

Hey there and welcome to another episode of the Your Next Best Step Podcast. I'm your host, Theresa Cantley, and I am super glad you're here with me for another episode of the podcast. And today, we are going to be talking about a topic. Most recently I had to step back and slow down a bit due to a health situation, a health scare. The universe always works where you're going, going, going and you have signs along the way and you keep going, going, going and you have some more signs and the signs get louder, and then finally the universe says, "Okay, it's time. You need to slow down." And that's kind of what happened to me most recently. And it's funny because when we do slow down and we have the ability to slow down, that's when we have a lot of ideas and a lot of aha moments and realizations come in that we may not have thought about before. And I can't tell you how many times this has happened to me.

So as I'm hanging out at home and recovering and going through all the different things that you go through, I started to think about things that I was doing in my own business, and actually, this was the first time, for the longest time, I've had a team for many, many years, and for the longest time I always thought to myself that I was delegating to my team and giving my team things to do, and I realized that I really wasn't. And now going through what I was going through, I really needed to think about what was most important, what were the really necessary things that I needed to do and then figure out how to delegate and really rely on my team, which is why I hired a team in the first place. And it's why I always preach it to people. But I'm human. Things happen. I make mistakes, too.

But it's funny, because like I said, when we are forced to get quiet and when we're forced to slow down, that's when realizations happen, new ideas, new creations, new things come in because we don't have all that extra noise of running around, being busy, doing things, constantly being in a state of motion, where actually, we give ourselves time to sit and be quiet so that things can come in, okay? I always say, "Give yourself some space for grace," so that's when grace can come in and give you the guidance that you need and the things that you may not have thought about before and were asking for answers or looking for some clarity. That's the time when those things come in. Not to get all woo woo.

But it's funny because as I was thinking about this, this topic for the podcast, based on what I've learned myself, I started to realize that many, many, many business owners and just friends of mine and entrepreneurs I've worked with or worked for over the years, many people struggle with this issue. So if you do, you are not alone. You are not alone. So in thinking through things, and it's funny, because I actually just listened to another podcast a couple of days ago where this topic came up and they were talking about this topic that I had wanted to talk about and I thought, "Oh wow." Again, that's the universe saying, "Okay, you need to talk about this."

So if you're like me and you are constantly going, going, going, you like to get things done ... I plan my day out. I have been planning my day and setting goals. I teach goal setting, I teach productivity. I teach the whole thing of, it's not about the goal per se, but it's about the system that you create and who you become along the way. And I teach all that and I follow it. I mean, every day I have my morning routine where I get my cup of tea and I sit down with my cup of tea and I sit down with my planner. I have a new planner I'm testing, by the way, the Full Focus planner. It's amazing.

But I sit down with my planner and I go through my goals. I set my goals for the year, I set my goals for every quarter and every week. And I'm looking at this, and I have this daily routine. I have this morning routine where I go through and I say, "Okay, what are the three things I need to get done today? And then what are the rest of the tasks that I need to accomplish?" And I know many, many, many people do this. Like I said, it's one of the biggest things that I teach to my clients.

And it was funny because I had this epiphany myself one morning because every morning, like I said, I had my morning routine. I pour my green tea, I get that prepared, I sit down, it's early in the morning, I have my planner out, I'm running through my day, pick my top three things, I have a whole mindset thing that I go through where I write I am statements, and it was funny because I was sitting there one day and I thought to myself, "Wow, I really get a lot of stuff done in a day," more than I ever did, you know, when I was in corporate, but I just sat and I was like, "Wow, I really get a lot of stuff done in a day."

But it was funny also because I also thought at the time, "Wow, yeah, I get a lot of stuff done in a day, but I am so tired at the end of the day and continuously, by the end of the week, I feel like I've burned myself out time and time again." And I'm like, "How is this possible?" I mean, I've been through burnout myself. I've talked about it on the podcast. I've talked about it on Facebook lives and things that I've done and in my content. And I thought, "Why does this keep happening? This is crazy. I get a ton of stuff done and that's awesome, but at the end of every week, I consistently feel like I'm starting to burn out or I feel like mentally exhausted and I'm like, "This is nuts." And I know I'm getting busier in my business and that doesn't have something to do with it. But thinking, "What is this?"

And I started to realize after a couple conversations and just looking at and witnessing interactions with my clients when my clients were interacting with each other and just conversations that I was having with them, because when I started to have this health scare, I started to cut my client appointments and kind of shifted stuff around. A lot of times I am going to the place to meet with people, but I was doing more web meetings, but I was at a couple of my clients and I'm watching people and I'm watching the interaction with them and they're talking to me because for local businesses, particularly in the retail space and in restaurants, this is a busy time of year. You're starting to get into a really, really busy time coming up.

And I'm hearing from people, "I'm setting my goals. Every morning I have my morning routine. I'm setting my day up. I'm planning my day. I have my goals, but I still feel so overwhelmed and I feel" ... I was in a meeting with someone and after the first five minutes they were like, "Oh my gosh, I can't do this. I'm so taxed. My brain is just so taxed." And I thought about it and after we started, I said, "Okay, what do you got on your list?" And we started dissecting it and we started taking a look at their list, and it came to me. It came to me for my own self and what I was doing, but it also came to me in looking at what other people are doing. And I know this is something that so many people struggle with because it's not something that we really learn, and I know every single goal setting thing that I've ever taken, I don't focus so much on this piece, which is why I really wanted to talk about it.

And the thing I know you're all waiting, like, "What the heck is it Theresa? Just tell us." So what I realized is that more often than not, most people try to create at the same time they're trying to analyze, and here's the deal. You can't create and analyze at the same time. You can't do creative tasks and blend them with analyzing tasks or connecting tasks or where you're teaching. You can't combine the two together. You can do it for a very short period of time, which is why, and I realized I was doing this myself, where I was planning my day and yeah, I had my priorities picked, I knew what I needed to get done, I know when my most productive time of my day is. I mean, I know all that, but what I was missing is that I was doing a creative activity and then right after that I was doing an analytical activity, and then right after that I was doing another creative activity, and what's happening is they're two different parts of your brain.

The creative side, when you're creating content or you're researching or you're brainstorming an idea, that comes from one space, but when you are trying to analyze something, you're trying to look at numbers, look at metrics, you are trying to teach or do a one-on-one meeting, it's like two different sides. And when we try and bring them together by doing a creative task and then an analytical and then a creative task or an analytical or even trying to create and then analyze it in the same thing that you're doing, you can do it for a very short period of time. But then after a while, guess what happens? You start to burn out, right? You start to get tired because your brain is taxing itself because it's trying to go back and forth between these two things. It's trying to tax itself, because it's trying to keep up and it's burning so many calories, so it's like, "Ah," and then you get tired.

And it was funny because as I'm sitting here and I'm listening to my clients talk back and forth about an event, so we were talking about an event and they were trying to brainstorm new ideas for the event to make it better ... It was actually a program, I'm sorry ... to brainstorm new ideas. The conversation started off as to why this program wasn't working, so they're analyzing, and then it moves into brainstorming new ideas and shouting out new ideas of what they could do with this program to make it better, and then it went back to analyzing what the profitability of it would be, and this was all in, no joke, like a 20 minute conversation.

I mean, I sat there and started to feel anxious through this whole conversation until finally I said, "Okay, stop, stop," because again, you can't create and analyze at the same time. And people don't understand and they try and do that and then they can't figure out why they're tired or whether they're burned out or for me, why at the end of the week, like I just kept feeling like I was mentally drained. Well, the reason why is because, and I thought, "Wow, I'm getting a lot done, but maybe I need to do less, but I really can't do less because this is what I do," and I couldn't quite figure it out until it hit me. And again, I had to slow down in order for this realization to come in.

So some of the things that I started to think about, and just in my own schedule, in my own world, is what are the things I could do different so that I could really be productive and get more done so I can achieve more and at the end of the day, not feel drained or tired, and not tired in a good way, but tired in a bad way? So I started to think to myself, I want to give you three things that you can do. So the first one is figure out blocks of time for your creative tasks. Now, for the longest time I used to say to people, "What's your most productive time of the day? And that's when you want to get your most important tasks done," but it goes further than that. You want to get your most important tasks done during that most creative and productive time of the day.

But you also want to think to yourself, "Okay, the creative tasks probably should be done first," okay? Now, some people are different, but I am going to make the recommendation that anything that's creative, so you have to plan out your content, create your content, do research for your content, maybe you're creating videos, okay, maybe you're brainstorming a new product or a new event or a new program in your business or a new promotion, a new sale, a new whatever. The holiday season's coming up. Everybody's doing holiday promos. So that's all creative work. Even working on your vision, that's all creative work, and that needs a chunk of time.

And I don't mean ... because this is where I was guilty is I would plan out my content. In the morning, I would plan out my content for an hour, okay? I'd plan it out, create it, get it scheduled, ready to go. And then the next thing that I would do is I would have a meeting booked and I would be teaching somebody something, and then after the meeting, so when you're teaching, or when you're meeting with

somebody, you have to be very engaging. You have to listen. While you're listening, you're also thinking about what the person's saying and how you can help them or how you can solve a problem, so it's more analytical, okay?

So then I would have a meeting and then right after the meeting, and even though I was taking five minute breaks in between, I would move to the next thing, and the next thing, guess what? It was creative. So maybe it was brainstorming or researching what I wanted to do for my podcast episodes or maybe it was creating the product launch that I want to do next and really mapping it out. And I couldn't figure out, number one, because I ... and it's funny because I look back now and I would ... I remember there were times when I couldn't sit still. I would get up and down and up and down and up and down. I'd go downstairs, get a piece of gum, come back upstairs, spit my gum out, go get another piece of gum, drinking my tea. Crazy, right?

Well, I'm guessing, and I'm not a neuroscientist, but I am guessing based on what I do know about neuroscience is that I was having those connections in my brain going nuts because I was bouncing from one type of task to another, to another, to another. Even though there were breaks in between, it still wasn't enough to recharge or switch gears. Looking at your list and figuring out, "Okay, what are my creative tasks that I know I need to get done?" Okay? And for me, I actually started to say, "Okay, I'm going to have two creative tasks and I'm going to have two analytical tasks that I know I need to get done today, and then everything else that I want to get done or that I need to delegate goes underneath it," okay? So instead of just having three priorities, actually, sometimes I'll have two creative and one analytical, sometimes two analytical, one creative, sometimes it's two and two, all right?

And blocking time. Now, I'm not saying an hour for one, an hour for another. I'm saying where potentially you block your time off, where if you know that you need to get a bunch of video content created for YouTube so you can post it up or maybe you have a ... I have clients that have ... they are brick and mortar businesses and they have memberships. They have memberships where people have access to content that they can learn about, but then they can also come into their business and attend events or get discounts or whatever. So if they know that they need to create a bunch of content that's going to be dripped out over a period of time, I recommend to them to block out a full day, a full day, and all they're doing is creative work in that full day. And maybe all of that creative work is going to spread over a week or maybe even a two week period of time, okay?

So they make sure that they get that done. Then, if it's a full day, then they have four more days or five more days to do the analytical stuff because they've gotten all those creative tasks, they've blocked that time. So a block of time doesn't necessarily need to be an hour to an hour to an hour to an hour. It could be you work for an hour on a creative task, so you take a five minute break. You work for another hour in creative, five minute break, and maybe you do like a half an hour or a half a day of creative and a half a day of analytical.

So however you want to do it, I highly recommend, and I know with local business owners, the biggest thing that they struggle with is staying consistent with their content. So if you dedicate time to work on those creative tasks, okay, those creative activities that you need to do and batch everything together, then you have time to do the analytical stuff, looking at your numbers, going through an entire day and maybe analyzing your inventory or creating your budget or maybe even analyzing what your spend is versus what you've sold and maybe are you under or over and taking the time to do those things or

maybe even taking the time, and you'll have the time now and the mental energy, to sit down and have a meeting with your staff and go over what's working, what's not working, okay?

So separating out those tasks and understanding what they are and learning how to batch them together and block time from them has been, for me, it's been a game changer. And I know in speaking with my clients recently, especially when we were in that meeting and we were going over the program and stopping and saying, "Okay, let's re-look at this. Let's take everything that we've learned and let's kind of put that aside, or everything that you've been doing and let's look at this with a new set of eyes and a new perspective," and kind of reorienting what needs to happen.

It's the same thing when we have different parts of a project, okay? So the first phase of the project is typically, that's the brainstorm phase. That's the phase that's super creative, right? And you have to go through that phase so that you can get to the ... and that's a chunk. And then you have to go through that first so that you know what you're doing, right? So then the next phase is actually doing all of the execution and having all of those tasks and everything get executed and implemented, so that's definitely more analytical so that you can then get to the third phase, which is when the project actually happens and things flourish and things get harvested and all of that happens so that you can do the debrief. So it goes from creative to analytical to creative to analytical, but you're doing it in chunks of time, okay? It's the same kind of thing. And when you do it that way with a project, a project flows a heck of a lot easier than if you're kind of doing it backwards or you're all over the place with it.

So taking time to block your creative and understanding your creative and also kind of when is your creative time during the day, all right, and then also taking time to block those analytical things, batching stuff together to see if you can have a full day of content creation, all right? So that's all you're doing is creative work. So you're batching your videos, you're batching your posts, you're batching your emails, maybe you're even doing some content repurposing where you're taking a video, having it transcribed and then putting it into a blog post and then getting that on your website.

And I've noticed for myself, reorienting my daily schedule and doing things that way have made such a big difference, because here's the thing, and this is the third key, is that you need to be mindful of your energy. And so often as business owners, we don't focus on that. We don't focus on our energy. We're just go, go, go. A lot of local business owners think that if they just work longer hours and harder, that they'll become successful. And what happens, you burn out. You drain your energy, and your energy is the key. It is your greatest asset in your business, which is why you need to protect it.

If you're working and you're completely taxing your brain out on a daily basis, the energy that you're putting into interacting with your employees or interacting with your leadership team or moving your vision forward, the energy that you're putting into that is not good energy. It's not beneficial to anybody, so then the outcome or the results that you're going to get is exactly what you're putting into it, so we need to be mindful of how we are using our energy and what we're using it on. So the more we can learn, I mean, planning your day out, I am all about that. Like I said, I teach it, and it is so key to success, having a plan for your day, having things scheduled, having goals, but focusing more on the process that you create to achieve those goals.

And now, this is an additional piece that we can put in, which is looking at how we work, looking at how we work on what we're working on and how we put our energy into things so that we can conserve our energy and we have enough to get us through the day, through the week, and we don't feel like we're

drained. We might be tired because we've been working hard, but we still feel really, really good because we got stuff done. We got all of our content planned for an entire month planned, created, scheduled, ready to go for an entire month, and we know it's going to connect to our customers that come through our door every day because we gave ourselves time to brainstorm and time to talk to people. We gave ourselves time to write down ideas and then put it into that content instead of rushing and trying to do it on the fly.

So at the end of the day then, or at the end of the week, we had time to analyze. We had time to give certain things to our teams so that they could execute them. We had time to have the meetings, meaningful meetings, important meetings, really engaging meetings that we needed to have with people because we focused on the types of tasks that we were doing and how to put them into chunks of time so we could get them done and get things done in a more effective manner, and also continue to move our business forward. And I'll tell you, this slight change that I've made in my day and how I schedule my tasks out and how I block my time and how I schedule my entire week out has just made a huge difference. I mean, I was doing it before, but not like this. And like I said, it took slowing down in order for me to understand what I was actually doing and how I could do things even better so that I can make an even bigger impact on this world.

And as I said, I've worked with so many local business owners and I see people planning their day out and it's great and I see people getting stuff done but still feeling that overwhelm, or maybe even not getting done that they wanted to get done. And when we go back and we dig through the tasks and realize how much they're trying to put together of these creative activities and then the analytical activities, how they're trying to put that together into one lump and trying to push stuff through. I mean, no wonder why they feel like they can't think at the end of the day or they can't think at the end of the week.

So if I can give you any piece of advice, it's go back and look at your tasks. Go back and look at your priorities and go back and look at how you're planning your day and your week and try moving some stuff around so that you're blocking a good amount of time off so that you can do all of your creative work and then you're blocking another good amount of time so that you can do all of that analytical, that more connecting, teaching, meeting type work that you need to do. The two can coexist together. Obviously they have to, but we have to learn how to work through those tasks and how to work through those things so that we're not feeling overwhelmed.

So I hope this episode helped you. I would love, love, love to hear from you in the comments or leave me a review. Let me know what part of this episode was most helpful and how maybe you've applied some of this to your day. I guarantee, if you focus on planning your tasks, just make these slight tweaks to them, I will guarantee that you will get more done and you will be consistent with getting your content out there and consistent with connecting to your customers so you can get them back through your door time and time again.

Also, like I said, I would love to have a review from you if you would leave me a review. Let me know what you like and what you don't like. I read every single one so that I can make tweaks to the episodes and really make sure that I'm creating content that will help you to reach success faster and make it more sustainable and make your growth happen faster than you ever thought possible. So definitely, I would love, love, love if you would leave me a review.

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