

EXPLORE YOUR ENTHUSIASM

EPISODE 206: COMBAT INFORMATION OVERWHELM: YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Books! Podcasts! Classes! How do you handle Information overwhelm? How do you learn what you need to learn and not just totally sidetracked and overwhelmed? Today I'm answering a listener's question on how to avoid information Overwhelm.

Hi and welcome to Explore Your Enthusiasm, episode 206, with me Tara Swiger, today we have a question from Selma about information overwhelm.

Selma from [SelmaLHamilton.com](https://selmahamilton.com) says:

"I want to take my business to the next level, but I am so overwhelmed with info from podcasts. I'm afraid to miss an episode unless I miss something important, but feel like a factory churning out products."

First of all, it's normal, especially when you're taking in so much information, to feel overwhelmed. So take a deep breath. It's a part of the growth process to feel like this - to feel like you need to learn everything and yet you can't learn everything and everything is going to explode if you don't learn everything.

That's normal.

And the answer is actually really simple. STOP.

Stop listening to all the podcasts. Stop reading all the blog posts.

When you listen to someone's show or read someone's email you are letting THEM dictate what you focus on. Instead, the power and responsibility of having your own business is that YOU need to, you have to set the agenda. You decide what your business needs you to do. Then seek information that supports that.

As long as you are taking in ALL the info that comes at you, you're going to be scrambling to make sense of it. This isn't like school or a job. I don't set the agenda for what you are supposed to learn. You, your business, and your goals set the agenda. Then you look at what you need - tools, skills, etc to get you where YOU have decided you want to go.

This is why I talk so much about setting a goal and then making a plan - that has to be the first step to any other learning or research. My book [Map Your Business](#) leads you through the process of getting clear on where you want to go, how you're going to go there and then allows you to check in each month to keep you focused. That process needs to come BEFORE you do anything else, including listening to podcasts or taking classes.

Now, that's easy to say, but you shared why that's so hard - you're afraid of missing something. You're afraid that if you don't immediately put everything into use, you're going to fail. You are not alone in that fear, I have it all the time too!

BUT THE TRUTH IS - YOU'RE NOT EVER GOING TO FAIL BECAUSE OF ONE MISSED PODCAST EPISODE.

There is not ONE thing that will either cause you success or total failure. It will be a lot of tiny things. It will be defining success for yourself, setting a goal, taking the steps to it. Then realizing you need to change and making changes. Nothing is going to just blow up - either positively or negatively. You'll learn what you need to learn when you need to learn it.

How I avoid info overwhelm is that I don't listen to podcasts during my workday (if I had a business where I needed to do something with my hands, I likely would) and if I'm in the middle of a big project or focused on a goal, I don't listen to any business podcasts in my off hours. Instead I listen to news or culture or interviews - because I know a biz podcast is going to distract me and give me ideas that aren't related to what I need to focus on.

But how do you let go of the scramble and the overwhelm? Trust. You have to trust a few foundational things:

- ★ This is doable without going crazy.
- ★ YOU can do this. You will be able to learn whatever you need to learn in order to make it happen.

Learning to trust yourself and the process isn't easy and it's made more complicated because we live a world that is telling you - you're not enough, you're not doing enough, you need to listen to other people in order to be better/know enough/do it right.

And even in our own community, in the small business community there are teachers telling you that they have the ONE answer. That they have the ONE path. That if you just do this ONE thing you'll have success. But, well, that's just a marketing tactic.

If there's ONE thing you have to do is this - trust yourself and focus and take action. (ok, that's three things!).

So! In order to cut down on the information overwhelm, I'm going to give you homework, but I'll keep it quick so you have time for it!

1. Write down your next goal for the next 3-6 months.
2. What is the next step to get you there? Do you need to learn anything or just do that step? (in 99% of the steps you'll take, for any goal, you don't need to learn anything - you already know how to do what you need to do)
3. Do the thing.

When you come across something you do need to learn, go seek out the information for it. Search my site for the topic (like pricing, profit, marketing) or search your favorite resources (like [CreativeLive](#)). But don't keep bingeing on information = that's a way to avoid doing the things you need to do.

The more you do this - the more you focus your energy on doing what you know to do, the faster you're going to see growth and the more you're going to learn that it's safe to trust yourself. Your trust in yourself will get stronger and your action-taking muscles will get stronger and stronger.

If you want to see the bigger picture, my book [Map Your Business](#) walks you through this process. Readers have told me that it's really helped them cut out the distractions and get more done and reach their goals. You can find it on Amazon wherever you're located. And hey, if you have read it, leave a review on Amazon! That helps other people find it!

Thanks so much for listening, go get back to work.