

SCALE YOUR WAY

077 - How to Be Intentional About Doing Less

Welcome to The Scale Your Way podcast episode number 77.

You're listening to the Scale Your Way podcast, where we share simple, proven strategies just for done for you service based companies here, you'll learn how to scale your business on your own terms so that you can have more time, money, create a bigger impact and a better life. I'm your host, Nicole Jackson Miller. Let's dive into today's episode.

Hey, everyone, Nicole here and welcome back to the show today we were talking about how to do less, and it's funny how the timing of these episodes work, because basically I usually will brainstorm a bunch of ideas on what to talk about during the podcast and then schedule it out. And sometimes I feel like the days where I'm set to record are the moments where I need to hear my own advice. So here we are talking about how to do less. And the reason why I think this is so important is because it can be a lot harder than we think it should be. Right. It seems like it would be easy how to do less. Right. You have a bunch of stuff on your plate. You need to get some things off of your plate. That's the answer.

But unfortunately, sometimes when we actually go to implement the practice of doing less, it becomes way more challenging than it should be. And then we never get the stuff off of our plate. So I think that this is definitely more challenging for service providers because you literally get paid to do work for other people. And in the past, the more work that you've done for people, the more that you get paid and the more that your company grows. Right. But that will only work up until a certain level. And I'm sure you have experienced this yourself. I'm sure that when you started your business, you may have been the only person offering the services. Right. And there became a certain point where you just couldn't grow anymore. And then maybe you got to the point where you hired a team member to to take some things off of your plate. But then you slowly realized that you reached another point where you couldn't work anymore and may need may have needed to hire more team members. Right. And so you probably constantly get to this point where you just have too much work on your plate.

And that's what I want to talk about today, because the practice of doing less is something that it's a skill that you need to learn and it's a practice that you need to do. It's not something where all of the sudden you just snap your fingers and suddenly you don't have as much work on your plate and everything is going really well. It's something that you constantly have to work on, because if you are someone who is growing and you have a company that's growing, you will constantly have to be removing things from your plate because in order to grow, you have to do less. And this is true for service providers. But this is also true if you are at a company and you are the head of a department and you have a team underneath you as well, it's the same thing. It works the same way.

And so oftentimes we need to get more comfortable with doing less because for so long we have done a lot right? But in order for us to be able to lead companies, to be able to lead organizations, to be able to lead departments, we have to be able to do less because things work way better. And oftentimes you will find that you are getting in your own way and that things actually work better when you're less involved, which you can feel really odd, really, really odd.

So today I want to talk you through a few things that I work on with my clients that are so very helpful when it comes to doing LABS, because like I said, this is challenging. I have learned this the hard way in both business and in life, too. You know, I have the ability to do a lot. I have the energy to do a lot. But oftentimes I end up it's at the expense of just kind of steamrolling over my own needs in order to get the things done on the list. And that's what we want to avoid. We want to find this balance where we are able to tend to ourselves and our own needs and also what our responsibilities are. And I'm really working on getting to a point where I'm able to do things both in my business and in my personal life and feel good about it and also recognize recognizing that tipping point. Because if I'm not being present and I'm not paying attention to my needs, what happens is I end up being stressed and then I end up getting angry and I end up crying because I am not giving myself the space that I need. And so the work that I am calling myself to do and what I also invite you to take on is to be able to get better at being present in the moment and identifying what it is that you want and need and then giving yourself permission to have that without having to defend it.

And so that's really what we're talking about when it comes to doing less is being present and being present is a practice. And it can be challenging, especially when you have a lot to do. Right. It's very hard. It's very hard to get out of that zone of just doing. Doing, doing, doing and really taking a moment to being like, OK, what is it that I really need right now? So here are a few things that that I've worked I've done that I've worked on with my clients that could be really helpful to you. So the first is creating boundaries is a huge one. This is really helpful in how to do LABS. I actually talked about this during a podcast episode with Jamie Johnson. It's episode number sixty five. I highly recommend it. She talks. We talk about so many things. But one of the things we talked about was her super power of setting boundaries and then how to communicate those boundaries in a way that that feels good.

Boundaries are hard. Boundaries are very, very challenging because there's a few steps to them. The first step is actually creating a boundary. And in order to create the boundary, you have to be able to be present and tap into what it is that you want and need, regardless of what anyone else wants and need, like what is it that you want or need and creating that boundary and then communicating that boundary. So actually not just keeping it for yourself, but sharing that with the people that need to know what the boundary is. And then the third piece, which is absolutely the hardest piece, it's been something that I have been working on tremendously this year is holding the boundary. So after you communicate the boundary actually holding, holding it and I've heard clients struggling with boundaries when it comes to clients. So we'll just use that as an example. So let's say you're working with a client and you've set a scope of work and then they are coming back and they are wanting you to work outside of your hours. They're wanting you to maybe do more than what's inside of your scope of work and your work in setting the

boundaries to create the boundary. Right to communicate what you're working hours are to communicate your scope of work, to communicate that to the client. And then it can be the hardest job to hold the boundary. Right?

And where people often get upset at other people is when they they don't hold the boundary. So it's like, well, I already set the boundary with this client. I already told her what my working hours were. I already told her what the scope of work. She signed the agreement. I already communicated this to her. Yes. She's coming to us and she's asking us questions outside of our working hours and she's asking us where our work is that's not even in our scope of work. Like, how dare she, right? But it's actually your job to hold the boundary. The work doesn't stop at you setting the boundary and creating the boundary and communicating the boundary. It goes further into actually holding the boundary and it can feel so hard. We have clients where it's easy, like you set the boundary, you communicate the boundary. And they totally they remember the boundaries. They respect the boundaries. They don't push the boundaries. Right. Like that is easy. The challenge comes with the clients who don't who constantly push the boundaries or they question the boundaries after they've agreed to them. Right.

Well, why are these your working hours? It doesn't make sense. If I were charging this amount of money, I would be working 24/7. if it were me. Like, none of that matters, right? And that's where holding that boundary really comes into play. And oftentimes it can be so, so hard to hold the boundary. And you're like, well, you know what? It's easier for me to just do it. It's easier for us to just do it. It's easier for us to not hold the boundary. Right. And that's where we can get into trouble and where we actually end up taking on more work. And then it's even more frustrating because then we're beating ourselves up and upset right at this other person because they push the boundary and B, we still did the work anyway.

OK, so so creating the boundary is just a first piece of this. So let's talk about a few different boundaries that you can create to do less. So the first is in your packages. What do you offer and what don't you offer? And I think sometimes what you don't offer is just as important to list out as what you do offer, because then it makes it really easy when someone comes to you to know this is what we do and this is what we don't do. And so if they're asking you to do something that you have declared that you don't do, you simply don't do it right. And you communicate that. Another thing you can create a boundary on is your role. Right. What do you, as the CEO of your business, do and what don't you do really defining what that is? I think oftentimes we are excellent at defining roles and responsibilities for other people on our teams, and we're not so great at defining the roles and responsibilities For ourselves as the head of our company, like what are the things that you do, what is in your job responsibility and what what don't you do? Because ultimately you are a team member of your business, right? So really defining these things are super important. And then you'll know when something comes your way that's clearly listed on what you don't do, that you don't do it.

Same thing with your time, right. What are your working hours? What days do you have off where? What are your vacations? Right. Setting some boundaries around your time and

again. Then at once, you do these these things. And here are just a few examples, right? Then it comes to communicating them and then holding them.

OK, so for your packages, if you don't offer something, communicating that and then holding true to that, your role when something comes up that you don't do, maybe you have declared that you do not do client delivery anymore or a certain part of client delivery anymore. When that client comes and they're asking you to do additional work outside of your scope or an opportunity comes up where they want you to do something that you have declared that you just don't do anymore. Maybe you don't have another team member that can do that piece of it. Right. That's when you hold that boundary or when maybe you decide that you're going to actually, this is the time where I hire someone to do this work. Right, because I don't do this anymore. And same thing goes with your time. If you have actually taken days off or vacation, you know, holding, communicating it, making sure the team has what they need to do their job and then not checking your email. Right. If that's something that you have set up that you will not do. And that's a boundary that you've created.

So the second piece of this is that doing work and doing more and taking on more. Right. It's a habit. It is a habit, and it's a habit for a reason. Like I mentioned before, when we, you know, start our companies, oftentimes we're the only person that's doing the work. So we form the habit of doing the work that needs to be done to get paid. Right. But over time, as we grow right, we need to do less. And other people are there to do the work. And so we need to break the habit. We need to change the habit. And this is where I highly recommend my Post-it note strategy, where I highly, highly recommend that you put a Post-it note on your desk that says doing more work is no longer my job or the solution is never me doing it right. So that way, if something comes up where a client wants you to take on more work or a team member is asking you to do something right, you can look at that Post-it note and say, OK, the answer is never for me to do more work. Right. And this will allow you to pause before you just habitually go to do the thing to really be present and ask yourself, is this something that I actually have to do? Is there someone else that can do this better? Is whatever this thing is going to actually help the company? Because oftentimes it doesn't or oftentimes there isn't another solution, but because you're so much in the habit of doing yourself, you're not even thinking outside of the box. Right. So that is my second. My second recommendation is to create the Post-it note so that you actually break the habit.

So the third thing that I want to mention is redefining the word work. So in the past, your work has been doing more. Right. But what I want to suggest is that that's kind of the easy way. Taking on more stuff is easy. What can be harder and what the actual work is, is not doing more and everything that's involved with that. Right. So what's involved with doing less? Saying no, Right? Actually doing the work to pass along that work to other people, so giving people the information that they need to do their job and then not stepping in and micromanaging them to do it, letting them take full ownership over something. And this is something that is so challenging. And, you know, it's one of those things, too. It can be easy with some things, but more challenging with other things, just like with boundaries, it can be easier to create and hold boundaries with some people. But then there's other people that come and just like want to push and question. And it's like, oh, I thought I was so good at doing this. And this is like a whole new

challenging thing. So when it comes to thinking about your work as the CEO of your business, as the leader of your team, I want you to know that sometimes the work is in not doing the work. Is it not checking the email when you've said that you are off for the weekend, it's in not saying yes to an engagement or an event or to a project. That is not something. Maybe you think it might be fun, but when you actually go and take a look of everything that it's going to require from you, it's just not. It's a no, right. And then having the conversation with people to say that it's a no. Right? There's a lot of things that can come up around this. You can maybe you might feel like you're letting someone down. Right? But, this totally easier said than done know, when you say yes to something, you're saying no to something else. And so if you're saying yes to other people and it's it's really something that you feel like you can't do or like there has to be a give. There's like the give and take. So when you're saying yes to something, you're saying no to something too. And oftentimes we're saying no to ourselves.

We're saying no to the space that we need and we're saying no to the self care that we need to do in order to be able to take care of ourselves and other people. And so this is this is it's very it's it's hard and it's challenging work. And I will say that it's a practice. And with any practice, the more that you do it, the easier it becomes In many ways.

It doesn't mean that it will always be easy. As you were growing, you were going to have things come up that challenge you and new and different ways. But it definitely it's slowly breaking that habit so that you're like, OK, even though this feels difficult or even though maybe this person I'm setting a boundary is more challenging, or maybe this this project or this event is really hard to say no to. I've seen the evidence of what can happen when I say no to the things that I actually know are just a no, Right. I just it's a no, it's it's a no. And I need to fully trust myself to be able to own that and to be OK with that and not to have to defend that to other people. And so if you are looking to to really dive deeper into this, I highly recommend going to the episode that I did with Jamie Johnson. It's episode sixty-five. You can go to NicoleJacksonMiller.com/065 and definitely listen to that episode because we cover, we cover a lot.

One thing that we talk about is tapping into your inner knowing for big decisions. And then we naturally go into setting boundaries and and yeah, highly, highly recommend that episode. So let's recap.

Doing less can be hard. It involves creating boundaries, communicating them and holding them. It involves breaking habits and it involves redefining the way that you it's redefining work and what your work is. And that can be challenging. But it is so worth it, because when you start when you start doing less and honoring what it is that you want and need, everything changes. And honestly, a lot of the people who are on your team will have a better experience themselves because they're actually able to step up and take ownership over an area and they might do it better than you do. I know that feels like it can be hard to believe, but this is for both business and personal, you know, really allowing people to take ownership over the things that you can't have on your plate anymore. It can be great for them and it can be great for you, too. I oftentimes hear from team members or from clients when they talk to their

team members about like, oh, do you need me to be involved in this? And they're like, no, you're actually making it worse. Please let us let me do my thing right.

So anyway, that's what I have for you today on how to do less. It can feel hard, but it is so, so worth it if you struggle with this or if you have any additional ideas on how to do less, or maybe you've had a situation where you've needed to create a boundary or break a habit and you want to share a story with me. I would love for you to reach out to me on Instagram. It's @NicoleJacksonMiller and yeah, send me a DM. I'd love to chat more about it. It's something that is a practice. I like I mentioned at the beginning of this episode, I am working on this too. I'm working on this a lot in my business and a lot in my personal life, especially after having a baby and needing to rely on other people and needing to make different choices and really break some of the habits that I formed. And yeah, and just not being able to do as much. It's really interesting for someone who has always been kind of a worker bee and. Yeah. And just been able to do a lot. It's like, you know, we all hit a limit. And so I have definitely hit some limits. And this is something that I am doing just as much as I'm sure you are too. All right, everyone, I hope you have a great rest of your day and I will see you next week.

Thanks so much for tuning. And if you are ready to stop settling for being a done for your service provider and really fully step into the role of agency owner and CEO and lead a team that you love that just delivers excellent client results, then you have to check out my new program called AGENCY, which is specifically designed to remove you from at least 50 percent of client delivery in 12 months or less, so that you can have the time and the space to be able to run your business and, you know, to take a tech free vacation, too. That's always nice, right? So if you're interested in learning more, head over to NicoleJacksonMiller.com/Apply. You can learn more about the program. If it looks like a good fit, then apply. And we will send you before our call. We'll send you a free business assessment that will really explain more about the framework that we use to remove you from client delivery. And it'll give you an assessment that you can take to really show where you are now and where you're going. We've had so many people get a lot of insight just from taking that assessment, so I can't wait for you to check it out.