



The Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast

Ep66: Procrastination vs. Processing

You're listening to Episode 66 of the Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast.

Hello! You're listening to [Episode 66: Procrastination vs. Processing](#).

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.

We are officially less than 50 days away from The Music-Preneur Mindset Summit and tickets are being snatched up, so don't wait! Space for in-person attendees is limited so grab yours today before they're gone. They also go up in price by 30% on Sept 1 so buy now to save!

Our speakers are all in place and you can read up them on our website, so be sure to check out the link in the show notes to see who's coming and the topics they'll be covering!

You can purchase a ticket to stream it, however coming out live to an event can be incredibly impactful. Both our speakers and attendees in years past have all said their biggest take away was the relationships they made and the community they felt being at the event together.

Something different happens when you step out of your normal day-to-day - you leave your comfort zone and gain a new perspective on the work you're doing, all while being surrounded by a supportive network.

So if you're feeling like you need a fresh take on where you're heading, or if you're in need of some epic motivation and clarity, be sure to get your ticket now and do right by your future self.

And that's exactly what this episode is about - knowing when hitting pause is necessary for your future self to thrive and when you've paused a little too long out of fear and need to get back into things for the sake of your career's future.

Procrastination. It's such an ugly word. Not gonna lie, when I hear it it makes me think of constipation, which I guess is the same thing - you're stuck.

Seriously. Both are no bueno.

But, sometimes we mistake taking the time to process things as procrastination and we beat ourselves up for not working 24/7 on something that's important to us. So how can we tell the difference?

When anxieties run high it can be difficult to tell at first, but this is where listening to your gut and your body in general is important.

Your body knows when you need a break. It knows when you need a moment to slow down and step back. It knows when you need to keep moving at the pace you're going, but maybe towards a different focus.

Switch it up! Live a little!

I was constantly beating myself up and getting anxious when I would spend too much time away from my work or when I felt like I was leaving things to the last minute, but I couldn't seem to break the cycle.

Have you been there?

Not gonna lie, I still get there sometimes. Old habits die hard. But, I remember when it was at its peak. I was a freshman in college and I accidentally signed up for a graduate history class - History 499 - Urban Planning.

Yea, it was an accident. See, you need to understand that when I was in college online registration was a fairly new thing. Gone were the days of waiting in line for hours at the Registrar's office hoping to get the classes you wanted.

And, at Drexel, if you were in the Honor's Program, you didn't have any barriers on your account - for some reason it didn't recognize or flag any prerequisites you may have needed when

signing up for a course that looked interesting.

My roommate and I also didn't realize the numbers next to the course meant anything. Sure "101" meant a beginner's class, but nothing screamed out at me, "You're not smart enough for any class beginning with 499" when I saw the course description.

She and I just figured it'd be fun to take a class outside of our majors together and we were both extremely interested in the topic. So we signed up and on day one were confused as to why everyone in the class looked so old {granted, they were all 22-24 years old}.

So we held tight, worked our butts off and by some miracle not only made it through the class we both left with As {or maybe B+s but whatever, we aced it as far as I'm concerned}.

However, the point to this tangent is about the final paper that was due - a 30 page thesis detailing a U.S. county of our choosing and breaking down how it had been segregated throughout the decades and the effect it had on the overall growth of the community.

We knew about the project beginning week 1. The class was 10 weeks long. We were terrified, neither one of us had ever written a paper longer than 5 pages. Did we procrastinate?

Hell yea we did! It was a combination of fear, overwhelm, and plenty of freshman year distractions that helped us put off the paper until the day before it was due.

Yes.

Both of us gave ourselves 24 hours to write a 30 page research thesis.

We had outlines, we had picked our counties and we had gotten our research collected from the library. But no book was cracked, no words were typed until the day before.

We worked endlessly. Thinking back neither one of us is sure how it happened, but we managed to create a system where we both had 2 computers going at all times and would take turns highlighting our research and then typing. We were in the ZONE!

By 10am the next morning we handed in our papers and passed out. Never would we ever again for that year decide to “challenge ourselves.” The rest of the year we would coast and recuperate from History 499.

I told my mom after I handed in the paper that I couldn’t believe I waited until the last minute and that I had no idea how I ever managed to write 30 pages {which, after getting my Master’s no longer seems like such a huge undertaking but rather a normal size paper to write}.

She pointed out to me that while waiting until the day before may not have been the best decision {as I certainly didn’t proofread anything}, it was not like I pulled it all from thin air that day.

All semester long I had been processing it. The thoughts were there, the thesis was coming together, the ideas and arguments were percolating. I had to step away from it and do other things in order for my brain to do its thing.

It didn’t pour out of me due to fairies and pixie dust - it had been writing itself in the back of my mind as I went about my days.

I may not have cracked open the books until the day before, but I had been looking at them, every day, seeing them on my desk. I had been talking out my ideas to my mom on the phone each week, figuring out what materials I’d need to gather.

I say all of this to point out that while yes, we can let our fear hold us back too long, and we can drag our feet on projects that don’t exactly thrill us, I feel what many of us define as procrastination should really be defined more as working smarter not harder.

Writing a 30 page paper the day before its due is not the best example of working smarter, but it is an example of trusting that you have the tools you need to accomplish something that may at this point in time feel insurmountable to you.

I also wish to point out that taking *in* information is one thing, digesting it and understanding how it serves you is quite another and you shouldn’t beat yourself up if you’re a slow digester.

My therapist always used to call me that. Both figuratively and literally he'd say I was a slow digester. Not only does it take me over an hour to finish a meal, as I'd often come into his office with a bagel and still have 1/2 of it left by the time we were done, but it also takes me time to process things I've experienced and learned.

When my father passed it had already been agreed my mom was selling the house and moving into an apartment. Even when he was alive we all discussed it as a family, and while selling the house 3 months after he passed may have seemed rushed to some, we were all good with it.

My brother ended up buying the house and within months he was settled into our childhood home with his family and my mom was loving her new gorgeous apartment in Queens.

I had trouble stepping into either one for quite some time. When the family got together at the house for Thanksgiving I sat the holiday out and spent it with friends, not ready to see my brother and his wife hosting the family in our old home.

It was totally fine and I was thrilled they were there, but I needed time to process it all. Even with the move I'm making now into my tiny house, as exciting as it is I still get incredibly anxious and overwhelmed because I'm processing the change.

I am someone who needs many steps back from something to fully grasp what is happening. And then once I take it in I'm good to go.

Same with work. This podcast episode, for instance, was due to my team days ago so they could edit it and get it ready to be published. I knew weeks ago what the topic would be and why it was important - if you recall I always say getting reacquainted with your why is always a great way to get motivated to act - but I couldn't bring myself to write and record the episode.

So, I did other things, handled other business, and even up until the day it was due before we'd miss the chance to publish it, I stopped what I was doing to go get a manicure. I had the episode in my head, but all the pieces weren't there yet.

I was processing. And I was tired. So I left my desk and went to go get pampered.

I came back and the words poured out. They had been in there, written most likely days ago in my head. But I needed to be in the right frame of mind to allow it to come out.

Any of this feeling familiar?

Sometimes we procrastinators get used to the rush of the... well, rush to get it all done before the deadline.

But, many times we're simply slow digesters; taking time to make sense of it all and process what we're doing.

I know when it comes to what I want to say in the podcast it's not a matter of procrastination - something that's usually based in fear or lack of interest - because I don't feel either of those things in relation to this podcast, in fact, quite the opposite.

But I DO care deeply about it being impactful and so I want to be clear with what I'm trying to say. Hopefully, I accomplish that.

I drag on things like the podcast episode because I'm digesting it.

What can we do when we know it's fear or boredom holding us back from something that's important and needs to get done? How can we move forward on something we've already digested but haven't been able to bring ourselves to do yet?

In those cases I always turn to my trusted friend, Parkinson's Law. That law tells us, "work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion." Meaning, if you give yourself a week to write your newsletter, guess what? It's going to take you a week.

If you set a timer and block out the rest of your week with important deadlines and intentional work you'll get it done in a reasonable amount of time and won't leave it til last minute because there aren't any last minutes to leave it til.

I'm not saying fill your day with busy work to only allow 20 minutes to write to your fans. I'm saying get clear on what needs to get accomplished this week and identify your higher priority

tasks so that you know the newsletter has to get done by a certain time because other things that need your attention are waiting and can't wait much longer.

Think about the single mother who works 2 jobs and the latch key kid who's able to focus and get good grades and complete their homework on time. Or the med student who's working another job to pay for classes.

When our plates are full, and full with things that matter, come hell or high water we figure out a way to get the things done that matter.

Those people in those situations are intentional with their time because they have to be. It's not busy work, it's not about filling your day 24/7 with things that you are hoping will show people you want this career badly enough.

It's about knowing you've got to get as much sleep as possible in and you've got to make time for eating right and cultivating relationships and *digesting the things you've learned* that you only have x amount of time left in the day and it's too precious for you to waste it because the future of your career depends on it.

So you fill your time with things that matter.

THAT is working smarter, not harder.

Still with me?

I do my best to not procrastinate and I've learned to honor the time I need to process things largely due to time blocking. I know if Tuesdays are blocked off for a specific type of task or Wednesdays are dedicated to clients and I'm all about honoring that time, then I DO NOT have a week to get a podcast episode done. I have to get it done within a specific time frame because those other days are spoken for and I've limited the time I give myself to accomplish it.

I'll be honest, life gets messy and I have tripped up before on these boundaries, but when I stay dedicated to honoring the boundaries I've set... man, am I easier on myself.

I trust myself more and recognize my time to process things. I trust I have time to get it all done even when it feels like things are piling up because I've prioritized time for the things that matter and the things that don't get done - well, they couldn't have mattered that much.

So trust yourself to know the difference. Keep checking in with yourself - with your body and with your goals - to make sure your priorities are in alignment.

And if you're dragging your feet on something that matters to you and something you believe you can accomplish... well then it sounds to me like you need some time to digest it what it truly means to you and what you want from it.

So come join us in Long Beach this Sept 26-28 and let's learn and digest together. You can find more information and links to tickets in the show notes - www.therockstaradvocate.com/ep66.

I want to thank you for taking the time to listen to my stories of digestion and procrastination and I hope it brought you some clarity on the difference between the two so you can stop being so hard on yourself.

Did anything in particular hit home with you today? Did anything leave you scratching your head with more questions than before? 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.