



The Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast

Ep83: The Pressure to Be Productive

You're listening to Episode 83 of the Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast.

Hello! You're listening to [Episode 83: The Pressure to Be Productive](#).

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, and sometimes not get it all done in order to make room for that ever-important "me time."

Speaking of "me time," I want to thank you all for being patient with me as I took some weeks for myself to heal and find my own new normal. I hope you've been enjoying the music-preneur spotlight interviews over the last few weeks and I'm excited to come back and talk 1:1 with you.

While I haven't been recording regular podcast episodes, I've spent a lot of time jumping on Instagram Lives, Zoom calls and other platforms to speak to various audiences about managing time and balancing productivity and rest during this quarantine.

It's been an interesting time, to say the least, and I've learned so much over the last few weeks about the many misconceptions we have around productivity, the value we place on it, and the pressure we put on ourselves to master it. I've learned the power in permission and forgiveness, and I've reminded myself of how I measure success and progress.

It's important now more than ever to stay in your lane. Measuring your success or progress against someone else's is NEVER a good idea, but it's especially toxic in a time where a global pandemic is effecting everyone in many unique and specific ways, often behind closed doors and away from people's usual support systems and communities.

There's no *right* way to be or *right* way to feel. Besides washing your hands and wearing face masks outside there are no rules on how you choose to get through these unprecedented times.

The Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast (c) 2019 The Rock/Star Advocate, LLC All Rights Reserved.

www.therockstaradvocate.com/podcast

Looking at what someone else is doing, how they are doing it, and how quickly they seem to do it has no bearing on what you're capable of, the speed at which you move, or what it is you need right now.

Recently, I wrote a blog post for TuneCore. You may know them as a top music distributor, but TuneCore also offers a library of incredible resources, including its free blog. The other week, as part of their *Life During Quarantine* series, I discussed *The Pressure to Be Productive*.

I thought I'd share the post with you here today and expand upon it in certain areas. The link to the original post can be found in the show notes, www.therockstaradvocate.com/ep83, and I highly recommend checking out the other entries in their series as well as their additional resources for artists.

I'm honored to also have the opportunity to dig into this topic a bit further with a live Q&A this Wednesday, 5/6, at 11am PST/2pm EST as part of the 320 Festival on their Instagram channel during Mental Health Awareness month.

The 320 Festival was created by Talinda Bennington, wife of Linkin Park frontman Chester Bennington who took his life a few years ago, and Kevin Lyman, founder of the Warped Tour, to bring awareness to the importance of mental health, provide resources to our community and normalize the conversation surrounding all mental health pursuits.

Originally scheduled to take place in LA, the festival has been moved online May 8-10. More details about the event as well as additional mental health resources available on their site can be found in the show notes.

The social media world has become a melting pot of people's highlight reels, depressing news, and strong opinions on how to feel and what to do with your time. I'm hoping more online events like the 320 Festival will create space for people to connect online in a meaningful way.

Many times, what someone posts is usually not meant to speak to *YOU* but rather to what that person needed to see/hear for themselves. You may resonate with it, agree with it, or even be inspired by it, but, when it doesn't feel good to you, it doesn't mean something is wrong with you or that you're somehow failing at this new life we're all living. Surviving quarantine is not a

contest.

By now we've all come across those memes on social media that "inspire" with tales of a mathematician who solved some crazy math problem during a plague in the 1400s and an artist who created one of the world's most celebrated works during a pandemic in the 1600s and an inventor who, during the Great Depression, created a tool that completely changed the way we live life.

In fact, I'm sure we'll soon find out Steve Jobs created the iPhone while he was locked in his basement home-schooling his children and social distancing himself from his team of technicians.

These *highly*-exaggerated stories, while intended to light a fire of motivation inside of us, often leave us feeling behind on our tasks, judged for not doing enough, and a pressure to be even more productive than we expected ourselves to be when the world felt right-side up.

The two biggest productivity myths out there right now are that (1) there's a certain way we **should** be using this time and (2) we suddenly have **more** time now that we're stuck at home.

First of all, as I said, there's no wrong way to use this time - there's only **your** way. We are all fighting different battles on the home front - from mental illness, to sick loved ones, to home-schooling children, to finding new routines, to losing jobs, to shortages on food/medical care/ social interaction and more.

Some of us are thrilled to be at home more but are struggling to pay the bills, while others are able to make ends meet but are struggling without travel and the freedom to go where they want with who they want.

Some of us had our entire plan turned upside down and inside out and are being forced to learn entirely new skill sets, while others had to put their plans on hold to help loved ones whose plans were shot to hell.

Any way you slice it, we're all dealing with a reality we've not known before this.

With over 20 clients, the ONLY thing that has rung true with all of them is how lost they sometimes feel with their goals. However, almost every single one is feeling lost for different reasons and struggling with different hardships.

Lately in my group accountability program, [Rock/Star Slackers](#), we've started to implement more connection amongst the group members and changed our weekly and daily check-ins from being less task-oriented to more emotional- and mental-well-being-oriented.

There are times we focus on knocking out tasks, but sometimes its just as important to spend the time self-reflecting or venting so that we are freed up to focus when we need to without carrying the weight of things we're keeping to ourselves.

Secondly, while many would think, "Now's the perfect time for me to do that thing I always said I would do if I had the time," that only holds up when the world we once knew wasn't completely unrecognizable.

We don't have more time - we have *less* of it now, as more of our time is spent managing our stress and adapting to unexpected and unpredictable changes we are now facing on a daily basis.

I feel so fortunate that while I've had to deal with unexpected loss and other hardships, working from home is something I've been doing for quite some time. I haven't had to learn new technologies (for those of you who have been with me for years know that technology and I aren't friends and the learning curve for me is STEEP!) and I'm not required to homeschool any children and support them emotionally while still trying to get my own work done.

For others, those challenges and then some exist and there's a new battle every day to navigate.

Those promises we make ourselves, those commitments we *swear* we'll keep when we "have the time" don't apply here so there's no need to judge ourselves for breaking those promises - we haven't broken them because we *haven't* had the time.

I've spoken on this podcast before about Decision Fatigue and how its a common symptom of music-preneurship. It's exhaustion from constantly having to make every decision for your

career, big and small, and carrying the weight of needing those decisions to be successful ones - and that's on a good day.

In this "new normal" we're all facing, there's the added pressure of Moral Fatigue. I recently read an article in Rolling Stone, and it explains, "As a culture that was all but burned out before the coronavirus pandemic hit, the past few weeks of seismic societal shifts have made us readjust in ways most of us never imagined." The link to thank full article is in the show notes.

Every decision down to whether or not to step outside, now carries with it the weight of knowing there's the possibility that we could be putting our health at risk and/or putting others' health at risk with our decision.

Then there's the information overload when it comes to trying to stay informed so we can make the right decisions - which information is politicized? which is "fake news"? which information is outdated, as scientists are learning new things daily about this virus and how to manage it?

For a situation that is hitting us all globally, it's been difficult for us to all come together and fight the virus as a united front. Everywhere you turn there seems to be discourse and finger-pointing and even racially- and politically-charged assaults (both verbal and physical).

And while we are all sharing in this added stress, how we each react to it is different. It's much like its own fight or flight response - we're either going to push harder or ease up and slow down.

Neither is particularly wrong and both require self-awareness so that we don't do either to too much of an extreme. Motivational marathoning, as I call it, can lead to burnout and forgoing your passion too much can lead to larger bouts of depression.

Luckily, as musicians and creatives, we have the power to bring people together and empower them to understand their own feelings better through the music and content we create. But, we've got to take care of ourselves if we're going to be of any help to our communities.

I created a guide for Working {Smarter} From Home that you can use to find more structure in your day as you focus on work and you can access it through the show notes -

www.therockstaradvocate.com/ep83 - but in this episode I want to focus on 5 tips for finding the middle ground between hustling and hiding:

1. Redefine what productivity/success means to you. This doesn't mean settle, but it does mean be more aware of what is going on with your mind/body. Acknowledge that certain things that were once realistic goals may *right now* be unrealistic in the context of what you're going through so adjust accordingly. When you'd normally choose 3 things to focus on in a given day, choose 1 instead.

2. Get rid of the word "should" and examine when you're using it. As explained earlier, there's no right way to handle all of this. When the word "should" pops up it's a good time to hit pause and question why you're feeling the pressure to take certain action or complete certain tasks. Then, go back to listening to what your body needs at the moment and do your best to address it.

3. Treat every day separately. You may have a productive day today, but that doesn't ensure it will be productive tomorrow. Take it one day at a time and give yourself looser/larger deadlines. Hit pause on planning too far in advance and focus on the present.

4. Know what recharges you and double the time you would usually commit to doing it. Again, you have less time these days, not more. You are also under more pressure, so up that self-care time. If you normally don't focus on self-care make it top priority. If you normally set aside an hour for "me-time," try for two. Building a career is important but you can't pour from an empty vessel, so fill 'er up!

5. Don't do it alone. Social distancing has made us all feel more isolated, even if we're introverts who love alone time. Accountability always helps when working towards a goal and now, more than ever, connecting with others is crucial for getting through uncertain times.

Most importantly, remember that you can't mess this time up. You can't waste it and you can't outsmart it. There's no blueprint for this so make your own.

As I tell all my clients, and myself, this is the time to learn to act more intuitively. Listen and learn to trust what your body is telling you it needs. If you need to rest, rest. If you need to

create and engage, do that, but take the pressure out of it to be the best content you've ever created or to reach the most people you've ever reached.

Any positive impact you make is going to be felt and appreciated and that's what matters.

We are humans, not robots. Our value is not determined by how busy we are or how much we get done. You're more than your career and in order to have a career, a *sustainable* one, you've got to put you first.

If you want to learn ways to be kind to yourself, find resources to help get you through these times, and find a community of like-minded people discussing self-care, mental wellness and mental health disorders and how to manage them, I encourage you to check out the 320 Festival and join me before it kicks off May 8-10 on May 6 on the festival's own Instagram channel for our special IG Live presentation, 11am PST/2pm EST. As I said earlier, more details can be found in the show notes - www.therockstaradvocate.com/ep83.

If you're feeling focused and ready to take action and feeling that pressure to make more money in order to pay your bills and sustain that career, but you're not sure how you can do that when your usual income streams have been obliterated, I invite you to join me at a another free event I'll be participating in next week.

As music-preneurs and freelance creatives, many of us are being forced to pivot and adjust our goals, plans, and expectations for our future while maintaining a sense of self (and supporting our most basic needs).

We're all dealing with our own set of struggles. For many, in order to keep the bills paid, this means setting up makeshift studios in your homes, garages, attics and backyards, trying to do your best while maintaining your health and mental well-being.

These changes can be harder to ride out than others, but there is relief out there to help manage and navigate these changes.

What you've always done to make money can continue to be a source of income. It's just going to look different than it did before. If you cannot see a way to translate what you've always done into something that you can do now, I encourage you to sign up for the EXPAND ONLINE

SUMMIT, hosted by Jaime Slutzky from Monday May 4 - May 8. You'll hear first hand from artists and creatives just like you who have created businesses from their knowledge and experience by delivering it online.

Join me and my fellow colleagues as we walk you through exactly what to do. I'll be there on Monday 5/4 to get you through the emotional roller coaster we call entrepreneurship and Jaime and her cohorts will cover the rest when it comes to technology, setting up funnels, promoting your brand and more.

It's 1000% FREE and you can RSVP now to access everything beginning Monday! I know your time these days is precious, again we don't magically have more of it, and I would not steer you wrong on how to spend your time.

If your priority is to regroup and find new ways to build your income streams I highly recommend signing up. The link is in the show notes or you can head to bit.ly/suzexpandonline.

Whether you need this time to take care of yourself or you need this time to take action, only you know what matters most right now and I encourage you to trust in that. Don't let anyone, even me, dictate how you should feel, act or react. As long as you stay safe and keep those around you safe, you can't go wrong.

If you need more support or someone to talk to, reach out anytime to suz@therockstaradvocate.com.

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