

You're listening to the Your Next Best Step podcast, episode number 12. Today, we are talking all about three things that are potentially blocking your growth and why these three things are coming up, so stay tuned.

Hey, there. Welcome back. I'm Theresa Cantley, and I am so glad you're here. Of course, you know who I am. We are on episode number 12. Can you believe that? Episode number 12, and it's a nice spring day, and while I'm recording this podcast, the lawn people decided to mow our neighbor's lawn and the birds decided to start chirping at the same time. I have birds chirping. I've closed all the windows, but you can kind of still hear it. I apologize if you hear, but things happen. What are you going to do? It's nature. People gotta take care of their lawns, but it's all good.

Anyway, I hope you are having an amazing spring day. I am so glad you're here. I am getting some amazing feedback about the podcast and about the topics. I've gotten some awesome reviews, five-star reviews. Yes. So, so, so excited. But I am just so blessed and so grateful to have the chance to be able to create this podcast and share all my great insights with all of you and things from my own experiences that I've been through myself owning a business and working in entrepreneurial environments for, oh, gosh, over 20 years now, but also working with people one-on-one over the years and things they've experienced, things that they've gone through, things that they've gotten through. Hopefully, all of this wrapped up together can help you with anything that you're struggling with in your business.

It was funny because the other day, I was working on a new program that I have coming out called The Business... You're going to get this great insider information right here right now. It's called The Business Growth Formula. Woo-hoo. It's designed to do just that, give you a formula and help you create a blueprint so that you could start growing your business.

I was talking to my team, and we were working through a lot of the content and the copy. It was funny because something came up that I have heard for years and years and years about myself that I never realized really is something that I need to start putting into my content and my messaging and just really putting out there, which is I am a total blend of science meets zen. People have said this to me for years, and I never, ever, ever thought about it until, like I said, we're putting together this new program. It's a lot of new amazing content to really help you get clear and to build a strategic plan to get you unstuck and get you moving forward.

When I was talking about the content with my team, this topic came up of, "Theresa, you are like a scientist. You go into the science aspect of it, but then you have this way of bringing this zen piece into it and blending the two together," which I thought was, which was kind of funny because, like I said, I've heard it for years. I mean, I'm a blend of my mother and my father. My father is a, he's a scientist. He's an environmental engineer and a mechanical engineer, and then my mother is just a total creative. I mean, my mother can sew and knit and decorate and do all this amazingly creative stuff. I'm a total blend of the two of them, which makes me different from a lot of business strategists because, like I said, I bring in that zen piece and that creative piece, and I have that science piece and put it altogether to use my strategic genius to help people grow their business.

It's just funny. I kind of wanted to tell that story because I have this new stuff that's coming out, these new programs and everything, so stay tuned for the early bird information so that you can sign up and

register and get on the wait list for when we open the doors because it is going to be amazing, and it really is a blend of that science and zen. It's a process that I've created that has helped.

I mean, one of my clients, we were talking the other day, they've grown 86%, 86% implementing this. I've had clients that have told me that they've grown 30%. I've had clients that have created totally new income streams to put into their business that they never, ever thought would either even be possible, and they've just totally, like their business has just gone gangbusters.

Stay tuned for this because, like I said, it is a mix of science meets zen. You'll love it. It'll be awesome. Like I said, it will help you to grow your business if you've reached a plateau and not really sure why and not really sure how to get through it, which brings me to our topic today, which is all about three things that potentially are blocking your growth and why these things come up. I recently had a conversation. I have a client that I work with, and their business was just growing exponentially, and it grew fast.

We have difficult seasons in our business. We have seasons where we are building momentum. We're figuring stuff out, we're building momentum. Then we, potentially, our business goes through a season where we have a lot of growth. Sometimes that growth happens fast, sometimes that growth happens slow, but we have a season of where our business is going through a lot of growth. When we're looking at our gross profit or net profit, you can really see a huge surge and a huge growth from one season to the next.

Then after that, we go through a season of potentially going back, and because we've had that huge growth, particularly in our net profit, we have a lot more money that we can then take and reinvest back into the business to do things that we've been wanting to do, investing back into infrastructure or in, maybe it's even remodeling your store, maybe it's getting a bigger office, whatever that looks like, hiring new people, hiring new team members.

We have these different seasons in our business. I was talking to this client, and they saw a giant surge, like I said, a giant growth in their business over the past couple years, but what they've seen recently is their team, stuff isn't quite coming into alignment, and the team isn't quite aligned as it was before, and things that they were doing previously to grow aren't working anymore.

I sat, and I listened to what they were saying. I thought to myself, "Hmm." I listened to what they were saying, and I've made my own observations. What came out of my mouth next was quite shocking. What was happening is that they've seen all of this success, and what started to happen is that the team, the management team started to get comfortable, started to get complacent because what they were doing to get to this level had worked. They had a huge amount of success. I mean, huge in percentage-wise, growing like 30%, 25-30% in one year. The things that they were doing and the plans that were put into place, the strategic plans that were put into place and the marketing habits that they built and the daily productivity habits that they built, what ended up happening... and then they got huge bonuses, but what ended up happening is that along the way, they got comfortable.

My answer to them was, "You need to give up the good to get to the great because what got you to this point is not going to get you to the next level." That just doesn't mean actions. It means the mindset that you have surrounding your business because what I was starting to hear is, "Things are hard. Things are difficult. Business is frustrating. I'm frustrated." That whole mindset piece needs to shift, how you

view your business. Do you view your business as being difficult or hard, or do you... If I can get my words out. Do you view your business as being easy? It's easy to generate money. Money flows to us. It's easy to bring customers to our door. That mindset piece and how we are showing up every day needs to shift, but then also our behavior and what we're doing. Like I said, the things that they were doing to get them to this level aren't going to get them to the next level.

The last piece is the perspective, the perspective around what needs to happen, around what has happened so far and what we've been able to achieve but also not staying in current circumstance, but actually looking towards the future and moving from future possibilities. What was happening is because they've reached this level of success. I've seen this, I've seen this with people who have come to me for help because they've already built two or three successful businesses, and they are working on building another business, and they can't get it going. They can't get it moving forward.

The reason is because you've gotten to a certain level of success and you've seen a certain level of success. We get comfortable, probably because in our mind, we think, "Oh, my gosh, I've done all of this work. So far, I've pushed myself, and I've gotten to this level, and now I've seen success, and I feel comfortable. I feel like I can just skate through and do the things that we've always done, and things will just automatically work because I've already seen that success."

In reality, that's not the way that things work. We get comfortable because we push ourselves to a certain point, and now we've seen the success. Now, it's like things aren't working. Things aren't... People get comfortable. They don't want to push themselves anymore because that's what ends up happening. You're the one that has to keep pushing yourself, and when you've seen the success that you've wanted to get and you've seen the results that you've wanted to get, we kind of say, "Okay, you know what, I can kind of skate now. I don't need to learn anything new. I got this."

That's where the breakdown starts to happen is we get comfortable because we're the only one pushing ourselves. Just like that management team, there was no push. There was no... They were starting to function in current circumstance. They were starting to function in the circumstance that they were already in and saying, "Oh, well, we've had the success. We're just going to keep riding on that success, and things are going to just keep working."

What they started to see is no, that there were a lot of blocks that were happening, blocks that were preventing them to continue to grow because people got comfortable. Again, like I said, I've had people come to me that have built several businesses before, and they've even said, "This business isn't growing. It's not working, this new business." Then we talk about, "Okay, well, what are you doing? Let's assess." "Oh, well, I'm doing this and this and this, and it worked before, so I know it can work this time." "Okay, well, obviously it's not, and obviously we're having this conversation because something's not working, so that hasn't worked for you so far, so you gotta do something different."

I've gotten a lot of pushback where, "Oh, no. I'm a strategy person. We're strategy people. We built strategies every day all day long, and we've built these huge businesses before. We don't need another strategy." Then my answer is, "Okay. Well, obviously, again, what got you here is not getting you to the next step, so you need to do something different. You need to start pushing yourself and, again, getting uncomfortable," because as we grow and we get to a certain level, if we start getting comfortable and

complacent, then we end up stagnating. We stop growing. We get, like things get stale, and a lot of times, what ends up happening is businesses will go backwards, so you gotta shake stuff up.

Well, guess what? Every time you go to the next level, things get harder, and guess what, people typically do not like change. They see change as a threat. They see change because they've already come out of their comfort zone, they've pushed themselves, they've gotten to this level of success, and guess what happens? We need to push ourselves out of our comfort zone again and get uncomfortable. As they say, to be an entrepreneur or have entrepreneurial thinking, you need to get comfortable being uncomfortable. You need to get comfortable not knowing what's going to happen next but just functioning and doing the things that you need to do to keep yourself moving.

Again, a lot of business owners and managers and leaders, we get to a certain level, and we get comfortable. Because we've seen that success, that doesn't mean that we are now untouchable. That doesn't mean that we are all-knowing and we're always going to be successful because we've gotten to this level, we don't need to learn anything new. Well, guess what? The world is constantly changing. Business is constantly changing. Buyer behavior is constantly changing. Things just change, and the world doesn't change on its own. It needs people with new, fresh ideas who believe in those ideas no matter what and are willing to continue to put themselves out there and put their innovations out there and their inventions to ultimately make a difference and make an impact.

But when we get comfortable and we want to stay in that comfort zone, because we've already pushed ourselves out, so now we have a new comfort zone. We've pushed ourselves out of our old comfort zone. We've done the things. We've gotten the success. We've gotten the huge bonuses. Everybody's been in alignment. We had these new things that we've implemented, and now we have a new comfort zone. Guess what? Those ideas, new ideas can't come from a place of a comfort zone. New innovations can't come from a place of a comfort zone because when we stay in our comfort zone, we stay in our old habits, our old behaviors, things that have been comfortable to us, and growth and change can't happen from that place.

Because we've been the ones that have been pushing ourselves to get to this level, when we reach this level, that level we think we want, we stop because we feel like we don't have to push ourselves anymore, but in reality, we do because when we stop at that level, we stop that wondering or that potential, that future potential, that highest potential that we have inside that we might not even know we have, but if we stop pushing ourselves because we think we've gotten to this level of success and we say, "Oh, well, I'm good. I'm just going to be comfortable," we'll never know what next-level there is for us and our business.

In having this conversation with my client and this other person that came to me, this other client that came to me that needed my help, in having that conversation, that's exactly what was happening is that everybody got comfortable and everybody got a new level of a comfort zone, and then that's where stuff started to stop. What's behind all of that is, like I said, fear. It's a form of fear. It's that fear, really, I mean, some of it is fear of your own next level of success. Some of it is a fear of, "Oh, my gosh. We gotta go through and do things even that much better. What if it fails? What if things come crashing down? What if this doesn't work?" That's where people say, "Oh, well, it's better if we just stay in this comfort zone and just ride on what we've been doing so far and just keep doing the things that we've done so far," but again, what got you to this level will not get you to the next level.

What happens when we get comfortable and we're in this complacency, and I see it all the time. I see it. When I was in corporate, we went through the same thing where they had gotten to whatever their number was that they wanted to get to, and then everybody got comfortable. It was like, "Oh, we're at the top of our game, and we're the top dogs in the industry." Well, guess what happened? No, other people came in. Competitors came in, competitors who were selling stuff less or competitors who were doing things better, had better marketing, had better connection with their customers that they were trying to attract. Then guess what? What got you to this level won't get you to the next level.

Three things that end up happening when we get comfortable and when we're functioning in this space of complacency. Like I said, when you reach a level of success, it doesn't make you untouchable. It makes you complacent and comfortable and potentially lazy. The three things that end up happening, or three reasons why growth can't happen in that place of comfortable and complacent is number one is we stop getting consistent learning, but not just learning, but also implementing. We think to ourselves, "We already know what to do. We'd already done it, so we don't need to learn anything new," so we stop that consistent learning new things, and it could even be making mistakes, learning how to do it better, and then trying something new, but that lack of consistent learning and implement.

Sometimes, it's not even just the business owner. It trickles down to the rest of the team. They don't want to learn new things. They don't want to try new things. They don't want to implement new policies, new procedures. Take things to the next level. It's not just about doing things well. It's taking the things you do amazing and doing them even that much better.

A lot of times also with getting comfortable and trying to get uncomfortable again, that's when we really need to take a look at our business and say, "What excess do we have here? What can we get rid of, but then also, at the same time, what do we do amazing that we can do even that much better to build the key experiences in our business such as new customers that are coming through the door, people who don't even know you're there and you're attracting them, but then also people who have been with you for a long time, how can you reengage with them and build a better relationship?"

That lack of consistency with learning, but not just learning, implementing. Implementing is the big thing. You can learn all kinds of stuff. I see business owners do this all the time. They read all these articles, but then they don't do anything with it. Well, you're reading the article, next thing you gotta do is how can I implement what I just learned? How can I show up better? It goes back to mindset needs to shift, behavior needs to shift, and your perspective needs to shift. It needs to go to that next level. It needs to go up.

When we're learning, we can't just read something and forget it, but we need to also implement. When we get comfortable, we either think that we don't need to learn anything new, or if we're doing something where we're learning something and we just, "Ugh, well, my business is fine," we don't implement that new thing. We don't bring that new idea into the business.

The second thing is a lack of connection. When we get comfortable, that's when we stop communicating. I like to have, I have these five things that teams need, that bring teams together. The foundation for this is responsibility and integrity. It's communication, connection, creativity, collaboration, and... Oh, I have creativity on there twice. Community, connection, collaboration, creativity, and consistency. I wrote creativity twice. Those are my five Cs.

When we get comfortable and we think, "Oh, everything's going good. Everything's fine," some of those bad habits start to creep back in. They start... It's just like when you say, like if you've been consistent and you've been exercising every day, and you have this new routine, and it's been great, and you've been doing it for so long, and then one day, you say, "Oh, I'm not going to do abs today." But you keep going with it, and then the next day, you say, "Oh, I'm good. I'm going to skip a day." Those bad habits start to creep back in.

When we have a lack of connection with our customers and with our team or even with our community, that's when breakdown start to happen. That's when the collaboration suffers. That's when obviously communication between teams suffers. That's when we stop connection. I mean, one of the things was the, my one client, they were sending out a weekly email, connecting with their customers. Then along the way, some things happened, some bumps along the road happened, and they stopped that weekly email. Well, guess what? People started asking, "Well, am I still on your email list? I'm not getting your emails." Then people started dropping off. Then it was like they weren't even hearing from customers that they were normally hearing from. People weren't attending events.

This is how that starts to have the breakdown, but then also, when we get comfortable, that's how we stop connecting with each other, connecting with the team, making sure that we're communicating new ideas, we're communicating there's a breakdown in policy or procedure, like let's take a look at it and examine it so that we can make it even that much better because as the business grows, things need to grow with it. Policies need to grow, procedures need to grow, experiences need to grow. We're constantly needing to be changing and doing things even that much better for the ultimate goal of making an impact for the people that we're connected to: customers, community, each other. When we get comfortable, we lose that lack of connection, which then forms breakdowns.

The third thing is, and you can probably figure this out, is we lose our focus. We really lose our focus on what it is that we really do, the intention behind what we're doing with each project, each service, each experience that we're building. We lose our focus just on a daily basis. When we get comfortable, we start to slip back into, like I said, bad habits. We end up doing random things. We end up... Our commitments starts to shift.

That was one question that I asked is, "What are you committed to in this business?" It was, "Oh, I'm committed to growing it, and I'm committed to doing this," and da, da, da, da. It was like, "Okay, let me see your calendar. Let me see your planner. Let me see what..." because when you work with me, everybody gets a 90X planner. It's one of my favorite ones. It's great for planning out goals and projects and everything and keeping yourself accountable. It's "let me take a look at that, let me see what you got," and it's empty.

Then I ask the question again, "What are you committed to? What is your commitment?" Well, the commitment is to being a firefighter and to doing random activities and driving yourself nuts and going back into overwhelm. When we get comfortable, we lose our focus. We lose our focus on what the vital few things are that you need to do to move the needle in your business. When we lose that focus and that connection and that consistency with learning, that's when things start to go backwards. Growth can't happen in a place of random busyness. Growth can't happen in a place where people are not communicating and connecting and collaborating, and growth can definitely not happen in a place



where you stop yourself from learning, where you shut off learning, consistent learning and implementation.

That's when people get stuck. People can't figure out what to do next. A lot of this happens, getting comfortable, like I said, you've seen a level of success, and you start to get comfortable because you've achieved it because a lot of times what happens is what got them to that point was a ton of effort, a ton of randomness, a ton of things that they didn't really need to do but they did anyway, which ended up leaving them tired and potentially facing burnout. That's what ends up having people say, "Well, I've reached this level of success. I'm comfortable." Well, that will prevent you from really figuring out and seeing, like digging deep, even deeper to see really what your highest potential is.

If you're feeling this right now, and maybe you're looking at your own business, and you're saying, "You know what? I got all of this going on. I know I've gotten comfortable." Sometimes, getting comfortable, and this is like, I know, I face this myself is that, and I didn't even realize I was comfortable, but what happened was I was addicted to work. I was addicted to working longer hours, being stressed, and having anxiety.

I didn't realize, and this is, like I said, this is a little on the warp, side, but what I didn't realize is that I had focused so much on growing my business that getting uncomfortable meant that I needed to delegate and do less stuff that wasn't in my strengths that I could delegate and have someone else do and do more things like content creation, getting my podcast started, and do more of the vital few things that only I could do. But instead, I got comfortable being overworked, overstressed, and having anxiety until one of my mentors actually pointed it out and said, "The reason why your results are the way that they are is because you got comfortable." I'm like, "I am not comfortable." He's like, "Yes, you are. You are comfortable being stressed."

It was like, "Holy Mackerel." Ding, ding, ding, light bulb go off. It really, for myself, it really took a lot for me to push out of that comfort zone and say, "No. I don't want to be comfortable being stressed. I don't want to be comfortable having task after task, task, task, task, project, project, project, project and just filling my day." For me, I wanted to take my business to the next level, so I had to look at all of this stuff and say, "Yeah, I wasn't implementing the right way. I had a lack of connection because I wasn't giving the things that I really needed to give to my team to do so that I could focus on really being the CEO and the visionary." Also, my focus was off.

The things that I talk about and teach are not just... I talk about experiences and things that I see when I work with people, but there's stuff I've actually been through, gotten through, gotten to the other side myself. The three things I'm going to give you in case this is you and in case you're experiencing these same things, the one thing that I want to tell you is that when we get comfortable, a lot of times, well, more often than not and probably all the time, there is fear behind there. It's that fear of going to the next level. It's that fear of what's next or what do I have to do, do I have to do all of that hard stuff to take my business and my team to the next level? I actually had a client that said that to me is that their level of success, they were just going to ride on it because it was comfortable.

But what the underlying piece is, and I face this myself, is that there was a fear. There was a fear of what you needed to do to go to the next level. Like I said, as you're going to the next level, the struggles don't go away, the fear doesn't go away. It actually gets bigger. The struggles get harder. They get bigger. The

fear gets... but it's how you show up, and if you show up the same way that you have been, you can't tackle and face and get through those bigger fears.

That's where our mindset needs to go to the next level, our behavior, understanding what our strengths are and what our team's strengths are and hiring people for their values and what they can bring to the organization and resetting our perspective, our own beliefs that we have about our business. That is what's going to push us out of that comfortableness. Facing that fear and showing up in those difficult times anyway is what's going to move us forward and get us to start growing again, realizing that we don't have all of the answers and that getting a mentor to help us to go to the next level, getting somebody to help us that has been there, done that, gotten through it, gotten to the other side, and they can help you to move forward and help you to get to that next level.

What happens is, and what the underlying piece of this is, is that fear, that fear of, "Oh, my gosh. I did all these hard things. I sacrificed. I worked 16, 18 hours a day, and I did all these things. I did a lot of stuff myself, and I don't want to do that again." I actually had a client who almost sabotaged a giant event that they really wanted to build. They really wanted to have this giant event, and they almost sabotaged it because fear came up because they thought, "Oh, my gosh. I'm going to have to do this myself because that's what I've done in the past," so they went back to their comfort zone.

Now, granted, the event still turned out okay, but they realized afterward that it could've been even better and people would've even enjoyed it even more if they wouldn't have let that fear get involved and wouldn't have gone back to that feeling of being comfortable because they were afraid of having, they basically let their past dictate what was going to happen in the future.

The three things that you can do, if all of this is resonating and you're saying, "Yup, yup. This is me. This is me. I hear you, Theresa. I hear you," these are the three things that I did myself and also what I have talked to and coached people through that I work with one on one that have experienced this in their business.

The first one is revisit your vision. What does your vision look like? Not current circumstance, but where do you want to go? Let yourself just go big. What does that three or four or five-year vision look like for where you want to go and what you do. I would put money on it that you haven't really dug in and really gone big as far as what you wanted that to look like. Maybe even also as you're doing that, what people do you need in your business? Do you have the right team? What does that look like? What is your bigger intention behind your business? Going back and revisiting that and relaying it out and really digging in and doing it afraid. If it scares the bejeez out of you, then guess what? You should do it. Don't prevent yourself from doing something because it scares you. Lean into that, and you'll move through it, I promise you.

The second is stay curious and open to any possibility. Stay curious and be open to learning new things and look at the people that you're connecting with, the people that you've already connected with and what are the possibilities? Maybe they've talked to you about stuff. Maybe you've seen things on TV, and you want to connect to someone that you've seen, and maybe they have some kind of a connection with your business. Stay curious and open to the possibilities always because the clearer we start to get on what it is that we want, and then we start taking the actions. Those actions that we're doing connect directly that what it is that we want, and we're showing up as the person that has already achieved



those results, there's so many signs that start to happen and so many possibilities start to open up. But we can't do that when we stay in a comfort zone. We need to push out of that.

The third thing is really, and this was a big thing that we did in the beginning of the year to push them out of this comfort zone, was really understanding what your core values are as a business and what each of your team member's core values are, what are important to them. Then looking at how everything aligns together with what your vision is because from there, you can also look at what you're doing in your business and seeing if what you're doing aligns with those core values.

I would put money on it that there are things that don't align with that, and you're trying to make them align. That's where you're getting stuck, so going back and really understanding and making sure that each team member understands. You understand what their core values are. They understand what the core values of the business are and what your core values are as a business owner, but then also each team member understand what each one's individual strengths and what they bring to the organization are. When you can put all this stuff together, you will start to see, "Okay, we got work to do. We got work to do," and maybe even, you might even say to yourself, "I need to find a good coach. I need to find a good coach and a good mentor to take me to the next level because I gotta re-figure out this strategic plan."

Those are the things that I did. From that place, things for myself and for the people that I've worked with that have been through this, things start to shift. Things start to go in the direction that we want them to go because we've opened up that energy, we've opened up the opportunities. We've gotten reconnected to the purpose that we had in the first place for starting this place and that higher purpose of it's not just about you. It's not just about you and the product or service that you sell in your business, but it's about the impact that you want to make in the lives of the people that are connected to you. That's what it comes down to.

Like I said, the world doesn't change on its own. It needs people who have new ideas and aren't afraid to put them out there and aren't afraid to push through even in the face of adversity. They're not afraid to push out of their comfort zone so that, ultimately, they can invent something new where they can create a new experience for people that will make a difference in the lives of others. We can't do that from a comfort zone. We have to do that from a place of getting comfortable being uncomfortable.

I hope today's episode helped you. I'd love to hear what part of this episode resonated with you the most, what helped you the most, and maybe some things that you're doing to start implementing some of these three things to learn new stuff. Maybe even you're looking to find a new mentor. Whatever it is. I would love to hear from you, and I would love to get feedback as far as what you thought of this episode.

I hope you have an... amazing rest of your week, if I can talk, and I hope also think about what you can start doing to start shifting your mindset, your behavior, and your perspective to take it to the next level and push past that underlying fear of what you need to do next because you're not alone. I'm here for you. I won't let you do this alone. You shouldn't do it alone because, together, when we come together or even working with someone one-on-one, working with a coach or a mentor, can help us to get to that next level faster versus trying to figure everything out on our own. Stay open to the possibilities,

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reconnect to your vision, and really understand what your core values are and what all the values are that your team brings to your organization.

Until next time, I hope you have an amazing rest of your week, and I hope you keep shining your light and keep putting your ideas out there because the world needs all of those amazing things that you are thinking of, that you're creating, and that you're doing. Take care, and I will see you next time.