

Well, hello and welcome back to another episode of the... I almost called it Your Next Best Step. That was the old name of our podcast. Locally Grown. Locally Grown podcast. I'm showing my age. Just kidding. But going along with forgetting things, that is exactly what we're going to be talking about today, which is three critical steps to get more done and remember what you need to do. But before I do that, I wanted to tell you about something really, really cool that I am launching, and it is something that I have wanted to do for the longest time. Working with local business owners, being a local business owner myself, also being involved in entrepreneurial businesses for over two decades, this is something that I've wanted to do to give business owners the support and accountability in a really highly curated group setting so that they're able to achieve more of what they've set out to do, to take a goal and really break it down and be able to achieve it and have a group of people to support them and hold them accountable along the way.

So I am going to be launching something called the Local Business Advisory Board. Now, I've had a lot of exposure to advisory boards over the years, and I've also had exposure to Chamber of Commerces and Main Street organizations being a business owner myself. And I wanted to start this group program because I have been in masterminds myself over the years and they have just helped me to... every year I've been in one, my business has grown exponentially. It is highly... the group, having the group be curated and have... bringing like-minded people in, bringing people in who are very driven to achieve the things that they want to achieve in their business., They have a passion for what they're doing, and even if they're stuck going along the way, or if they've hit a plateau and they're not really sure what to move forward, I want to create this group environment so that we can help each other get unstuck, but also help hold each other accountable to do the things that you really need to do to grow your business.

So this Business Advisory Board, while I was involved in Chamber of Commerces and I was involved in a lot of Main Street organizations, one of the things that I noticed is while they were helpful, they didn't really create that close-knit environment, and also you didn't necessarily get the help that you really needed. You didn't really get to say, "Okay, here's my issue," or, "I'm dealing with my business and I'm not really sure how to move this forward." And then have a group of people who can help you troubleshoot, help you brainstorm new ideas, but then also help you to stay accountable to recommend what you talk about. So that's what this group is going to do. I wanted to just talk a little bit about it because we are going to be launching it soon and we do have a wait list going on so that you can get... as soon as we launch the information about the Business Advisory Board, you'll be first on the list to find out about it, get all the ins and outs.

It is going to be six months. You can opt in to stay in for a year. It's going to require a couple hours a week of meeting time, and then however long you need to do the implementation of things that need to be done. You are going to have to bring certain things with you to every meeting, and the meetings will be via Zoom or Microsoft Teams. I've been kind of interchanging both, but you're going to be required to bring certain things with you and report to the group where you are, where you're stuck so that we can all help each other to continue to grow and continue to move through these things. So if you are interested in getting more information or learning about it as soon as we open, go to [theresacantley.com/waitlist](https://theresacantley.com/waitlist) and get on the list.

So going back to today's episode and talking about the three critical steps to getting more done, one of the biggest things that I have seen that people struggle with is productivity. And I know for the longest time when I was a manager in corporate America, when I was a laboratory equipment director, I used to always tell my people during performance reviews, "You need to work on your time management. You need to work on your..." and now I know that time management, I don't even like to even talk about time management. I like to talk about where we're putting our energy and our focus and how that in

turn helps us not even just to be productive, but to also make sure that we're consistently putting our energy and our focus in the right places.

And when I say the right places, the things that we need to do in order to move the needle on the goals that we have and the declarations that we set as far as what we want to accomplish in our business or where we want to take our business. So often people get stuck in the day-to-day and they get mired down in all these tasks of things that they need to do and end up not really getting anything done during the day. And raise your hand if that's you, because I'll tell you what, that was me for the longest time. I used to be one of those people that would keep long to-do lists, and more often than not, what I know now looking back at that, what was on my to-do list was actually projects or giant goals that I had on the to-do list and couldn't figure out why I couldn't ever get them done.

So when we don't have these three critical steps put into place, and when we don't focus our energy and our efforts in the right areas, that is what leads to overwhelm. That is what leads to... well, it's a component that ends up leading us towards burnout, but this is what leads us to getting ourselves into a swirl and never getting things done that we need to get done, which again, is overwhelm and thinking that, "Oh my gosh, I have so much stuff to do." And then what do we do? We focus on all the stuff that we need to do that we haven't done yet, and we end up getting stuck on that and then we don't really take the actions that we need to take to move the things forward that we want to really do.

So I want to give you three... actually four things that I think are the most critical. I'm going to give you the fourth, that's going to be like a bonus, but three critical steps. There's more to it than this, and if you're interested in learning more and learning how to really, really harness your focus and your energy during the day to make sure that you're focusing on the right things, join us inside the Business Advisory Board. Sign up to get on the wait list because this is one of the key pieces that we talk about. And the way that I learned how to build something to allow me to focus on the right things and focus my energy in the right direction is when I didn't have the ability to do that.

So back in 2011, if you've listened to this podcast, you know, you've heard me talk about it, I had a brain injury. I had a dissected artery in my neck, which led to a clot in my brain, and I went from having these long to-do lists and being able to keep stuff in my head constantly, to not having my memory, to having my memory slip and not being able to memorize things after I had this brain injury. And it took me a long time to get back up to where I was. And during that time, I ended up doing my own therapy to try and get my memory back and try and figure out how to get back to normal, because they don't really tell you exactly how long it takes and they don't tell you what you go through.

But I ended up learning from Chalene Johnson years ago back in, like I said, 2011, 2012, to go about setting your day up for success. So over the years, I've fine-tuned it and I've done some of my own things with this, but this is one of the big things that I coach people on. I don't care if you're a manager. I don't care if you're an employee. I don't care if you're a business owner. I don't care if you're a director. This is the most... this is the biggest thing that I think I coach people on, and I think it's probably one of the biggest things that I've coached people on is because I've struggled with it myself over the years. So I want to give you these three... what I think are the three critical steps to be able to get more things done in a day.

If I had a nickel for every time I walked into a client and they told me that they were overwhelmed or that they were frustrated because they weren't getting stuff done and they weren't achieving their goals the way that they wanted to achieve, if I had a nickel, I would probably be a millionaire right now. And I think the first thing that I say to people... Not I think. The first thing... my response to them is, "Well, let's see your calendar. Let's see your calendar, let's see your plan, and then we'll go from there." And you can probably guess listening to this, when they show it to me, well, there we go. That's why. That's why you're not getting things done. That's why you feel overwhelmed and you feel like you're going in

circles, because more often than not, there's nothing filled in in their calendar or the things that they have filled in there are stuff that they could probably delegate off to people, which is a whole other conversation.

But I want to give you these three critical steps and a bonus fourth one to help you to take some steps now. But again, if you're interested in learning more about this and having a place with people, with a group of people, that can hold you accountable to making sure that you're implementing this every day. This is not something that you do it once and you just... you're perfect at it. It is a muscle, just like any other muscle, that we need to build. And again, it took me a long time to figure this out, and there are days and weeks where I struggle with it myself, and I get myself stuck in getting into the weeds. As much as I tell you all to mow the lawn and get rid of the weeds, I get stuck in them too. So I need to pull out my own lawnmower.

But these three critical steps are things that I do absolutely every single day, every single week, and it has been the secret to me plowing through tons of stuff, especially when I have something going on in my life. When I have something going on, whether it's something with me, something with my husband, something with my family, something with a client that I need to address, something, putting this practice into place and building this muscle is what continues to help me get through the difficult times. It also helps me to take something that I'm not really looking forward to doing and make sure that I get it done because I know it's important to get it done, get it off my plate, and continue to move forward. A lot of people have that, and that's what ends up... they have something that they know they need to get done, and they put it off and put it off and put it off. What that is is procrastination.

And what's behind that is some kind of fear, whether they don't fully understand what they're doing, or fear that if they get it done, then whatever the aftermath is going to be. Or it could be fear for a whole bunch of reasons. But just know that when we don't put these critical pieces, these three critical things into place, what's behind it is procrastination. What's behind it is resistance. It could be resistance to being successful. It could be resistance to learning something new. It could be resistance to stepping out of our comfort zone and trying something different. And we all know that nothing great comes from staying in our comfort zones. So what do we need to do? We need to jump on out of there and make sure that we push through that resistance, because what's on the other side of it is everything that we've been looking to do, everything we've been looking to achieve.

So let's go through these three critical points. So number one, your week actually starts before it actually starts. Your day actually starts before it actually starts. So planning your week ahead, taking a look, and we can even stretch it out even a little bit further, taking a look at your quarter and saying, "What are my big projects for the quarter? What are my things that I need to get done for this month?" But also, "What do we got to do? What do I need to do this week in order to continue to move whatever forward?" So I plan my week on a Sunday. I've talked about this many times over. I have been through... and if you don't have a planner, I used to do this on my phone, and what I have found is that makes me more distracted than not. So I don't put my schedule... I mean, my schedule's on my phone because of my calendar, but I don't keep my strategic plan, which is what I call it, so it's your strategic plan for your day and your week, I don't keep that on my phone anymore.

I actually have a planner and I have gone through so many different planners, and the one that I am using right now is the one from Kelly Roach. It is a year long planner and on the front of it says "miracles in the making." I love this planner. And it gives me a week at the glance, it gives me a quarter at the glance, and it also gives me a month at a glance. And what that does is that helps me... So in the beginning of the week on a Sunday, I put in all the meetings that I know I have, if I have any appointments, doctor's appointments, appointments for my dogs, appointments for my husband, whatever that I need to be at, any special events I have going on, any meetings that are standard. I have

a standard team meeting every week. I have a standing appointment with a couple of my clients every week, so I make sure I put that in there first.

So your strategic plan for your week and your day starts before it actually starts. So that's number one. And literally what I do is I just brainstorm out, once I have that all... I have my appointments kind of laid into my calendar, I just brainstorm out everything that I know that I need to get done for the week. And I start to categorize it into things, whether it's marketing, business development, client work, accounting stuff. I do a lot of forensic accounting for people digging in the books and finding things. So I categorize things so I know what's what. So that's number one. Plan your week before it starts. Plan your day the night before. So at the end of the day, you're actually saying, "Okay, what did I get done? What do I need to do tomorrow?"

Number two is understand what is priority for that week, and make sure that you do those things first. You should have three things, and only three things, that you need to get done that week that are directly related to your goals. So one might be, for me, I need to get a chapter written. Another one might be, for me, to connect with three people for speaking. Another one, another priority, might be to... one of the things I need to do is go through all of the landing pages that I have for different programs that I've done, and I need to get rid of all the ones that I don't want so my team can do their thing so we can kind of clean stuff up because I have a lot of old stuff in there. So what is priority? And making sure that you understand what is priority.

Now, what I always tell people, and this is a little bonus tip, I always tell people that whatever is priority, you need to match that, the things that you need to get done for the day and the week. You need to match that with what is your most productive time. If you are not productive in the morning, don't put those priorities there. If you're more productive between two and four, that's where you're going to put those things that you absolutely need to get done this week, non-negotiables. Again, if you're more productive in the morning, don't put them at four o'clock in the afternoon where you're having that slump and you need your fifth cup of coffee. Not going to work. If you're somebody who works in the restaurant industry, and I have clients that work in the restaurant industry, they come in and they have to get set up right away, and they have people that they need to open their drawers and blah, blah, blah, make sure you get in there early and give yourself time to do the one thing that you need to get done for the day.

And make sure that you have that blocked off and you let people know what that is. So making sure that you understand what is priority for that week and making sure... and that day, and making sure that you do that first. And what goes along with that in these three things, when you're planning your week before it starts and your day before it starts, you're understanding what's priority for that day and that week, the third thing is the art of the chunk is what I call it. So chunking your time during the day, and what I mean by that is blocking off specific... remember I said that we categorize those tasks that you need to do, blocking off specific times, cause you already have your meetings laid in there.

So if you have a bunch of marketing tasks that you need to get done, you have a marketing block in your schedule. If you have to connect... if you have some networking stuff that you need to do, make sure that you have a business development block in your schedule. If you have time that you know need to spend with your employees training, you have a training block in your schedule. And those blocks typically are nibbles, but block our time like that, it allows us to be a little bit more flexible should something come up and we have to shift some things around. But again, we always want to make sure that we're focusing on that thing that is the priority for the week, that is going to move the needle on our goals and our declarations and what we want to accomplish in our business for that month, that year, that quarter, whatever.

So chunking your day, and we build that chunk, those different time chunks, into our day, guess what, from the brainstorm list and from what we categorized. So if we have a marketing block, we know what we want to put in that marketing block. Maybe it's plan out posts for the week, maybe it's talk to the advertising firm about an ad for whatever, so you know what you need to do and you just slide it into your schedule. Maybe you also have a chunk of time in there from like let's say one to four where you are doing regular tasks that you normally do, or maybe you're spending time in your store, you're spending time in your restaurant, or you're spending time again, meeting with staff, whatever that looks like. And here's your bonus thing, is that you want to make sure that you have specific CEO days set up with thinking time.

And what does that mean? Literally what it says it does. We want to have chunks set up, one time per week, two times per week, but specific time that you can be the CEO and you can spend time thinking as far as what is going on in your business, what's been happening, and evaluate where there's gaps, where there's roadblocks, or where you have opportunities and you've been focusing on and monetizing on those opportunities. But also, what are opportunities that you want to go after? What are opportunities that you want to build into whatever it is that you're doing? Maybe it's a new menu item. Maybe if it's a new purveyor. Maybe it's a new vendor, a new artisan that you want to bring in. Maybe it is a new program that you want to offer to your clients. Whatever it is, but making sure that you have those CEO, whether it's a day, or CEO chunks throughout the week could be like an hour a day, you have your CEO time to just think.

And that is one of the biggest and the hardest things that people need to do. The hardest time that they have doing something is slowing down and thinking, giving themselves... me included. I'm not immune to this. Spending time thinking about what's really happening and where are you going. And so often we want to be in that hustle, hustle, hustle, and that grind, grind, grind, and eventually it grinds us right down. And again, that's what leads to overwhelm and burnout and all that stuff that we don't... all those places we don't want to be. So making sure that you carve out specific CEO time to give yourself time to think and process and plan and dream and vision cast.

So I hope that these three things helped you. And let me just give you a little piece of... a little word of wisdom that I heard a long time ago. The results that you've achieved in your business thus far are directly related to what it is that you're committed to. So if you're committed to being a firefighter where you're at everyone's whim, you're constantly responding to everybody's what they think is urgent and is not really urgent, and being on everybody else's agenda instead of being someone who has perspective and someone who is setting up healthy boundaries and someone who is committed to really staying focused on that vision and being able to think and implement, or guide people to implement, at the same time.

So if you're committed to being a firefighters... when people come to me and they say, "Oh my gosh, I'm so overwhelmed. I didn't get stuff done. I just go in circles," and I look at their calendar and there's nothing on there, well, you're telling me that you're committed to doing nothing and achieving nothing and being a firefighter, and of course I get the look. But if somebody says, "I feel overwhelmed," and they show me their calendar, and I say, "Okay, well, you know what? Maybe let's shift some of these blocks around. Or maybe you're trying to do things," and I do this myself all the time, "You're trying to do these heavily creative things at a time when your brain just isn't quite there yet, and you need to recharge it and refuel it before you can do that creative task." So then we can shift stuff around.

Because what that sends out is that you're committed to do whatever you need to do, the work that you need to do in order to move your business forward, in order to get the results that you're looking to get. So that is my words of wisdom too. And again, if you want to learn more about this and you want to get all of my gold nuggets on how to really focus your energy and your efforts and really stay focused on the

things that are most important to move yourself forward, definitely sign up to be on the wait list for the Business Advisory Board, and you'll get the information as soon as it comes out so that you can join me inside with about probably between six and seven other people. It's going to be super small, super curated, but high-powered, driven individuals. So go to [theresacantley.com/waitlist](https://theresacantley.com/waitlist).

But again, remember, if you do these three things and you are committed to doing the right work that you need to do in order to move your business forward, you plan your week before it starts, and you plan your day before it starts, you understand what really is priority for the week and for your day, and you do that first or at a time when you're most productive, and you chunk your time down during the day into chunks of categorized time so that you're constantly focused on the right things in that block so that you are just checking stuff off your list. And the biggest thing is make sure that you have CEO time in your schedule so that you can just think and plan and dream and ideate. So until next week, have a great rest of your week, and I will see you soon.