



The Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast

EP33: Why I Laugh At My Lymes



You're listening to Episode 33 of the Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast.

Hey there! You're listening to Episode 33 - Why I Laugh At My Lymes. Today's episode is sponsored by The Music-Preneur Mindset Summit, which I'll tell you all about at the end of this episode!

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

I have never really gone into much detail here about why I chose to teach others about a better work/life balance, and being that this week marks the 5-year anniversary from when I was diagnosed with Lyme Disease I thought it'd be appropriate to share that piece of my journey with you.

I've learned a LOT of lessons about my limitations, and lack there of with the right mindset, and have decided to make an episode about it in hopes that it gives you hope should you feel held back by a sickness or other hurdles in your life.

On my 29th birthday, 2 weeks after my first camping trip, I was out with friends and one of them commented on 3 large bullseye-like spots on my legs. I was so tired and felt so out of it that I shrugged it off {one of the many symptoms of Lymes is being extremely lethargic, but I'm also someone who shrugs off going to the doctor}.

Luckily, they ignored my dismissal, told my mom on me and I was brought to the ER later that day and immediately put on 6 weeks of medication.

Over 300,000 people are diagnosed with Lyme Disease in the US each year, but every case is unique, which can make it difficult to diagnose as it doesn't often show up in blood tests.

In 2015, it was the 6th most common Nationally Notifiable disease, according to the CDC.

When people find out I have it I get a lot of sympathetic looks and words of comfort. I usually respond with, "Oh, it's totally fine, I brought this on myself."

I say it with a chuckle and people are often concerned and perplexed by my response.

I want to be clear - I don't believe people are punished with illnesses or that people "deserve" to get sick or that if someone is sick they must have "brought it on" or asked for it.

However, I do believe that if there's a lesson we're meant to learn the Universe will make sure we learn it, one way or another.

For me, the Universe did all it could to teach me to slow down. And it wasn't subtle.

My 20s were littered with loud, in-your-face signals.

Within 3 years I suffered 2 bouts of Mono - the second time I continued going to work and ignored the fevers, aches and pains and occasional vomiting. Hey, deadlines are deadlines, right?

I worked 15+ hours at a job I hated and multiple former bosses and professors warned me not to take the job and instead take time off after graduation.

Dating, vacations with friends, you name it - it all went on the back burner as an after-thought. Those things were something I'd try to squeeze in where I could. I had countless friends and family ask me to slow down and spend more time with them.

I watched my workaholic father suffer terribly from Cancer and never get to make it to his retirement and enjoy the fruits of his labor, and still I never picked my head up from work to live more of the life around me.

That is, until, I was invited to go camping.

A friend of mine implored me to stop working and live a little. They thought it would be good for me after dealing with such a tragic loss.

They were right. It was a blast and I still don't regret it. I did need this trip in more ways than we could have known at the time.

Before then I had almost become paranoid, as if people who told me to slow down were hoping I'd give up or take myself out of the running so to speak. I wasn't thrilled with how my businesses had each performed and I thought people just wanted me to give up.

It felt like some kind of test and every time I ignored their ploys and kept busy I somehow passed.

Looking back, I'd say I was crazy, but I feel it's rather normal in this business because I now see that same semi-paranoia-meets-distrust around slowing down in others on an almost daily basis.

That's because the music industry's definition of "hustle" makes us believe if we aren't suffering we don't want it badly enough.

In my 20s my 2 businesses went nowhere. No matter how many clients I had or glowing testimonials I collected, I never took the time to scale my businesses, let alone learn how to even do that, because I was so focused on the minutia.

I convinced myself that because I was so busy and sacrificed so much, success HAD to be right around the corner. That's how that works, right?

Something wouldn't work or wouldn't get me the result I wanted so then I just threw myself into the next thing without taking any time to examine how to improve or how to work smarter.

I was in a rat race with competition that I had made up in my head and I was rushing to a finish line that I wasn't even sure existed. I had no passion, no clarity, and no purpose to the work I was doing. I was simply doing.

That summer after camping was rough. The two weeks between coming back from camping and going to the ER, I was sleeping through my alarm clock {but that was also something I was known to do}, I was emotionally erratic {ok, maybe it was my period and hey, I was in mourning}, I was vomiting and my legs ached deeply all the time {ok, I don't have a way to excuse those last 2 away, but I still managed to think I was fine}.

After being diagnosed, even though I felt relieved to know everything I was feeling was because I was sick, I still struggled to accept I had to take it easy.

But unlike the flu, Lyme's is not something you can ignore. There were days where I couldn't sit upright in bed, no matter how much I wanted to. Working in retail at the time, it was almost impossible to go up and down the flights of stairs at the store without needing to stop and take a break.

I had become so sensory sensitive I could only look at the computer screen for 2 hours or so at a time.

It took a full 6 weeks for the medication to do its job and during those 6 weeks I broke down into tears more than I care to admit. On top of mourning my father, I had put ridiculous pressure on myself to build this business I always told him I was going to

build whether he approved or not {more of that story in [Episode 16](#)} and this disease was an inconvenience I refused to accept.

Eventually, I gave in and realized that if I had limited energy I wasn't going to waste it fighting against something I couldn't control.

I started harnessing my energy differently. I started to give myself more permission to rest. I realized that 2013 was not going to be my breakout year.

I decided to take a year off from work. Not my day job work, just what I saw as my "actual" work. It had been more than 10 years since I last worked at only 1 job. I had one focus - show up on time for work at my retail job.

I spent time with friends when I was up for it. I took days off and did nothing. I came home and vegged out after work. I went to happy hours. I realized I was turning my brain off from planning for the next thing and being present more and more each day.

By early 2014 I was ready to get back to my old life, and get back into the music scene, but I knew I couldn't go back exactly to the way things were.

I couldn't run around going to 2-3 shows a night to see clients perform. I couldn't burn the midnight oil writing bios if I had a morning shift at work. I also couldn't charge next-to-nothing prices when I knew I had a limited amount of working hours to make money.

I also knew I didn't know anything other than being a workaholic, so I needed to learn how to work smarter.

I started reading works by Arianna Huffington. I started taking classes on being an entrepreneur. I read up about the power of mindset and how busy does not always equal productive.

Everything I was learning was 150% counter to what I had picked up from working in the music industry. I was extremely reluctant to trust it. I felt the only way I could have enough time to build my next business up was to spend 24/7 on it.

I made a 4-month exit plan to quit my retail job by the summer of 2014, giving myself time to line up enough clients to pay the bills after quitting.

The summer of 2014 was successful monetarily for me, but I also spent a lot of my time battling my inner voices - one that wanted to find an easier way to do things and one that believed easy and success never went hand in hand.

By the fall I had finally agreed to call up a friend in the entrepreneur world who had been offering her coaching services to me for years and for years I kept telling myself she had no idea how this industry worked.

When we started together I had a bit of a chip on my shoulder, warning her that my situation was not going to be like any of her other clients - I worked in the music industry and different rules applied here. I was also dealing with a lifelong illness and I wasn't going to be able to do everything she may need me to do, but I'd keep an open mind.

Yea... I was that bitch.

Luckily she and her wife, who I also hired to help me, helped me see that I was making a TON of excuses and living behind a LOT of fear.

They helped me see how poorly I was using my time and how I was ignoring building any type of structure around my day-to-day tasks.

They also gave me plenty of examples of successful people who battle a lot more on a daily basis and overcome whatever's in their way without burning out or ignoring relationships in their lives.

I had invested a good amount with my coaches so I was determined to try it their way, even if I didn't quite believe. They even helped me realize everything I had been through lead me to become extremely passionate about self-care and time management.

Out of that realization came The Rock/Star Advocate. I often get asked how I became a mindset coach. People often say, "I didn't realize that existed in the music industry." I often nod and say, "It didn't, I made it up."

Not to say I created the term "mindset coach" but my illness helped my see what myself and so many others have struggled with in this industry and I had an opportunity and a passion for addressing it head on and helping others see a better way for thriving in this environment.

I have learned ways to help keep my symptoms at bay in order to have more time to do the things I love and show others how to do the same. Some times I make smart choices, and other times I don't and I pay for it. I also teach others about that, too.

But when those times happen I 100% find a way to laugh at the absurdity of it all. With everything in my life that has happened to tell me to slow down, it took 3 little ticks to make me listen.

Of course it can be painful at times, but I never once feel regretful or sorry for my situation. My friends who encouraged me to come with them camping always say how regretful they feel that they didn't let me stay home.

I recently said to them, "Don't feel bad, look at everything this situation has given me."

My passion comes from realizing how much of a hold my former mindset of what it means to "hustle" had on me and what it took to snap me out of it. I realized that if it took a serious illness to wake me up, it must be just as difficult, if not more, for others to see the light as well.

Talking at conferences and having this podcast is my way of helping others wake up. I may not be a musician or know a whole lot about what it takes to perform, but I do know what it feels like to feel as if you can never take a break.

For those of you listening, TAKE A BREAK! Go live life. You have the time.

In 2015 I relapsed and had become so sensory sensitive that living in NYC had become too much and I decided to move to Nashville. That came with it's own challenges and I detail that hilarity in [Episode 4](#).

But, I say this to say that while moving and working with clients I slept more and worked less because I had to and I still managed to get it all done. The reason was because when I could work I was super focused, knowing that I might have to go lay down at any given time.

A lot of what you're doing right now is spinning your wheels and with a little clarity and a little bit of structure around your goals you can make better use of your time.

I want to thank you for taking YOUR time to listen to my story. The biggest takeaway I hope you have is that there are always multiple ways to look at a situation. You have choices and those choices determine what you do next.

So choose to laugh. Doesn't mean you can be sad or acknowledge when things don't go as planned. But this is the new plan - so what are you going to do about it?

There is a lesson in everything and you get to choose what that lesson is going to teach you. While I appreciate people's sympathy, I much rather laugh about what a stubborn mule I've been and how I can now tell the Universe, "Ok, thanks, got it!"

Message loud and clear. 10-4 and all that stuff.

Now I want to know - what are YOU going to choose to learn today? What storm cloud can you turn into a dance in the rain? Be sure to hop on over to the show notes on my website and leave me a comment!

Just go to www.therockstaradvocate.com/ep33!

Or you can email me at any time - suz@therockstaradvocate.com.

If you find yourself in the show notes, you can also download my Flip the Script workbook. It's a freebie I made for you to help you find that silver lining in your situation if you're having trouble getting there on your own.

Lastly, if you like what you heard today, there's more where that came from! Mindset and work/life balance are at the core of The Music-Preneur Mindset Summit and it will all be going down during the last weekend in September in Long Beach, NY.

The Summit, the inspiration for this very podcast, is a 2.5 day event at one of Long Beach's newest hot spots - Junction - with more than 20 respected industry professionals all focused on one goal - providing you with digestible information you can learn to apply that very weekend to your own career in a way that works for you.

Zero overwhelm. Zero burnout. Zero workaholism.

Each morning we'll start the day with either a journaling or yoga exercise to get us in the proper mindset and make the most of the panels and workshops scheduled each day and each evening we'll end with live music performed by our very own attendees.

You can also join us via live stream, catching all of the classes, panels, and workshops inside a private FB group!

Head on over to the [show notes page](#) to find more details, purchase tickets and learn more about submitting to play live through ReverbNation, but hurry as submissions close on 7/31!

Thanks so much for turning in!

You can access all current episodes of this podcast using your app of choice, 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 how to trust this whole working smarter business, let's talk!

That email again is suz@therockstaradvocate.com.

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