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Case Study: How To Start A Business Venture When You Are Already Working Full-Time, A Parent And Can Only Invest \$100/ Month

"If it doesn't cost you in money, it costs you in time."

STEP ONE: DON'T PANIC

Worrying can be useful to spur you into taking action and solving problems.

But if you're preoccupied with the "what ifs" and worst-case scenarios, worry becomes a problem.

Unrelenting doubts and fears can be paralyzing. They can sap your emotional energy, send your anxiety levels soaring, and interfere with your daily life.

But worrying is a habit that can be broken. You read that right, you CAN train your brain to stay calm and look at life from a more positive perspective.

How can you do that?

Ask yourself, 'is the problem is solvable? How?'

Reverse-engineer it and break it down, you'll find that the solution comes in bite-size, orderly, easily actionable tasks if you just slow yourself down to think about this.

Challenge the reality of anxious thoughts.

You might find that after reverse-engineering your problem, the anxiety begins to lift. After all, if a problem is solvable, then is this anxiety really necessary?

Accept uncertainty.

There's a big difference between **successful** entrepreneurs and **unsuccessful** ones.

The successful people know that nothing is set in stone. By accepting uncertainty, you can make your own impact - and isn't that better than getting swept away by stress and failure?

Be aware of how others affect you.

You're the boss, in your life AND business, and the limiting beliefs of others isn't your problem. This shift in mindset enabled me to stop listening to the advice of people

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around me who have never owned a business, and instead began to focus on what I need to do to achieve **my own** objectives.

Focus on the present rather than the past or future.

We can't change what's already been - and what *will* happen depends only on what we do **right now**. So being present in all that we do is the greatest and most freeing perspective on work and life.

Confine your worrying to one time period during the day.

By integrating "worry" into a scheduled "planning session" each day, I can focus on the jobs that need doing the most and prioritise each one by their importance. Remember, worry can be **useful** under **the right circumstances**.

STEP TWO: Put Yourself First

After all, if you are not taking care of yourself, who is?

You might feel like taking care of yourself first selfish, and for many people it's very hard to do.

But when you have a family, job and business, burnout can strike you down in full force. To be able to take care of your family, you have to first take care of yourself.

Most entrepreneurs put sleep on the backburner, getting "just enough" to get by.

But you NEED your sleep, some downtime, and some time AWAY from work.

It sounds counterintuitive, but it's been proven that healthy breaks are vital for the mind so that you can **create, think, and reflect**.

Immediately you will feel better, and when the 'online OCD' starts to wear off you'll feel more in control.

Looking and feeling good, eating wholesome, healthy food and ensuring you have some DOWNTIME are some of the most important things you can do.

When I took a stern look at my diet and scheduled downtime into my daily routine, my daily productivity started to rise - *it helps to get your head in the right frame of mind.*

STEP THREE: Invest In A Coach or Mentor

You might be wondering what I invested that \$100 a month in...

This is by far the smartest business decision I ever made, and this where my small monthly budget goes.

If you really want to level-up you need to work 1-to-1 with a mentor who can provide you with some guidance.

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Before I invested in a mentor, my “marketing” was a mess of PPC, social network, and purchasing Fiverr Gigs promising 40,000 targeted leads (*it was a long shot*)...

Do me a favor: work with a coach or mentor and click “delete” on all the crap.

Now, we implement a **strategy** of marketing - the one thing every business needs but can never find at the beginning.

A coach or mentor is dedicated to being your personal sounding board, as they push the benefits of their knowledge and expertise over to you.

So be present, listen and act. Doing so allows your coach to propel you out of your comfort zone, so that you can take the positive actions required to finally get your business off the ground.

My mentor assists and guides me in growing my business by helping me **clarify** my vision of my business, and how it fits in with my personal goals.

After clarifying where I would like to take the business, my coach helped to strategize and prioritize what goals and strategies are needed to help progress us closer to these goals.

We meet regularly, to keep on track to the commitments made during the past coaching session.

A critical component of business coaching is accountability.

Keep in mind that a coach or mentor will not do the work for you in your business.

Their task is to keep you focused on the end result and remind you why it is important.

Of course, he provides me with all of his knowledge in marketing, re-reads my copy and ads, and provides me with extremely valuable advice.

But most of all he motivates me to keep my commitments.

A good mentor will plan a list of actions to be carried out. His knowledge will save you hours and prevent you from wasting your time.

Here's the interesting bit:

You don't need to spend \$100 a month like I did to get a mentor.

My mentor and I developed a free community on Facebook for small business owners, startup entrepreneurs, and solopreneurs to get access to mentorship, marketing advice, and share ideas in a kind of ‘mastermind’ with the community.

Because accountability is so important, we share our weekly objectives in business, ask questions, and help to solve each other's problems.

I know a lot of entrepreneurs find business to be quite a lonesome job, and distractions are everywhere. That's why staying accountable to your goals is so important.

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So this group is a way of giving back, to share what I'm learning and possibly make some great connections along the way.

If you want to do the same, then it's free to join, no hassle, no obligation, (and no spam). ['The Business Objectives & Goal Setting Group'](#), just click to join.

STEP FOUR: Plan Your Day

It's a known fact that people who plan their time effectively simply achieve more.

Not only do you get a clear vision of your time when you plan it, you also figure out, on the spot, which tasks are important and which tasks aren't.

When you have a clear picture of what you need to do, everything is a breeze.

So here's what to do:

Get a pen and paper – I always start planning offline and away from a computer.

This is crucial, because it eliminates all those little 'bleeps' and notifications that can distract you from the outset.

The objective here is to take what you need to do – the blocks you have put aside for work, fun, exercise etc. - and then make sure they are FIXED in your diary.

It's the same in a day job, everything should be planned the day before so that you know exactly what you have to do order to be as efficient as possible.

And remember to schedule in your downtime as well!

If you want to know what I do, and have found to work rather well, then this is how I set up my day/week:

- Job – 2 blocks of 3 hours and 1/2 block per day (we work 35 hours in France)
- My business (focused) 2 block of 1 hour and ½ per day
- Speaking with my coach – 1 hour once a week
- Reading/research – 1 hour/day
- Spending time with my family 2 hours/day
- Emails/calls – 1 hour/day
- Social Media – 2 x 30 min blocks/day
- Weekend: emails 1 hour + social media 2 x 30 min blocks

This way you can make sure the important stuff is already neatly filed away.

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And you've got to stick to it. Trust me, you'll see the benefits almost immediately!

STEP FIVE: Look Differently At Your To-Do List

Burnout and overwhelm can spread like a disease, and one of the biggest perpetrators of this is **your to-do list**.

It seems to just keep growing and growing, no matter how much you accomplish.

So in order to keep track of everything I've taken care of, and to remain focused on the most important, **key objectives** each day, I adopted the 3 + 2 rule.

This isn't a new method, you can learn more about it through a quick Google search, but it is a hugely effective productivity habit that I urge you to adopt.

Here's how it goes:

Change your perspective.

Instead of expecting to get a list of 10 or 20 jobs done 'as-and-when', just permit yourself to work on 3 big tasks, and 2 smaller ones.

Each morning, or evening, when you plan your day, think about this:

"If I could only get 3 things done, what are the most pressing, most important 3 things I could do to get the best output for my business?"

Then, consider what 2, less important, things that might set you up for the following day.

That's how simple it can be, but it's **focused**. And the results?

- You can get more completed because those procrastinating activities (I'm looking at you, Facebook!) take a back seat
- You can focus on just what's most important to grow your business
- I don't feel like I'm juggling too much at once, now that the old daunting to-do list is gone
- You can balance work, home, parenthood and business easily, stress-free

FINAL THOUGHTS

Change is not always easy. It wasn't for me. But by following these 5 steps for focus, time management, and productivity, I've been able to truly focus on running my business on the side of parenting, 'husbanding', and working the 9-5.

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For the next five days identify what you can change to put yourself first. You are in control of your life.

Why not take 15 minutes right now to reflect on:

1. What's most important to you
2. How you can integrate your goals with those around you
3. What part of the day you're most productive and how you can protect that time