

# EXPLORE YOUR ENTHUSIASM

## EPISODE 189: STOP SEEKING APPROVAL (TO BUILD A GREAT BUSINESS)

Here's a dichotomy: You want to listen to your customers and your audience, to give them what they want, to create an awesome business. But yet, needing their approval has you frozen or afraid or feeling kinda needy. How do you balance this?

Welcome to Explore your Enthusiasm episode 189! You can find the transcript of this episode along with links to anything I mention and an invite to an upcoming webinar at [taraswiger.com/podcast189](https://taraswiger.com/podcast189).

In the last week of 2017, I did a live video (you can watch it at the show notes for podcast189) about the lessons I learned in 2017. It was very honest, very vulnerable and one of the lessons I shared REALLY resonated with a lot of viewers, so I wanted to explore it deeper with you. The lesson I learned in 2017: I am not here for your approval.

Whoa! How do you feel when I say that? Do you feel defensive? Upset? I've found that some people just nod along, "Yeah, duh Tara." And others go: "**WAIT A MINUTE! BUT I'M A CUSTOMER** (or listener)."

Your reaction is super useful! Not for me (because this is all about me trying to unhook from your reactions to my work) - but for YOU. How you react to other people needing approval can help you explore how you feel about needing other people's approval.

So before we go further, stop and think: Do I think I need my audience (or client's) approval? Do I think I owe them something more than just the product?

Either answer is ok! Write down your answer and just set it aside for now - this may be a lesson you need to learn, or it may not.

One of the things that keeps coming up when I chat about this with y'all is: Yeah, ok, I know I need to not seek outside approval (for my own mental health!)...but: aren't I supposed to care

about making my customers delighted? Isn't that what you teach, when you talk about Right People and listening to them?

Yes! Exactly! This is exactly what I've struggled with over the years. The dichotomy is this: I am here to serve you. And yet to do that sustainably (ie, not get burnt out + to create new, useful stuff that only I can create) I need to not be hooked into your approving (or not approving).

### So let's break this down:

I am here to serve you: When you think about your audience, it's important that you're focused on your RIGHT people - the people who truly want and need the thing you offer. So you are NOT here to serve your family members who "don't get it". You're not here to serve the other people who do what you do. And you're not even here to serve ALL the people who like what you do. For example, ever since I started doing this 8 years ago, I've been working with makers who have already STARTED their biz. So if you are a maker who doesn't know what you wanna do yet - My products and my biz isn't really built to support you. Can you get a lot out of my podcast? According to you: absolutely! But am I going to offer products for you? Not really!

Recently, I started talking more about mental health and wellness and self-care. If you're a person who just wants the super-measurable profitability stuff...I'm probably not the person who is going to most serve you. Are you going to enjoy some of my stuff: absolutely! Are you going to be happy with everything I do? Probably not!

### When I talk about listening to your audience, it helps to PRIORITIZE people's feedback.

1. Your Customers, re: the product they bought. I listen 100% to my customers about the product they purchased. If you're in the Starship and you want me to create a directory of SS captains (a real request I just got) - I will do it.
2. Your paying customers re: the next things you make FOR THEM. (Not everything you do!)
3. The people who follow you and encourage you - this is where it gets tricky. If they aren't paying for your product, you can ask them what you could change to make it appeal, but you can't make biz decisions based on them because guess what? They might NEVER buy!

So! It's possible to listen to your people and YET, not hook your self-worth or your decision making into seeking their approval. HOW?

## You make decisions on two levels:

- ★ Macro - big picture, like the overall direction you're going, your mission, the TYPE of biz you wanna have.
- ★ Micro: the daily decisions you make, the way you word your marketing, the topics I cover on the podcast.

So for the Macro: do you

For the Micro: listen in. Write your marketing copy using the words your customers use. Take pictures from the angles they respond to. Post more content on IG that they enjoy! Answer their actual questions on your sales page.

The other way of saying it is in the process of creating and doing something: **START WITH YOU**. Decide what you want, no matter outside opinion.

THAT is your filter, that is your standards.

When you listen to your audience, filter it through your own decisions for what you wanna do. For example, if you want me to change the macro of my business (for example), not work with doTERRA to share essential oils anymore. Well, that's a macro decision, so I need to make it. But if you want me to hold a webinar about how to use oils for goal-setting, there you go! That's a micro - it passes through my filter and is easy for me to do.

And finally, if you've made a decision and your audience doesn't like it, Stop listening. Especially to negative feedback. Often, it doesn't even need a response. Just delete the email, especially if it's in any way un-constructive. If it is genuine and they're trying to be helpful, you can simply say "thank you". And if they seem to want more from you - like they want you to admit that they're right and you should do what they say, I have literally replied "I'm not looking for your approval." I very much wanted to explain my hierarchy of who I listen to...but what's the point?

But I want to talk about this because I know a lot of you WORRY about it - far more of you worry about it than have actually experienced it. And I want you to know: I have worried about it FAR MORE than I've ever experienced it. To prepare for this, I listed out every negative "I wish you wouldn't do that" email I've gotten this year (because you know every one is burned in my memory) and you know how many it was? 4. I added a whole new income stream, one in a biz model that has a negative reputation (because other companies in the industry are predatory)...and I speak to 4-5k people every week and I got 4 negative emails. That's 1/1000. That's .1%. Isn't that crazy? So many of make decisions to avoid conflict with .1%

The fact of the matter is - you're worried about the disapproval you're never going to receive. It's holding you back (it's holding us all back). So this year, in 2018, I want you to shine that light. I want you to make those big decisions, I want you to go in the direction of your dreams. I want you to create a business that delights it's customers but is not reliant on outside approval, because you trust YOURSELF.

I'm wishing you all that and a very enthusiastic day.