

Today we're talking about focusing through chaos. I'm recording this at the end of April, 2020, a crazy pandemic still going on. I don't remember the last time I left this house. I don't know anything, besides going to the grocery store and I'm not even the one going to the grocery store these days. For the most part, I have been either in my house or in my garden for, I think two months. You can imagine how that may make some people crazy. As I think all of you out there are maybe getting a little crazy. The funny thing is that my life really hasn't changed that much. It's, uh, this is kind of how my life was before. I mean, we went to restaurants and things that I did leave, but I worked from home before. So the whole virtual working thing, I was already doing that for years now. My husband already worked from home.

So we've already had to deal with that dynamic. We have a small bungalow we're on top of each other, a lot, trying to like work and have meetings. And who's getting to be in the room by themselves to have a call without interruptions, that kind of thing. So we've had to work all this stuff out. The big thing for us is having our son home for homeschooling, and that is an additional juggling of things. But other than that, there's not a lot that's different around here as in a workday way, the world at large is crazy and we can't go to restaurants or see our friends ever, but the kind of day to day the business stuff, it isn't really that different. So I thought I would get on today and, and talk a little bit about all the things that I've learned over the last couple of years of working in this way.

For all those people out there who have never had to do this, the first thing set a schedule. And I know that the world is a blur right now, and you're just trying to hold on. But the feeling of chaos makes panic and we don't panic here. So setting a schedule is really important. We have a big whiteboard that we brought into the house and every day we set a schedule, all three of us. So my son, all his schoolwork, he's in kindergarten, but there's so much to do. And you know, it starts out by eat breakfast, brush teeth, because you have to actually do those things every morning. Um, and we have our schedules on there. We do look at our schedules in the beginning of the week as well. So we know that we don't have meetings that are clashing because someone will be with our son who was only six and some will be working trading off. But every day we go through and then we can check things off and then we're done for the day. That's like a big deal, knowing what you have to do, and then it's done. And then you can relax because when you are in the same place all the time, it's hard to know when you're working, when you're not, which is the next thing, which is set a place to work. So I have an office, all of you out there, some of you might not have that kind of space that is dedicated to work, especially if this is not a thing you do all the time from home, but try to pick a place to work and then go to work. I come into my office, I do the things that I need to do. And then when I'm done, I leave work.

**I go back into** the house and then I'm mom again, or whatever, or my a wife, but I'm not working all the time. If you work all the time, you will become a disaster. You'll be a mess. And you'll be cranky and you will always feel like you have to be on for that. And it will not work. Trust me. I did this. When I first started working from home, I had my computer with me. I have a laptop, so I can just work from anywhere, right? Except that I worked all the time. So it's like nine o'clock at night. And I thought I should be working on something or updating my website or whatever. And then it becomes this weird blur of I'm just going to keep doing things, even if they don't really need to be done. Because I feel like I should be working hard. Being focused and saying, I'm going to work for these three hours on my website, or I'm going to do client work or whatever that is. Make a block of time to do that thing. Go sit down at the place you've picked to work and get it done. And then when it's done that time is over. You walk away, your sanity will appreciate this. It was the thing that really changed everything. I am now done from work. I would go cook dinner. I go hang out with my family. And I don't feel that guilty thing that I should be working all the time, because you should not be working all the time.

You need to get out of your PJ's. Everyone is talking about how awesome it is to not shower and be in your PJ's all day. This working from home thing is so awesome. Again, the shower please, people get out

of your PJs. Have a little self-respect. You're going to start to descend in a madness. When all of a sudden you have like cheese puffs cheese on your shirt, and now you have a video call and everyone can see this. If you're in a video call in your pajamas, get your life together. Every morning I get up, I get showered. I get dressed. I go to work. It's a mindset. I am getting ready to go run my business, to run my company. I'm not just somebody in my PJ's doing some stuff on the computer. It is a mindset thing. Go shower, especially when you're getting on video calls. Jesus. I'm sure you've all seen all that stuff on the news of like people walking in, their videos are on, people don't know. Please shower. Even if people can't smell you, they still know.

And then you kind of started to, you need to start setting some rules. This is my fourth piece of advice. Do not start happy hour at 9:00 AM. At least not every day. Like it's not a free for all. If you want your business to keep running, you need to be intentional here. I'm going to get up in the morning. I'm going to get myself ready, have some coffee, whatever that is. And then I'm going to go to work and I'm going to do some stuff. Look, do I have a drink at the end of the day? Of course I do. Maybe in the middle of the day with lunch, maybe I do, but just having a free for all where you're just drunk at 9:00 AM and you're not getting anything done. And then all of a sudden you're making no money. And then you start to panic because you can't pay your bills. Let's not do that. Go to work, get your stuff done. Then stop working.

Don't turn the TV on all day in the background. So it's distracting. You're not focusing. You're not getting your stuff done. Get your stuff done. Then go watch TV. Set some mealtimes, make a break in your schedule that says lunch. Really important to eat every day. Instead of wandering through the house, just grazing on whatever is in your kitchen, go eat something, eat something with a vegetable. It will make you feel better. Eating chips all day will not make you feel good. And when everything is so crazy and you already have that inclination to not feel good, don't add to it.

And I know this is going to be hard for a lot of you right now because we can't see our friends and we're not going places, but stay in contact with family and friends. That's my fifth piece of advice. Call your mom, talk to your friends and talk about something besides the news and the apocalypse. Because like I talked to my mom one day and she was like, do you know all the terrible numbers and all the terrible, this and the terrible that. And it freaked me out. I am avoiding that. All of that and talking to her about those things freaked me out as well. So talk about something else. Talk about something nice. Call your friends. Do zoom calls with your friends. Especially if you have little kids, it really does help to have faces instead of just your own in the mirror, because you're by yourself. All the time.

Number six is avoid being bombarded with news all day. I check in with the news once a day. Maybe if something else terrible happens, my husband will come and yell and tell me what's going on because he can't stop listening to the news all the time. I found that when I was listening to everything that was going on all the time, I was constantly in this like panic state and that wasn't productive. Finding out everything that's happening. Minute by minute is not productive. I don't have the TV on in the background. Well, I don't have the TV on background at all. My office doesn't even have a TV, but having that news feed going or listening all the time to the terrible things that are happening, it's just like it's having dark clouds over you while you're trying to get things done and it's not productive. A lot of this stuff is just not productive. Like I want to get my business going. I want to make money. I want to do things. I want to help people. And none of these things are going to be productive in getting all that done.

So number seven, do something you enjoy. That can be an accomplishment. Look, a lot of our businesses right now are getting hit hard and it's a lot. We're trying to figure out what the hell to do, how to keep going all of that. And so much of it feels out of control. Go pick certain things you can do that are within your control. I have been making an enormous amount of food. I'm cooking. I always

baked bread before and now I'm baking a lot of bread. I garden. And if you saw my garden right now, there's a crazy amount of vegetables. And it's April in New Jersey. I'm tearing up half of our front yard and making a new rain garden. Those are things that I can do that one, I'm exhausted at the end of the day, burns all the bad Juju off. And then I see something happening. Like I plant seeds, I see them grow. It gives me a sense of accomplishment. It's also has nothing to do with business and has nothing to do with the news. So I go out in the garden and it's peaceful out there because it's spring and the lilacs are blooming and the tulips are coming up and the world is turning and it is just normal out there. And that is keeping my head grounded so that I can come in and not be crazy and not sleeping and all that kind of stuff. Go and do something that you can accomplish. It can be done. You can feel good. And then go back to your family. Not want to kill anyone.

The last one is, I want you guys to give yourself a break, no matter where you are, you're probably stressed. Maybe you're feeling guilty that you weren't prepared, or you feel guilty. You can't pay someone or you feel guilty you're making lots of money and no one else is. There's so many things that our minds are really getting screwy around right now. No matter where you are, no matter what you're doing, give yourself a break. Look, I want to do all the things right now. I'm starting this podcast. I am releasing new products. I am teaching my son to schoolwork. I have dug up my entire front lawn because I think I need a bigger garden. All of these things. I want to do all of them right now, right now, right now. Right. But it's too much sometimes. And then I feel guilty that I didn't get it all done. And then I'm a failure. And then you wind yourself up and then you're not sleeping. And then. But just give yourself a break, set some realistic goals, pick things that you can accomplish and feel good about getting done. Go outside, breathe some fresh air. If you have some fresh air, that's out there, if it's safe to be outside. And then forgive yourself, if everything didn't go as planned. The biggest disconnect in our heads is for what we think should happen and what is happening. And when we sit in the should, this should be happening. My kids should be at school. He's missing things because this should be happening. It is just, it just screws with your mind. This is what's happening. Let's figure out from here. What's going to happen and give yourself a break. All right, you guys stay safe out there. Wash your hands, stay home and take a few good deep breaths. We are going to make it through. We're going to make it through. We can do this. We've got this. Your businesses are going to be, they're not just going to be okay. They're going to be great. I want you to focus on where your life and your business are going to be when this is all over. Stay safe, guys. I'll talk to you later.