

Taking a Break: How Time Away Is Actually Good for Your TpT Business

Hello there and welcome to another episode of School of Sellers. I am your host, Erin Waters. And today I'm covering a topic that I honestly probably would not have covered a year ago today. So it's something I've kind of changed my tune on just a little bit, but it's something I'm really excited to talk with you guys about today because it's a really important topic that I think we should all address. And that is the importance of taking a break in your business. Now you know if you have been a listener for a while that I'm a self-professed workaholic. But I think that's kind of a negative term. So generally speaking, I'm just really passionate about my business. And it's just my business is my hobby. It's what gives me life. I just really enjoy working on it. I'm really proud of it. And it's just something that's really enjoyable for me. So a lot of times, most times my work doesn't actually feel like work. And the reason I started really going hard on my TPT business and working super duper hard and putting all this time in is because of a story that I shared at a TPT conference in Austin several years back. And that is the story of Kobe Bryant because of 4 am. And I'm not going to share the whole entire story in detail right now. But in general, Kobe Bryant is my hero. He was always such a hard worker when he was playing basketball, and it wasn't that he was just heads and shoulders above all of the other guys on his team. It was that he would put the work in over and over and over. And there was a time when he was training for I think the U.S. Olympics basketball team, and he asked a trainer to meet with him at like four o'clock in the morning one day. And he did their training and agreed to meet them back at the team practice a couple hours later. And when they crossed paths later in the day, the trainer had asked Kobe how the rest of his training had gone that morning when they met up. And Kobe said, oh, you know what? It was really good. In fact, I just wrapped up. I told myself I wanted to make, whatever it was, 400 shots before I wrapped it up. So even though he had been there since 4 am, he put in that extra time and work even if it meant staying at the gym until their regularly scheduled practice. And he did that not only that day, but he would show up at 4 am every single morning without fail to hone his skills and get better at something that he was already really amazing at.

When I heard this story a few years ago, it just really lit a fire under me. And it's funny because I'm not a sports person, definitely not a basketball person. So I could still relate to this drive and that grit in a way that I hadn't related to anything before. So that's really what got me thinking. And in the very early stages of my business, I would really put in all of that hard work and hustle hard to grow my business. And being a workaholic or whatever you want to call it, let's stop saying workaholic. Let's say that we are people who are super passionate about our business, and we like working a lot. So people who work a lot results in a few things, right? Now let's focus on the good first. There are some great things that came out of my working hard on my business. The first thing is definitely growth. I definitely attribute my early hustling days to where I am now. I still hustle at work in terms of working hard but not in the traditional sense. There's way less burning the candle at both ends and more work because I'm adding to my plate, right? So for example, in addition to my TPT business, I started School of Sellers. So I am still working a lot, but it's in a different sort of way. It's not as much of the late nights like I was earlier on. But those late nights and those early mornings at the very beginning of my TPT journey is absolutely what I attribute my growth to. Honestly, if I didn't go hard at the beginning, I don't think that I would be where I am today.

Another good thing about just loving what you do and loving working and working all the time is that it proves things to yourself that you never thought you could do. So things like running a business in general, little things like figuring out how to start an email list. I might have stayed up till 2 am several nights figuring out a Facebook ad or how to set up an email sequence, but I did it. And it's this huge sense of accomplishment and wonderment when you see all the things that this business world shows you that you're capable of. And you're just like, wow, who am I? Because I'm generally a pretty, I don't want to say lazy person, but I'm not always someone who is necessarily looking to add things to my plate. I generally don't love like social events. I'm very much a homebody. Like I'm very happy just sitting back and doing my thing. But there's something about running my business that turns me into like the Energizer bunny, and it brings out the best in me, even parts that I didn't even know I possessed previously.

But, and you knew that a but was coming, what happens when your work, work, work lifestyle shows no signs of stopping? Because for me, the longest time, I resisted breaks, and I wore my busy schedule almost like it was a badge of honor. And even once I started really honing in and focusing how I used my time and wanted to get more productive, there was still this sense of work, work, work all the time. And I think it was partially ingrained in me but also partially what I still wanted to be doing because I still loved it. But about like 90% of the time, and it was that 10% of the time that would creep in like every so often and then more often and then more often it was happening. And starting last year about mid pandemic, my desire to work was being replaced by the desire to do absolutely nothing. And I mean like nothing. I did not even want to open my computer at one point. And if you know me, you know that is the craziest, most unheard of thing ever.

So for the first time ever, I took a huge break. And by huge break, I mean that I took most of the entire month of December off. And this was really bold because December is a big month for School of Sellers. On December 1st, we launched our Jumpstart Your Year planning workshop, and as soon as that wrapped up, I was done. And luckily, everything wrapped up really cleanly. It was a wonderful launch and a great note to end the year on. And I also had already done all of my business planning for 2021 for the new year because of Jumpstart. So I felt a little better than I probably normally would have saying, okay, I'm going to take a break for the rest of the month. I'll see you next year really, right? The idea of a break was still very foreign to me, but it was one I knew I needed. It was one that I actually wanted for the first time in forever. And I don't know about you guys, but there's something about 2020 that kind of just made me feel like I could give myself permission to do like anything I wanted. So I really didn't feel that weird about taking a break. And I'm glad that was the case because that break ended up being one of the best things that ever happened to me and my business.

Here's how I spent my break, nothing earth-shattering. I probably spent the first week cleaning and organizing every single corner of my house. And then after I got tired of doing that, I took a lot of naps, and I did some arts and crafts projects that I had been looking forward to doing at some point. I did all of the fun holiday stuff with my family, and I read a lot of books and also listened to a lot of audiobooks. And then before my break was over, I started thinking about work, and I would steal time with small projects at night like after the kids were in bed. And I started feeling this spark when that happened, and it was a familiar one. And I realized that it was the same spark from my early TPT days. And every so often throughout my break, I would get that spark, and I would sit and just for a couple minutes go on PowerPoint or go on Trello and plan out a product or whatever. And it was really fun. And by the time January 1st rolled around, I was ready to go, and I was so pumped to start. Because I hadn't done anything for my business. I snuck in and did a couple little projects, but they were projects I wanted to do, not because I had to do them. And by the time the new year came, I was so ready to go, and I had missed it. I had missed my business. But most of all, I felt so fulfilled in other aspects of my life that I was ready to just pour myself back into my work. And I wanted to do that.

But I made sure to take a few lessons with me first because my December break totally has stuck with me. And I haven't taken an entire month off again, but I have started sneaking in breaks where I otherwise would not have had them in the past. And I don't schedule my breaks. I rarely schedule a break unless it's like an overnight trip or something. I tend to just listen to my body and my mind now and give them what they need. And most days honestly, it's business as usual. I'm still loving the work, work, work lifestyle. But when I have those days or God forbid even weeks where I just can't seem to get it together, I tie up any loose ends or I do my best to, I close up shop, and I step away. And now one day is usually all it takes, sometimes maybe two. And I'm not even sure what it is. A reset? I mean there's something about taking a break that is restorative in a way that I just can't put my finger on.

So if you are someone who resists taking breaks or you feel guilty for taking breaks or maybe you're someone like me who just loves work so much that it really never even makes sense or occurs to you to take a break, I encourage you and challenge you to take a break, whether it's a day, a half day, or maybe you even want to try taking one of the months off during the summer, something that works for you. Or maybe planning your month off later on in the year so that you have something to work towards and look forward to. As I record this podcast, we're getting ready to leave to go on vacation together as a family for the first time ever, and we are going to the beach. And we will be gone for I think six days and six nights. And I am really looking forward to it. I'll be popping into work a little bit doing office hours for our Foundations course and doing small things here and there. But for the most part, it is very much a break for my business, and I'm really excited for it, not just for the break aspect and all of the fun books that I plan to read but because I know when I get back, I am going to be so rejuvenated and ready to go that my business is going to thank me for it. So I hope that you yourself can take a break or a couple breaks if that works. And just remember that it is important to work hard, but a lot of times stepping away can accomplish just as much if not more than a day spent working. Thank you so much for listening, friends, and I will talk to you next week.

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We are a group that is committed to helping teacher sellers in all stages of their business. We like to provide tips, tools, and resources that aid in building your business while making it feel doable every step of the way.

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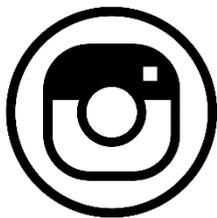
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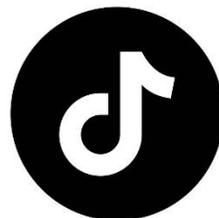
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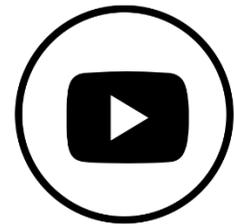
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