



The Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast

EP30: Stop the Sleep Shaming!



You're listening to Episode 30 of the Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast.

Hey there! You're listening to Episode 30 - Stop the Sleep Shaming!.

I'm your host, Suz - a mindset coach to help music-preneurs build sustainable careers in music by setting clear goals and creating time management systems that enable them to find greater happiness with a better work/life balance.

Some of you may be thinking, how'd we get to Episode 30 already? Wasn't last week Episode 28?!? In case you missed it, Episode 29 was a BONUS episode - a live coaching call with our guest, James Divine, where I helped him break down some roadblocks he was facing with landing more speaking gigs.

If you missed that little bonus nugget you can get it from your favorite app or by going to Episode 28's show notes' page and it's embedded there - www.therockstaradvocate.com/ep28

Now that we've cleared that up, I'd like to clear something else up - a big misconception that seems to have permeated the industry - working on no sleep does NOT mean you want it more than someone else.

I repeat... forgoing sleep to pursue your dreams DOES NOT mean you want it more than someone else.

The sleep shaming that happens at industry events needs to STOP!

What do I mean by sleep shaming, you ask?

Think back to the last event or show you went to where there were other musicians or industry folk. I'm going to take a wild guess and assume this conversation or something like it took place at least once:

One person: "Ugh I'm so tired, I only slept like 3 hours last night."

Another person: "Oh, please be grateful! I'm working on 1 hour of sleep I've been so busy." OR "Ppsssh I don't sleep, I hustle."

That, my dear friends, is sleep shaming.

What that second person is REALLY trying to say is "Ha! You think you understand struggle in this industry, I clearly understand it more and I'm willing to put in the work so I'm going to make you feel bad for saying how tired you are."

This is the perfect example of someone convincing themselves that busy = productive, which, if you've listened to this podcast before, you know is a load of crap, and they want to show you that working more hours = being more productive aka successful.

Here's the thing - I used to get involved in those shaming conversations. I used to wear my all-nights like a badge of honor.

I did this because I was struggling to survive, not seeing any real progress from my efforts, and felt that if I showed how little I slept it would convey to people I work hard and therefore must be successful to some degree.

It's a natural reaction to cover up those feelings of fraud we discussed in [Episode 11](#) and I believe we say it less to shame others and more to comfort ourselves, but it's not a good look.

When we shame others for admitting they're tired we only perpetuate this belief that we all need to do more and sleep less to be successful.

We say that if you want something badly enough you'll make the necessary sacrifices and won't complain.

Not only is there no agreement out there in the Universe that says if you work more than you'll sleep you'll be successful, there's also hard, scientific evidence that concludes your work suffers the less you sleep.

The music industry, however, tends to still be stuck in the hustle/grind mentality.

We've been raised in a culture of *work hard/play hard*, rather than *work smarter not harder*. Everything is seen as a competition, and often the *quality* of work isn't what's being compared.

Whoever is seen at the most events is seen as the hardest worker. But, what about the person who stayed focused and actually got their work done and met the deadlines?

Whoever burns that midnight oil, or works on their vacation is the MVP. But, what about the person who spends time with their family and comes to work fully charged & in a great mood?

Whoever is available 24/7 and puts sleep on the back burner is the one who wants it more. But, what about the person who shows up everyday with a full tank of energy and never takes a sick day due to strong health habits?

I understand that sometimes a project requires long hours, or children can keep you up all night and you still must report to work. However, there's a difference between doing what's needed and glorifying the lack of self-care.

Many other industries are starting to see the effects "workaholism" is having on their overall productivity and have begun to implement mandatory vacations and even mental-health days as well as [better mental healthcare](#).

I've left a few resources for you to check on on this increasing trend in the [show notes](#).

As a teenager I did nothing but sleep. I loved the snooze button so much I missed my 2nd go-round of the SATs, waking up at 3pm in the afternoon and realizing the test was probably over by then.

By freshman year of college people actually started calling me Snooze.

But once I began interning in the music industry that summer, everything changed. I got a taste of the fast-paced, never-stop-it's-New-York-City lifestyle and sleep and I parted ways.

I became the QUEEN of all-nighters. By junior year I was taking 8 classes and working 3 part-time jobs. Friends didn't matter. Family didn't matter. Sleep and eating right were easily the first to go.

Even once I left my label job and started building my own business, I used to go home after a late night event, painstakingly stay up at least another 4 hours doing work, only to wake up 3 hours later to go to a day job at which I barely functioned.

I'd then look back and realize the work I did during that 4 hour cram session was either sprinkled with mistakes or simply dead wrong.

Even when I delivered work that clients thought was "amazing" I'd look at it knowing I could have done it better because I knew it wasn't me at 100%. I was skating by. My business was being maintained, but it wasn't growing.

I wasn't proud of my work.

I wasn't building my brand.

I wasn't feeling motivated.

I was not fun to be around because I was SO.DAMN.TIRED!

Fast forward many years later and I've finally learned the error of my ways.

It wasn't until I was 28 and was diagnosed with Lyme disease that I finally decided I had to make sleep a priority.

After hiring a coach and learning how to take better care of myself while balancing a full workload, I accomplished more in 3 months under my new business as The Rock/Star Advocate than what would normally have taken me close to 6-8 months (if not a year) in my former business.

It's not because The Rock/Star Advocate is a better business than IXiiV Artist Consulting was; it's because I've become a better business person. I wasn't working more; I was working *smarter and with intention*.

Making that shift, I saw the improvements in my work and productivity. I began reading up on the positive effects of sleep and how dangerous our society's outlook is on considering sleep a waste of time.

Sleep allows us to digest our experiences from the day, rid our body and brain of harmful toxins, and reboot ourselves for the day ahead.

Without sleep we are more likely to make impulsive decisions, increase our levels of stress, anxiety, and depression, and have a weakened immune system.

One of the best books I've read on the subject has been Arianna Huffington's [The Sleep Revolution](#).

Before you go to your next mixer and brag about how much you didn't sleep, or let someone shame you into feeling lazy because you *did* sleep, consider these facts Ms. Huffington lays out in her book:

1. "63% of men who suffered a heart attack also had a sleep disorder" (p. 26).
2. "People who get 6 hours of sleep per night are 23% more likely to be overweight... less than 4 hours of sleep per night and the increased likelihood of being overweight climbs to a staggering 73%" (p. 27).
3. "...after being awake for 17-19 hours... we can experience levels of cognitive impairment equal to having a blood alcohol level of .05%" (p. 30). The legal limit in NYS is .08.
4. "...our loss of sleep, despite the extra hours we put in at work, adds up to more than 11 days of lost productivity per year per worker" (p. 23).
5. Going from regularly sleeping 8 hours to sleeping 6 hours for 5 nights in a row, "fine lines and wrinkles increased by 45%, blemishes went up by 13%, and redness increased by 8%" (p. 28).

You may think you're adding more hours to your day, but all you're really doing is depleting your health and the level of work you're producing.

In fact, many studies have found that even a small amount of sleep deprivation can cause the same mental and physical impairments that drinking alcohol can cause. I've left links to them in the show notes [like [this one](#) and [this one](#)].

Basically, staying up 24 hours straight is equivalent to being legally intoxicated. Remember, it's about quality not quantity. Getting 10 well-written and effective emails to booking agents or sponsors is better than 35 incoherent, mistake-filled emails that will be quickly discarded.

In addition, if you are out on tour, PLEASE consider the effects of not sleeping when you are the one driving the car or van. It is equivalent to driving drunk and some states are beginning to try to pass laws that will fine people who are found driving while sleep deprived.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, "Drowsy driving is implicated in 100,000 car crashes per year, which leave 71,000 people injured and 1,500 dead according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration."

For a full list of impending policy changes by state you can visit the website I've listed in the show notes.

Do your best to get 6-8 hours of sleep every night. It won't always happen, but it should be the goal you aim for, rather than making the goal to prove nonsense to people who aren't on your journey.

Listen to your body. If you're tired, sleep. Working on all cylinders you'll get more done faster than forcing yourself to do work when you're not focused. Know the hours when you're most focused.

Maybe you're a night owl (like me). Take a nap during the day. Work at night when you're ready. Or maybe you're an early bird. Take advantage of the morning to get

your most important work done. Being honest with who you are and how you work is the best way to get the most out of your day.

I talk in Episode 2 about quitting my first industry job 5x. I was in an extremely bad place mentally and emotionally and should have been making myself a priority, yet I kept coming back due to the pressure to “step it up” and prove I had what it took, no matter the toll on my health.

I now realize I had nothing to prove beyond producing great work.

No one should care if I get 4, 6, or 8 hours of sleep. It has nothing to do with them. All they should care about is that I show up and do the work.

Don't worry that someone is “functioning” on less sleep than you. It doesn't mean they want it more. You have no idea the greater effect it has on them or how it will eventually catch up to them.

You also never know how much of their all-nighter is spent doing the wrong work, or making the wrong decisions. So, how much time are they saving?

Next time you enter a sleep-shaming face-off, stand tall and proud and say “wow, that sounds awful, I hope you're able to find more sleep tonight so you're at your best tomorrow!”

If you're looking to get more sleep, or at least find ways to wind down and find more structure in your nightly routine, I've created a worksheet you can use to get the ball rolling.

Simply go to www.therockstaradvocate.com/ep28 and download My Journey to Better Sleep Worksheet.

Always remember the Oxygen Mask Principle - you've got to put your mask on first, aka take care of you, before you can be free to help or serve anyone else. So if success in reaching and changing lives matters to you, then your health should be your first priority in getting there.

If you enjoyed what you learned today, you can access all current episodes using your preferred podcast app, including iTunes & Spotify, or by visiting www.therockstaradvocate.com/podcast.

If you're looking to figure out your next steps, find time to balance everything on your plate, or learn better ways to practice self-care, let's talk!

As always, feel free to email me at any time: suz@therockstaradvocate.com.

Until next time, Rockstar! Have a wonderful week and I hope to see you back here next Wednesday so we can get grounded to get rising! Take care.