

Trial Task 1: Transcription

Episode 1: “Procrastination: It's Not What You Think” (Podcast [Link](#))

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Are you a procrastinator? How many ideas have you come up with and never executed on? How many times have you let something that you were so excited about sit on the backburner in your business because you just couldn't seem to take the first step? How often do you leave tasks that you know you need to finish undone for way longer than necessary, just because they feel so overwhelming to complete? If you're feeling a little attacked right now, don't worry! That's exactly what we're tackling today on Episode One of the Self-Made Mamas Podcast.

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Intro Music

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I'm Melissa Rodgers, recovering supermom, corporate dropout and CEO of a successful online business that I built from scratch with a baby on my hip. Through lots of trial and more error than I'd like to admit, I built a thriving company that impacts thousands of busy high achieving moms around the world, and gives me and my family a life and future that we had only dreamed up before. I created the Self-Made Mamas Podcast to bring you step-by-step strategies and inspirational stories that will help you design a business that gives you the life you really want, and the future you've been dreaming of. If you are an ambitious business mom, or one in the making, you're in the right place. So let's get to work.

[01:07]

Hello! Hello! Welcome to the Self-Made Mamas Podcast. This is our first episode ever and I'm so excited to be here. I'm so excited for you guys to be here listening. Today we are talking about procrastination. This is a really appropriate topic for Episode One because, to be totally frank with you, I procrastinated on starting this podcast for three years.

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So I think that this is something that we need to talk about because if I'm doing it, and I am the business coach in the room right now, I know you guys are doing it. I know my clients are doing it. I know that we have a lot of stigma and misunderstanding around it. So that's what I want to

dive into today. I think procrastination is kind of a dirty word. Even when we make light of it, like when you see all the memes and reels and stuff, tiktoks about it.

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Where, you know, it's kind of self-deprecating. We're associating it with negativity. And we have developed a bit of a stigma around it as a result. We associate procrastination with laziness and on productivity. But in my coaching practice, I've actually never found that to be the case. I am a hard procrastinator. At university, I wrote my entire honors thesis four days before it was due, and somehow I scraped a B+. Don't ask me how. I still have no idea.

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But this is kind of a pattern for me like I tend to procrastinate. And I have felt so much shame around that because I have a very successful business and I've worked really hard to grow it. But as someone who teaches business and teaches, you know, productivity and time management and things like that, my own tendency to procrastinate has made me feel quite a bit of shame. I feel like I'm generally a productive and efficient person.

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But again, I'm someone who teaches business and so in my mind I feel like I should not be someone who procrastinates. But the more women that I coach, and the more clients that I serve, the more personal development work that I do, the more I realized that procrastination is actually a symptom. It's the symptom. It's not the sickness. So what do I mean by that? In my experience, procrastination usually comes down to one of two things: either fear or overwhelm. Let's tackle overwhelm first because it's easier.

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First of all, I want us just to all please acknowledge that we are all parenting in the middle of a global pandemic. That shit is overwhelming to begin with. Let alone trying to work or like to do your nine-to-five or to build your business, or both, in some cases. This is so much for us to be taking on. As women and mothers, we are generally the default parents. So we're carrying the majority of the mental load and the mental load is like tripled right now.

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Let's cut ourselves a little bit of a slack and just be aware that this may or may not be our new normal. But it's not normal and it's not natural. And we are under way more stress as a collective than we normally would be. Second of all, I just want to acknowledge that entrepreneurship and parenting can both be wholly overwhelming on their own. Doing them simultaneously is inevitably going to result in overload at some point. We can use all of the hacks. We can use all the systems and tools.

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But kids are human beings, you know. They're living, breathing, people. And they don't always adhere to our systems or our plans. And that's okay. But it does mean that again, we have more of a mental load. We have more things that are potentially going to overwhelm us, and more curveballs that we have to deal with. So we've established that overwhelm is probably a factor here. And the thing is that when you're overwhelmed, you get paralyzed. Your brain is moving so fast that it can't slow down to process information and prioritize it effectively.

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It's almost like you're in a heightened adrenal state when you start to get overwhelmed. Your fight-or-flight kicks in. And your brain is not processing information the same way as if you were in a calm, rested, fearless state. Right? What happens is your brain is moving super fast. It can't slow down. It can't prioritize. And so what happens is you end up doing nothing or you end up doing the wrong things as a buffer or as a means of self-soothing.

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Like have you ever cleaned your entire house instead of completing a task that you were supposed to do? Let's say you need to file your taxes. Instead you decide you're going to gut out of your closet or something like that. This is something that so many people do. It's because we're self-soothing our "overwhelm" with tasks that make us feel like we're in control. What happens is we end up not accomplishing the task that we're actually procrastinating on.

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And so, you know, the anxiety around what we're procrastinating on grows and compounds the overwhelm. It's a bit of a vicious cycle. So if you are listening to this and you're like, "Oh my god. Get out of my head" or you're feeling like I'm calling you out, then this is what you need to do. If you are in that state of overwhelm and that is what's causing you to procrastinate, then you need to slow down in order to speed up. So whatever you're procrastinating on, I want you to decide that you're not doing it in the next 24 to 48 hours. I know that's counterintuitive, but you need to decide that it's not happening in a given time window.

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If that means that you need to email a client, and let them know that you're pushing a deadline or ask for an extension or whatever it is, then you need to do that, because you need to intentionally put the task aside. Which means you're regaining control of the situation, right? You guys have ever heard the analogy of juggling? Like when you're juggling motherhood and

working and business and all that kind of stuff. You have rubber balls and glass balls. You have to know which ones are glass.

[06:59]

Most tasks are rubber balls, and so we have to intentionally set them down. There are very few things in our lives that are actually glass balls. Most of the things that we procrastinate on are not glass balls because we're doing those automatically everyday. So, most of them are rubber or plastic or whatever analogy you want to use and you can put them down. People use the analogy of letting them fall. But in this situation when you're feeling overwhelmed, it doesn't serve you to just keep letting things fall because again that's just going to compound your anxiety.

[07:33]

So I want you to intentionally put this down whatever it is that you're procrastinating on. And then I want you to sit down, get a piece of paper and a pen and break out the task into small, manageable chunks. And I'm talking small here you guys. Like I want you to break this into a first step that is so easy that a toddler could do it. I want you to break the task down like that. Then I also want you to write down everything else that you have going on and kind of reprioritize your next few days on paper.

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I want you to calm yourself down by gaining clarity. Because often when everything is just kind of swirling around in our head and we have this cloud of chaos and stress going on, we don't actually know everything. We couldn't at a glance tell ourselves what it is that we have to do. So get it all down on paper and the reason that I like to do this with paper and a pen instead of on a phone note or something like that is because there is an actual process that happens in your brain when you write something down.

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When you have to generate the thought and then your brain has to send it to your hand to write it down on the paper. This is a terrible description of how brains work. But we're just gonna roll with it. The process of doing that actually causes you to process the information differently. You may be aware of different ways of studying different, like studying methods, and a lot of people study this way.

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A lot of people will write stuff out. I'm a person that always has needed to study that way. Many people do. Sometimes people need to hear it in order to absorb it. But everybody's brain is triggered by writing stuff out. Even if that's not the way that you absorb information the best, it

does force you to process it. So writing down everything that you have going on and writing down all of the steps inside this task that you're procrastinating on will actually force your brain to slow down and process it properly so that you can actually get it done efficiently.

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And then when you sit down to actually tackle the task, you've already broken it down. So you can start with the first chunk. You know exactly what you have to do. Then you can build momentum from there. Even if the first time you sit down to do it, you only get that first tiny step done. You will feel a sense of accomplishment from that. It will create a feedback loop, a dopamine feedback loop in your brain. And you will feel motivated to continue on with the next step and the next step, and so on.

[10:04]

So that is how we tackle overwhelm when overwhelm is causing our procrastination. But if overwhelm isn't really your issue, then we need to talk about fear. Fear is the other thing, and the even more common, I think more prevalent reason that people procrastinate. And I can tell you, when it comes to starting this podcast, if I really look hard and close to the reasons that I procrastinated on starting this for so many years, fear is the thing that comes up.

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Fear is the root cause of all of it. So I want to talk to you about the idea that when you take action, you create outcomes. Anytime in your business or you know in your life generally as well, but we'll focus on business here. Anytime you take action in your business, you're going to have one of three outcomes. You are either going to fail.

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Or you're going to do it and it's going to be meh. It'll be mediocre. It'll be kind of like neutral. Nothing good will come of it. Nothing bad will come of it. It will maybe feel like a waste of time. Or you're going to succeed. And the thing that we fail to realize, when we are procrastinating on something, is that all three of those outcomes are differently scary. So, failing is the obvious one, right? When we think about failing, obviously that feels scary.

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Nobody wants to fall on their face. Nobody wants to screw up. Nobody wants to take a leap and not make it to the other side, right? That's not a good feeling. And while failing is so important in your business and I'm going to record an entire episode about this... Probably more than one episode... Because failing forward is such an important part of developing as an entrepreneur and as such an important part of growing your business. But failing is... It's never not scary. You know the risk of totally screwing up and something completely flopping is never not scary.

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And so that's one fear. A lot of people procrastinate because they're just afraid that it's not gonna be good enough. That it's not going to work or that they're not going to do good well whatever it is they're procrastinating on. And that would be I think the more obvious, you know, the more obvious fear, right? The next one is sort of that it's going to be mediocre. This is a bit of a unique fear but if you are a high achieving personality... So I'm an Enneagram three, a high-achiever. I'm a type A. I like to win.

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I'm very competitive, and not even necessarily with other people. But I hold myself to a ridiculous standard that I'm constantly self-coaching around. I'm constantly working on that and making sure that I'm setting realistic expectations for myself. And not being so hard on myself and forgiving myself for not being excellent all the time. Because that is the kind of inherent expectation that I have.

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So for me, as a high achieving personality and for many of you as well listening to this, doing something, and it being average or not getting the response that you wanted or doing the thing and completing it, and actually getting the task done but it not landing the way that you want it to or not creating the result that you want it to, the peripheral result, that is a fear, right? You know some people are really chill. Some people can just put something out there and go, "Oh, I'll see what happens".

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If you have a more high-strung personality or more high-achieving personality, that is really hard because you have automatically attached to the result that you want that action to create. So the fear of not getting that result, even if you execute perfectly, is a big one. Then the last way that fear shows up when we are talking about procrastination is actually fear of success. I want to talk to you about this one because fear of success is something that you will often hear touched on in personal development.

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If you're someone that consumes a lot of motivational content or anything like that, you'll hear that fear of success is a thing. But we don't often deep dive into it. That's because it's so unique to everybody, right? So, I will share with you the reason that I was afraid to start this podcast. And I'm gonna say afraid, not the reason I procrastinated, because ultimately I procrastinated because I was afraid.

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And you know that's what I want to... The point that I really want to drive home to you guys, but I had a fear of visibility. It's something that I came into my business with. In my case, it's very grounded in a toxic family member. An immediate family member that is a very toxic non-presence in my life at this stage. When I first started my business, this person was a lot more present.

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And, you know, creating a lot of emotional harm for me. So I really hid in my business. When I first started out on my own, self-employed, I actually was... I started out under my own name. I did that for about a month, I think it was. Then I chickened out. And I went and created a business name. Which, ultimately, if I could do it over again, I would choose a business name but for very different reasons.

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At the time it was entirely fear-based. It was because I didn't want to be so searchable I didn't want to be so easy to find because this person was already, like leaving comments on my social media and things like that. So I wanted to put a bit of a boundary between me, the person, and my business so that I could sort of grow it quietly and not attract that negative attention from this person. And I didn't pay attention to the fact that this carried with me, even as this person's presence in my life, gradually disappeared.

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I carried this with me even as my business grew, and as my confidence as an entrepreneur grew. I realized, a few months ago, I was actually listening to an episode of a friend's podcast, who started last year. I had still been telling myself last year that I was going to start it, that I was going to start recording and I was going to launch it, and I just didn't.

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I kept putting it off and I kept putting it off. Back then, you know I had the time and I have even less time now. I have an extra child now. You know, it's totally illogical for me to have waited. But I kept putting it off because I was afraid of being more visible. I was afraid of growing my brand publicly. I feel very safe marketing myself on my Instagram because I can block anybody that I want.

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I feel very safe marketing myself in my Facebook group because I control who's in there. And on my email list, things like that. But to create something that is so public facing, to create

something that anybody can listen to that is inevitably going to be a little piece of me that I'm putting out into the world, and that is inevitably going to grow my business... that actually scared me and I never acknowledged that fear. I was really afraid of getting so big that I would attract negative attention from this toxic person.

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And I was afraid of getting so big that I would attract negative attention from random people as well which is a very illogical fear. Like I'm a 30 year old woman, you know. I've been through the wringer. I don't actually care if people like me or not. But that sort of inner voice, like that more juvenile inner voice was dictating this decision for me. It was a fear that I hadn't acknowledged.

[18:00]

And so it was just kind of hanging out under the surface, causing me to put this off. Because I never dug into it, because I never peel back the layers and said, "Okay. Why am I procrastinating on this?" I typically am able to make shit happen. "Why have I put this podcast off for three years?" Had I sat with that, peeled back the layers and really dug deep to understand what was causing me to delay action and to sit in inaction, I would have realized that it was fear.

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And then I could have addressed it. So here's how I recommend you address it if you find that fear is what's driving your procrastination. Whether that's fear of failure, fear of success or fear of something totally unremarkable in between. Here's how we are going to address that. So my favorite exercise to walk my clients through when we are dealing with a fear-based block is following the fear to completion. What this means is that you have to play out the narrative of your fear in your mind.

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Some people like to write it out. I typically just do it. I sit quietly and do it in my head. If you're more like a visual, tactical person, then you might want to write it out or speak it aloud. But you can just do this inside your head. So what you're going to do is you're going to think about the action that you're afraid to take. We'll use the podcast example again. I'm putting off my podcast.

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I'm putting off creating it. What am I afraid of? And so the first thing that comes up, that's your step one. I'm afraid that my podcast will make me visible. "And then what?" "And then what" is the key question here, right? We're gonna ask "and then what" over and over and over again until we get to the root of the fear.

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So if I asked myself "and then what" over and over and over and over again. Eventually what I get to is that I might grow my business, my brand visibility so much that I not only attract negative attention from this toxic family member, but I also attract negative attention from random people who will be hateful and hurtful and sort of push those buttons that I may not necessarily have healed. And so, when I think about that, I'm able to, you know, when I look at it because I've worked all the way through it and I've gotten to the root of that fear that I hadn't fully acknowledged before, when I get there to the end of it, I can say well yeah.

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I mean like that may happen. People may leave hateful comments. People may not like my content. I may attract negative attention from my toxic family member. But that's not actually going to do any harm. It's not going to create any sort of tangible negative result for me.

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It is what it is and I can't control other people. I can only control myself. So why would I hold back from doing this thing that I want to do so badly and that my audience is asking me for over and over again just because I'm afraid of what someone else might do. Which they might do anyway. Which I can't control. And you will find when you follow your fear to completion, that the outcome isn't actually that scary once you get to it. Or it's not actually that likely.

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Or the third alternative is that it's actually already happened, and you've already gone through it. In which case, it's not that scary. And there's no reason to sit in inaction and there's every reason to take action and do the thing that you're procrastinating on. Because the fear is unfounded. So that's what I want to leave you with today guys. Thank you so much for tuning in to this episode. And I can't wait to see you next week and bring you more.

[21:59]

Outro Music