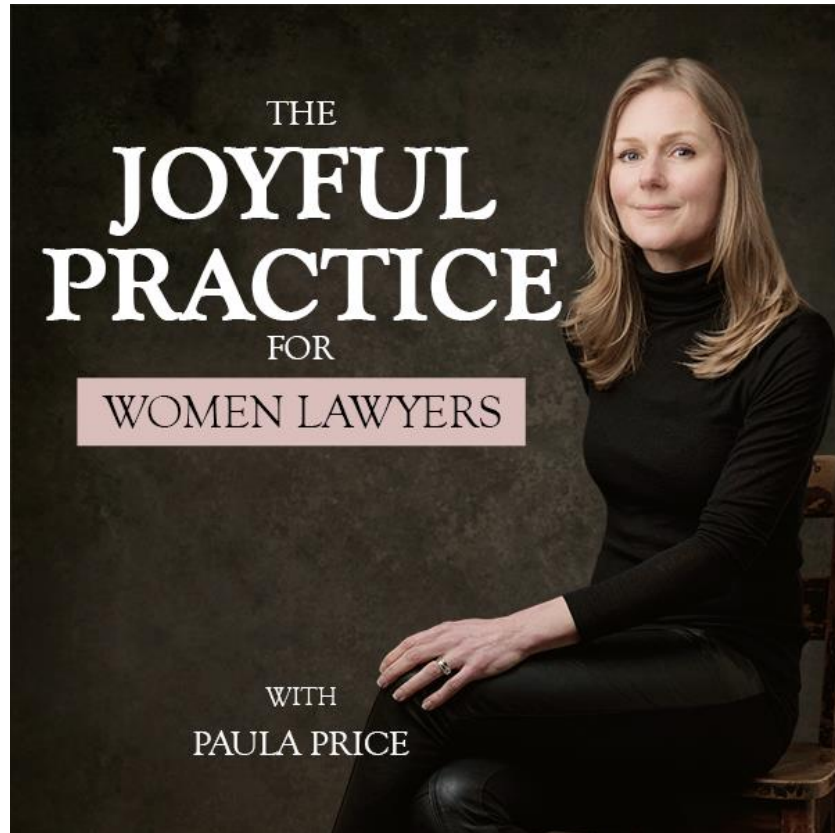


Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Paula Price

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

You're listening to *The Joyful Practice for Women Lawyers* Podcast episode number 18.

Welcome to *The Joyful Practice for Women Lawyers* Podcast. I'm your host Paula Price, lawyer turned certified executive coach. This podcast was created to empower women lawyers just like you to create a life and practice you love. Join me every week for a break from the hustle so we can focus on you, what you truly want, and how you can create it.

If you're over the overwhelm, done with putting out fires, and ready to create a life and practice that brings you more joy, you're in the right place. Ready for today's episode? Let's dive in.

Hello, my friends, and welcome back to the podcast. If you're joining for the first time, welcome. My name is Paula Price, and I'm a lawyer turned certified executive coach and the host of this podcast. Today we're going to be talking about time management. Specifically we're going to be talking about a simple shift that you can make so that you can go from feeling busy and overwhelmed to feeling collected and focused.

I say it's a simple shift, but by simple I don't necessarily mean easy. Once we get into it, you'll see what I'm talking about. It's a shift in mindset that you can make that will help you go from that feeling of anxiety, of being rushed, of being busy to feeling cool, collected, and on top of things. The reason that I want to talk about this topic is that I see so many lawyers who struggle with their time. They feel anxious. They feel overwhelmed. They are running from task to task. It really does not feel great. Maybe you can relate to this. It doesn't necessarily result in greater productivity.

They ask me sometimes for solutions. What are the best apps or calendars or techniques or strategies that they can use to better use their time? The answer that I have for them is typically that there is no one single app or

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

calendar or program that you can use to be more efficient, be more effective with your time.

The reason is that we're all so different, and we all have such different needs and lives and practices. Really what needs to shift for any of those tools to work is the way that we think about time in the first place. So that's what we're going to be focusing on today. It is really all about the relationship that you have with time. In today's episode, we're going to dive deep into the relationship that you have with time and talk about some ways that you can shift that relationship into one that allows you to be more productive, to feel more present, to feel more confident in the way that you manage your time.

So as we get into today's topic, I would invite you to think about the relationship that you have with time and ask yourself whether this is an area where you might want to have some improvement or maybe a reframe. You'll know that you maybe need to or would benefit from addressing your relationship with time if any of these things sound familiar to you.

So maybe you feel like you don't have enough time to get the things done that you want to get done in any given day. Maybe you find that you sit down to do your work or to complete a task, and you find yourself getting distracted. Maybe you start looking at your social media or you start thinking of a to-do list that you've got running in the back of your mind. It may be that you feel like you're not moving fast enough. It could be that in your work, you're working on a particular assignment and that simply isn't going quickly enough. It's taking too much time.

It might be at a more macro level. It may be that you're looking at your career, and from year to year you're feeling like you're not progressing as fast as you want to in relation to the goals that you have for yourself. It could also be that you are one of the lawyers who maybe you are recording

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

your time in six minutes increments. I did that for over 10 years. So it was very much ingrained in my psyche. So there's this hyperawareness of every minute of the day.

It may feel like you're not getting enough billable hours into your day. That you are not reaching enough hours to fulfill your target. It may even mean that you are spending the time. You are spending the billable time, but then you look at that time and you feel like that time wasn't properly spent on the task at hand. That maybe it's too much time to be billing to your client.

What I would suggest to you is that a lot of this thinking comes from a perspective of scarcity where you may look at time as this scarce resource. That may cause you to feel stress. It may cause you to feel panic in relation to tasks that you have at hand. This could be event specific.

It might be that there are periods of your practice, of your life where you feel more on edge or more under pressure than other times. You may think back to your days at law school and how you felt during exam season. Maybe that was a period of high intensity. Maybe that was a period of high stress for you. Maybe you continue to have periods like that within the nature of the work that you do today.

It could be applications that you're working on. If you're a litigator, it could be trials for example. If you're a solicitor, it might be if there's a deal closing or there's certain periods of the year where there are a lot of filing deadlines. Whatever it looks like for you, I would invite you to think about when it is that you have these experiences in your relationship with time. It may be that your time management practices or your relationship with time also has a spillover effect with your personal life.

So in earlier episodes, I talked about neural pathways and how what we do as a habit becomes a well-worn pathway in our brains at a neural level. It's like that expression. How you do one thing is how you do everything. So if

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

you start believing that time is scarce or you start struggling with your relationship with time at a more macro level, it may play out at a more micro level not only in relation to your work but also in relation to your personal life. So you may find that you're on edge when it comes to getting things done during the day or when you're planning on the weekends, etcetera.

So the reason that you struggle with time is not that there's anything wrong with you. You're definitely not alone in this. Time management is something that so many of us struggle with, not just lawyers. This is something that non-lawyers struggle with. I see that. I'm sure in your social circles and in your professional circles, you know all sorts of different people who have their own version of time management challenges. Because I'm speaking with you, because you are for the most part lawyers—although I welcome all the nonlawyers who are listening to this podcast. I'm delighted to have you here as well.

Today we're talking about it in the context of what a law practice looks like. There's a certain culture that lends itself to increased anxiety when it comes to time management. We've talked about a few of those, or we've touched on them a little bit already, but some of those might be the culture of productivity.

When I was practicing law, there was a real culture of wanting to be productive. Some of that is measured in the life of a billable hour. So looking at your time from a billable perspective can create maybe a feeling of time scarcity. You may feel like there's a lot of pressure to build. You don't have enough time to reach your targets. You feel maybe like you're being compared to others. Maybe there's a system where you get to see other people's hours, and you're looking to your colleagues and asking yourself, "Am I measuring up?"

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

It could be that the upper management or others in your firm are looking at your hours, and they are comparing you. I don't know what your system looks like, but there's this pressure and an underlying pressure to be working a certain amount. That in itself can lend itself to this amplified or heightened sensitivity to time. I know I felt like that when I was recording every six minutes of my time. There was a real sensitivity to that.

Sometimes I really felt like there just weren't enough hours in the day to get everything done that I wanted to get done. And a giving of priority to billable over all other things, whether it was work related or something happening in my personal life, because that was being measured so closely.

Now it could also be that your time management struggles are rooted in perfectionism. So a lot of perfectionists will struggle with procrastination. They may take longer to finish tasks because they are wanting that thing that they're working on to be absolutely perfect. It may also be that if they are worried about not delivering a perfect product, and maybe you can relate to this.

If you identify as a perfectionist, it may be really hard for you to even get started on a project. I've had clients who I've worked with who really defer or delay or procrastinate on getting started on tasks because they're worried about the final product. What ends up happening is that they put off beginning a task so long that by the time they finally get to it, they are really struggling to complete it on time.

So if that sounds like something you do, you may find yourself operating in this time scarcity mindset where you're panicked and you're really just trying to complete a project in a very short period of time that you might be better off allocating more time to. So that's another area where you might really be struggling with your time.

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

If you're a perfectionist, it may also be that it's the self-talk that is slowing you down. You may notice this. If you have a project that you're working on or something that's particularly challenging, you may feel like there's self-doubt or fear or concern that you need to process and deal with. That actually takes time. So, again, that's something that contributes to not having that time available to do the actual work on hand.

Another area where you might find yourself getting stuck on time is people pleasing. Lawyers work in a service industry. There's a lot of pressure to want to please the lawyers that you're working with. Maybe they're your colleagues. Maybe they're your internal clients. There's a desire to please your clients. There's a desire to please all the other individuals who make up your life. So these are maybe your friends or your family, people that show up in your personal life as well.

When you are motivated to please others, this is by no means something I'm being critical of. I appreciate wanting to please others and doing things for others. There comes a point where you may be taking on challenges or doing favors or work or other things for other people in order to please them, but you take on so much that you end up with too much on your plate. It's just not doable.

So you might find yourself rushing from one task to the other task in this frenzied energy where you're trying to do it all and you just haven't given yourself enough time to do that. There are of course other challenges that come up in a law practice. This is interesting. It's not just law practices. I would say that each profession, each job has its own set of challenges.

I remember speaking to a friend of mine who works in a very bureaucratic environment. She was telling me about a time management specialist who came to speak to her organization about how they could best optimize their time. She said to me it was helpful, but only to a limited extent because a lot of the tools and techniques that were being taught would be helpful for

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

someone who was in a very independent type of role. But where she was, which was this institution where a lot of the timelines are dictated by meetings and external influences. That type of system just didn't work.

So when it comes to lawyers, I've practiced myself. I know that there are certain time management strategies that simply aren't practical in a private practice environment. Some of those challenges that you might be facing, these are challenges that I face, that lawyers that I've worked with as a coach have faced. It might be things like surprises where you sit down at your desk. You're ready to work on drafting something that you've reserved that time for, and an email comes in with a surprise. Maybe it's a last minute filing deadline that you are now responsible for.

Maybe you're a litigator, and it's one of those claims where the limitation period is about to expire, and you've got to put together a rush claim and get it filed in a very short period of time. Maybe you are an employment lawyer, and something has come up with an employee, and it's urgent. It needs to be dealt with in real time. All of these are things that can happen in a law practice that can make it harder for you to manage your time.

It may also be that you are reporting to different clients, whether they're internal or external clients. They might be asking you to do things that have multiple deadlines. You can find yourself in a situation where you've just simply got too much on your plate. It may be that your work is seasonal, and things come up all at once. So maybe you're working in tax and there are certain filing deadlines that come up. So you have a busy season when those deadlines are coming up. It may be that you're working on a trial and there's a flow to that trial. There's a season where that's going to be very intense. So that will, of course, have an impact on your time.

It may also be that you have the opposite problem. This is something that I experienced in practice, that lawyers that I've spoken with and that I have worked with have also experienced is those slow periods. Those are almost

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

more painful than the busy periods, or at least that's what I've found when I was in practice. Because you may not have the work to keep you busy, and all of a sudden you start wondering why you're not busy. Even though you know it would be a great time to work on some non-billable tasks or to do some other things around the office, things that you wouldn't get to when you weren't really busy.

There's this bizarre sense of not having enough to do or maybe it's lack of motivation where there's an urgent deadline. So you may find it really hard to get motivated during the slow times. You may find yourself unable to enjoy that time as much as you would like to.

Finally the one last thing I want to highlight in terms of lawyers and how you may be struggling with your time is that you may find that you have a lack of planning in your practice. The reason that I mention this is because planning is something that isn't taught in law school. I don't know anyone who teaches, apart from coaches and other practice helpers and supporters who will come in and teach time management practices.

I was never taught how to manage my time. It's something that I learned by osmosis. I observed other lawyers. Some lawyers would offer me tidbits here and there, and I was able to cobble together my own time management system. If you don't go out looking for it, we don't really talk about planning and time management. When it comes to planning, it actually takes time itself. That may seem counterintuitive, especially if the emphasis is on the hours that you are billing as opposed to the hours that you're spending in the management side of things.

So it may seem counterintuitive to you to devote portions of your workday to organizing your work and thinking about workflow and thinking about how you're using your time in a more strategic level. Because you're not rewarded for that time in the sense of having it acknowledged through the billable hours or whatever that might look like.

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

So what that can lead to is if you aren't taking the time ahead of time to plan your days out, to plan what's most efficient and effective, then you may find yourself jumping from task to task in the moment based on what seems to be the most urgent. The main drawback with that is that number one, you're not really taking full advantage of the executive functioning capacity that you have to sit back and use your prefrontal cortex to create a time management plan or a calendar that is most efficient.

The other drawback is that if you are reacting in the moment, then chances are you're acting from that more fight or flight space where you simply aren't necessarily at full capacity. I'll talk about that a little bit more, but it's that difference between acting with confidence and deciding ahead of time that this is what you're going to focus on and coming at that with your full capacity. Versus that panicked reaction.

If you've ever been in that situation where something has come up and you're acting in a panic. It just seems to take longer. You're not as efficient. You're not as effective. Then you have experienced firsthand what it is that I'm trying to describe.

Now when you have time management challenges, when you're feeling that sense of urgency or overwhelm, there are many ways that you might go about trying to solve that. Often, we try to solve that by working harder, by working faster. By jumping from fire to fire and just trying to get everything done. You might bury yourself in your work, and you might try to motivate yourself by beating yourself up and putting more pressure on yourself to do things faster and better.

It may be that you bury yourself so much in these day to day tasks that you don't ever have the chance to take a step back and look at where you are in relation to the big picture. What this could mean is that you are busy, but you aren't necessarily being productive at the level that you could be.

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

When you do these things to try to resolve time management problems, it ultimately doesn't work because, again, you are not really dealing with the underlying thinking about the way that you relate to time. You are very likely coming at it from a perspective of scarcity where you believe that time is scarce. You are engaged in this fight or flight mentality that I alluded to earlier where physiologically your system is now in survival mode.

Your body is shutting down some of your more expansive ways of thinking so that you can basically survive the day to day challenge of getting through the day. It deprives you of this more expansive and creative way of thinking where you can really plan out ahead of time not just how you're going to be spending your days, but also how you're going to be spending your years.

If you haven't really adopted a new mindset around time, what you may ultimately create for yourself is a situation where you're constantly feeling rushed. You constantly feel like you're behind schedule. You feel like you don't have enough time to get things done. Even though you're always "busy", and I use that using quotation marks, but you don't necessarily do the things that you want to do. You may not have the hours that you need on your timesheet. You may be working harder. You're squeezing in emails at all hours. At the end of this, you feel exhausted. Maybe you're getting close to burning out.

So what we're going to be talking about today is really fundamental. I'm going to offer you four strategies to turn this around. What I'm going to be suggesting is probably counterintuitive, and maybe something new and perhaps a little out there for some of you who are listening. I encourage you to think about this because it really is a mindset shift that can help you to reorient the way that you think about time. It may help you reestablish your relationship with time. My goal for all of you is to develop a new way of thinking about it so that you can come at your tasks, you can go through your days feeling more confident, more collected, and more effective.

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

Before I dive in, I just wanted to share with you a mental picture that I have in relation to this concept. A couple years ago I was putting on a webinar for students. It's part of a program that I do for students that are transitioning from law school to law firm. It's a six week program. It's a virtual program. One of the weeks is focused on time management. That is one of my favorite weeks. I really love talking about time and how we use time, how we relate to time, ways we can optimize our time.

I was putting my slides together, and I came across these two images. One of the images, it was the silhouette of a woman. She was dressed in a suit. She had a phone to her ear. She was walking. She was kind of hunched forward. She looked, from this silhouette image, to be in a hurry. To be under pressure. To be perhaps frazzled. There was another image which I juxtaposed next to that first image. In this image there was also the silhouette of a woman. She was standing tall. She was walking. She just seemed so cool and collected.

I thought these images were so interesting because we can all relate to being either one of those women. We can also relate to individuals who we have worked with who have that almost frenzied energy of being rushed and stressed and panicked versus those who seem to float about the office effective, productive, but from this space of elegance and calm and being self-possessed.

I would like you to have those images in mind as we go through these four steps. Because what I'm really hoping for all of you is to be able to shift into that space where you're managing your time from that very poised and effective and calm space. So I'd like you to think about that as well. Hopefully that's an image that helps you to get grounded.

The other thing that I wanted to mention here is that these things that I'm suggesting are all part of a practice. I've been doing this work for years, and I still find that there are days where I'm really on top of things. Where I

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

feel really good about how I'm managing my time, about my relationship with time. Equally there are days where I simply don't feel that way. I feel rushed. I feel a little bit panicked or stressed.

So if this is you and you're working on these things, I just want you to give yourself that grace to know that there's an eb and flow. The purpose here isn't to change everything overnight and to feel like if you haven't been able to do that then you've somehow failed. The purpose here is really to offer a different way of thinking about things so that you can feel more calm as you go about your day, and that you give yourself a different type of relationship to aspire to.

So with that we're going to do to step one. That step is to identify your current relationship with time. This is probably not something many of you have done. Maybe you have, but it's not something that I did until I really dove into the world of coaching. What I would invite you to do here is to think about time as though time were a person. If time was a person, then how exactly would you describe your relationship with him or her? What might you be saying to that person?

So here are some examples to make this a little bit more attainable. You might be saying to time, "There's never enough of you. Or I complain that you're never there for me. When I have you, then I waste you." It could be that you say to time, "I hate you. You limit me. You age me. You give me wrinkles." Not necessarily in the physical sense, but in the metaphorical sense. So there are a number of things that you might be saying to time in that relationship that you have with time.

If you think about it, there are a number of messages that are communicated to us socially, and that we hear about time that reinforce a notion of time scarcity. So maybe it's we are running out of time. Or time's a wastin. Or if only there were more hours in the day. One that I like: time and tide wait for no one.

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

So what I'd invite you to think about is to get clear on your relationship with time, and to notice where you're describing time in a way that comes from a place of scarcity. Where you're thinking that there simply isn't enough time. Once you've done that, then you can start thinking about how the way that you've been thinking about time is reflected in your actions.

So for example, if you think that there's not enough time, it may be that you're going through your day in a real hurried manner. It could be that you're feeling more stressed because you're telling yourself, "I don't have enough time to do this project, this thing." So that's just the first step is really to observe what your relationship is, and to notice how that might be playing out in your current environment.

That brings us to the next step, which is to redefine your relationship with time, and to come up with a more ideal relationship for yourself. It might be helpful here if you give yourself something to look into. In a previous podcast, I talked about what it means to be wildly successful, which is a definition that is dependent on the person who's defining it. What wildly successful looks like for one person will look different relative to how someone else will define wildly successful.

So here I would invite you to think about an ideal that you could live into that would reflect your perfect relationship with time. So here are some ideas that might resonate with you. One is elegant productivity. Another might be steadfast effectiveness. Another might be levelheaded efficiency or unflappable productivity. Whatever words resonate with you, maybe these don't.

I would encourage you to think about how you would want to define yourself in relation to time. If you were looking at those two images, those two silhouettes of the women, and you were choosing the latter one, how would you think of what those words are? Then you can use that as a guide

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

when you are doing the next part of this exercise, which is really to define your relationship with time.

So if you were now thinking of time as a person in this new situation where you're being more intentional about your relationship with time, how would you describe that relationship? So things you might say to time assuming time is a person. You might say, you're always there when I need you. You might think about this.

I know this happened to me multiple times in my practice where when I was lawyering, I would have this crazy looking calendar where there literally seemed to be more things on my calendar than I had time for. Maybe they were dates of court applications that were all falling on the same week or maybe there were other types of other deadlines. Often what I would find when I was getting to one of those bottleneck type situations is that something would fall away.

So it was a question of that opportunity opening up. Or sometimes you may think okay you had a project that you were working on. You didn't think you'd be able to finish it on time, but somehow things opened up. Somehow you were able to do it. So that might prove to you that it is true. That time really is there when you need it.

It could also be just, "When I think that I've run out of time, you bring me more of it." So that might be an example like I've just described where something on your plate goes away, or it gets redistributed to somebody else. You might think everything is playing out exactly as it should. So this is a way of thinking about time that is taking a step back. It's a little bit more big picture. So you may think that maybe you're learning something, and you wish that you were learning it faster.

So this came up recently with a friend of mine who is building a business. She's always, like so many of us, wanting things to move a little bit faster.

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

Then she was appreciating the fact that it wasn't moving faster because each step along the way is a learning opportunity. There's growth that happens at each stage that is necessary for further growth of the next stage.

So for you, it may be that in your practice you're learning certain skills. Maybe it's conducting a discovery, and you're wanting to master that skill. You're wanting to master how you ask questions, how you adapt on your feet. There may be multiple layers that you're wanting to get through. You may be feeling impatient with yourself. Like you want to move faster, learn faster.

With this way of thinking—So if you were to say to yourself, “Everything is playing out exactly as it should.” It allows you to accept and relax into the moment. Accept the stage that you're at right now, and to appreciate it for what it is. Whether it's just giving yourself that time to learn and/or appreciating that this is the building block in which you will reach that next level. So that's another thought that may help you with your relationship with your time and allow you to be more patient with yourself and the speed with which certain things happen whether it's in your practice or whether it's in your personal life as well.

You might also think things only get better with time. So I said before you might have this relationship with time where you don't like time. That you think oh the more time passes, the worse things get. It could also be the opposite. You could think that things get better with time. That you evolve as a person. That your practice grows. That you become so much more wise. That you have the benefit of all of these experiences. So you could look at time that way, especially if you feel like time is something that you have a difficult relationship with. You can look at the benefits of it.

Another thought that you might have is so much becomes clearer with time. We know this from that whole hindsight is 20/20 expression. That as you

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

move through your life as your practice unfolds, that things that you looked back on that happened maybe a few years ago, you're able to see them with such a different perspective. You see the learning opportunities that you've had. You've seen the challenges that have really required you to grow. So that is another way of looking at time in this much more abundant way.

So we talked earlier about having scarcity mindset when it comes to the way you think about time. What if you had an abundant mindset when it comes to thinking about time? That there's all the time that you need, and that time is really a blessing that you can optimize when it comes to your practice.

There's also some expressions that are out there that would reinforce a more positive and abundant view of time. I couldn't think of too many of them, but one that I really like is that time heals hell. I remember that that was an expression that somebody shared with me. I remember this was years ago. I was having a challenge, and somebody said that to me.

I thought that was so true. The things that we may find really painful or difficult today, five years from now we probably won't even remember, or we certainly won't feel the same degree of pain when we look back on them. So that's an example of how time really can be a blessing. So that's step two is coming into a new relationship with time, or at least defining what a different relationship with time could look like if you were to approach that relationship from a place of abundance and not look at it from a place of scarcity.

So step three is really about thinking about time with respect to the big picture. Here what I would invite you to do is to look backwards and forwards. First, I'd like you to look backwards and come up with some examples of where you have been tripped up because of your relationship with time. Maybe it was a project that you were working on where you were

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

really impatient with yourself because things weren't going fast enough, and it caused a problem for you. Maybe you're in a situation where you want to grow and develop, but you're not because you think you'd run out of time.

There's some really interesting conversations that I've had with lawyers who are relatively senior who want to start a new chapter of their practice. They have said to me, "What I really want to do is go out and take additional schooling and increase my qualifications because I want to do this next thing."

Then in the next breath they say, "But I'm not going to do that because I feel like I just don't have the time for it. It's too late. It's going to take too much time. I'm too busy. I just don't want to do that." So this is an example where scarcity thinking around time may be stopping you from taking on a next challenge because you don't think you have the time for it for some related reason.

It may also be the way that you're showing up. It may be that you go into the office. Maybe it's you actually go to a physical office. Maybe you're working from home. Your days really look like a hamster on a treadmill, and you're feeling flustered all the time. You're feeling anxious all the time. You're short in the conversations that you have with others. You're not really enjoying your practice. You're not carving time out for things that you enjoy, interactions with others that you would really benefit from.

So if that's the case, then maybe the shift that you would look to make isn't so much an event that you need to complete or a project you need to take on. It may be simply the way that you're showing up in your day to day. So whatever it is that you have in your past, I would encourage you to think about where your relationship with time has limited you. Then I would invite you to look forward and think about how things could be different for you if

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

you were to apply a more abundant mindset when it comes to the way that you think about time.

We'll get into that a little bit more in the next step, but for now what I'd like you to think about is to identify a couple of big rock items. Things that you want to do that you haven't done because you've told yourself you don't have enough time. So maybe these are projects. Maybe it's additional learning. Maybe it's some networking that you want to do. Maybe it's a new job transition that you want to make.

I invite you to think about that. What is it that you want to do that you feel like you don't have time for? Or maybe it's more of how you show up type of situation. Maybe there's a new way that you want to be in your practice where you're not showing up rushed and hurried and anxious and feeling overwhelmed. What you really want to do is show up poised and ready and confident and calm. Still getting the things done, still being efficient, but from a place of empowered energy as opposed to this much more scattered and frantic rushing from thing to thing.

So once you've done that, once you've completed step three, we're going to move on to step four. This is really all about managing your time wisely. This is about embracing the new relationship that you choose for yourself, that you choose to relate to time, and to put that into practice.

I would recommend in this case going back to an episode that I recorded earlier this year. It's episode number two. It's all about time management for lawyers. In that episode, I offer a number of strategies that you can adopt when it comes to time management. I would encourage you to listen to that episode, to think about which of the strategies that I offer in that podcast would apply. Which resonate with you that you could apply in your practice. Then I would encourage you to start applying those in relationship to some of the projects or goals that you have with yourself, and to see what comes up for you.

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

So one of the things that I talk about is planning. So as you start to plan, what does that bring up for you? What effect does that have for you? As you go through your day to day, maybe you find yourself caught up in procrastination. So you're trying to overcome that procrastination. You're adopting certain strategies. As these things come up for you, I would encourage you to take a step back and ask yourself what you're thinking in that moment, and how you're relating to time in that moment.

When you start to notice where you are showing up from a place of scarcity and when you are showing up from a place of abundance, then you can start consciously shifting from a place of scarcity to one of abundance. As I mentioned earlier, this is a practice that I'm working on myself. I'm working on it on the regular. It can be really powerful because you can really move yourself from that place of feeling that frantic unmanaged energy in a sense into that place where you're much more deliberate and focused.

So that's what I would encourage you to do is to pick some challenges for yourself, ones where you know your time management skills are going to be put to the test. See how you feel as you're going through those exercises. Be really deliberate about choosing to come from a place where you're seeing time as abundant.

Maybe you need to remind yourself of some of the phrases that I offered earlier like, "Time you're always there when I need you. Just when I think I've run out of time, more of it shows up. Everything is playing out exactly as it should." So you can think about exactly which of these expressions or mantras or thoughts are most useful and resonate most strongly for you and pull those out of your back pocket when you're feeling stressed, when the pressure's on. Slowly over time work your way towards that more calm and collected place.

So those are the strategies that I am offering today. The reason that I think these strategies are effective, the reason that I think that they will work is

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

that it's not a band aid solution of getting a new app or buying a new calendar. That's not going to fix. If you find yourself having time management problems, if you find yourself being stressed, if you find yourself being overly busy, those things aren't going to help until you're really able to change the way that you approach time. This is one way for you to do that. It goes more than just dealing with some of the superficial problems and gets below the surface to what's really going on beneath.

As you practice this new way of being, you will be able to bring yourself into a place where you're feeling calmer. As I mentioned before, when you're in that calm place, when you move away from that fight or flight where you're physiologically literally shutting down because your body is focused on survival and what it needs to get from moment to moment. When you're moving from that state into that more rest and digest state, your thinking is more expansive.

You're more open to learning. You're more creative. You're more productive. So as a result, you will actually be more productive in the time that you have instead of that scattered and often inefficient energy that you might have when you approach your problems and challenges from that place of stress and anxiety.

Now the skills that you will need to adopt these strategies is number one, you're going to need to learn how to pay attention to what you're thinking and how you're feeling. This may be something that you're not used to doing, but I would highly encourage you to develop this practice. It's helpful not just for time management but also for managing all sorts of other emotions and feelings that you might be having when it comes to your work.

I mean it could be confidence. It could be anxiety. It could be wanting to be more productive. There's all sorts of areas where simply paying attention

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

and noticing what's going on is such an effective first step to making changes that will make you feel more confident and empowered.

Another skill that you'll need is a willingness to try something new and different. I mean it might sound weird to you. "Paula, what do you mean? You want me to talk to time as though time were a person? That's crazy." You may truly believe that. What I'm inviting you to do here is to think about things in a different way, and to really ask yourself what your relationship with time is like.

Chances are you haven't really thought of that before. If that's the case, how can you create a relationship that you love? One that is really going to empower you, and one that is going to make you feel better and enjoy your days more. So that's another skill that you'll need to have is that willingness to try something new. Something that might seem a little bit unconventional, possibly counterintuitive.

Another skill that you'll need, and this one is huge, is patience. It's patience with yourself as you develop this new skill, as you design your relationship with time. It's also patience in terms of the pace that your practice evolves and your relationship with time evolves. Patience with how much you get done in a day. Patience with the rate at which things change over time. So that is a huge component is having that patience and that grace with yourself that everything doesn't have to happen all at once, and that there's benefit to things happening at a slower pace.

If you think about meals, for example, we don't eat a lifetime's worth of food in one sitting. Nobody would ever do that. It's not possible. It's not desirable. It's the same with your work, your evolution as a lawyer. There's time for all these things to happen. It doesn't have to be all at once. There are periods where you're going to move more quickly than others. All of that is okay.

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

By taking a holistic approach with your relationship with time, I hope that you start to feel that sense of calm. Almost like that inner knowing that everything is unfolding exactly as it should. You're exactly where you need to be right now. This will all become apparent as your journey, as your career, as each step unfolds.

The result that you will create if you adopt this practice, if you develop this practice is that you'll feel calmer. You'll feel more joyful. You'll be more productive in the work that you're doing. Generally you'll feel less anxious, less overwhelmed, and less busy.

So those are the strategies that I have to offer you today. Just to recap, the first step that I would encourage you to take is to evaluate your relationship with time to see how it is that you're currently thinking about time. The second step is to be intentional about your relationship that you would like to have with time. What do you want that to look like?

The third step is to look backwards and think about where you've been tripped up because of the way that you've been thinking about time. That's both in terms of specific projects maybe that you've worked on and also in terms of maybe how you've shown up in situations. Maybe you've shown up more anxious or stressed than you would have liked.

Then to think about going forward, what could be different? What are some projects that you would take on if you weren't feeling like time was an issue? How would you show up differently if you weren't so stressed or thinking that time was this scarce commodity that you simply didn't have enough of?

Finally the last step that I would encourage you to take is to test it out. To go back to episode number two of this podcast, listen to some of the time management strategies that I offered, implement those, and implement those from a place of time being something that is abundant. Where you

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

have control, where there is enough of it, where you feel confident that you're exactly where you need to be. That so long as you keep moving forward and you keep practicing that you are going to find yourself getting exactly what it is, creating exactly what it is that you want to create.

So with that my friends, I am going to say goodbye. Before I sign off, I would just like to thank all of you for joining me for these podcasts. In the last couple of days, I mentioned in the last podcast that we were just shy of 1,000 downloads. In the last few days, we've now surpassed that. I can't tell you how amazing it feels to me to know that you're there listening. I'm so delighted to have you share these podcasts with me.

If you would like to reach out to me, I'd love to hear from you. I'd love to hear any ideas you have for podcasts ideas or topics that you think would be really helpful for you. I'd love to hear how listening to the podcast has impacted you. I've had a number of you reach out and send me emails or posts on LinkedIn about things that have changed for you. I love hearing from you. So please keep that up.

If you are listening to the podcast and you have friends that you think would like this podcast, please share it with them. If you would like to rate the podcast, that would be amazing. When you rate the podcast, when you subscribe to the podcast, when you give it a review, that helps the podcast. There's an algorithm that is factored in, and it helps the podcast become findable. That's probably not a word, but you know what I mean. To others who listen to podcasts who would really benefit and enjoy listening to this podcast.

So if you would do that, that would be amazing. I would really appreciate you helping me to share the word of this podcast so that we can reach more people, so we can invite more people into this community. And so that we can all really together create exactly what it is that we're trying to create in our professional lives and in our personal lives. So thank you

Ep #18: Rethinking Time Scarcity and Reduce Overwhelm

again. It has been amazing having you here. You can reach out to me on LinkedIn. You can go to thejoyfulpractice.com website. I would love to hear from you.

As I mentioned in earlier podcasts, I continue to coach one to one. I would love to hear from you if that's something that would be of interest to you. You can set up a call with me. We'll talk about what's going on for you, and we can see whether we would be a good fit for each other. There's no pressure. As I said many times, I've always loved hearing from you.

So that's all for this week. I can't wait to connect with you again. I hope this has been really an impactful podcast for you. I hope that your relationship with time is one that becomes more peaceful, more abundant, and that you find yourself carrying yourself through the day with that assured confidence and unflappability that we all strive for. So with that, I will say goodbye and look forward to connecting again next week. Bye for now.

If you enjoyed today's show and don't want to miss an episode, subscribe, and follow the show wherever you listen to your podcasts. If you haven't already, please leave a rating and review. Your feedback will help me create a podcast that's tailored to your needs and goes straight to the heart of what matters to you. For instructions on how to subscribe, rate, and review the podcast, visit www.thejoyfulpractice.com/podcastlaunch. See you next time.

Thank you for listening to this episode of *The Joyful Practice for Women Lawyers* podcast. If you want more information, visit www.thejoyfulpractice.com. See you next week.