

PLEASE NOTE: This is a machine transcription. Some punctuation and spelling weirdness are to be expected.

Last week my friend Angela sent me a link to an article that claims it’s impossible for business owners to have work/life balance. The idea was attributed to Randi Zuckerberg - that’s Mark Zuckerberg’s sister - and she says that we all have five areas of focus in our life. Work, family, fitness, sleep, and friends. She goes on to state that as business owners - or founders, as she calls them - we have to choose just three of them. We can’t be successful in all five.

In other words, you can do good work, get plenty of sleep, and have lots of friends, but if you do that, your fitness and family will suffer. Likewise, if you prioritize friends, family, and fitness, your work will suffer and you won’t get enough sleep.

I told Angela that I think that’s BS. I believe that you CAN have it all. I believe that we can ALL have everything we want in life and in business, and it doesn’t have anything to do with finding balance or cutting your sleep hours in half.

This is episode 84 of the Tiny Course Empire podcast, and today I want to talk about how you can have it all - and you don’t have to be superhuman to do it.

**EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO
START, GROW, AND SCALE
YOUR ONLINE BUSINESS**

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COURSES**

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MEMBERS**

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Hey it's Cindy, and thank you for spending a few minutes of your day with me. I appreciate you, and I hope you'll discover some actionable or inspiring ideas in today's episode.

You'll find the show notes and recommended resources for this episode at TinyCourseEmpire.com/84. While you're there, be sure to grab my free download, Your Online Business Roadmap. It's a step-by-step plan for building your own online empire without the overwhelm.

Now let's talk about this article. I'll link to it in the show notes if you want to read it yourself, but I'll also cover the highlights here.

The first thing that stood out to me is that Randi Zuckerberg lists only five life areas. I think we have more than that. If you've ever looked at or used a wheel of life, you know what I'm talking about.

If you haven't heard the term before, a wheel of life is a chart you can use to plot how successful or fulfilled you feel in different areas of your life. It looks kind of like a pie, with each wedge representing one area. The idea is that rate each area of life on a scale - usually it's from zero to 10 - and you mark each point on the wheel. Zero is at the center of the wheel, and 10 is at the outer edge.

By plotting the areas of your life on this kind of chart, it's easy to see where you want to focus your efforts.

Looking at some examples of wheels of life you can find online, you'll see we have at least eight life areas.

We have

1. work or business
2. family and home
3. finances
4. health and wellness
5. relationships
6. spirituality

7. Personal growth
8. Hobbies

You may even have more than that. Maybe you want to include other things that are important to you, such as romance or giving back to your community. Or depending on your situation, maybe you have fewer.

No matter how many areas of life you consider important, the question then, is how do you keep all of those things in balance? How do you participate in your church while still running a thriving business, raising happy kids, staying connected to your spouse, keeping your home organized and peaceful, and enjoying hobbies? Is it even possible?

I think it is. If you’ve been listening or following me for a while, you won’t be surprised to learn that I think the secret to balance is - wait for it— systems.

Ok, now before we dig any deeper into this, I probably should explain what I mean when I say systems.

A system is simple - it’s just a standard way of doing things. You might call it a process or a routine or even a checklist, but all it means is you do the same thing in the same way each time.

See, when you have good systems in place, everything is more efficient and easier to do. Systems allow you to get more done in less time, and they create predictable results.

Why does this matter when we’re talking about having everything you want? Because when you have good systems, they operate on autopilot. You don’t have to think about it or plan for it or spend your precious mental energy on it.

Here’s a simple example, and one you’ve probably heard hundreds of times:

A place for everything, and everything in its place.

That’s a super basic home management system that keeps your stuff from becoming overwhelming. You don’t have to spend any time thinking about where to put the InstantPot after you’re done making dinner, because it has a home. You don’t have to waste any mental — and physical — energy tripping over a pile of shoes in front of the door, because they have a home in the closet.

AND - you don't have to spend all weekend cleaning up because everything is where it's supposed to be most of the time. It's a whole lot easier and faster to take 10 seconds to put the Instant Pot back in the cabinet after you clean it than it is to wait until cleaning day to do it.

That's what having systems means. It's having a regular, predictable routine way of doing things that lets you be more efficient and effective.

The real power of having systems like this though isn't just that you always know where the Instant Pot is, although that's helpful when it's time to make dinner. No, the real beauty of systems is that they become second nature. You can do them without even thinking about it.

Think about the last time you went to the grocery store. You probably drove, and while you were driving, you were likely having a conversation with someone else in the car, or maybe you were listening to a podcast or an audio book.

You can do that because driving to the grocery store is a system. You've done it dozens or maybe hundreds of times, and you've become so efficient at it that you can do it without thinking.

Here's where it gets interesting. Being more efficient and effective in one area of your life - like keeping your house organized or driving to the grocery store- frees up time to be more successful in other areas.

Imagine if you had good, effective systems in place for doing things like creating courses and marketing your business. That's going to keep your business running smoothly with minimal time investment. Then you have systems at home for keeping your kids fed and making sure the lawn doesn't turn into a giant patch of weeds. And then you add in some systems for staying in touch with family - maybe you schedule a once-a-month dinner out, or a weekly phone call.

And what about fitness? You can systemize that, too. Go for a walk with the dog every morning - that's my personal favorite - or take a yoga class or commit to going to the gym every day before dinner.

Can you see how putting systems in place in different areas of your life will actually give you better balance and more success in all areas? Because this is the key to having everything you want in your business and in your life. It's all about creating efficiency.

Now of course it does take time to develop good systems. They don't just appear and start making your life easier. If that was the case, then we wouldn't even be having this discussion about work/life balance because everyone would have it already. There wouldn't be anything to talk about.

This is where you do need to be willing to let some areas coast a bit while you put systems in place in other areas.

For example, let's say you want to prioritize having a clean and tidy home. Maybe things have slipped a little bit while you've been growing your business, and you'd like to get back to the organized life you used to have.

It's going to take a little time for you to reorganize the linen closet and sort things out for donation, or to paint the spare room or whatever needs to be done. While you're working on that, maybe your business has to coast for a while, just while you're spending time finding your groove with a new home routine though. Once you've got a system in place there, your business routines can go back to normal.

And let's talk about that phrase, letting things coast. I'm not saying you should ignore your business and stop creating content for three months while you work on decluttering your house. That's not coasting. That's coming to a complete stop, and it's really difficult to get going again if you do that.

Instead, coasting means doing the minimum required to keep you moving forward.

Here's a recent example from my own life. If you've been listening or following for a while, then you know the husband and I recently pulled up stakes and moved across the country from Michigan to Arizona. That was a massive undertaking. We had to get the house in Michigan ready to sell, look for, find, and buy a new home here in Green Valley, and then once that was done, we had to get everything packed, arrange for moving trucks and then finally, unpack everything once we arrived.

We're still unpacking, by the way, and I think we will be for a few more weeks.

This move has been a full-time job for both of us, and we had to be willing to let the business side of our lives coast for a bit in order to get everything done. Business didn't stop though.

I didn't stop creating content. I didn't stop emailing my list. I didn't stop publishing podcast episodes. I didn't stop meeting with my coaching clients or my [Six-Figure Systems](#) members.

But I also didn't do anything extra. I didn't spend time creating new courses or launching new websites or writing a book.

I did the minimum required to keep the business running, and I could do that in just a couple of hours per day, because I have good systems in place.

I have templates for emails that make writing them faster and easier. I have a checklist for publishing them that means I never waste time figuring out how to use my email platform. I have email reminders set up for [Six-Figure Systems](#) calls so I can simply repurpose them month after month. It takes me about 3 minutes to schedule the entire series. I had earlier podcast episodes I could republish quickly to cover the four weeks when I knew I wouldn't have time to focus on new content.

And I made sure that we planned the moving and the unpacking so we'd be ready to host live calls on time.

I hear from so many people who are overwhelmed with all there is to do to get an online business up and running. They have to start an email list and build a website and create products and figure out the traffic part and all the tech and it feels like that list just goes on forEVER. If you've done it, or you're in the middle of it right now, you know what I'm talking about.

Five years ago, I came up with a simple method anyone could use to get all of that done, and I called it [Six-Figure Systems](#). That's my monthly program that walks you through all of the steps - it gives you all of the systems you need - to create a six-figure digital business.

We start at step one, which is list building, and work all the way through to scaling beyond six figures—and we do it one system at a time, so it's never overwhelming, and so it doesn't take over your life.

I'd love for you to give it a try, so I created a special offer just for podcast listeners. Head over to TinyCourseEmpire.com/join, where you can sign up for a 7-day all access trial for just \$7.

Once you're in, start with the roadmap. That's the easiest way to follow the process I've laid out for you. And if you get stuck, you can post your questions in our private community, or bring them to our next Q & A call and I'll help you out.

Go to TinyCourseEmpire.com/join to learn more and to get started for just \$7.

Ok. Besides having good systems, there's one more thing I did to make this big move possible — really, to make everything possible. This one is the most difficult for me - maybe it is for you, too. Here it is:

I had to be willing to ship imperfect work.

That's always been hard for me, because I am a perfectionist. Pretty sure I got that from my dad, and it's one of the things that makes me a good business owner - but only to a point.

I have to remind myself that my emails don't have to be 100% grammatically correct. If a misplaced apostrophe or a misspelled word causes someone to unsubscribe, then they are not my people. I'm human, and so are you, and we are never going to be perfect.

Your courses don't have to look like you hired Steven Spielberg to direct. Your printables don't have to have impeccable spacing and the perfect shades of pink and gold. You don't have to respond to customer service requests in 3.5 seconds.

It's ok to not be perfect. Perfect is a trap, and it's the pursuit of perfection that keeps us from moving forward and that keeps us from finding success in all five or eight or 10 or however many areas of life you are pursuing.

Let go of the need to be perfect, and success looks a whole lot different—and a whole lot more achievable, too.

This is true in every area of your life.

Just the other day I got stuck rearranging the pantry. In our other house we had a big pantry closet, but in this one, we have a much smaller cabinet that's just not ideal. I've spent way too much time trying to figure out the best way to store canned goods, rice, flour, and other staples.

The problem is, I've been watching those Instagram reels with the beautifully organized pantry, where all the food is in pretty little glass containers that all stack

neatly on the shelf. Man, that can really make you feel like you’re not good enough. If your pantry is messy like mine, do not watch those.

Having that ideal setup in mind is what turned me into a pantry perfectionist, and I’m unlikely to ever achieve that look. I don’t have the space. I don’t have the tools. And frankly, I just don’t care that much to put all the time into it.

So I decided that as long as a can of mushroom soup doesn’t land on my toe when I open the cabinet door, my disorganized pantry a win for now. I can’t waste any more time on it if I want to keep the other areas of my life moving as well.

Brooke Castillo calls this being willing to turn in B-minus work, and Nicole Dean taught me that done is better than perfect. These are both things I try to remember when perfectionism threatens to take over.

I can be ok with a less-than-perfect looking pantry, as long as all the food is unpacked and put away, and I can find what I need for dinner.

I take the same attitude in business. Done is better than perfect.

Last week I hosted a Q & A call for [Six-Figure Systems](#) members. I don’t have a full office set up yet - I’m working from my bedroom with a tiny little table that barely holds my monitor, and when I’m on camera, my background is — well let’s just say there are a lot of unfinished projects hanging out that I don’t really want to show off.

I still hosted the call. It wasn’t perfect, but members still got their questions answered, we still had fun, we still posted the replay, and it worked out just fine. At the time of this recording, I’m still working from that tiny table, so our next call will likely be the same, and that’s ok.

I’ve ordered a new desk, and I’ll be putting a proper office space together over the next couple of weeks, so future calls will let me feel more professional and on top of things, but I’m ok with this little table in the corner for now. Done is better than perfect.

If you’re thinking that you can’t possible manage all the areas of your life, ask yourself, where can you be ok with imperfection for now? And where can you put systems in place to make the things you do everyday easier, more efficient, and more effective?

That will free up some time so you can work on the systems that don't yet exist. Give yourself some space and some time, work through all the areas of your life where you're feeling a little overwhelmed, and soon enough, you'll have exactly what you want in every area.

Remember to head over to TinyCourseEmpire.com/84 to find the show notes, the transcript, and all the resources I mentioned today. And if you have a friend or a colleague who needs to hear this episode, go ahead and send them the link.

Finally, if you're enjoying the show, would you do me a favor and leave a rating and review over at Apple podcasts or wherever you're listening? That helps other small business owners just like you find us.

Have a terrific day everyone, and I'll talk to you again next week!

If you like what you hear on the Tiny Course Empire Podcast, you're going to love all of the courses and workshops and support you'll find inside Six-Figure Systems. That's my monthly program where we dig into online marketing for regular people like you and me. We don't do big launches. We don't have the big headaches and we don't have the big expenses that come with them. Instead, we focus on creating repeatable, sustainable systems that continue to grow over time, and that don't suck up all of our energy or require a 10 person team to manage. You can come see what we're all about at sixfiguresystems.com and I'll see you on the inside.

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