



The Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast

Ep109: Why Perfectionism Is Overrated & Counter-productive

You're listening to Episode 109 of the Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast.

Hello! You're listening to [Episode 109: Why Perfectionism Is Overrated & Counter-productive](#).

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.

This episode is brought to you by my weekly accountability and monthly coaching program, [Rock/Star Slackers™](#). Slackers was created to get you focused on what matters and overcome the pesky perfectionism, controlling comparison paralysis, and Debbie downer moments that keep you from crossing off tasks on your todo list.

We've got a wonderful mix of musicians and business bosses in the group, in every point on the journey, all with the goal of creating sustainable income from doing what they love. It's a supportive, fun environment hosted on Slack® where you can be as involved or as fly-on-the-wall as you'd like to be while still getting the most from our focused structure.

For less than \$1.50/day you can begin to expand your team, having people to lean on in times of chaos, plus have a coach in your pocket when you need extra guidance. If you're new to coaching and want to see what it's all about before jumping in full-force or simply need that extra support to keep you on track as you go about your day, Slackers was designed with you in mind!

Email me at any time for more info or go to www.therockstaradvocate.com/rockstar-slackers to sign up today and you'll receive your Orientation Packet + your FREE 2021 Rock/Star Life Planner and access to our weekly planning calls and Slackers Only webpage with exclusive tools + bonuses, like my Plachella video modules and workbooks. Hope to see you in Slack!

Now, let's dig into this week's topic of perfectionism. Last week in [Episode 108: Is it Rest or](#)

[Laziness](#), I dove in a bit to reasons we may be procrastinating. We touched upon comparison paralysis and all of the misleading thoughts that can come from it, but I felt perfectionism deserved its own episode as I know it can stop SOOOO many creatives in their tracks.

Let me say that a bit more clearly: it has stopped ME in my tracks so many times I knew I had plenty to say on the matter.

Whether it's baked into our DNA before we're born, or picked up through teachings at an early age, the pressure to "get it right" can feel all-consuming. It's often the way we begin a task - "What is the 'right' way to do this?"

Think about it.

Before you even begin to write a song I have a feeling you think to yourself, even for a second, "Will this be good?"

"Will I be good?"

"Will this or I be enough?"

All of this is tied to this idea of reaching this illusive status of perfect - it doesn't exist! It's like thinking if I eat enough ice cream I'll get sick of it - false. It won't happen. So stop starting with false narratives.

If you begin a project under false pretenses or set unrealistic expectations, you're already setting yourself up for failure. I know there are those of you out there listening thinking to yourself, "If I'm not aiming to get it as right as possible, what's the point of even trying?"

Let me be clear - letting go of perfectionism doesn't mean letting go of high standards. It means setting standards you can actually live up to and achieve AND setting standards that actually mean something and relate to reaching your goals.

When your standards are to "be perfect" here's what you're telling yourself:

1. That perfect exists (which it doesn't, so you're already lying to yourself);
2. That you will always fall short;

3. That you will never be ready or enough.

I want to go over three reasons why perfectionism is overrated and counter-productive towards reaching your goals, no matter what those goals may be - whether they are personal goals, professional goals, or goals you've set for your community.

The first reason I'm going to touch upon is going to be, well, touchy. This may rub some listeners the wrong way if this is the first time they've heard this, but I ask you to put down whatever else it is that you may be doing and listen up and listen carefully so we can learn together.

Perfectionism is a toxic behavior grounded in white supremacy. Now I know a number of you may have just been like, "she said whaaattt??" Let's break this down.

Perfectionism is concept that sets an unattainable ideal, with the myth that it's attainable if you follow certain rules, and causes us to suppress anything that is other than ideal. Emily PG Erickson says it best in their post on Medium: [The Worst Mindset to Have When Fighting Racism: How perfectionism can undermine the work of dismantling White supremacy culture.](#)

Emily writes, "Perfectionism constrains all behavior. It demands that we show only the flawless versions of ourselves and so the parts that don't conform to the dominant culture's norms are kept hidden. In the United States, as we know, the dominant culture is infused with White supremacy. Perfectionism functions like respectability politics, which *Hood Feminism* author Mikki Kendall defines as 'an attempt by marginalized groups to internally police members so that they fall in line with the dominant culture's norms.'"

Setting a single ideal, and vanquishing or dismissing anything that is not that ideal, is what white supremacy is built on. Some of you may be saying, "How did we get here? I thought we were talking about building a career in music, why make this about race?"

I get that. But it's important to see how it's all connected. This is NOT an attack on white people, of which I am one. This is me shining a light on the dangers of living by a construct that was created to constrain your behavior. This does not only constrain your creativity, as perfectionism is binary - you either reach it or you don't, but it keeps us from taking action when the stakes are high and/or complex, and that's when action is most important.

Whether it's to dismantle systemic racism, or have deep, complex conversations with loved ones or creative collaborators in order to get at something meaningful and impactful, taking action even when you question your ability to "get it right" is crucial for growth.

As I say on this podcast many times - this shit's messy. There's no room for perfectionism, it will only hold you back. Emily also writes that she and her friends were, "so worried about fumbling, and saying the wrong thing, and not being able to answer hard questions that they've avoided this conversation [about racism]... altogether."

Perfectionism is avoidance.

Which brings me to my next reason perfectionism is counter-productive - it's fear-based. We are either spinning our wheels striving for the unattainable or we are avoiding it altogether, like Emily and her friends, because we know we'll never attain it.

So how is perfectionism bringing us closer to our goals again? Perfectionism wasn't meant to serve you, it was meant to keep you in line with someone else's ideal.

Rather than running towards your goal(s) with full force, self-belief (even with doubts present), and excitement, you're stuck in one place redoing the same steps until they look/feel "right" to you or doing nothing because you don't believe you know how to do/get it "right."

Where's the fun in that? Where's the creativity in that? We've trained ourselves to believe that striving for perfectionism is growth, when in reality nothing is stunting your growth more. Mess allows us to grow. Mistakes allow us to grow. Challenges allow us to grow. Learning is where growth happens.

Don't wait until you're no longer fearful. Figure out a way to take action with the fear in hand. My therapist once had me speak to my fear, comfort it, and bring it with me as I took action forward. I think about that exercise often when I find myself paralyzed by perfectionism.

I think of that image of Pooh Bear taking Piglet's hand. In my mind Piglet is my little fear friend, and I'm taking its hand and bringing it along for the ride. Growth doesn't happen in a box, where it's safe and familiar. It happens on the outside. And it can be painful, and embarrassing,

and painfully embarrassing, but the pain and embarrassment subside and you're left with new lessons and deeper understandings and new ideas.

And that brings us to the third reason perfectionism is overrated and counter-productive - it's boring AF! It's unattainable, and therefore un-relatable, and it's a SNOOOOZEFEEST!

I may be a mindset and productivity coach, but that doesn't mean I'm always super productive and in the right mindset all the time. I know how to get there, and I know how to jolt myself out of a funk, but I get in funks! And life gets messy, and my plans get fucked up!

The other day I posted a reel about showing up late to a meeting as a time management coach and it was one of my fastest-growing posts in terms of engagement. People were interacting with it immediately - because they've been there!

Your mess is relatable.

One of the best compliments I've ever gotten was from one of my Rock/Star Slackers™ during one of our enormously enjoyable monthly Happy Hour Hangs. And I wish it was during a call we recorded, like our Monthly Q&As, because I wasn't able to transcribe what she said, but in essence it went like this:

"I decided to work with Suz after hopping on a call with her and realizing she did not always have her shit together. Her life was kind of a mess and I liked that. She was able to build her business and I figured if she could do it so could I!"

Now I'm paraphrasing slightly, but that was in essence her point and it made me so happy to hear that! Because guess what, I don't claim to have it altogether! I'm not trying to make it seem like my life is perfect now that I figured out ways to manage my time better and shift my mindset to one of abundance.

I have those days where I slip into a scarcity mindset, I have days where even though I did my best, I still over-booked or over-extended myself. BUT what makes me an expert in this realm, aside from a few master degrees and going on 20 years experience in the music industry, is that I have figured out the tools I need to get myself out of those ruts more quickly and have built a business that can sustain not only myself, but a growing team.

I'm not building a business off of looking like a supermodel 24/7 and I never make claims that my methods will ensure you're never late to another appointment ever again. What I DO claim and stand by is teaching methods that give you more time back for the things that matter and a mindset that leaves you focused on your passions without the overwhelm so you can avoid burnout and build a career you can sustain over time.

Sustainability isn't perfectionism. It's not about living up to some ideal, it's about managing the ebbs and flows in a way that doesn't become overwhelming. My life is still a rollercoaster. The difference now is my dips aren't as steep and/or as frequent as they once were.

I do IG Lives without makeup or a full lighting system not because I don't care about presentation, but because I rather spend time prepping my material than prepping my face. When I'm at a place where my material is being prepped for me and I have a glam squad to get me ready for my close up, I'll maybe do things differently.

If people are going to work with me, they've got to KNOW me - and that includes the me that sometimes gets it wrong. I don't promote my flaws, I promote the lessons my flaws and mistakes have taught me. And I promote learning from them with a bit of humor, because otherwise, what's the point?!

Did you forget, we're in the MUSIC INDUSTRY! There's nothing rockstar about being buttoned up and sterile in your approach to work. This is about creativity and being an artist and art is messy!

Your community will resonate with you when they see themselves in you. As my fellow Slacker said - if I can do it she will then believe she can do it, too, and she can. And so can you.

If you'd like to learn more about how to live with your mess while reaching your goals and taking IMPACTFUL/INTENTIONAL ACTION, think about joining us in [Rock/Star Slackers™](#) or, if you'd like, you and I can work 1:1 and you can see first hand how *my* messy life can actually benefit *your* growth.

Links to learn more about Slackers and/or setting up a free, no obligation call with me can be found in the show notes page. Head on over to www.therockstaradvocate.com/ep109 for those

links and while you're there leave a comment! I'd LOVE to know what you thought about this episode, how perfectionism plays a role in your life, and/or what you'd like to hear about next on this podcast.

You can also email me at any time, suz@therockstaradvocate.com and let me know your thoughts and how I can best support you.

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