



The Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast

Ep65: Behind the Scenes of a Mindset Coach

You're listening to Episode 65 of the Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast.

Hello! You're listening to [Episode 65: Behind the Scenes of a Mindset Coach](#).

I'm your host, Suz - a mindset coach helping music professionals get clear on their goals and find the time to get it all done while maintaining a healthy work/life balance.

I say that same sentence, or something close to that sentence, in every episode and it recently occurred to me that you might be thinking, "Yea, that's great but wtf does that reeealllly mean? What do you reeealllly do?"

Well I can tell you right off the bat that no one in my family knows wtf I do. I'm the Chandler Bing of my universe. They'd sooner say I was a transponster before they'd try to explain wtf a mindset coach in the music industry does.

And that can happen when you invent a new line of work in this industry. I'm by no means the first mindset coach who ever existed and I'm not the first one in the music industry to address mental health and goal setting, but I'm one of the very few, if any, who decided to stick strictly to time management and goal setting services, with a background in counseling and therapy.

Why did I do this? Mainly because of the reasons I discuss in Episode 63 - Quit Making Music For Everyone - I wanted to quit marketing services to everyone. As I said in that episode, the riches are in the niches.

Don't come to me for help with your bio, or press release, or marketing plan - that's not my area of expertise. Can I help you with it? Sure. Is there someone out there who can do it better? Most likely. So don't spend your money on me for help with that. I'm happy to refer you elsewhere.

When it comes to working through mental and emotional roadblocks, managing a mental disorder, navigating relationships, and staying organized & focused on your goals through it all... I'm sure there are definitely other people who can help you and who you may click with more depending on your personality and specific needs, but overall I'm very confident that I have the tools to help get you clear on where you want to go and how to get there while managing the various areas of your life.

That's my thing.

Ever since I was a little kid that's what friends came to me for - even before the formal training - advice on how to deal with tough situations and to have someone to listen to them and empathize with what they were going through.

And I loved being that person. I still do.

I love being able to take in what someone's saying and hear what's really behind it - the deeper layers. I'm an empath and an introvert - I love the layers. I love going deeper on a topic and seeing what's really the core issue.

I love that moment when I suggest something to someone and you see that light in their eyes like, "Ok, that was the missing piece, yes!"

I also love the listening - being able to hold space for someone as they open up to me and share things that often times they've never told anyone else before. Sometimes it's easier to talk to someone you don't know that well about the deeper stuff.

It's easier for me to see things from a fresh perspective as someone who isn't coloring the situation with past experiences with you or clouded by a desire to want certain things for you in life that you may not want for yourself - as friends and family often do, even with the best of intentions.

I often say to people my work is part therapy, part organizational coaching. Someone once called me their emotional closet organizer and I thought, "Yea, that's a pretty accurate term."

I help people manage their emotions and thoughts around what it means and what it takes to be a professional in this industry. This is entrepreneurship and it's messy and you've got to maintain a strong emotional and mental foundation in order to withstand the chaos so you can enjoy the fruits of your labor.

I get asked a lot why I chose to be a "mindset coach" in this industry - what made me choose that term for what I do and what made me choose this industry. Well, there's a bit to that story so I'll try to summarize it as best I can.

First off, one thing that often gets misconstrued is what I am and am not and I'd like to make it clear here today. I am a trained counselor and therapist. I am not licensed by the State of New York, which means I don't take insurance, as I decided to not continue with additional credits to take the test as I decided to start this business instead and I didn't need a state license to do that.

I also do not identify myself as a therapist to any of my clients - as it states clearly in my client contracts. We do discuss their mental health and I am able to recognize certain disorders they may be managing which enables me to provide them with support that's best suited to their needs, but I will never diagnose a client and will often refer them to resources for seeking professional help in that nature if they're not seeking it already.

Could I hang a shingle outside my door and be someone's therapist? Yes. I do have the qualifications for that - but that's not something that I want to do at this time. I prefer to take the knowledge I have and use it to inform better/more customized ways for each client of mine to manage their day to day business in this industry.

I am not a psychologist or psychiatrist, and have never claimed to be. I am also not a licensed social worker, although I do have some training in that background.

Originally, I was heading down a path in 2011 to leave the music industry behind altogether and become a social worker and/or school psychologist. But after a few internships and shadowing others I realized I am too much of an empath to be able to do an effective job in those areas - a job that requires you to leave the work at work and not get too attached to the outcome.

So as I floundered around wondering if I should keep going for my license, my father passed and everything halted.

I took a solid year or so away from both psychology and the music industry and decided to focus only on my day job in retail.

In 2014 I was pulled back into the music industry, an industry I've studied and worked in since I was 18 years old, and I started to realize, thanks to the help of people like Corina Corina and Jordana and Gena Jaffe, that I had the tools I needed to begin helping artists in a way that felt aligned with my strengths and passions.

I chose the music industry because, at that time from where I was standing, not many others in my line of work were choosing it. I knew first hand how hard it was to mentally and emotionally survive this industry.

My friends used to tease me in college for going for a degree in the music industry. While many of them were taking Advanced Physics and Microbiology something or other, I was taking Gospel Choir and The History of Rock and Roll and a class completely focused on the album Quadrophenia - yes, the album by The Who.

I would go back to my dorm room and do my roommate's Calculus homework just to feel challenged.

Not gonna lie - the academic part of college was not hard for me. But as anyone who listened to Episode 2 of this podcast - How & Why I Quit My Job 5x - you'll understand there was another side to the industry that really took its toll.

This industry isn't rocket science but it *is* deeply rooted in human emotion and the relationships required to build one's career can often be layered and complex.

It's also been treated as the Wild West for so long that it's never really been approached with a thought of, "Hey, what if we organized and systemized things a bit?" But to me, life without systems and organization is no life at all.

When I was a kid and my mom needed to keep me busy she'd simply open up all of the kitchen cabinets and I'd gladly sit there for hours organizing her Rubbermaid containers and stack her pots and pans in size order.

Taking me to the toy store was easy - I'd pick out one thing and be done. Taking me to the basement of Macy's where they had all of their Gladware and Pyrex? God help you. I wanted to look at every size container and marvel at how someone figured out a way to make a space for EVERYTHING. I didn't even know the Container Store existed yet. Thank God for that or my parents may have just abandoned me there.

When I started interning for Atlantic Records and there was downtime I poked in each department and asked if I could organize their supply closets. I couldn't stand walking by each one and seeing folders and pens and merch falling off of the shelves onto the floor with no rhyme or reason to anything!

I did such a good job, my next summer back they had turned one of the closets into my own office and put my name on the door. It was a small but thrilling gesture.

12 years later when I reconnected with one such employee - Lou Plaia, who had gone on to create ReverbNation - he said, "Oh yea, I remember you - you organized the closets, right?"

Yea. I was that person.

I've always had a love for this industry. I could just never understand why it had to be so messy. If it was going to be messy emotionally then there had to be some structure elsewhere to balance it out.

I love balance. I haven't always had it, but I'm learning how to find more of it. And that's messy, too, but it's worth it! Even to have that balance for a fleeting moment, it's worth chasing again and again.

Which brings me to my next topic - now that you know why I chose this path, wtf does this path look like now that I've been on it for almost 5 years?

Well, like I said, it's messy. And thank God I started down this path in my 30s because in my 20s I don't think I would have been able to maintain this lifestyle. I was too set in my ways of multitasking and sleep shaming that I never would have been able to walk my talk and help people slow down because I couldn't slow down.

The organizational part I had down pat, and that's a big part of it, but even after I finished my training as a counselor, I was 28 and one large piece of the puzzle was missing. I never even thought about helping musicians see themselves as entrepreneurs because I had no idea how to properly be one.

Monotasking and avoiding burnout are 2 crucial pieces of the entrepreneur puzzle and I didn't have either one. I had tried running my own businesses in the past, as I'm sure you've heard me talk about, but between perfection paralysis, purse cursing, and all of the other cute terms you've heard me discuss over the years, I was in no shape to effectively build a sustainable business.

So I got help. As many of you know I hired a team of business coaches and I invested in coaching just like I would invest in any other schooling. It was scary to invest so much money, but I knew it was what I needed if I wanted to stop spinning my wheels on how I could make an impact.

When I was 29 I got Lyme disease thanks to 3 distinct bulls eyes on my legs from camping. It was a heavy dose of the disease and it was also the best thing for me because it forced me to stay open to what my coaches were telling me to do - slow down.

I never would have trusted this "nonsense" they were telling me - done is better than perfect, work smarter not harder, delegate and automate - fuck off. That's not how I saw things being done.

Truth be told I also didn't see many successful and happy people in my field - they were always one or the other - so what the hell did I know? But my Irish stubbornness would not have allowed myself to hear what my coaches were telling me.

However, my body had another plan. My body heard what they were saying and was like, "Yep,

exactly, this is what I need you better listen to them or I will make life miserable for you.”

So I trusted in what they told me and it worked. And I slowed down. I worked fewer hours, I published work before it was ready, I create services before they were flushed out, I pivoted and tweaked and experimented like a mad scientist and when something worked I doubled down on it.

It was messy. It is messy. And it doesn't always feel good... but it's always felt right. Even on my worse days I've always felt I'm where I'm meant to be.

I've failed endlessly at ideas I've had for this business and I've had surprise wins with things I thought would tank. I've lost people's trust when something didn't go as planned, but I moved forward with integrity and eventually won that trust back.

I'm late for things here and there, I forget to follow up sometimes, and my calendar sometimes gets double booked. Like I said - messy. But, thankfully I've created systems and automations to help insure those sometimes don't become all the times.

The fact is, no matter how perfect a system is, or how helpful an app is to automate that system, we'll always be human. Being a “time management expert” doesn't mean I'm always on time and have some magic beans that allow me to ensure my plans always go as planned.

But through the years I've realized time management is more about understanding priorities and being able to pivot at any given time when you realize those priorities need shifting. It's about managing what things get your focus and what things no longer serve your goals.

I'll be honest though, through these last few years, especially when things are going well, that Fraud Talk that we discussed in Episode 11, rears its ugly head and loudly tells me I'm no good, that I'm somehow fooling myself and everyone around me acting like an “expert” when I just showed up 10 minutes late to a show or I missed a podcast episode or something I did needed to be redone.

It's funny how that works - the Fraud Talk is silent when things aren't going well - because that's what we deserve, right? That fits. But, when things are going great and things just get a little

messy or feel a little uneasy that's when it gets its fog horn to remind you that you don't belong.

It tricks you into thinking that the uneasiness you're feeling is you doing something wrong, rather than you simply feeling those growing pains while you navigate new territory.

One thing I'm very grateful for, whether it's from experience or just simply getting older and giving less fucks, is that I don't panic and sit listening to that Fraud Talk as much as I used to. I know what it is and I trust it will pass if I just keep moving forward.

Don't get me wrong, I still get down on myself and beat myself up when I don't stick to what I teach my clients. I get frustrated when something goes wrong because I didn't do what I know to be the right thing. I know better so I need to do better, right?

This year was a huge lesson in learning to let go of control and judgment of myself. Ready for a peak behind the curtain? Let's do this...

The beginning of last year marked the end of my 3rd year in business and I finally decided to take the leap and pay myself first, before putting any money earned back into the business. I was living sssuuupper lean for 3 years on savings and side hustles until I had finally had enough and thanks to the support and guidance of yet another coach and my financial planner, Brunch & Budget founder Pam Capalad, I set up a system that would pay me and then pay my business.

I also worked extra hard on my money mindset and relationship with money in my life. So many of us have a tense, scarcity mindset around money, ESPECIALLY in this industry, so after listening to the words of Jen Sincero, Marie Forleo, and Amy Porterfield, I started to have a better relationship around money - I raised my prices, attracted the clients I felt most aligned with, and started going after the opportunities I wanted, even if I worried I wasn't experienced enough to be considered.

I didn't get every opportunity, but I got enough of them to feel confident in what I brought to the table. 2018 was a great year for my business, and I made exponentially more than I had made in years passed.

So 2019 was mine for the taking. I had grand, ambitious plans and I had systems and structures in place to make sure those plans could be carried out.

And then I got sick. During Christmas week I had gone too heavy on the sugar and my Lymes came back in full force. I wasn't taking care of myself, I got too comfortable with my health and I made some poor choices.

I was sick from Christmas week through early March. I was on medication, a strict diet, and a growing depression brought on by focusing on my foolish choices that got me back in this mess.

I fell behind on plans, I was dragging on projects even when I did have the energy to work because I was frustrated that I wouldn't be able to work as long on the project as I would have liked, so rather than take advantage of the time I DID have, I sat sulking.

I don't think I have to tell you the endless cycle that created... Have you ever been there? Does any of this sound familiar?

By April I was finally feeling more like myself and then the opposite happened - I got a bolt of energy and I decided to bite off way more than I could chew. It was like the opposite of Fraud Talk - it's like that pink clouding effect that addicts often feel after they've gone through recovery.

It's a short stint of feeling like everything is amazing and you start to think things are so good that bad things can't touch you, but not too long after reality sets in and you crash.

I had this short-lived feeling that I was Super Woman and even though I warned my clients not to over-schedule, not to lose sight of their goals, not to ignore what their bodies were telling them, I didn't have to follow that advice because I was somehow going to do it all. My energy was back and this was my chance to catch up.

I even decided now was the time to put my apartment on the market, move forward with purchasing a tiny house, and start looking for a car. Because, why not?

April was also the month I started planning for the next Music-Preneur Mindset Summit in September and Alyssa and I were discussing what the 2020 Rock/Star Life Planner would look like.

Sure, no big deal. Why not go 0 to 60? I was only sick for 3 months because of the fact that I had neglected my health, but that lesson was learned, right? This was a new day! A new Suz!

Eventually, I did crash and I had to realize that while I may have been on medication for over 2 months, I wasn't taking my OWN medicine. I needed to schedule a clarity session with myself and get connected once more to where I was headed and how I was going to get there.

May and June were quite the ride as I figured all of that out. I'm a slow digester to change and since finding my work/life balance 5 years ago I have often slipped back into my old ways because I knew them more intimately.

After all I've been a workaholic a hell of a lot longer than I've been a successful music-preneur. I may know the steps necessary to grow and sustain a business, but those unhealthy habits are hard to break. And when things get stressful I can often fall back into those unhealthy habits like they're this big comfy blanket waiting to be wrapped around me.

The only thing I fail to remember in those moments are how suffocating and stifling that blanket can be. But this is the rollercoaster of entrepreneurship. And the sign of success, to me, is getting those dips to be less steep and those rises to reach a little higher each time.

You can't avoid the dips, and you shouldn't want to - those are where the lessons are. I need the dips to set me straight and prepare me for the rises to come.

I've also learned, as I've grown my business and met people who are where I someday hope to be, that the amazing women I look up to in business are just as, if not more, messy as I am. Their success is not allergic to chaos, in fact it often attracts it.

As I've grown with my amazing assistant, Jenn, and brought on a kick-ass intern, Joe, to help with social media and content promotion, I've realized what a nut job I must seem like to them. I wonder sometimes if they had a view of me that's since been annihilated by my scatterbrain

during our meetings.

I know they love me, they better!, and I've realized through the discussions I have with myself at night - yes, I talk to myself once Pepper stops listening to me - that having them on my team is what allows me to be messy.

Every boss I ever had seemed scattered and messy - and I never thought anything less of them, I just thought, yep, they're the boss. When you're the one inventing the work that needs to be done and you're the one making every last decision and you're the one figuring out the ultimate next steps, there's gonna be mess and maybe even some chaos.

But that's where creatives create their best work, right? In the chaos. The balance is having that structure and support in place to fall back on in order to sustain and keep going.

It's up to you to surround yourself with people who hold you down while simultaneously lifting you up and it's up to you to be there for yourself so that you can live with the mess in your life without letting the mess *run* your life.

These days I'm back on my time blocking, setting reminders to make sure to use the helpful apps I pay for, like Calendly, to ensure I don't double book myself. I'm also getting better at asking Jenn and Joe for help, delegating things even if I feel I want to handle something myself - I know I can trust them to do a good job and communicate with me when there're issues.

I'm also back to hiring coaches to help guide me to the next phase of my business and I can't wait to see what's to come.

The Music-Preneur Mindset Summit is almost upon us and I couldn't be more thrilled with what we have in store. I'm lucky to know people in this business who are so badass but also kind enough to share their time and expertise with us.

I'm also loving growing my Rock/Star Slackers™ community and as you may have heard in Episode 62 - I've decided to pivot away from my Facebook group and Jenn and I are creating a private membership site to better serve musicians who want guidance and support but don't yet have the budget to do so.

Will it be successful? Time will tell, but I'm confident that no matter what it will teach us what we need to know in order to move to the next phase.

I want to thank you for taking the time to listen to my journey and learn a little bit more about what I've been up to. Links to everything I've mentioned, including the people I've mentioned, the services offered, and details on how to join us at the Summit can all be found in the show notes page - www.therockstaradvocate.com/ep65.

Did you resonate with anything I shared today? Be sure to let me know! Leave a comment on the show notes page or send me an email: 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.