EXPLORE YOUR ENTHUSIASM

EPISODE 136: THE IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING FOR THE NEW YEAR (AND HOW I DO IT)

Did your 2016 go as planned? Are you feeling discouraged or sidetracked or thrilled? No matter how your 2016 has gone, you can create a better 2017. Today we'll hear from a non-planner about how planning projects has made his life better, and I'll share what I do in my own New Year planning session.

An overview of New Year Planning:

- ★ Acknowledge what happened in 2016 - both good and bad
- ★ Spend some time thinking about the Big Picture that we talked about last week - why are you doing this?
- ★ Break down the big picture into measurable milestones. Prioritize what you care about MOST and break it into tasks.

This is exactly what I'll guide Starship Captains through in the first weeks of January 2017, using my Chart Your Stars + Map Making programs. In the past, these have been exclusive to members of my biggest online programs, but I've been asked to make them available as real, printed workbooks. So my team and I are working on that right now! I hope to have the print workbooks available to you the week before the New Year.

If you want to go through them with the community, check out the Starship at Taraswiger.com/starshipbiz. If you think you'd like a print copy of my planning workbooks, sign up to hear about them first at TaraSwiger.com/planner

Bill Gates says, "Most people overestimate what they can do in one year and underestimate what they can do in ten years."

So don't get stuck on what you didn't do TODAY, think about what you can do in the coming year.

Why it's worth the time:

Now, I've been talking and thinking about planning and goal-setting for years, and it's easy to fall into saying the same things about why you should plan. So today I asked Jay, my husband and the producer of this podcast, what he would say about planning. Jay is NOT a natural planner. For years he's resisted my attempts to to look at the coming year and make plans or set goals. But in the last few years, as he has worked in the local comic shop and on increasingly bigger projects, he's started to come around. Over the last 6 months, we've done my Map Making process on several of his bigger goals, and we've broken it down into tasks and put it on his calendar. And guess what? The overwhelming amount of tasks got done!

So I asked him: If you were telling another small business owner who doesn't do any planning, why they should take a minute and do it, what would you say?

He says:
1. Planning makes a project seem less monumental. In the beginning our current project of buying the local comic shop seemed GIANT. We didn't know where to start. But then we talked to a local SBA guy, and he told us the steps and what we needed to do… but it still seemed to huge and kind of unreasonable: who the heck are we to do this?

But when we broke it down into months and into weeks, it's so much less scary.

We were actually just talking last night about how easy it is to fall into thinking: This is just totally crazy, why the heck do we think we can do it? The GIANTNESS can make it seem undoable. The trick is: You act AS IF. As if this is totally reasonable. You act as if this is going to work out. You have no way of knowing if it is or isn't going to work, so you have to act as if it IS.

If you don't, you'll never do what you need to do. You'll think: Oh well, this is too crazy, what's the point?

We're totally aware that this might NOT work. But focusing on that is no help at all. So instead, we focus on making it more manageable and less monumental.

If you act as IF this is totally normal and totally within your ability, you'll start taking some action. You'll start moving things forward.

2. Perspective - Planning, and breaking things down, helps you see things in a different light. Instead of a big amorphous "some day," you start to see what this actually entails (maybe it's not as fun as you thought! Maybe it's better!).

3. Process - Planning provides you steps to follow on bad days; you don't have to think in the moment. You've pre-decided, so when you're tired or frustrated, you can just implement what you know you need to do.

When you make decisions in the moment, they're not always your best. When you plan, you're sitting down when you have time and energy and can bring your best self to the big questions you need to answer.

Remember:

You don't have to do it all at once. In fact, I find it better to think and percolate, and then sit down after thinking, and come back to it a few times

Work with your own best way of working - make it visual, or write it like a story, or make it tactile by putting it all on index cards and moving it around.

For more planning specifics:
Episode 87: https://taraswiger.com/podcast87/
Episode 36: http://taraswiger.com/podcast36/
Episode 37: http://taraswiger.com/podcast37/