

Well, hello there my friends and welcome back to another episode of the Your Next Best Step podcast. I am your host Theresa Cantley and I am so glad you're here this week because we're talking all about planes. I mean, not literally about planes, but I heard this topic last week with everything that's going on with Covid-19 and the ever changing path of what is happening and where this whole situation is going and how people are dealing with it and all the fear and the struggle and the misinformation, everything in between. I heard this thing, I was listening to a podcast, actually, no, I wasn't listening to a podcast. I was listening to, I was watching a webinar. That's what it was. And I heard this woman, this business experts say this phrase that I just thought was so good.

And she said, and I wrote it down and I have been talking about this. And every time I've talked about this phrase, and I told it to somebody, they're like, Oh my gosh. And they write it down and they're like, that's exactly what's happening right now. And the phrase is talking about planes is right now we are building a plane while we're actually trying to fly it. Building a plane from scratch while trying to fly it. Imagine that like it's like something out of the matrix, right? Like you're building a plane or it's like, what's that thing? Oh my gosh, Minecraft, my nephew plays it. That game where like you're building something while you're actually like in it and acting in it or being active in it or whatever. But I just thought that was just so like profound.

When I heard it I was like, Oh, such a simple phrase, but like it, there's so much meaning behind it. And in talking to business owners or just talking to people in general, we have, I feel like there's like two schools of thought going on, maybe three, but I'm just going to break it into two. But we have two schools of thought. We have these people who think that nothing is going right, that they can't get out of this, that all the decisions that the government made are not benefiting small businesses or local businesses at all. And that someone's coming to save them and that everything is just crap and it's going to be crap until we can go back to the normal, until we come back to life as normal.

Then there's the other school of thought of people who are like, okay the government came up with these loans and these things to help small businesses and I mean, okay, there might, maybe they're not perfect but okay I'm going to just do what I can and yeah, this is a situation. Does reality kind of stink? Absolutely. But you know what, I'm going to figure out, like I'm going to figure out how to get through this because I have no other choice because I have spent so much time building my business and I don't want to lose it.

So I kind of narrowed it down to these two schools of thought and these two types of people out there, whether you're a business owner or you're just somebody who is just voicing your opinion on things. And this is based on people that I've talked to, whether they're clients of mine, potential clients, fellow entrepreneurs, friends of mine, I've kind of, cause you also have the fence sitters, the people that are right in the middle.

But I've narrowed it down to two because you don't want to be a fence sitter as my mentor says, you have the red light and you have the green light. If you're at the red light, you're completely stopped and stuck. If you're at the green light, you're going really fast. If you're in the yellow light, which is the worst place you want to be, you're right in the middle of the intersection. You don't know what to do and the cars are coming at you and that's not a place that you want to be. So the fence sitters. So we're just going to remove the fence sitters and we're just going to say, okay, you have two schools of thought. And like I said, we have these people who are just saying everything stinks. I don't know what to do. My business looked like this before Covid-19 and now my business is failing and the government put out these loans and these things to try and help small business and they're not helping us at all and they don't really benefit anybody. And I am just going to like wallow in my own self pity.

And then you have, like I said, the people who are taking, doing something and moving forward and not relying on the fact that anybody's going to help them even though it helps, but really figuring out how to carve their own path. And even if you have the school of thought of the people who are figuring out how to carve their own path, there's also this element of having all of these thoughts and ideas and not really sure how to execute anything or what to even execute because this is so new to them. However, they've also made the decision that they're just going to figure it out somehow so that they can build a plane and fly it because they don't really have another choice. Because if you don't that right now, cause the plane that we had, it tanked, it crashed.

So we have to build a new one and we don't necessarily know what that looks like and we have to do it pretty fast. But we're going to do it. We're going to do it because we need to. And I had a conversation with one of my clients today and he said it's funny Theresa, we have all these ideas and we're working on executing all these ideas, things that we've talked about for so long. But we were always so busy being busy that we never took the time to do this. So in essence, he was saying, we never took the time to really build our plane. So the way that I look at it is that in this situation with everything that's going on, I look at it like we have three zones that we kind of move through to build our plane.

Some people don't get out of the first zone, some people do and they get to the second zone and some people stay there and then some people get to the third zone, which is where you want to be. And I look at this like the first zone is that fear zone. It's that zone that we go through of contraction. So when this whole thing first happened, everybody was like freaking out. Like this is the end of the world, this is the end of my business. I just need to just close shop. Or they try and control everything. They go into control mode and they're just trying to control everything and not realizing that they don't have control over everything. And really they're trying to control the things that they don't have control over and not focusing on the things that they do have control over.

So I call this, this is like when we contract. It's that contraction, that shrink, that going back into our comfort zone of trying to take control over everything and totally squishing any kind of energy or ideas that are trying to come out of this adversity. This is also where people get into that analysis paralysis, looking at something and examining it and re-examining it and examining it and talking about it and talking about it and talking about it and not taking any action because they're afraid that if they put this new idea or this new concept of this new thought into practice, into play, that people aren't going to like it, that it might not work, that it's going to flop. I mean even worse than they did before. Or even looking at the numbers and saying and analyzing and reanalyzing and analyzing the numbers and saying, how can we even do this?

How can we even make this happen or keep staff on? Even if we take the loans, how can we even do this? And that like what that does when we stay in that fear zone, obviously it prevents us from doing anything. It prevents us from taking any kind of action. And it also keeps us stuck in that zone of nothing's ever going to work. And people think that the more they complain, someone will end up "saving them" as what I see and what ends up happening and that they don't realize is that the more they complain about it, the more they get what they're complaining about. The more they focus on that fear and that contraction and analyzing and reanalyzing they waste valuable time that they could be using that time to put something in place or just try something and see if it works.

I mean that's why you have restaurants are selling toilet paper or restaurants that are selling any bacterial soap because they have access to it and they're just trying anything so that they can keep things going in some form until we can get people back into restaurants or get people back into retail stores or whatever so that we can really start moving forward. So the second zone is what I like to call the action zone. So we get past the fear and we say, okay, I'm going to start building some kind of momentum. I'm going to start taking some kind of action. And while this is really good and you want to

get to the zone, you want to move through that fear zone into the action zone because A, like I said, that builds momentum.

So we go from being contracted to we start taking action and that starts to give us some momentum to move us forward, okay? But what ends up happening is people get stuck in this zone when things don't work or when they put something out there and they don't give it time to stick and time to move forward. And then they say, and then they want to give up. So either what happens is they go backwards, back into the fear zone, or they just stay in this action zone. And the action zone is they're just putting anything and everything out there and not really thinking about what they're actually doing.

So, I have this model that I call the business crisis navigator and there's three parts to it. The first part is the assessing. Assessing where you are, what's happening, what do you need to do? What do you need to cut? Like restructuring, re-inventing so that you can then execute plans. You can get new skills and you can get your people involved. And the action zone, what ends up happening is, and then the third thing in my model is to communicate it out to people, your community, your customers, but also more important your team and getting them to be a part of creating these new initiatives. But what happens is, when people move from that fear zone into the action zone they're building momentum cause they're taking action. But if you go back to my model of asses, execute, communicate, they jump, they go from asses to execute and they stay there. So nobody knows what's going on.

They're focusing on things that maybe were hurting the business and to begin with, now they're focusing on stuff that really hadn't brought them money before. They're taking action because they're hoping that this brings money in now and maybe it will and maybe it won't, but there they can only keep that momentum going for so long until they either, they're just taking random action. So once the crisis is over, they're still putting money, time, effort, and resources into things that maybe don't necessarily align with the business. And were also not profitable for them before and are definitely not going to be profitable for them moving forward. So again, they either stay in that constant action which eventually leads to burnout and less profitability or they end up going back into that fear zone because they haven't seen the results that they really want to get.

So then the third thing, the third zone, which is where we really want to go and we really want to stay is the growth zone. And there that is when we can have expansion and that my friends is where we really start to build our plane because that growth zone, we have to move through the fear. We have to experience the fear because there is nobody out there, not a single person. Whether you have a successful business or you're in the middle of a crisis where you know kind of what we're dealing with right now, but there's nobody that doesn't ever feel that fear and there's nobody, I mean there are people that will feel the fear and stay there, but then people who get to that momentum zone had to get there because they had to move through that fear. But then also the people that can move through that momentum zone and really get to that expansion in that growth area is when they put the model in place in its entirety.

So they assess what's happening, what's going on, what's working, what's not working. They find the gaps and find the opportunities so that they can then start executing and building a plan that they can take action on as well as figuring out what do they need? What kind of skills do they need moving forward and what kinds of things do they need to Uplevel their employees, Uplevel themselves and just up level the business? But then the bigger part is, is that they start communicating and so their community and their customers understand what it is that they're doing, where they are and what they're doing to try and move things forward. What kinds of new initiatives are they putting in place or what kinds of things are they doing? And just not even necessarily focusing on making money, but just focusing on connecting. Focusing on that connection that they have with their audience, with their

community, with their customers, with their people, with their team, with their management, with their employees, so that they can build that energy and stay motivated even when times get tough.

So when we can put those three things in place, that's when we can experience a lot of growth. And I've heard a lot of people saying, well complaining that, Oh, I can't do, I can't do anything. I can't do anything different with my business because I can't bring people in. I mean, I've read a story the other day of a business up in Maine and they were saying, well because typically we have, and it was a brewery and typically they have tasting rooms and he was saying, Oh, I can't do anything with my business right now because normally we have tasting our business relies on people coming into the tasting room and right now we can't have people in the tasting room. And I was reading this article and I thought to myself this is where you've got to get creative.

This is where you have to because your goal is I got to fly. So I got to build a plane while I'm trying to fly it so that I can keep myself soaring. I sat there when I read this article and I just thought to myself, man, like listen, you have more control over this than you think, you have more control over your future than you think you do. I mean yeah, do we know what the outcome's going to be? Absolutely not. But we have control over taking the right actions and putting things into place so that we can get to some kind of future. Because otherwise if we don't do anything, we're not going to have a future. We're going to sit in the same spot doing the same thing and hoping that somebody is coming to bail us out.

And a government, I'm not going either way here, but what I can tell you is that are things perfect? No. Are things great? No. Do they always help the people that they need to help? No. I mean they do. There are things good that they do. There are benefits and things that they put into place that do help people. However, you can't rely on that because just as I would tell anybody, you can't rely anybody else to build your future. You are the only one that can build your future. You are the only one that is responsible for that. Nobody else is. So it doesn't matter whether it's a business crisis or things are thriving, no one is responsible to build your business for you. No one really is responsible to figure this out for you.

It's something that you need to do for yourself because if you're relying on somebody else to tell you how to do it and build it for you, well then what's the purpose of having a business anyway, right? I mean, I talked to somebody many many weeks ago who before the shutdown was even put in place, this whole virus came out and they just shut their business down. They didn't even like try. They just shut it down. And same thing as the brewery, it's like, okay, you don't have the ability to have people come to your business and be in a tasting room, but you do have the ability to be innovative with how you connect with people and maybe different types of offers that you're going to create now. But here's the thing, nobody is going to tell you how to do it. Nobody's going to tell you, Oh, well you're a restaurant, you have access to toilet paper and hand sanitizer go sell that to make money or nobody's going to tell you what other types of services and offers to do right now, but that's the whole point of being an entrepreneur.

An entrepreneur looks at a situation like this and doesn't say what should I do? An entrepreneur looks at this and says, okay, let's figure out where we are so that we can figure out how to build a new future for ourselves. I've said it in podcast episodes before we make the choice every morning. Every morning we get up, we make the choice to find our direction, to find our path, whatever that looks like no matter what the circumstance, we don't let our circumstances dictate what we do. We look at it, we assess it, and we say, okay, how can we use these current circumstances that we have to grow, to make things different, to make things better?

And when we do that, that is how we really start to build our plane while we're flying it. That's how we say, you know what? This is the type of plane I know I need to build and I want to build so that I can move forward. Not this is the type of plane that someone telling me to build and keeping me in a box. I want to have, I want to build my own box. I want to step out of the box. You know what? I don't want to

box. I want to circle. I want to plane because I want my future to soar and I'm going to build that plane however I want to build it. I don't know how I'm going to build it, but I know I need to fly. So I'm going to just start building the plane and keep building it while I'm flying.

But in order to do that, we need to just get started. And like I said, there's a lot of uncertainty out there. There's a lot of fear, there's a lot of struggle, there's a lot of misinformation. But in order for us to bring some stability, we need to take the right actions. We need to take the right steps so that we can build a future. We can have a future for the business that we've worked so hard to build and complaining and saying woe is me. I don't know what to do and there's nothing I can do. So I'm just going to wait around until somebody tells me what to do. Or like, that's not going to get you anywhere either. And while I understand some businesses this has impacted even more than others. It doesn't mean that the situation is impossible.

We put a man on the moon, we're putting people into space all the time. We've figured out ocean exploration, we've conquered the Arctic and the Antarctic. And I mean, we've done so many things that at one time people thought were impossible, but it just took someone to say, no, this isn't impossible. This is a plane that I need to build. And unfortunately I need to build it while I'm flying it. But I'm going to do it because I know ultimately it's going to change the world. And I know ultimately it's going to move something forward and it's going to create something innovative. So you might have a business such as a restaurant or a retail store or a yoga studio or a brewery or a distillery or whatever where your primary connection with people was face to face live.

And right now we can't do that. But it doesn't need mean that your business needs to go away. It doesn't mean that you need to stay in that fear zone and function in that fear zone forever. It just means that we need to look at things a little bit differently. It means we need to dig deep and find our courage and our confidence. I heard something yesterday as well, that confidence comes from being afraid and maybe feeling that those negative emotions and sitting with them anyway and using them to move forward and not stay in the same place. Pretty interesting, right? So if you think about it, if you were building your plane while you were flying it, you would feel fear, right? But you'd feel that fear and you would try and take some kind of action, like try and figure out, okay, what do I need to do next?

I need to put some propellers on cause I'm not going anywhere and then let that guide you for your next step and your next step and your next step and build your confidence muscles because you're continuing to take action even though you might be afraid. Even though you knew something doesn't work or even though something might've fallen flat or even though people may have criticized you or not agreed with what you're doing. But you do it anyway because you know that the plane that you're building is not going to be perfect, but it's going to be functional and it's going to move you forward. And you can go back and you can perfect it and fix it and add things and make things better. But you're never going to know what you need to make better or you're never going to know if something is going to work for the future unless you just get started and you take the first step.

So through this whole situation and even after this situation, no matter what things happen in your business, we're always going to be building a plane or building our plane while we're trying to fly it at the same time. It's going to be filled with uncertainty. Whether you're in a pandemic or you're just in an uncertain period in your business, or even just in life in general. But that doesn't mean that we quit. It doesn't mean that we stop. It doesn't mean that we give up trying to figure new things out or build new things. It means that we continue to build our plane while we fly it no matter how much uncertainty is there. The thing that we can be certain of is that we can figure it out no matter what. No matter what happens, we can figure it out.

So I hope this episode helped you and I hope you go back and maybe take a look at what zone are you in? Are you in fear zone one? Are you in the action zone, which is zone two or are you in a growth zone? Because you've taken those right steps to start taking this adversity and finding the innovations in it.

So hopefully this brings you some stability so that you can really start focusing on building your plane while you're flying it. And if you see me in the air, I know I'm building my plane while I'm flying it and it's not perfect. But I do know this, that as I'm building it, I'm building my future. I'm not letting somebody, I'm not waiting around for somebody to tell me what to do or to save me because I know no one's coming. And I know if somebody tells me what to do, well then what's the purpose of having a business anyway? So if you see me flying my plane in the sky, give me a wave, give me a little shout because I'm going to give you a wave and a little shout back and I might even give you some guidance and some help. And maybe you'll give me some guidance and some help so that we can build our planes even faster while we are flying and soaring and changing the world. So until next week, stay healthy, stay safe, be well and I will see you soon.