



Visionary Series: How to Set Boundaries and Prevent Distractions to Get More Done

THRIVE BY DESIGN WITH TRACY MATTHEWS

Finally, to empower your team, teach them to become solution-oriented. What this is going to do is to help you create better boundaries and to prevent a lot of distractions that happen in your business.

You're listening to Thrive-By-Design business marketing and lifestyle strategies for your jewelry brand to flourish and thrive. Let's get started.

Tracy: Welcome to the Thrive By Design Podcast, episode 110. Hey, guys. It's Tracy Matthews. I'm here today as your host for another fun week of Thrive By Design. I love bringing you this podcast every week for a lot of reasons and, today, I'm particularly inspired because we're going to be talking about a few things. This is the first in a series about stepping into the role of visionary and, today, we're going to talk about how to set boundaries and prevent distractions to get more done. My original idea for starting Flourish and Thrive Academy many, many years ago when I hooked with Robin was to really teach people how to not only run a successful jewelry business, but to be leaders because you always learn from your own mistakes. I struggled for many, many years in my business because I didn't know how to manage my team, I didn't know how to be a leader, I didn't know how to set proper boundaries. I'm still learning how to do all this stuff in a way, but, for me, it's really inspiring.

Last year, I read a book called Rocket Fuel by Gino Wickman, and I literally started bawling my eyes out after I read it. I read it and then I also listened to it as a book on tape. I love all of Gino Wickman's books, so you should definitely grab it if you haven't read or listened to it yet, but one of the things that Gino talks about is successful companies have to really key, important roles, and they have what is called the visionary and they also have is what is called the integrator. For many years, I struggled with the fact that I wasn't really good about taking my ideas and moving them forward to completion. I can get things off the ground really quickly. I'm a 10 on Quick Start in the Kolbe, but I get bored really easy and want to move on to the next thing and keep following my





ideas. We call it here in the jewelry industry Bright Shiny Object Syndrome. We call it that in other industries, too, but I guess it's relevant for that.

I'm really passionate. I'm going to bring you a series of visionary podcasts because, for me, this is really your next level in business. It doesn't matter if you're a solopreneur. It doesn't matter if you're thinking about hiring some people or you already have a small team or even a big team. If you're the visionary of your company or you're the integrator, it's really important to be able to step in that role as the leader and the chief visionary officer of your company.

Today, we're going to talk a little bit about that. I'm going to tell you about the inspiration for this episode momentarily, but before I do, I want to take a word from our sponsor. Today's sponsor is Whatify. Whatify is amazing platform that is designed to help you split test your images on Etsy. I've heard a lot of designers who have been selling on Etsy for years who've had a lot of success on Etsy notice a dip in their sales because the Etsy algorithms have changed. The way Etsy shops are showing up and products are showing up has changed, and it's become difficult to get exposure and to get noticed. What these guys did over at Whatify ... I had Jason Abaluck on the show a couple weeks ago, and make sure that you listen to it. It's episode number 107. It's a really amazing company. What these guys did is took what the technology that big companies like Amazon and Google and Netflix and so many other big companies in the medical fields use to sample and test what is the best direction to go in and there's science behind this.

What they do is take your images and show you which images are going to produce better sales, and what this ends up doing is helping you increase your sales on Etsy a minimum of 10%, but we've seen numbers that for some people it's increasing it a lot more. A/B split testing is the bomb. If you haven't tried it yet, you should definitely head on over to FlourishThriveAcademy.com/Whatify. That's FlourishThriveAcademy.com/Whatify. We'll also have this over on the show notes. It just takes a few minutes of your time. It's completely automated to get set up. If you have an Etsy shop, you're silly for not using this platform. Plus, they're offering a free trial to get started. Head on over to FlourishThriveAcademy.com/Whatify.





Let's dive into the story. I was talking with one of our mastermind designers a couple weeks ago. In fact, this was [from 00:04:41] a sequence of conversations that I was having. It was really bringing me back to a very specific time in my business when I felt like no one understood my plight. I realize now that many people understood my flight. My plight, should say, and they were going through the same thing. After mentoring designers for five, seven years, however long it's been, five years at Flourish and Thrive, but I've done it two more years before that. I've seen the same problems come up over and over and over again.

I was having this conversation with Christina who is in our mastermind this year, and Christina was telling me about how she just feels busy all the time and is trying to get stuff done. I asked her ... I investigated a little bit. I asked her how she structured her days, and I also asked her how she was working with her team because Christina is someone who has a couple of people working on her team. I think she mentioned about five, which is pretty cool, which is something you guys might consider as your business starts to grow.

I think if we want to get to a certain level, we eventually will want to have people come in and support us with the making piece or bookkeeping or other things, but I was asking her, "What's preventing you from getting X, Y, and Z done," because we're working on creating a plan for her to be more productive and start delegating some of this stuff and getting it off her plate, and one of the first things that she said was that she was interrupted all morning. In my opinion, I think the mornings for a lot of us are the most productive time, when we can get the most off our plate. It's when we will commit to doing those important things that need to be done in our business.

I was asking her what was going on, and she said she kept getting interrupted, and then she was telling me a bunch of other things about things that she was doing to set up different systems, etc., and some of the other ways that she was handling running her team, and she's doing a great job. Don't get me wrong, but one of the things that I really identified was that she was getting interrupted all day by her team members and not able to set proper boundaries.

I remember this from when I had my jewelry business, especially back in San Francisco and in New York, as well. I think after I'd moved my company to New York, I had more of a separate space and I had a little bit more boundaries on





when people could interrupt me. Plus, my sister, at the time, was my operations manager, so she fielded a lot of questions for me, but I remember being back in San Francisco. I had this amazing office with exposed brick walls and we painted the walls red to be like ... I don't know. Red's the color of abundance, and it was just a really lively and enlivening environment. We also had 1,500 square feet to work with, which was awesome for an office space.

When I moved to New York, I was working out of I think 500 square feet with four of us. It was pretty crazy, but it was great because I had a big team at that time. I had 13 people working for me, some full time, some part time, and they had a lot of questions, which they should, and this is something that I didn't properly understand when I was first starting out in business. This must have been year four or five, and I hadn't set up proper systems in my business in order for them to know what to do next if they had a question about something. I also didn't really empower them to figure out and come to me with solutions before they asked the question.

What would happen is all day, every single day, I would be interrupted all day, and I felt like I got nothing done at the end of the day. As someone who likes to feel a sense of accomplishment in my business, it was really frustrating. I don't like to waste time. I like to have control over what's going on next. I'm sure some of you do, too. I really struggled with it. Instead of thinking about how I could solve the problem, I got frustrated with my team, which was a bad way to lead and a bad way to manage. It became this point of contention where I started closing the door to my office, and I said, "If my door's closed, don't bother me unless the place is burning down or something or it's a real emergency."

I had to do that in a way because if I didn't, people just would take advantage of the fact that I was trying to work and get stuff done and not respect my boundaries, but I've learned that there is a better way to do this. It involves setting boundaries and maybe shutting a door at times, but also having a system or ways that your team can communicate with you down the road.

I know a lot you maybe don't have teams here at ... You might be doing just a little business. You might be considering bringing on people. You might be considering sourcing out certain things like bookkeeping or different parts of your business, maybe some of the marketing stuff. This will be relevant to any of





you who want to do that. It even will be relevant to you if you never decide anyone at all because I think one of the most important things in getting enough done or a lot done in your business and growing your business is your ability to set boundaries and create parameters and actually lead your company and drive your company forward, and that's what it's all about to be a visionary. You have the ideas. You might not be the integrator who's actually implementing those ideas, but you have the ideas and it's important for you to spend time in your creative zone, and it's really hard to be creative if you're interrupted all the time.

I wanted to get into a few tactical things, and these are some things that I shared. I was really also ... I have to mention this, too, is that this was something that was coming up, not only in our mastermind, but I [got 00:09:47] a Super Share, or actually, sorry, excuse me, a Hot Seat for one of our Diamond Insiders members. We have contests for our Diamond Insiders all the time, and we give away these mentoring sessions with Robin and myself, and one of the things that Ginger said was that she was getting interrupted all day and it was hard because her family ... She worked from home, and her family didn't take her business seriously. Her son needed something, and she was living with her parents at the time. Her parents needed something, they would interrupt. She felt obligated to go help because she has that helper kind of personality instead of being able to say, "No." I said, "It's really important that people understand that you're busy working, that you're trying to get stuff done, and when you're interrupted, it's hard to get things done."

Here's a couple of pieces of advice that I gave to both Ginger and Christina, both totally different. Ginger's a solopreneur. Christina has a team, but I think this will be helpful for all of you, especially if you're working from home or you're doing this on the side and you're trying to take care of your kids and you're getting interrupted a lot.

The first thing you need to do, and it sounds obvious, but set boundaries about when people can interrupt you. One of the things that we talked about from a productivity perspective, especially in our Diamond Insiders and in our Time Optimizer Formula, which is one of our trainings here at Flourish and Thrive, is that you need to set up parameters for yourself. That's also a form of creating boundaries, and start to work in time sprints so that you can focus on one thing





at a time. With that, when you set up boundaries and you say to someone in your family or someone on your team, "Look, I'll be taking meetings at this time every single day. From this time to this time, I'm gonna be working, head down, so no interruptions unless the place is burning down or something like that."

What you can do, especially if you have teams or other things, is maybe work in two sprints at a time, take a break in between the sprints, and then set a meeting time after those sprints are completed so that the people on our team or the people in your family know, "Okay, it's 11 o'clock now, I can ask Mom a question," or, "I can ask my boss a question. I have a question about this production piece or a question about what she wants posted on social media." If you set these parameters and you maybe have two meeting times a day, one in the morning when you first start your day, maybe one in the late morning or early afternoon, and then one maybe later in the day, you give your team, the people around you touchpoints of when they know that they can actually ask you questions.

Another thing is that you want to make sure that you have times when you answer questions, but also times when you actually take meetings and try to schedule these and make them the same every day if you possibly can. The other thing that I talk about a lot is just plan specific days for different things, like planning calls and stuff like that, or maybe it's just a time of the day because what I like to say is that the revenue generating activities in a business should be done in the beginning of the day, and if you block out that time in the morning, that's the time that you can take calls, and then your afternoon time is maybe working with your team or working on other stuff that you have to do in your business that maybe is more time [sucky 00:12:45] stuff or the tasks, but you want to get your higher leverage stuff done first, and we talked about this on a ton of podcasts and a ton of trainings. I talk about this all the time. I think it's really important.

What you can do, also, is have specific days and times of the week that you're doing specific activities. I know for a jewelry designer, that is extremely important because you likely have a lot on your plate. You're doing social media. You're marketing your business. You're trying to sell it, too. There's just a lot to do. If you can make sure that you're blocking out time for the most important highly-leveraged activities, including sales and PR and stuff like that, then you





can make sure that you're moving your business in the right direction so that it continues to grow, and that's how visionaries focus on their business.

I remember hearing a story about one of the designers. I think it was Kristen from Silver Ranch or from Kristen Mara Jewelry. She changed her name this last year. She did a rebrand. She was telling a story how she met with the former CEO of Alex & Ani, and he was telling a story about how he used to get so much done and how he grew that company from a couple million dollar company when he started to a 250 million dollar company years later, and this is the same ... Don't get caught up by the numbers, guys. It's the same thing. If you want to grow your company from a \$100 a year business to a \$1,000 a year business, it's quite the same philosophy.

What he would do is he'd block out that time in the morning to focus on things that grew the business. No email, no phone calls unless it was directly related to growing the business, no meetings with the team, nothing. It was solely focused on business growth, and that's what a visionary does. That's what the CEO of a company does or the chief visionary officer, as I like to call us over here. Make sure that you're focusing the most important things early in the day and that you have have specific days for specific tasks.

Then I want to make sure that you're setting boundaries with yourself because what this ends up doing is helping you ... It helps you prevent distractions. A lot of these things that I was talking about earlier are technically distractions, people interrupting you, people coming to you, but you have to tread lightly because there is a difference between ignoring the people that work for you and not properly training them and setting boundaries. I just want to be clear on that. Also, ignoring the people around you, you obviously want to be available for your family if you're a solopreneur working from home or you have other things that are distracting you, but this is just to bring that point home.

You want to make sure that you're setting boundaries for yourself so that you have specific times of the day that you do things, like check your email, check your Slack, check your social media, so you're not constantly checking your phone and getting distracted. It's really, really important that you put that stuff away when you're working in your time sprints.





Another thing that I think is important to do is to have effective meetings, but avoid useless meetings, and here's what I mean by that. A lot of times, people want to meet to just chitchat about staff and the meetings aren't focused. Gosh knows we are sometimes victims of that here at Flourish and Thrive Academy because we all really like each other and we chitchat on the meetings, we're catching up, and the meeting ends up running a little bit longer. One of the goals that I have here with Abby and one of the goals that I have with my jewelry business teams is to have short and sweet meetings and to try and get to the point right away. Check in and make sure that the meetings are structured and have an agenda that we're actually working through. That's really important for you is make sure that there is a point to the meetings when you have a meeting and that you can get through them quickly and that there's a resolution at the end, and any answers that people have are answered.

Another thing that I really wanted to talk about today on this episode that I think is important to prevent these distractions and help you create better boundaries are to empower the people around you. If you're the person who gives someone in your household or your team answers for everything and they don't know how to think for themselves, you are setting yourself up for destruction. One of the things that I've learned in business because I've run teams of all sizes, over at Flourish and Thrive, we have about four super core team members and then a bigger circle of team members that are full, for the part-timers is about seven people. Then the network goes on beyond that. We have a designer. I have someone who does ads and all these other things. There's all these different roles, and a lot of people are coming to me for answers. What you want to do is empower your team, the people around you, or your family to get the answers on their own or come to you with solutions so that you guys can workshop the problem together.

Here's an example of what I mean. Let's say, this is totally mock example and not a true one. Let's say Sharon came to me from social media and she was wanting to do some Facebook Lives, get a strategy down for Facebook Live and get a strategy down for Instagram Stories and stuff like that. If she comes to me and says, "All right, Tracy. The Instagram Stories are really taking off. What do you want to do for them," and then she's just relying on me for the answers, and I'm like, "Well, I don't ..." I'm thinking I get frustrated and stuff because I'm like, "Well, I thought I told you 15 things to do before," and her role is to actually





investigate social media. I'm not saying that Sharon does this. She doesn't. She's very good and has grown our social media for a long time, but what I try to empower people to do is to ask them, "What do you think?" Then what that ends up doing is that they come back to the table with ideas.

If you're workshopping solutions with your team or people who are contractors or family members, all this stuff, make this a collaborative effort to take some pressure off yourself because [inaudible 00:18:13] going to help you. It's going to free up some mental space so that you can actually focus on your creativity. If you're always going to have to come up with the solutions, it can become a problem. Then on top of this, I know you hear me say this all the time, make sure that you have solid systems in your business and that you're consistently documenting the things that you do so that you can hand things over so if someone doesn't know how to do something, you could say, "Oh, yeah. It's in our Systems Manual. Check it out under the social media systems," or whatever.

Find ways to empower your team. Teach them to become solutions oriented, and what this is going to do is to help you create better boundaries and to prevent a lot of distractions that happen in your business. I know you are going to love ... You're going to love, love, love experience this. Trust me.

The final thing that I want to say ... I talked a little bit about productivity. It's sort of a productivity broadcast, but it's really more about you leveling up. I want to leave you with this final idea. Act like the boss of your company. Act like the owner. Take initiative. Step up. Don't pretend like things are just ... Don't act like a victim or things are just happening to you and you don't know what to do. Be proactive. Constantly learn.

I was reading somewhere briefly on the Internet today that ... Maybe it was in an email that was sent. I can't attribute it to who it's from because I read a lot, but one of the reasons why people who are entrepreneurs and CEOs, the successful ones can often grow businesses really quickly is because they are obsessed with learning and implementing those things in their business. They're obsessed with leveling up and becoming better people. They're obsessed with personal growth and becoming visionaries of their company. This is really, really important. On a final note, act like the boss.





Let's recount some of the things that I talked about here. You want to make sure that you are setting boundaries, not only for your teams, but also for your family, and then setting boundaries for yourself. You want to also set specific meeting times, especially if you're working with teams or if you are trying to pitch business and get on calls. Have specific times of the day that you actually do this. Make it repetitive so that you know exactly what to do. Set boundaries with yourself. I mentioned this before, but make sure that you're not getting distracted by phone notifications. In fact, turn off all notifications if you can. Turn off your email. Turn off your instant messaging. Turn off your project management tool while you're actually working with something if you don't need it. Turn off everything that you possibly can so that you can be more productive and be productive with yourself.

Prevent useless meeting and have an agenda on your meeting schedule so that if you do need to meet with someone there is an agenda, there's a point to the meeting, and that you can get to a resolution quickly and that everyone who is at the meeting has what they need to move forward.

I got two more for you on a final note. I was talking with a designer the other day, and we recommended that she get some support because she's at a space in her business where she was really growing and she ended up bringing people on her team and they ended up leaving really soon, and I think one of ... She was frustrated. It's like, "We're still back to what we're doing and we're doing everything ourselves, and this is hard. How do you grow and how do you actually put it into use?" I think the important thing to remember is that you have to empower the people around you and train them properly. Give them ... Create systems. Work with them. Give them proper training on how you expect the job to be done. Don't expect people to just know.

This is a big mistake that I used to make when I would hire people on. You get consistently frustrated. We didn't have a proper system for training people. We didn't teach people our way of doing something. In fact, this is a little bit of a sidebar, if you ever want to sell your business, what the company is actually buying is your way of doing something. My friend, [Dan Rotel 00:21:55], told me this a couple, last year or something, when we were talking about scaling businesses and scaling for growth is that you when you sell a company, businesses aren't necessarily buying the product. They're buying how you do





things. Remember that people need to be trained. They need to understand your expectations.

You also need to empower them to make decisions on their own and allow for them to make mistakes, but use those mistakes as a learning tool. "Hey, guys, we made this mistake." God knows my team makes mistakes all the time. They are great. Don't get me wrong, but I make mistakes all the time, and we always use it as a learning tool. It doesn't mean it doesn't cause frustration and disappointment when things don't go our way, but at the end of the day, what we're trying to do is learn from our mistakes so that we can become better people and do it better next time. Remember that.

Act like the boss, guys, especially if you're working with other people or you're working alone. Focus on the most important things first. Don't make excuses for why you're not getting things done. If you're not getting things done, look internally at what you're doing and how you're managing your day. Focus, focus, focus. Work in sprints. Turn off those distractions. Be productive. One thing that we do in our Diamond Insiders that I really love is that we focus on weekly commitments. We commit to three things a week and then three commitments a day. It's awesome. We are super thrilled about this.

I'm super thrilled to be sharing this kind of stuff with you because I've decided that I really want to bring on a new component to what we're offering here at Flourish and Thrive Academy. I'm going to be announcing it really soon, a way that you can work with me in a very intimate group setting. It will be with other visionary type entrepreneurs who are in the jewelry and wearable space, but a space for us to learn how to become the visionaries of our company, to learn to become, discover how to become better leaders, to discover how to be more productive and grow in business so that we're doing something that we love and in a way that we love so that we're not bogged down by all the things that it takes to actually run a business, that we're playing in the zone, our zone of genius, which, for most of us, not everyone, but for most of us here who are creative, inspired people are actually in the visionary role.

A couple suggestions for you, if you haven't purchased it yet, make sure that you buy the book Rocket Fuel by Gino Wickman. It's an amazing book. It's one of my favorite books that I've ever read. I was literally tears streaming down my face. I kept saying to myself, "I'm not crazy. I thought I was crazy all these years,"





because there is a place for us, for highly creative people who have a lot of ideas. It's just about getting the right support around you to help your business grow.

If you haven't considered joining yet, are Diamond Insiders is actually closed for enrollment, but if you're interested in checking it out, make sure that you get on the waiting list for the next time that we open it. More importantly than anything, if you're interested in hearing more about the visionary circle that I'm going to be announcing really soon and you want more details, it's a little bit of a secret right now. I'm not going to really reveal what it's about, but it's going to be a place for those of you who are really passionate about growing your business, that you want to actually have a certain level of success, that you want to potentially bring on people on your team. It doesn't mean that you have them now, but you're really ready to grow and step into the best version of yourself, grow as a human being, grow as a leader, and to be that visionary of your company.

I'm going to have a special link below where you can just sign up to get a notification when that actually goes live so make sure that you sign up for that. Go head on over to www.FlourishThriveAcademy.com/Episode110 to get everything that I mentioned in today's episode and I'll have it all linked there.

All right, guys. Thank you so much for listening today. Make sure that you check out our sponsor, Whatify. If you are on Etsy, it's a great tool. I think you're making a big mistake if you're not even testing it out because split testing is the wave of the future, guys. All right. Until next time, this is Tracy Matthews signing off.

