

S2: E200: Episode 200! My Secret to Being Prolific (Without the Hustle)

Hey there, welcome back or welcome to the Make Your Message a Movement podcast. This is your host, Tiffany Neuman, and I am so happy to be with you today because today is a big milestone: 200 episodes. It feels a little surreal to say that out loud because when I first started this podcast, I certainly hoped I would still be here 200 episodes later, but I don't know that I fully understood what 200 episodes actually meant.

200 times sitting down at this microphone, 200 ideas, conversations, stories, experiments, lessons, things I got right, things that probably sucked, and probably a few things I will listen to someday. And think, well, that was embarrassing.

But before I get into it, I really just want to start this episode by saying thank you. If you have been with me since the beginning or towards the beginning, thank you. If you found me somewhere around episode 187 and maybe binge listened while walking your dog, thank you. If you shared an episode with a friend, Left me a review, sent me a message about something that made you think differently, maybe even signed up to work with me because of something you heard here. Thank you.

I am so grateful for you. Because a podcast, if you think about it, is pretty strange. I sit alone in a room talking into a microphone, And somehow those ideas travel into cars, kitchens, airports, walks, offices, and lives I may never know about or see. And I'm always thinking about you listening and doing my best to give you value, to maybe make you laugh, although a professor and a corporate designer at Harp I don't know how funny I am, but still, I'm just so grateful that you've taken the time to be with me. And if this is your first time, thank you.

So that's one of the things I think I appreciate most about reaching this milestone, is that it's a body of work that has traveled farther than I ever could on my own. And that's one of the things I love most about working with clients is helping them develop their body of work, or if they already have one, really codifying it and making it cohesive. And that's what I actually want to talk about today is how this can happen. How did I reach 200 episodes? Because often people ask me how I create so much, how I've maintained a podcast for 200 weekly episodes while running a company, serving clients, traveling and speaking, leading a team, having workshops, having retreats, having a family, and occasionally having a life outside of my business.

And I think people sometimes expect the answer to be that I'm extremely disciplined or that I wake up at 4:30 every morning with a color-coded content calendar and an unreasonable amount of enthusiasm. And I assure you, if you know me, that is not the secret. I do work a decent amount because I love it, but I am far from being part of the hustle culture. The secret is

that I stopped relying on myself to be the entire system. And if you've been following me for any time, the last few months has made it clearer to me than ever.

As many of you know, I was in a very serious car accident, gosh, about 6 weeks ago now, and I fractured my ribs and spent the better part of at least 4 weeks, mostly off healing and doing very little compared to my normal pace because I was forced to. And there was days where simply getting comfortable and getting dressed or taking a shower was a huge chore, especially in the early days. I certainly was not waking up thinking, you know what sounds fun today? Let's optimize the marketing funnel. And yet the business kept going.

Our clients were supported. Marketing did not disappear. People continued finding our work. We continued booking new clients. And in fact, our one-on-one work is now on a waitlist.

So I want to be careful with how I say this, because this is definitely not one of those online business stories where I tell you, you know, I fractured my ribs, took a nap, and made \$1 million in my sleep. That is not the point. But the point is, for the first time in a very tangible way, I experienced something I have been helping clients build for years. The idea that a business and brand should not require your constant output in order to stay alive. That is very different from what many of us have been taught.

We have turned consistency into a character trait. You know, things like, she's so consistent, he never misses a newsletter, they post every single day. Which, by the way, I don't know how people post every single day, or the people who post like 20 times a day keep up with it. You know, unless you have a massive team. And then when we cannot maintain that pace, we assume that people need more discipline, or what happens the most often is people beat themselves up.

But what I know for sure is that most established experts don't actually need more discipline because you've gotten this far. What you actually need is more infrastructure. Because consistency is not a personality trait, it's a system. And being prolific is not necessarily about producing more. It's about building an ecosystem where your ideas have a plan, somewhere to go, and That gets distributed.

And that is exactly what my proprietary brand operating system has done for me. Unexpectedly, it had to work when I was not able to. And when I say brand operating system, I'm talking about much more than a content calendar or a collection of SOPs. Over the last 20 years, I've developed a way of looking at brands, positioning ideas, intellectual property, and marketing

that has become a methodology. And we've taken that thinking out of my head and built it into the business.

The questions I ask, the way I identify patterns, the way we extract a client's intellectual property, the way we determine what someone should be known for, the way one core idea can move from a podcast to LinkedIn to an email to to workshop and to an offer without feeling like we're simply repeating the same piece of content everywhere. That thinking is all codified, and now we have AI tools built around the methodology that allows us to do things in a fraction of the time they used to take me. I use AI consistently in my own business. But I'm not handing an empty prompt box the keys and asking it to tell me what Tiffany believes this week. The intelligence has to come first, and the strategy has to come first.

What makes the tools so powerful is that they sit on top of a system that already contains decades of experience. Decisions, language, and a point of view. So instead of AI replacing my thinking or scraping the internet and pushing out content that sounds like everyone else's, which is typically the case, it simply extends my thinking. It actually helps organize, repurpose, pull threads forward, find connections, and move my ideas Through the business and my content faster. It actually, now that I've tracked it, genuinely saves me hundreds of hours.

So the goal was never to use AI so I could cram hundreds of additional tasks into the hours I got back. The goal was to create more space for the work only I can do, which is, of course, Working deeply with my clients, developing new ideas, having meaningful conversations, and of course, being with my family, taking walks, being a human. And as I learned unexpectedly last month, healing when life requires me to stop. Of course, my small but mighty team is an enormous part of that too. And so I don't want to just put it out there like it's just me and my tools did all of this in that month alone.

But the reason they can keep moving things forward, and if you don't know and you haven't experienced my team, I have 3 team members, a project manager, a designer, and a developer. So I'm really the founder, the creative director. And everything else. And so it's not like I have a huge team behind me, and most of my team is actually serving clients, not putting out marketing into the world. So again, the reason they keep things moving forward without me is that we are not reinventing the strategy every week.

There's a shared operating system underneath all the work. They know the brand, they know the bigger vision, they have the tools and processes that carry the methodology. So when I was suddenly unavailable at my normal capacity, we did not have to reconstruct the business from

scratch. And that is freedom. I think a lot of people feel overwhelmed by marketing because they are constantly starting from zero.

Thinking, you know, what should I post today? Or what should the newsletter be about? What should I talk about on the podcast? What should my workshop teach? What should I say on the sales page?

What should I be known for? And each piece becomes another decision. And eventually you become exhausted, not necessarily by creating, but by deciding. We've all heard about the concept of decision fatigue, right? So it's the combination.

First you have to decide, and then you have to create. So this is one of the biggest things that I want to bring you today in all of these lessons I've learned in 200 episodes and the way that my business and brand has evolved is that the goal of a good brand operating system is not simply to help you make more content. It's to eliminate Thousands of unnecessary decisions. Because my podcast does not live in one universe while my LinkedIn lives in another and our client work lives somewhere else. They all feed each other.

And the things I'm observing with clients become ideas I explore here. The ideas I explore here become conversations on LinkedIn. And those conversations show me what resonates. Some of those ideas grow into frameworks, some become workshops, and some simply become part of the language people associate with my work. One good idea can have a very long life, and that is how you become prolific without having to become a content factory.

You stop asking yourself to generate endlessly and start building around ideas with enough depth, with enough force, and enough of your personality that they keep unfolding. And I also think that this is where most people misunderstand systems too. Systems are incredibly boring, especially to creatives like myself. I have to tell you, I'm actually pretty proud of myself because if you asked me when I started my business, what was it, 8 years ago, going on 8 years in January, I cannot stand systems. It's one of the reasons I wanted to leave corporate because there was so much red tape and I led a team of over 100 people as a creative director.

And I freaking could not stand the systems anymore. So here I am talking about systems because they work, right? But the purpose of a system isn't efficiency for efficiency's sake. The purpose of a system, I've come to realize through running my own business and scrambling and overworking and all of the things in the early years and learning the hard way. The purpose is space.

Space to think, space to take sabbaticals, space to write the book, space to take your kids somewhere on a Tuesday afternoon, space to travel without carrying your entire business in your laptop bag, space to actually be the thought leader instead of spending all your time feeding the thought leadership machine. Now, of course, I just want to say really quickly, it doesn't mean you won't have seasons, right? It ebbs and flows. You may have space, and then you may have a busy season. So I also just don't want to say, like, I have all this space, I'm just sitting on the beach all of the time.

And maybe you do not need to take a month off because of a car accident. I certainly hope you do not. We are all free from that. But maybe you want to stop feeling like marketing is another full-time job. Maybe you've been dreaming about a sabbatical, but you can't imagine how the business would function without you.

Maybe you want a system for your thought leadership so you aren't starting at an empty content calendar every week. Maybe you want to simplify your marketing. Instead of being on 7 platforms, you just want to be on 1 or 2. Or maybe you want fewer but better perfect fit clients. What if your brand could do enough of the explaining that you no longer had to convince people of your value once you got them on a sales call?

Or maybe you simply want to know that life requires your attention somewhere, like what happened to me. Everything you built would not immediately stop.

That one again became very personal for me recently. And I was so grateful that the systems we had built were actually doing exactly what they were supposed to do. They created space for me to be a human being. And Interestingly, that same infrastructure is what allows the work to grow. Because when everything is trapped inside your head, there's a ceiling.

But on the other hand, when your thinking has been extracted, organized, codified, expressed, and built into the brand, other people and tools can begin carrying it forward. For you. Your team can carry it, AI tools can help extend it, and even your audience can help carry it. That's when your ideas begin to compound. And this is the deeper lesson of 200 episodes for me.

You do not build a body of work constantly by starting over. You build it by allowing your best ideas to compound. And I see this in my clients all the time. We've had clients that we helped clarify their positioning go on to get incredible speaking opportunities, including speaking at TEDx, the United Nations, countless organizations. We've had clients literally double their income within a year After we helped them build their brand ecosystem.

We've watched people become dramatically easier to refer because suddenly everyone around them has language for what they actually do. We've watched experts who had years of brilliance scattered across dozens of ideas finally bring it together into something tangible to create a bestselling book. And none of that happened because they simply decided to make more content or get more visible. It happened because the pieces started working together. And that is why I'm so excited about the next 200 episodes.

Now, the authority positioning workshop we just held last week was such a hit that I'm doing it again on October 27th. But this time, I'm adding another layer. I want to take you behind the scenes of what I've been talking about today even deeper. Yes, I'm going to teach you the psychology behind becoming the expert people trust, becoming the obvious choice, but I also want to show you more of the practical side, how we turn expertise into a body of thought leadership, how we use AI without letting the AI flatten everything that makes you valuable, how we create marketing systems that create enormous amounts of time back for you, how I was able to step mostly away from my business for over a month while we continued attracting and booking clients. And I'm going to walk you through real case studies from clients, like I said, who've doubled their incomes, landed major stages, and show you what actually changed behind the scenes.

Because I don't want you leaving with another idea or notebook full of ideas that becomes one more thing sitting on your desk. I want you to understand how the pieces work together and how it can work for you. So if you've been craving a simpler way to grow your authority, create thought leadership, and attract the right clients and the right opportunities without your business demanding more of you, I would love to have you there. You can find all the details for the October 27th workshop in the show notes. I know it's about a month out, But I genuinely know that this is changing people's lives.

And as I close out this monumental episode, I want to share 2 gifts that my recent accident gave me that I haven't talked about yet, because I certainly would not have chosen the way these gifts arrived in my life. But now looking back, and as I've been healing, I'm grateful for them.

The first, of course, is a much deeper understanding that life is precious. We all know that intellectually, but something happens where your life literally flashes before your eyes, and suddenly you know it differently. You reevaluate what matters, who matters, what you're spending your days doing. What you keep telling yourself you will do someday.

And so, that is also why I'm more excited than ever to be running these workshops to give people time back in their lives. And the 2nd gift was an even stronger conviction that we, you

and I, as business leaders, are here for a purpose. I mean, I believe everyone's here for a purpose on this planet. However, business owners are next level. I love my business.

I love what I do. I love the people I have a privilege of serving. And I feel incredibly blessed to be able to say that with more conviction today than I could have before my accident. I truly believe part of my purpose is to be a light in the world and to help incredible business owners like you make your message a movement, because I believe the world needs more people willing to use their gifts for positive change right now. It's a little trite, but we need to become the change we want to see now more than ever.

And if you're listening, I know you have a strong purpose and conviction in your own business, and I see it in my clients all the time. I see Julie help raise consciousness on the planet in her own unique way. I see Pax supporting teens and helping shape the next generation. I see Jessica Literally changing laws. I see Randy supporting parents.

I see Selena creating a ripple effect of rich relationships. I see Sarah helping people get their ideas onto TEDx stages and into books so those ideas can travel further. And those are just a tiny handful of the people I am blessed to serve. They are literally living their legacy, and each one of them is doing it differently. And I don't think purpose requires all of us to become the same type of changemaker.

You have your own superpower, your own lived experience, your own way of seeing something, your own people you are here to help.

But when each one of us does our unique part, those individual contributions begin to overlap. And this is how we become the change we want to see in the world. And reaching episode 200 has made something else very clear to me. I never wanted to build a massive company. I still want this to be a relatively boutique business because I care enormously about the personal touch.

I want to personally know the people that we serve. I care deeply about the work, and I never want someone to feel like client number 4,782 moving through a machine. Plus, I've never been particularly motivated by having the largest following or the most impressive vanity metrics. That's simply not how I defined success. And by the way, side note, we all need to give ourselves permission to define success on our own terms rather than unconsciously inheriting someone else's scoreboard.

I don't necessarily need to serve millions of people. But I would love to reach millions.

And there is a very big difference between serving millions of people and reaching millions of people, because I can help millions by helping Julie amplify the work she's here to do, by helping Pax and Randy and Selena and Sarah and people like you Take the thing that you've been carrying inside you and turn it into a brand, a body of work, a message, and a movement that reaches people I will never meet. And most likely you already have a solid body of work and it simply needs to be elevated into a movement. And that, my friend, is ripple effect. And the most beautiful part is that much of that impact is never going to be traced back to me, and I'm completely okay with that. I don't need my name attached to every life that changes downstream.

I just want to know that I did my part. Our team did our part, that the people we serve went out and did theirs, and that together. In all our little different corners of the world, we moved something in a more positive direction. So after 200 episodes, I'm excited to share that my mission is stronger than ever. I want to help brilliant people like you become clear about what they are here to say.

I want to help you build the brand and the infrastructure that allow the work to travel farther than even you could ever imagine. And I want you to make incredible money doing meaningful work, having a business that supports the life you actually want to live, and create an impact that continues rippling outward in ways neither of us may ever fully see. That's the legacy I'm interested in. So if this podcast has played even a tiny role in helping you create yours over these last 200 episodes, Thank you for letting me be a part of it. We have more work to do, and I'm more grateful than ever that I'm still here to do it with you.

Sending you so much love. Thank you, thank you, thank you, and we'll see you next week. Thank you.