



The Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast

Ep101: The Overlooked & Overworked

You're listening to Episode 101 of the Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast.

Hello! You're listening to [Episode 101: The Overlooked & Overworked](#).

I'm your host, Suz, a mindset + productivity coach helping music professionals get clear on their goals, priorities, and next steps all while decreasing overwhelm and avoiding burnout.

Today's episode is brought to you by my 2021 Rock/Star Life Planner - a weekly planner designed with the creativepreneur in mind, jam packed with downloadable templates, checklists, PDF guides, and more. All Planners ship for FREE within the United States, and grant access to exclusive community support via my private Instagram channel - [@redefinethehustle](#).

We also have a "digital version" of the Planner available if you prefer to print your own at home. Artist Brittany Cotto, founder of Pacific Coast Strings and accompanist to Eminem, Ariana Grande, Camila Cabello and others says it's, "The successful musician's best friend."

Now through 4/30, to celebrate over 100 episodes, you can receive a digital PDF file of the 2021 Rock/Star Life Planner by following 4 simple steps in a fun Episode 100 Contest I'm running. All participants will receive the digital version of the Planner, a \$20 value, plus one lucky winner will be chosen randomly at the end of the month to receive my full physical Planner Bundle in the mail. That's the 2021 Rock/Star Life Planner, my Time Blocking Marker Set, End-of-Day Mindset Check-In Notepad, 2 sets of Planning Stickers and both colors of my Monthly Planner Tab stickers to easily flip between the months in the Planner.

This \$60 bundle could be yours by completing the following tasks:

1. Leave a rating AND review of this podcast on your platform of choice
2. DM me [@rockstaradvo](#) on Instagram or email me suz@therockstaradvocate.com a screenshot of the review once it's posted.

3. Go to my April 14 post on my @rockstaradvo account on Instagram about this contest and leave a comment with the phrase "I listened!"
4. AND share the post in your feed or IG stories.

That's it! Those 4 steps and you're done! Upon completing all 4 steps I'll send you a link to your Planner PDF and enter your name into the random drawing at the end of the month for the Planner Bundle package. All are welcome to participate, so tell your friends!

All details can be found on the show notes page: <http://therockstaradvocate.com/ep101> and you can email me at any time if you have questions suz@therockstaradvocate.com.

You can also head to the show notes page for a FREE downloadable guide to help you work smarter from home, but I'll tell you more about that later.

Right now, I want to jump into a topic I've been wanting to discuss for a while now. I want to shine a light on a group of music industry professionals who have been struggling immensely during these uncertain times and who have always had to work extremely hard to make sure the musicians they support reach their goals. I'm talking about the agency & label employees, the roadies, the lighting and sound crew, the interns, the marketing, radio, and PR teams. The ones whose jobs are constantly in flux and whose work hours can be demanding and thankless.

Last week I spoke about my journey through entrepreneurship, but this week I want to focus on where I started in this industry, why I left, and why today's industry employees are the ones who keep me building The Rock/Star Advocate and expanding its reach.

Back when I was sitting down with my first coach, discussing what my now third (or fourth, who's counting?) business would look like. I wanted the word Advocate to be in the name, but who was I advocating for, who was I trying to help?

I told her that ultimately, I wanted to help prevent the burnout, depression, and overwhelm I felt when working at the major labels. It wasn't all bad, but no one could have prepared me for my experience and starting so young in the industry, something people always think is something to aim for, wasn't all it was cracked up to be.

My job itself wasn't impossible, but navigating it at the age I was, surrounded by people on average 10+ years older than me with no reference of prior jobs and no understanding of boundaries on my time, energy and health, it felt damn near impossible.

I wanted to reach out to labels and work on addressing employee burnout. I also wanted to head out on the road and support those working on major tours, for a very brief moment in time this company was called The Touring Advocate. But, back in 2014, no one was talking openly about mental health and self-care, especially in the music industry.

My coach and I both knew of people, life coaches of sorts, who were sent out on tour to make sure the entertainers stayed on course and showed up on time for the show. There were sober coaches and therapists that labels turned to when needed, but I didn't have the experience or personal connections to make that happen, and even if I did - that served one person - the star. What about all those who worked with that person. Who was helping them?

I decided I would flip the word "rockstar" on its head and make it about anyone in the industry who wanted to feel grounded (like a rock) in order to reach their full potential (like a rising star). It wasn't about only those in the spotlight. It was about all of us, each and every one of us, who bust our ass to do what we love but can't seem to do it without falling apart and becoming untethered to what keeps us healthy and sane.

I began focusing on getting the conversation out there, hitting up every music conference and event I could, wiggling my way onto any panel that would take me - usually it was a "Future in Music" panel where I'd have to fight for the mic to discuss the future including better mental health resources and more boundaries around our time and energy.

By 2017, I was *finally* able to secure solo workshops at these events and more conferences were adding mental health and wellness panels to their lineup. I'm not saying I did all of that, I'm saying this is the long game we all have to play sometimes before we can see real change happen, so keep pushing forward if you're not seeing it yet.

Each time I spoke up about the burnout and the ridiculous, unrealistic expectations put on many of our industry's workforce more people would come find me afterwards and want to discuss things further. They wanted to share their own stories about how work's been going and share in the relief that it wasn't just them.

That's one thing I wish I knew at 21 - that I wasn't alone. Everyone else at the label seemed to be handling everything so well. Some had kids, some were artists in their own right, playing gigs after work, and yet I felt like I was the only one who couldn't handle the work.

I didn't really connect with anyone outside of work, so it was never discussed. I also lived the furthest away, living at home with my parents out on "the island" so as soon as work ended, sometimes after a 15-hour day, I'd take the next 45-50 min train home and pass out and do it all again the next day.

The harder you worked, the more work they gave you. I handled sales in the midwest region, as well as managing the national street team and hiring and training all of the interns - and when we'd get one or two that were older than me... watch out. It took time, but I eventually gained their respect.

I got 5 whole days off that year, and even with a raise and overtime made less than \$30k. As I describe in detail in [Episode 2](#), I quit 5 times, but came back in fear of losing my entry into the industry as a whole forever.

That's another thing I wish I knew when I started - no one gives you your entry card into this industry and no one can take it away. Someone may have opened doors for you, I definitely had a number of people do that for me, but make no mistake I got myself here. If someone slams a door in your face, carve out your own in the wall next to it.

The music industry isn't an exclusive club, though many will make it seem like it is. You make your own opportunities and as long as you lead with respect and do good work (notice I didn't say work hard, there's a difference), you will build and maintain the right relationships to get where you want to be.

As I said, by 2017 more organizations were talking about wellness, but so often the conversation focused on either the musicians or the leaders - the entrepreneurs, the CEOs. Very little of the conversation was centered around the people who made it possible for all of them to do their work.

We weren't addressing the shit pay, and the unrealistic quotas, and the refusal of so many companies to change with the times and accept that CDs weren't selling. We weren't addressing the demands put on employees when the talent was being burdensome or the venues pulled out last minute or there was a global pandemic and people were forced to work at home while homeschooling their children and looking after their elderly family members.

I wasn't working at the labels when the pandemic hit and the touring market burned to the ground, but I was there when mp3s took over and behemoths like Tower Records and Virgin Megastore were closing their doors and no longer ordering CDs. I watched as the major players kept pushing through as if nothing was changing. The quotas weren't changed, the expectations weren't adjusted, we just had to keep pushing forward.

That's another thing I learned early on in the industry - quit complaining, put your head down and do the work, otherwise there're plenty of people who'd take this job off your hands.

The stress of possibly being outworked, being outdone by someone coming up behind you was ever-looming. Imagine if that stress was lifted and a supportive environment filled with new ideas and fresh takes on a problem after a full-night's rest existed. Imagine then the productivity we'd see...

Imagine if your focus was kept on the road ahead, rather than the people coming up behind you. Imagine the lack of competition and the abundance of team work and trust at the workplace...

Imagine allowing employees, many whom are artists themselves, to think outside the box and try new approaches to problems rather than simply carry out the demands from upstairs in an effort to meet quotas.

Over the last few years, I've had the pleasure of working with more agencies, helping their employees find focus and clarity in their work. I've been able to speak to teams at labels like BMG about the importance of mental health and self-care and how to avoid burnout, especially around the demanding holiday season, by saying "No" more often without fear of being seen as a failure.

Organizations like Women in Music have allowed me to host workshops around coping with the pandemic and working from home during these extra-stressful times.

A shift *is* happening, and I am here for it! I have started creating training programs and workshops tailored specifically to industry employees who seek a better work/life balance. It *is* possible, and I only wish I knew it was possible when I started.

Competition is not what we need. The sleep shaming (omg, Joel, stop complaining you're tired from only 3 hours sleep, I only get sleep when I blink and go to the bathroom) has got to stop. The feeling as if you can't say no to something, when you absolutely need to say no for your own sanity and health, has got to end.

If Wall Street and Silicon Valley can start to wake up and realize how important employee satisfaction and retention is, the music industry can, too.

For all the industry employees out there, I see you. I know how hard you work and I know it doesn't always come with a thank you. I encourage you to speak up and turn to your fellow coworkers and support one another. If you need additional support, reach out! Coaches aren't just for musicians and CEOs.

If you are a CEO or team leader and fear your team members are struggling to get the job done and/or struggling with their day-to-day focus, let's talk. There are things you can do as a leader to instill more confidence and calm into your team.

This episode is not meant to be the conversation, first off it's only me, which is a really boring conversation, and there's SO much to cover there's no way we could in one episode, but I hope it's served its purpose to start more conversations and shine a light on those who often go unthanked. I encourage you to reach out to those you know in this position and let them know you appreciate them and the work they do.

This podcast was strictly focused on shining a spotlight on musicians who have managed to build careers on their own terms. But now, we'll be shifting the light to those behind the scenes, expanding the conversation around a healthy mindset when it comes to work and achieving success in this industry.

In the coming weeks, all throughout May, I'll be speaking with an array of experts around mental health in the industry, and moving forward you'll be hearing from more people behind the scenes - what their journeys have looked like and the lessons they've learned.

If you are, or have been, a burnt out industry employee and would be willing to share your story, reach out via email suz@therockstaradvocate.com and we can discuss having you on the show!

In the meantime, if you're feeling overwhelmed trying to manage work and your home life during a global pandemic, I've created a version of the guide I made for the Women In Music presentation last year - Working {Smarter} from Home with my best tips for finding a better balance when the boundaries between work and home have disappeared.

You can download it for free on the show notes page www.therockstaradvocate.com/ep101.

And don't forget, if you'd like a FREE copy of the 2021 Rock/Star Life Planner, be sure to enter the Episode 100 Contest, running now through April 30. All the details can be found in the show notes as well as on my Instagram page, so come say hi [@rockstarado](https://www.instagram.com/rockstarado)!

Thank you so much for listening and I hope you'll join me in this mission to eradicate industry burnout! I'll be back next week with a brand new episode so be sure to subscribe on your platform of choice!

Until next time, Rock/Star. Keep planning, keep learning, and I hope to see you back here next week so we can get grounded to get rising! Take care.