

# EXPLORE YOUR ENTHUSIASM

## EPISODE 132: WHEN YOU NEED TO TAKE A BREAK FROM YOUR BUSINESS

You're going to need a break in your business. It's unavoidable. It's part of being a human being, in a fallible body. You'll need to step back or scale down when you're sick, when your family is sick, or worse.

But when you need to take a break, when something important happens in your life that needs all your focus, it's easy to take the short term view, instead of looking at the long view of your life and career.

The short view is: *This thing came up, I need to deal with it- I'll put everything in my biz on hold.* And look, I get it. When something sideswipes you, you go into short-term problem solving. And that makes sense for extracurricular activities. Maybe you quit book club or you stop teaching Sunday school. Maybe you cut back on expenses like stash enhancement or kit clubs or eating out.

But if you're serious about your biz- then it is not an expense to cut or an extracurricular. It's a part of your income and your mental health. It's the thing that brings you joy or peace or a sense of self-reliance. It probably challenges you & pushes you, but if you want to have it in the future, you gotta take the long view.

The long view says: *things are hard, I'm going to cut the extra stuff, and I'm going to double down on the important stuff.* If I need to totally step away, I'm going to be sure my biz will still be here for me when I come back. I'm going to take the time and energy to keep your biz alive.

Now understand: this doesn't mean you'll never take time off. If you have surgery or become ill or you need to spend a week by someone's bedside, you do it. This isn't about working all the time.

But what I'm saying is that if your biz is important, **you plan for it.** You have an "in case of emergency." When you drop everything, you have a plan for your biz.

And when you *don't* have to completely stop everything, you don't.



Now, you'll notice a very important *if*. If your business is important to you, as a long-term career. If you want your business to be a sustainable part of your life, your income, your creative output; then you make a plan for it. Expect that things will come up and you make a plan for how your business will survive when they do.

But that "if" isn't true for everyone. For some people, their business is happy. Their business is just an experience that they do for fun. And that's fine. I'm not talking to those people. When I create any kind any podcast episode, when I do anything for my business, the question I ask myself is, Who is this for? And if you've been listening for a while then you know that who I serve, who I make classes for, who I make podcast episodes for, is the person who is serious. The person who is going to do the work to make this profitable. The person who is willing to do the work to keep the business going, even when things are tough.

If that's not you - if you don't want to create a career or long-term business -- it's really OK. Everyone doesn't need to turn their hobby into a business. Everyone who wants to sell a few patterns or start a shop on Etsy doesn't need to make it a business. There's a lot of glorification of entrepreneurship - like the best thing we can all strive for is to own a business and work for ourselves. But that's just not true. It's a lifestyle and risk level that doesn't work for many, many people. There's absolutely nothing wrong with that.

But if you DO want to create a business and life for yourself, let me encourage you: take the long view. Decide today that you're going to build a business that's staying through whatever comes your way. Death, sickness, broken limbs, kids: decide right now that your business is going to survive it.

How? How do you know that no matter what comes your business will survive it?

The first step is to decide. The first step is that you commit to yourself that you will figure it out. No matter what happens, you will figure it out. And then you get reasonable and responsible. How do you make anything happen? You figure out what it takes, and you make a plan to do what it takes.

In the case of needing to take a break from your business, either planned or unexpected, you need to decide ahead of time: how will I take a break if I need to? And then you make a plan. Stacey Trock of [Freshstitches](#) and I have created a guidebook that walks you through this process, of making this plan. We look at it from every angle: how much money do you need to make from



your business each month? What are the actions that bring in the money? How do you spend your time? How would you spend your time if you took a semi-leave?

We've both done this ourselves: Stacy took a semi leave during her pregnancy and for the first year of her baby's life she was the primary caregiver. I've taken weeks off, to teach around the country, because of sickness, to go to a grandparent's funeral, and over the summer to deal with my house. I've also helped hundreds of my students take leave when they had surgery, chemotherapy, sick kids, and the happiest reason: a new baby!

If you're listening to this the day that it's published then you are listening **as** I am flying across the Atlantic Ocean to spend two weeks in England and Scotland. When we get back, it'll be the week of American Thanksgiving, so I won't be back to work, for nearly 3 weeks. It's not really that I'm taking the time off, because I'm teaching all around England, on every weekend. But I will be offline, for nearly 3 weeks, and I run an entirely online business.

I went through the workbook that we include in "take a break," to figure out how to keep my business running while I was off-line. In fact the guidebook includes the exact email auto-responder I'm using while I'm offline. I'm not just coming back to a full inbox, I'm declaring full Email Amnesty. Find out how I'm doing that, in the [Guidebook](#).

Whether it's an unplanned emergency or a planned break, you owe it to yourself and to your business to make a plan ahead of time to take leave if the need ever comes up. Here's to a peaceful planning process and being prepared for anything.