

WRANGLE YOUR TIME

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LESSON 1

Hello and welcome to Wrangle Your Time!

I am so delighted to jump into your relationship with time and getting stuff done (I totally geek out over this!).

IN TODAY'S LESSON, YOU ARE GOING TO LEARN:

- ★ What's already working (so you can do more of it! Yay!)
- ★ Your hidden beliefs about time that are getting in the way
- ★ What you actually need to do

You can listen to the lesson [here](#)

Or read the transcript on the following pages.

YOUR HOMEWORK

fill out the worksheets that follow!

If you've completed Lesson 1, and you want to hear more about getting stuff done, you can check out my podcast episode about the principles of Getting Stuff Done that we'll be applying to this class. The podcast is an overview of what your system needs and in this class, we'll be actually creating that system for you.

REMEMBER!

This class won't change your workday unless you apply it to your situation and do the worksheets!

LESSON 1 TRANSCRIPT:

Welcome to Wrangle Your Time, Lesson 1. In this class you are going to

- ★ Identify what a realistic workday is for you,
- ★ Discover what's been stopping you
- ★ Prioritize what truly matters
- ★ Make a plan for keeping track of what you need to do AND getting it all done

HERE'S THE THING:

You likely know all of this. I do not have, nor promise to have, some magical fairy dust to sprinkle on your life and give you 10 more hours a day. Trust me, if I could, I would. (Or maybe I would insist you use it to catch up on your sleep!)

But what we can do in this class is work through what's stopping you from loving your workday and feeling productive right now, and come up with a plan that feels better to you; one you can stick with day in and day out, so that you're making the BEST USE of your time, every time you sit down to work.

In today's lesson, we're going to focus on getting real about where you are right now, and what kind of workday your business needs:

- ★ What has been stopping you?
- ★ What matters most?
- ★ What do you actually *do* in a week?

Let's start by getting right to your problem: There's never enough time

I know.

There's not a lot either of us can do about that.

But here's the good news: **business growth isn't about the amount of time you have.** Growth comes from taking effective action in the time you do have. It comes from being clear on your goals, and then taking specific steps to reach them - steps that are actually related to what you want. It comes from prioritizing what matters most, and cutting out everything that doesn't, so that you get as much productive time as possible.

So no matter how much (or little) time you have, it's up to you to use it wisely. It's your responsibility to sift through the many things you *could* do and focus on what *matters*.

I talk to MANY makers who insist that their problem is that they need more time. If they had more time, they could do everything. Well, that may be true, but you **don't** have more time. What you have is what you have and if you want a business, you need to accept the time you have and use it effectively. So this is the first step of this class: accept the time you have and how you're using it currently and then we'll move on to optimize it and work within your constraints!

Now let's dig in to how you currently work and get things done.

Without a shadow of a doubt, you absolutely get **something** done - you feed yourself, clothe yourself, and leave the house at some point, to do something to make your life smoother. So the trick of working on your own projects is to take what's worked for you in other areas, like your life or a day job, and apply the best bits to your creative work.

In all of my work with businesses, I start by focusing on what's already working. Because it's easy to see what's not working, and get frustrated, disappointed and de-motivated by what's going wrong. But when you look at what IS working, you can recognize the things that are already easy and good, and build on them. It builds confidence, and it's a lot easier to do more of what's working than to try to convince yourself to try something all new.

In the included worksheet, there's a space to identify what's working well for you already - first in life, and then in work. Be sure to include what's worked well in past jobs and in your creative work.

WHAT ARE YOUR RULES FOR WORKING?

We all have internal "rules" we use to measure ourselves and others. And when it comes to getting work done, often these rules are hidden and we don't realize how much they're guiding our actions.

For example: One rule you may have about working is that you need a certain number of hours to "really" work. Or your rule might be that you're "wasting time" when you're not making products.

What are your rules for feeling productive?

How do you want to feel after you've worked?

What **must** happen for you to feel this way?

For example, you might feel that what **MUST** happen is that you make a sale, in order for a blog post to be worth it. Or that you need so many comments or retweets to feel good about a piece of content.

One of my internal rules about productivity was that if I didn't start before noon, it didn't even matter. So even if I had a client call or I created a worksheet, if I didn't get online and start that work, it didn't count ... so I might as well forget it.

I want to challenge these internal rules, because they get in the way of doing what you can to move your business forward.

Does your rule make sense?

Is it easily accomplished?

Is it unreasonable?

Let's redefine what it means to be productive, to be more expansive.

For example, instead of "I must mark everything off my list", your rule could be, "Any time I get 2 most important tasks done", the workday was a good one.

Redefine what a "good workday" feels like.

For example, instead of "I must answer emails before noon" to have a worthwhile workday, I could change it to "Any day where I connect with one customer or student" is a good workday.

I want you to visit the worksheet and list your own rules, and rewrite them.

Now you might be thinking: ***Oh no! I can't make my rules easier to satisfy! I only get work done by being strict! I have to have strict rules or else I'll be lazy!***

But that's not true. Studies show that [willpower is finite](#) and if you spend it trying to hold yourself to ridiculously high standards, you'll actually run out before you get anything done, and you'll spend more time slacking off or avoiding work.

But you don't have to believe me; look at your own situation. You've had these internal rules for a REALLY long time. Is that helping you feel productive? Or is it making you feel like you're not doing enough and that you suck? Unrealistic rules don't motivate us - they challenge our confidence and judge us harshly and thus de-motivate us.

If you still don't believe this, imagine that your strictest rule came from a boss -- would you want to work hard for that boss because you loved her? Or would you avoid having anything to do with her because she's not fair?

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO GET DONE?

What matters is finding a time to do what you need to do. So we're not going to start by trying to manage the TIME, we're going to start with the WORK.

This week, before the next lesson, I want you to start keeping track of everything you need to do in your business. In Lesson #2, we'll talk more about task-tracking software and systems, but before you're ready to use something, you need to know what you'd even put into it.

I've included a worksheet, but after you're done with the lesson, as you go about your week, write down a new task any time you come across it.

The difference between Tasks and Projects:

- ★ A **task** is a single thing that you can do in one session. A task might be writing a lesson or labeling your products or making a single item.
- ★ A **project** is bigger and includes multiple tasks. It might be creating a whole course, or designing and printing new labels, or making enough items for a craft show.
- ★ (Answering a few emails: a task. Getting to Inbox Zero from Inbox Million: a project)

This is where a lot of people get overwhelmed. They try to work on big projects, without breaking them down into tasks. But not you! As you're listing out everything you do for your business, make a note of whether it's a Task or a Project

CONSISTENT VS ONE TIME TASKS AND PROJECTS

You'll do some tasks and projects once and be done with them. Others require consistency. (Most marketing tasks require consistency, but their initial set up is a One Time Project. Making products to keep your shop full requires consistency.) As you list your tasks and projects, make a note of whether this is something you need to do with regularity (how often? Weekly? Monthly?) or if it's just a One Time thing and you'll never have to repeat it.

You might think your tasks and projects are obvious and you can hold them all in your head without writing them down, but trust me. If you write them down, then you can find a place for them in the coming weeks. If you get them out of your head and into a system, you can stop worrying about them. You can be certain that every time you sit down, you know what to work on. And wouldn't that feel nice?

LESSON 1 WORKSHEET: WHAT ALREADY WORKS WHEN YOU WORK?

When could you work on your creative endeavor?

(Get specific with days of the week and times and locations. List all possible times, even if you don't want to work in every possible time slot.)

When do you currently work on it?

(Get as specific as you can about the average work session)

How do you feel about this?

When are you most productive in your personal life?

What do you easily accomplish?

When have you been most productive (in either life or a job)?

What were the qualities of that experience?
(*time of day, location, environment, pressure, etc*)

What parts of your current workday feel productive?

LESSON 1 WORKSHEET: IDENTIFYING INTERNAL RULES

What are your rules for work?

What are your rules for feeling productive?

How do you want to feel after you've worked?

What **must** happen for you to feel this way?
(*What rules must be satisfied?*)

Now, honestly, is that reasonable?

What would a more expansive rule look like?

(Rewrite every rule you listed above, so that it's very easy to satisfy.)

TASKS AND PROJECTS

List everything you do for your business this week, task or project, and whether that's a One Time or Consistent thing.

How do you keep track of these now?

How would you like to keep track of these?

LESSON 2

IN TODAY'S LESSON YOU'LL LEARN:

- ★ Building the habit of productivity
- ★ The three parts of a workday that works
- ★ The importance of having a set aside time to work
- ★ How to do what matters

You can listen to the lesson [here](#)

Or read the transcript on the pages that follow!

YOUR HOMEWORK:

- ★ Fill out the worksheets
- ★ Set aside ONE chunk of time (it can be any length of time, from 15 minutes to a couple hours) to only work on important business things this week. Put it on your calendar.
- ★ WORK during your chunk of set-aside time. Work on things you usually skip or that are related to your current goal.

LESSON 2 TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to Lesson 2 of Wrangle Your Time!

BUILDING A HABIT OF PRODUCTIVITY

If you've been feeling overwhelmed by all you need to do, and you can't seem to actually get it done, it's usually because you're missing one of the three parts of a working time system. Or, like many of the artists I work with, you don't have any system.

What I mean by "system" is just a regular, repeating flow that allows you to do anything with consistency. For example, I have a system of how I write blog posts; this system allows me to be consistent and not have to think too hard about it. You probably have a system for how you make your product - you know the steps you need to take and you don't rethink them every time.

The other way to think about a system in your business is as a habit. A habit is something you have trained yourself to do, without having to think too hard about it. Brushing your teeth is a habit and you don't have to fight yourself to do it each day. Feeding your cat or your kids is a habit - you're not going to forget it (I hope!).

If you want to get stuff done with consistency and less stress, then you need a system for it - one that becomes a habit of getting stuff done. In this way, you'll do the work your business needs, and it won't be a Battle of The Wills with each and every thing.

In Lesson 1 we covered your own rules and beliefs about your workday and productivity, because that is the basis of the habit you currently have. For example, if you had the rule that a workday had to be an hour long in order to count, then you got in the habit of not working when you had just 40 minutes. You got in the habit of judging an amount of time as "not being enough."

THERE ARE THREE PARTS OF A GETTING STUFF DONE SYSTEM:

- ★ Setting aside a specific time to work.
- ★ Figuring out what matters (and keeping track of it).
- ★ Doing the work.

Today we're going to talk about setting aside a specific time to work, and how to prioritize what matters, and next week we'll cover how you actually get the work done (and you'll finalize your own time system).

SET ASIDE A SPECIFIC TIME TO WORK.

There's no getting around this. If you wait until you have the time to work, you'll never do it. You need to set aside time and train yourself to work during that time.

Now, before you fret that you don't have any time, I want you to think through what you know about the work you got done in the last week. You've been keeping a list of it, so I want you to review the list and ask yourself: When did you get this done?

You may already have begun the habit of working at a specific time. If that's the case: Awesome, just keep going.

You may have felt like you didn't have enough time to get everything done. That's ok; first identify when you worked and write down those times. We'll dive into more of this in a minute.

You may not have worked at all on your business and truly feel like you have 0 minutes in a week to work.

If you have NO time.

If you didn't get any work done last week and you have NO time to get work done in a normal week: first, I want to give you permission to be where you are. You may be in a stage of life (like, with infants at home or an elderly parent who requires care) where you really need to prioritize something else over your business. And even though you have dreams of working on it, that might not be realistic right now. Now, often you'll go through small cycles of no-work because life takes over, but in almost every instance, it's just a cycle and you'll eventually be back in a place where you have a little more time.

With that in mind, I'm going to ask you some questions to help you get clarity around this and find a solution, but you need to be really honest with yourself:

Are you in a stage of life where you need to prioritize something else right now? What?

I ask this because if you really DO need to prioritize something else, I want you to acknowledge that that's what you're doing, so you recognize that this is a choice that you are making. It is your choice and you're choosing something else. That's ok! In fact, that's awesome, because you have the choice in your life. The more you can recognize the responsibility for your time, the happier you'll be in however you spend your time.

Do you truly value the things you're prioritizing over your business (by the choices you make with time)? Or is it just a default setting? If you don't value them more than your creative endeavor, how can you cut them back?

Sometimes we let things we "have" to do (but don't really value) creep in and take over our time. That's a normal part of life, but if you want to find time for something new, you have to cut something out.

Is it true that you have NO time? What would happen if you took the time away from something else? (Really think this through.) Whose support would you need in order to take this time?

The time isn't magically going to show up - you have to take action to free it up. Create a plan and enlist help. Maybe a friend takes the kids one afternoon a week. Maybe your teenager makes family dinner. Maybe someone else vacuums. Whatever it is, you're only going to get help if you ask for it.

If you need more time

Most of you in this class DO have a business, so I'm guessing that most of you have some time, you just don't feel like it's enough time. You can carve out more time by answering the questions I just asked, about stopping some things and getting some help. But you can also get more time by making your time effective, so that you're spending it doing what will truly move you towards your goals.

Ways to make your time more effective:

Make it sacred. If you currently work "whenever you find the time", you're not using the most of it. Instead of hoping to find the time, MAKE the time. Set aside at least one chunk of time next week and do nothing but work that moves your business forward.

Batch tasks. Once you have a set-aside chunk of time, don't flit from thing to thing. Batch all of the tasks you can, for the next week or month. For example, write more than one blog post at a time. Schedule several tweets every time you write one (I like [Buffer](#)). Batch your making, your photography and your descriptions. Batch your shipping.

Do what matters. Don't spend your working time on Pinterest (unless you have a streamlined Pinterest marketing plan). Don't spend it on Instagram. Don't spend it reading blogs and newsletters. Spend your working time doing the things that move your business forward.

HOW TO DO WHAT MATTERS:

Prioritize

When I work with clients who truly don't have a lot of time to run their business, the first thing we do is strip their To Do list to their priorities. These are going to be different for everyone, but there are a few ways to think about your priorities.

Prioritize based on values.

What matters most to you? What do you value? What do you most want to do or experience in your life and business?

For example, I value my marriage above everything, so I stop work by 5. That means during my work hours, I work HARD so that I can have everything done by 5.

I also value freedom, so I don't take jobs that are going to require me to limit my freedom and I've set up my business so I can travel a few times a year. This means that when I sit down to work, I have to do

whatever it takes to take time off for travel. (This focus on freedom also means I work ahead and schedule all my content, so I'm not tied down each week.)

Prioritize based on goals.

Where are you going? What's next for your business?

Before you spend any time worrying about your To Do list, you need to identify what your goal IS. Where do you want to be? In what time period? And then, what things will you need to do to get there? When you have very little time available to you, focus on doing these things and your business will still move forward!

As you're thinking about setting aside a time, it'll help to know what kinds of time you need. For example, in most of your businesses, you have making time and photographing time and marketing time and admin time. The list of tasks you did last week should help you see what kinds of time you need, so take a look at that and assess: Which things need (actually require) the biggest chunk of time? The smallest? Use these insights to set aside time this week to work on your business. Yes, you'll probably work in more than just one chunk, but I want you to practice actually making a specific time for work.

Setting aside a time to work is important because:

- ★ It ensures that you will have time to work on your business
- ★ It gives you reassurance that everything has a time (this helps you avoid overwhelm!)
- ★ It helps you use the time effectively and with purpose.

YOUR HOMEWORK:

Fill out the worksheets

Set aside **one** chunk of time (it can be any length of time, from 15 min to a couple hours) to only work on important business things. Put it on your calendar.

WORK during your chunk of set-aside time. Work on things you usually skip or that are related to your current goal. So if you find it easy to find time to make products, use this time to do marketing. If you avoid answering emails, use this time to answer every (business) email. (Delete or file away everything that doesn't require your action, like newsletters or coupons.)

LESSON 2 WORKSHEET: DO YOU REALLY HAVE NO TIME?

Are you in a stage of life where you need to prioritize something else right now?

What is it?

Do you truly value the things you're prioritizing over your business (by the choices you make with time)?
Or is it just a default setting?

If you don't value them more than your creative endeavor, how can you cut them back?

Is it true that you have NO time? What would happen if you took the time away from something else?
(Really think this through.) Whose support would you need to take this time?

MAKE YOUR TIME EFFECTIVE

Which of your tasks can you batch?

What are your values? How does this help you prioritize your tasks?

Based on these values, what are the three most important things for you to do in your business this week?

What's your next goal (3-6 months)?

What can you do next month to move you closer to that goal?

Based on this goal, what are the three most important individual tasks you can do this week?

MAKE IT SACRED

When will you work this week? Identify one chunk of time:

What will you do in that chunk? (Limit it to three individual tasks or less)

LESSON 3

Welcome to the final lesson of Wrangle Your Time!

IN TODAY'S LESSON:

You're going to put all the parts of your system together and you will commit to:

- ★ Setting aside a specific time to work.
- ★ Keeping track of what you need to do.
- ★ Doing the work that matters.

You can listen to the lesson [here](#)

Or read the transcripts that follow

YOUR HOMEWORK

fill out the worksheets that follow!

LESSON 3 TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to Wrangle Your Time Lesson 3!

Last week we talked about finding the time to work, and why that was so important, and how to work on what matters. Today, in the final lesson, we're going to put together all the pieces of your system. Those three pieces are:

- ★ Setting aside a specific time to work.
- ★ Keeping track of what you need to do.
- ★ Doing the work that matters.

1. SET ASIDE A SPECIFIC TIME.

So last week you set aside a specific time to work. How'd that go? Were you more productive? It might be that you're already used to working this way (good job!) or that this was totally new. Either way, take a note of what your work time was like. I've included questions in the worksheet.

Depending on how much time you have to work on your business and what your goals are, one chunk of working time per week might be all you need (or get!), but if you need or have more, the next step is for you to identify some more chunks, and put them in your calendar. Instead of leaving this up to chance, truly schedule them. I don't recommend doing ALL of them at once, but rather, continuing to build on them, one by one over a couple of weeks.

In this way, you can assess each chunk: Does this work for me? What did I get done? Is it my ideal environment for this task? Maybe you need to move some tasks to different chunks, or batch something, or go to a different place.

I found this part of it - finding a time and really experimenting (and then being flexible) to be one of the hardest parts of working on my own projects. It's easy to fall into the traditional workplace expectations that your workday must start and end at a certain time, or that you must follow some rule for the workday to "count". But as you've learned already, it's up to you to not only set the time to work, but to figure out how to be productive in that time.

In my own work life, over the 8 years of having a business, my working chunks have changed a LOT. No situation is better than anything else, but what's been the most important in getting stuff done is:

- ★ To have a set aside time to work.
- ★ To be flexible and not flip out when it doesn't work out the way I want it to.

For example, back when I was growing the yarn business and working a full-time desk job, we also kept my little brothers (who were around 8 and 10 at the time) every other weekend when my mom worked 12-hour weekend shifts. I would work 3-4 hours on Saturdays we didn't have them, and on weekdays after dinner and before bed. (I also snuck some computer time in at my desk :).

Then, when my husband worked an office job and I was self-employed, we shared a car. We planned for me to have the car Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays and for him to have it Tuesdays and Thursdays. I had to get dressed to take him to work, so I started my workday on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 7:30, at the coffee shop, and worked until he got off at 4-ish. On those days I did writing: blogging, class-creating, emailing, etc. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, he had the car and I stayed home, so I would do the things that required a quiet house, like client calls and podcast and video recording. When I wanted to start running, I had to find a time when I both had the car and could be in my workout clothes, so I started changing in the Starbucks bathroom in the afternoons, and when it got to hot, shifted to running in the morning and then showering and starting my workday later. That was huge for me - I felt super guilty for not starting the workday right away.

But it taught me: Oh yeah, I have permission to make my workday whatever works for me, based on what my priorities are!

There have been many, many permutations to my workday and to my actual WORK, so remember that you're going to change this as your life changes.

Email + Science

Now, as you think about your working chunks of time, we need to talk about email. But first, science! Your brain operates on two networks: task positive (focused and productive) and task negative (roaming around)*. Checking email, or even being dinged by an email notification, makes your mind roam - so it makes you less able to focus and finish a single task. So please, please, do yourself a favor and make email a specific task you do, in a specific time chunk. Turn off all notifications, bings, and buzzes that alert you of anything (email, Facebook, Twitter, etc) when you're doing one of your productive chunks of time. Email is a task, just like any other, not an emergency. NO ONE needs to be replied to immediately. If you look at your email without answering your email, your unanswered email will take up psychic space - you'll think about the answer you will write.

I try to answer my emails just twice a day and get on social media only in between working chunks.

*Read more about the science in this [New York Times article](#).

2. KEEPING TRACK OF WHAT MATTERS.

Now, in order to know what to do each day, you need to know what needs to be DONE. You started by tracking everything you did in a week, and I hope that made you realize how MUCH you get done, and how much you've been holding in your head. But we want to get it out of your head and into a system, so that no matter what happens, you can be consistent and stay on top of what needs to be done, without you thinking of it all the time.

Some of you may already have a system and some of you don't, so we're going to cover both situations.

If you already have a way to keep track of what to do:

- ★ Is it working for you?
- ★ What do you like about it?
- ★ Do you find yourself still worrying about forgetting something?
- ★ Do you actually forget things, or does it have you covered?
- ★ What could you do to make it better?

If you don't have a way to track what you do:

I'm going to share what I do, and what some of the Starship Captains do. You can pick a way that you think suits you.

What I do:

(I wrote a very long, detailed blog post on this [here](#), if you want more!)

For years, I just wrote everything down in a moleskine 5x8 journal. The journal is ALWAYS with me, and I fill one up every month.

There are a few levels to my planning and tracking:

- ★ When I have a big project, I write down every single task that needs to be done for the project to come to completion (ex: wholesale yarn order).
- ★ Each week, I write down the projects I've got going on, and under each one, write down the Next Steps I want to get done this week. (This list is usually a LITTLE idealistic. I'm probably going to get 93% of this list accomplished this week.)
- ★ Each day, I write down the individual tasks for the day, based on what kind of work I'm doing that day (writing or recording), prioritizing the most important tasks or projects.

Now, that's the system I used forever, just writing (and rewriting) in my journal. The upside: I could write something down, whenever and wherever I thought of it. The downside: each month I lost the lists from last month and would inevitably forget to write it down in the new journal. Even so, the system grew my yarn company until it replaced my salary and moved this education business from a tiny idea into my full-time job, so it certainly worked for me!

This year, I decided to experiment, and I started using OmniFocus on my phone. I use it exactly like the paper, in that I write down EVERYTHING that needs to be done. I also give everything a due date, so it shows up on the day I want to work with it. I still write down my weekly list on paper, and still prioritize the most important tasks for the day in my paper journal, so really the app is just a reminder system and holds all the tiny tasks for big projects. Now that I have two people on my team, I need a way of keeping track not just of my tasks, but of everyone's tasks and how they fit together, so I use Asana.

And what I've learned is that my system: of breaking down every big project, of writing down weekly priorities and of setting the most important tasks for the day - these are things you have to do in ANY

software. The software will help you remember it, but you have to get in the habit of thinking about projects like this, and of prioritizing both your week and day, or else you're going to be overwhelmed by an unsorted, unhelpful task list.

Now, the system that many Starship captains use and love is similar to what I do, but with a few tweaks. It's called the Bullet Journal and you can find a thorough explanation at <http://www.bulletjournal.com/>

The gist of it is that you write down anything when you think of it (events, tasks, etc), you use page numbers, and you keep an index of what's on what page, and then collect up similar things. You also make a monthly task list and daily task lists. I think this system is popular because, like what I do, it just keeps everything in one place. And it's very clearly explained at bulletjournal.com.

Another popular system is the one outlined in David Allen's [Getting Things Done](#). In this system, you write down all projects and tasks, and then you prioritize, and for each project or goal, you identify Next Steps. You move these Next Steps onto your current To Do list. This system emphasizes daily review and identifying the difference between a project and an actual Action Item. I've linked to [the wikipedia article](#), which has a great explanation of the system, and the book, which is amazingly popular. I think the original suggested you keep track of all this in a planner, but the OmniFocus app is built specifically for the GTD system.

When it comes to your system, all that matter is that you do it consistently. If you love to follow precise directions and explore all your big and little projects, read Getting Things Done, and implement it THIS WEEK. If you'd rather just start exactly where you are, use the Bullet Journal method. And if you're a rebel, Dotty, then just get a notepad or a journal or an Evernote note and start.

What matters is that you know:

- ★ Your goal and what you're working towards.
- ★ What you want to get done *THIS* week on your projects (this includes ongoing stuff like a blog or shop or production).
- ★ What you're going to do today.

I've included a worksheet to prompt you to start listing this, but what matters is that you do it in a place where you will check it EVERY DAY, before you start work.

Right now, I want you to choose:

- ★ Where will you keep track of this?
- ★ When will you check it + write the day's list?

If this is totally new for you, set an alarm on your phone or watch to prompt you to check your Weekly list and make a new list for the day.

3. DO THE WORK THAT MATTERS:

Now, we talked about prioritizing in lesson 2, so today we're just going to talk about how to actually get it done, once you know what matters. At this point you have your time in front of you, you have your list of what needs to be done, so now it's time to sit down and work.

To get started, especially if you're feeling blah, ask yourself two questions:

- ★ What moves your business forward right now?
- ★ What are the three Most Important Tasks (MITs)?

Write down your answers, pick one of the things, and get to work.

If you find yourself unable to stop drifting around between email, social media, and your project, here's what works for me:

- ★ Get very clear about what you need to do NOW (just one task).
- ★ Set a timer ([I use this one](#)) for about 25 minutes.
- ★ Close all tabs and turn everything to "silent" (except your work-inducing music!).
- ★ Work until the timer goes off.
- ★ Stand up (you should stand every 20 minutes or so).
- ★ Set the time for 5 minutes and do your roaming things (not email).

If you ever feel unproductive or like you don't have enough time, revisit these foundations.

Remember: Your system for getting things done has three parts:

1. Setting aside a specific time to work.
2. Keeping track of what you need to do.
3. Doing the work that matters.

Double check that each of those is in place and that you know the goal you're working towards. If you're feeling bad about your day, revisit your internal rules: are they in line with reality?

Above all, close all the other tabs, set your time, and get things done!

RESOURCES

These are the products I actually use.

- ★ [Moleskine journals](#)
- ★ My favorite pen: [Uniball signo](#)
- ★ [Get to Workbook](#): I just pre-ordered this (so I haven't used it yet), but I'm excited about it! It looks like it's going to organize the days exactly how I do already!
- ★ [OmniFocus](#) on my iPhone
- ★ [Evernote](#) (for fleshing out big projects, and keeping track of anything else in my life)
- ★ [Asana](#) for my team

*Amazon links are affiliate links. Feel free to just go to Amazon and search for the product!

LESSON 3 WORKSHEET: YOUR WORK TIME

What dedicated, scheduled time did you work last week?

Where?

How did it work out for you?

How did you feel about it?

Was the environment conducive to your productivity?

Did you notice any of your internal rules flaring up?

What would you change in the future?

Knowing all of the above, when will you work next week? (Schedule times!)

LESSON 3 WORKSHEET: KEEPING TRACK

GETTING STARTED:

Start tracking your tasks here, if you don't have a notebook yet!

Your goal and what you're working towards:

What you want to get done THIS week on your projects (this includes ongoing stuff like a blog or shop or production) :

What you're going to do today:

Your MITs for the day:

CHOOSE YOUR SYSTEM:

Where will you keep track of your daily actions and weekly plans?

When will you check in with it each day?

(If this is totally new for you, set an alarm on your phone or watch to prompt you to check your Weekly list and make a new list for the day.)

I've included a worksheet to prompt you to start listing this, but what matters is that you do it in a place where you will check it EVERY DAY, before you start work.

Right now, I want you to commit:

When will you check it + write today's list?