

WORTH EVERY PENNY *joycast*[™]

Your life has suddenly been thrown into a tailspin. Your children have descended upon you, and every five minutes, they need to be fed. They need to use your computer for homeschooling that you didn't ever sign up for. They want you to play with them, to entertain them. They're fighting. It's a good day if everyone in the family only cries once, so about your work routine, yeah, what routine? In this absolute chaos, you've been dumped on with jobs you didn't apply for, teacher, principal, parent, disciplinarian, AV department, 24/7 cook, cleaning staff. How are you supposed to keep your business going? Take a deep breath, and stick with me because on today's joy cast, we are talking about how to work from home with kids and still get things done, so you don't end up fighting your kids for the corner to cry in.

So, the real question is, how are portrait photographers like us able to run a profitable business and still put our families first without selling digital files for cheap, living on social media, or working all the time for little profit? Follow along in this joy cast as I show you how to find and serve boutique portrait photography clients in a world where we compete with free now that everyone has a digital camera in their pocket. My name is Sarah Petty, and welcome to this Worth Every Penny Joy cast.

The other night, we had a perfect family day. I love those days that are magical when nobody's fighting, and it just seems like the sun is shining on your family, and while those moments are brief, when you have them, you have to savor them. We had a family dinner. It was a Sunday night. Everybody got along, and my kids stripped their beds and washed all their sheets and made their beds and put all the fluffy pillows and got their rooms clean and laundry put away, and we tucked everyone in and said good night, and it was just a magical time. 5:00 a.m. comes, a giant child descends on top of our heads, screaming, "The cat yakked all over my bed and was going to yak on my face." She got up before the cat yakked on her, but there was yak all over the magical room that she had created the day before.

For those of you who are parents, you know that parenting is a lot like entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurship is a lot like parenting. Just when you think you have

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something figured out, the cat yaks all over it. And I think with parenting and entrepreneurship, there's kind of a blurry line between the two. You don't separate, right, especially now working with kids and kids and work, they're all this big, huge thing. With me, I had three kids in two and a half years. So, needless to say, raising them, there was some fighting, there was some crying, there was some proverbial cat yakking for quite a few years. I always thought, you know, I can do this. I can do this.

I remember when I had a sitter who couldn't work for the week. I often brought sitters to my house because with three kids, it was the same price as sending them to a daycare where they would get sick, and that way, she could help with the house a little and things like that, so it was really, really awesome. Hard, right? Hard to find good people, and then they'd leave, and you'd have to find good people. So, with every solution, there's always another problem, but I did love having the ability to do that, but she had a week off and was traveling. I didn't have anyone to fill in, and I had three little kids. They were probably, I don't know, four and six. Twins were six and then a four-year-old, at that age where they're bickering and fighting, but I thought it's okay. I can run my business and be a mom both, so for this week, that was my goal, and it did not go well. Oh gosh.

I remember before I had kids, I was that person. You know how we always have things, we say, "Oh, I'm never going to do that, or I'm never going to do that." Well, my thing was like I'm never going to buy a van. I was like, I just not going to be that mom. I'm going to have like a sleek, big black SUV where I look like I'm secret service. I'm going to look like this cool mom, like I thought that was the thing, right? By the end of this week, I was in tears, and I was van shopping. I'm just saying no offense to any of you who love your vans, and I didn't actually end up buying the van, which is a whole another very funny story that I can't even share here. Some time, I'll share it with you, but it was terrible. I couldn't do it. I was frustrated. My kids were in the backseat of my car, fighting, poking each other. It was terrible.

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I have the epiphany then that, okay, I can be a mom in work, and I can ... Well, that's it. Be a mom, right, and do what I love because being a stay-at-home mom, for those of you who do it, I don't know how you do it. It's hard. It's the hardest job ever, and I knew I needed the career to stimulate my mental capacity because being a mom full time was clearly ended in tears and van shopping. So, I realized if I wait until my life is perfect, my business will never happen because even when your kids grow, they come back, they have needs, and you might have grandkids and then you're going to want to be with them, so we might as well just figure it out now.

I get it. There are lots of reasons right now why you could quit your business, why you could give it up. The economy is a built in excuse. If you're looking for an excuse to quit, you've got one, right? Oh, pandemic wiped me out, like everyone's going to go, "Oh, that was so bad." They're going to pat your back and be like, "Good for you for sticking it out as long as you did." Don't be that person.

There are other reasons, right? Maybe you're a single parent. Maybe your hubby works opposite hours. You don't have a sitter. You don't have any family in town. Whatever those conflicts and challenges are, you can plan around them when you're an entrepreneur, right? If you have a job, you have to leave early in the morning and put on pantyhose most likely and leave and be there all day and get home. You have a messy house with no food, and that's where I was crabby mommy. So, I thought that's hard too. I'd rather take this kind of hard all day long because I can figure it out, and I can create my own systems.

So, I'm going to give you three things you can do to work from home with kids under your feet and still get things done. For me, I had to make sure that I was being productive because my hubby, he had started his own business, and he was our breadwinner but hadn't fully replaced his salary yet with his new business. I had left my job, and I wasn't making money, so I couldn't hire anyone. I didn't have money in the very beginning to hire a lot of help, right? So, I had to figure out how to be productive.

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So, first thing I learned early on was to plan my day tomorrow. So, I want you guys to write that down. Plan your day tomorrow. We know that failing to plan is planning to fail. You can't just wake up and be like, "Oh, I have a minute. Everybody's playing quietly. I'm going to hop on Facebook." Boom. Your day's gone, so if you take a piece of paper, I want you to draw a vertical line down the middle and a horizontal line down the middle. So, you have four quadrants on your paper. In that top upper left hand corner of each of those quadrants, I want you to write a word in there. I'm going to give you four different words.

In the upper left, I want you to write call, C-A-L-L. Upper right, I want you to write DO. Bottom left, go, G-O, and bottom right, I have back burner. Okay? So, I plan my day tomorrow by putting like activities together. If I get a break where nobody's at home and I can make phone calls uninterrupted, I have clients to return calls to, bang, bang, bang, bang. I don't want to call one person, then later be like, "Oh shoot. I forgot to call this person." Crank them out. What things do I have to do? Do I have to retouch images? Do I have to put together a presentation? What do I have to do? Take a prop in to get it fixed. Well, that would be in go actually. That would be in go like fix a prop. Maybe you have to move banking, checking accounts at bank, so all your errands you want to put together.

Then, I made the back burner column because for me, I would have so many things in all of these lists that I would never possibly get done, and then it's defeating, right? You look at your list, and you think I could never get this done. So, anything that doesn't have an urgent time frame to it, I put in that bottom right hand corner, back burner. Then if I get done with my other things, I'm feeling confident and good, and I have extra time, it's like, oh, I can go grab those things and do them. Okay, so number one, plan your day tomorrow.

Number two, schedule time to work on your business. Let me ask you a question. Why do your sessions happen? Like your last session that you did, why do they happen? Why do clients show up? Why are you there to shoot them? Because you put them on your calendar, right? That's why things happen, because you put them on your calendar. And if you don't put

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them on your calendar, they don't happen. Okay, so you've got to get religious about scheduling that time to work on your business.

Now, three kids at home, four kids at home, 10 kids at home. You can trade a friend for childcare, right? This is where that tenacity comes in again that I talk about all the time, right? You say, "Hey, I'll keep your kids on Thursday if you keep my kids on Tuesday or let's do half day, half day." Negotiate with your spouse or partner or your parent for some dedicated time. "Hey grandma, could you take my kids every Saturday morning for four hours, so I can really focus on work?" Maybe at 9:00 at night, you turn off the TV, or you put your kids to bed, and you set an alarm from 8:00 to 10:00, and that's dedicated business time instead of being like, "Oh, I should do this. I should do that." No. You schedule it, and you show up for yourself just like you would show up for clients. Tenacity, resourcefulness. They're so important.

Then, number three, have planning and doing time, okay? So, you're chunking out those like tasks to do during the segments that you've set aside. So, you've got two different kinds of tasks, right? You've got some tasks that are revenue generating that are super important that need your time and concentration, and you've also got non-revenue generating tasks like paying bills, cleaning out email, things like that. So, during that really important time that's like, it's like your gold, that golden time that you have to work by yourself with your brain in the quiet, be prepared to do the heavy lifting then, right? Be prepared to do the things, the call, the go, the do, and then while your kids are playing and you can't fully concentrate, that's when you pay your bills, and you do the prep work so that when you have the quiet time, you're ready to sit down.

Maybe you're renaming your files, and you're putting them in folders, so you can prep clients' orders. You can retouch. You can edit. You can send out what we call notes of joy, and you're going to be hearing me talk a lot about those notes that you're writing to people in your community. Those things have to happen. Your three things that you can do in your photography business that are profitable that grow your business and make you money are

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shooting, selling, and marketing. So, save time for those things. They have to happen. They're not going to happen if you don't schedule them.

Here's the thing. Are you going to be as productive as you were when you had a house free of kids all day? No, but that doesn't mean your business has to come to a screeching halt. It's just going to look different. With some good planning, scheduling your time and chunking out your most productive tasks so that you can actually do them when you have the time, you're going to get balance back in your life. That way, you're not resenting being dumped on and being taken advantage of or being miserable in your business. It might just have to go a little slower right now, and that's okay. We just have to keep it going.

The key is to use your productive time to work on only those most important tasks, the big rocks that make you feel accomplished. That way, when you aren't working, you aren't worried about what you didn't get done, and you can be fully present with your family. The key to balance and productivity always comes back to planning. Napoleon Hill said it the best. He said, "Plan your work, and work your plan." You can do this.

Hey, photographer. Everybody likes to learn about themselves, right? I know I do, and if you've been in a rut lately and feeling burnt out about your business, I want you to know this. You're probably just operating under the wrong business model. Like Einstein said, if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will spend its whole life believing that it's stupid. So, that funk you're in, well, it's probably not you after all. You're just trying to climb a tree with fins. So, what business model fits your personality? Well, I created a five-minute quiz to help you find out. Head on over to joyofmarketing.com/quiz and take the "What's Your Photo Biz Soulmate Quiz," and be prepared to have some serious insight dropped on you. I don't want you to waste one more single second feeling like anything less than the rocking photographer superhero that you are. So, go to joyofmarketing.com/quiz and take the quiz right now. I guarantee you'll learn something that'll change the way you see your business and will give you something positive and inspiring to think about all day.