

VOYAGE STL



Highlighter Series: An Inspired Chat with Gabrielle Stahlschmidt

THE MOST INSPIRING
STORIES IN ST. LOUIS

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MEET GABRIELLE

I'm Gabrielle Stahlschmidt, a business owner (SHE-E-O!), professional voice teacher, and mentor who's passionate about helping others step into the fullest version of their voice. My work lives at the intersection of artistry, education, and empowerment. I've spent years performing, teaching, and building a studio that's become so much more than a place to take voice lessons, it's a powerful community. In addition to my private studio, I'm also honored to inspire the next generation of voices as a Professor of Voice at Missouri Baptist University.

What makes my studio special is that we are not just about learning to sing well, we promote the growth of the whole person. I work with a variety of ages and goals, from beginners to professionals, and we focus just as much on vocal health, confidence, and creativity as we do on technique. My approach is very personalized, because no two voices, or journeys, are the same. I also run a brand called Own Your Voice University, which includes everything from apparel to vocal health tools and continuing education classes. It was born out of a desire to turn values into action, to remind people that their voice matters, and that using it well can change lives. A portion of our proceeds goes to supporting various local charities aimed at helping in the fight against human trafficking, homelessness and domestic violence.

My own story as an artist and educator has been shaped by both a lifelong love of music and a deep passion for people. I've learned that excellence means more than perfection; it's about showing up with purpose, staying grounded in your "why," and continually investing in others. At the end of the day, what brings me the most joy is seeing students light up when they realize the power they hold, not just as singers, but as people. Helping them grow, lead, and lift others along the way is the heart of everything I do.

- Gabrielle Stahlschmidt

GABRIELLE STUDIO OF MUSIC



WHO TAUGHT YOU THE MOST ABOUT WORK?

Without a doubt, my father. One of the things I've always admired most about him is the way people respond to his presence with trust, respect, and openness. I grew up watching him create safe, welcoming spaces where people felt seen and heard. His compassion and gentleness weren't just personality traits, they were the way he worked, the way he led, and the way he loved people.

Those qualities left a deep mark on me. They shaped how I view leadership and how I wanted to move through the world. In fact, they became the foundation for my own voice studio, a space intentionally built around community, safety, and connection. **My hope has always been that, like my father, I can be someone who helps others feel safe enough to show up fully, speak honestly, and use their gifts to bring healing and light into the world.**

I'm forever grateful to him for modeling a kind of quiet strength, the kind that leads with compassion, listens deeply, and serves others well. That's the kind of work I want to be known for.



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IF YOU COULD SAY ANYTHING TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Dear younger me,

Your gentleness is a strength. The way you listen, love, and show up for others, those quiet things you're not always sure matter, will become some of your most powerful tools.

Don't be afraid of the slow seasons. Growth won't always look like forward motion, and some of your most meaningful work will happen behind the scenes. Trust the process. Stay grounded in your purpose. Don't be afraid to build something that doesn't exist yet. Time is shaping your character, clarifying your values, and teaching you how to build something that lasts. What feels uncertain now will one day become your greatest gift to others.

You're allowed to do things differently. You don't need permission to dream differently, to lead in your own way, or to love your work deeply without compromising your integrity. The world will try to define success for you, but you get to decide what kind of impact you want to make, and how you want to make it.

And most of all, keep going. **Your voice will make room for others to find theirs, and that's a beautiful legacy to build.**



What are the biggest lies your industry tells itself?

I think one of the biggest things the music and performing arts industry often gets wrong is the belief that talent alone determines worth, or that you have to constantly prove yourself to earn a place at the table. That mindset can lead to a lot of fear, burnout, and comparison, especially for young artists who are still trying to find their voice.

In my experience, the most powerful performances, and the most fulfilling careers, come from artists who feel safe, seen, and supported as whole people, not just as performers. That's why **I've built my studio to be a place where students don't have to earn their belonging.** We focus on excellence, yes, but not at the cost of mental health, identity, or joy.

Our industry would be stronger if we emphasized collaboration over competition, and if we recognized that nurturing an artist's heart is just as important as refining their technique.



WHAT'S THE STORY YOU HOPE PEOPLE TELL ABOUT YOU WHEN YOU'RE GONE?

"I hope the story people tell about me is that I helped others come home to themselves."

I hope they say I didn't just teach music or voice, but that I taught people how to show up for their own lives with honesty, with courage, and with tenderness. That I modeled integrity in my work, and kindness in my relationships. That I was the kind of person who remembered your name, your dreams, and the battles you were quietly fighting, and who met all of it with grace.

I hope I'm remembered as someone who told the truth, even when it was hard, and who kept showing up, even when it was inconvenient. That I used whatever platform I had, big or small, to elevate others, to build community, and to leave things a little brighter than I found them.

In the end, I hope my life was a kind of invitation to live more fully, love more deeply, and to never underestimate the power of one voice raised with intention.



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