, what you think. Please share with me anything that's on your mind. Um, this is the first interview I've done like this, um, and, and it's, it's for you, so please post a comment or you can also email me, um, and, and let me know and we can continue to connect and I'll see you next time.

Stacy Stone: Bye.