



EPISODE 11: HOW TO MANAGE OVERWHELM AND BURNOUT – THE DON'TS

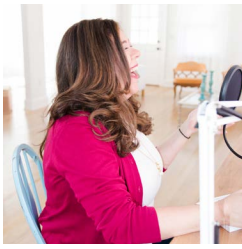
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Hello superstars. I am so happy to be recording this for you today in the middle of all the adventures we're having on earth right now. It's so nice to have a few minutes together to calm and center ourselves. I calm and center myself so I can be calm and centered for you. You come here, listen to the podcast, get your calm and center on, and then you go take that back into your marriage and literally everybody wins. And I love that. Okay, so let's do a little recapping, shall we, because the last two episodes go together with this one. So if this is the very first time you're tuning in, welcome and I also want to get you caught up to the awesome telenovela style adventures that we're having on the podcast right now. I did an episode called How to Manage Overwhelming Burnout. I started writing up the notes for it before the whole planet became a living disaster movie, which is just fascinating.

Remember this: heroes always win in disaster movies. So I am keeping my eye on winning, whatever that might look like on any given day. And I invite you to do the same. So part one was the things that you can do to help yourself manage overwhelm and these are the healthy coping mechanisms to either manage overwhelm or prevent it from happening in the first place. And one of the themes I touched upon in that episode was getting clear on your priorities and practicing saying no to everything else. And I want to share a really great article that my friend Angie Merced wrote on how to say no without really saying no. So Angie is one of the leading experts in burnout specifically for speech language pathologists. She is literally the SLP burnout coach. So she is thinking about burnout and how to recover from it all the time.

And she wrote this article specifically with speech language pathologist in mind, but you don't have to be in the SLP for it to be useful for you because when I read it, I thought this really applies to almost any professional woman trying to juggle work and home and bosses and colleagues and the zillion requests that we all get every day. One of my favorites that she





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mentions is one that I often suggest as well, which I like to call the deferred no, like we say no, but we defer it to later. I also like naming things, I name things like the deferred no. So this is where you don't say no right now, you say something like, let me check with my husband or my schedule or my family member or whoever it is that you would check with and I will get back to you. And that gives you time to really look at your priorities and see what makes sense.

It's super, super simple, but you would be amazed at the difference that it makes in practice when you do that often. And yes, if you consider yourself a people pleaser, if you've ever heard of the concept of people pleasing, I am looking at you right now. You are a person. Please yourself. Think about that. Just please yourself first and then see what you have left over to please other people. That's sort of a graduated way to wean yourself off of people pleasing with some gentleness and some kindness with yourself and towards others. So I will link to Angie's article in the show notes and I really hope that you find it useful. I totally loved it and that's kind of part of the previous episode, which was the How to Manage Burnout and Overwhelm, the to dos. And that's the to do section of this trilogy that I have created.

Then the last episode, so the one right before this one, we had my awesome hubby on as my very first guest to talk about How to Manage Crisis as a Team and we shared how we're approaching our life right now and what we did to manage ourselves together, you know, as a team when we thought that a hurricane was coming straight to Florida a couple of years ago. And today we finish this trilogy of episodes with the do not dos on how to manage overwhelm and burnout, which I would normally call the don'ts, but for some reason I was writing on my notes. I kept thinking of fonts like the typeface instead of don'ts. So we're calling them, the do not dos and we have five and this is the stuff to avoid and like an emotional GPS, take an alternate route, don't go down this road. As always, I like to lay them out for you first and then





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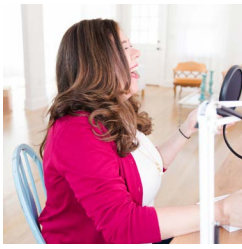
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we'll go through them one by one together.

And I've gotten a feedback from some of my awesome listeners that some of you got like guys, ladies like to take notes, during the show and you like it when I spell it out first and then you can listen to each one item by item. So thank you for that feedback. I will continue to do it this way. I'm so happy that it's working well for you. So here are the do not dos. First, do not talk too much. And my note around this was like do not talk too much, she says while talking on a podcast. So yes, you heard it right. We're going to talk about not talking today and why that can be really important, especially if you're feeling overwhelmed. The next one is do not make big decisions. So we're just going to hashtag that #nobigdecisions when you are freaking out.

It is not the time to apply for graduate school or a trip to Butan or anything else like that. You can decide dinner and that's about it. And I'll tell you why that's so important, in just a few moments. And the next one is do not stifle your tears. So I really drill into my clients this idea that every emotion is welcome here and once we have an emotion present, we need to feel that we need to fully allow it. If you need to cry, just cry. And I can tell you, as I record this episode over the last weekend, I definitely cried and felt all kinds of emotions, just seeing the different things that are happening in the world. And it's so important to know that we can be happy about something good happening. Several of my clients have told me they're spending more time with their kids or enjoying time with their family and they're happy about that even as they're deeply concerned about the things that are happening in the world as a result of the virus. So let's make space that we can have both intense emotions that inspire something like tears and intense emotions that inspire something like joy. And it doesn't make us a villain if we have one or the other or both. Okay, next step. Do not believe your painful thoughts. And as I was thinking about how to explain this really clearly and succinctly, here's what I offer you. Think





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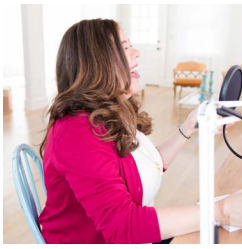
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about your thoughts like butterflies flitting from flower to flower and then flying away. When you believe the thought, it's like you're clipping the butterfly's wings to anchor it in a specific flower. Let that butterfly just fly away. Okay? And the last one for the love of all things Oprah, please do not lash out at your honey. We have all done this at some point and it's never useful.

The faster we stop doing it, the better our marriages can get. So it's so, so important when we're stressed out. Usually it's whoever's in front of us gets the brunt of it and we really want to be mindful to not do that. And to really focus on the positive coping mechanisms instead. Okay, so now we're going to take each of these one by one. Don't talk too much. Yes, you have stuff on your mind and yes, sometimes it's good to let it out, but the truth is you aren't thinking clearly when you're overwhelmed and the stuff that you're thinking might not be the things you actually want to be saying. So a lot of women in my community are highly verbal. I am highly verbal. Sometimes that leads to what I call over processing and I'm going to describe what this is. This is when you call five friends to have the same conversation.

Have you ever done this? I have totally done this. Okay, raising my hand, guilty. Do not do this. Call one friend, one friend is okay. Your coach, if you're working with a life coach is also okay, but when you get to the fourth friend, please stop talking. Consider talking just enough to share what's happening, but not so much that you give more energy and you exacerbate and you amplify the various crazy thoughts that might be running around through your head. Because when you wake up the next morning, you might not think it was the best idea to dye your hair purple and move to Mexico. Now I love both purple and Mexico. I'm just saying don't make that decision when you're overwhelmed. Okay? Which brings us to the next. Don't, do not, make any decisions larger than what to eat for dinner. Okay?. When you're going through any kind of emotional disturbance, when you feel high, a high degree of emotional intensity, the worst thing





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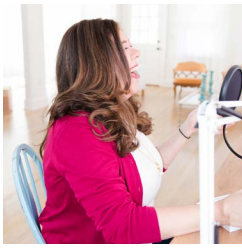
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you can do is make a life-altering decision.

So the quote I love to use to remind me of this, and if you're kind of mining, you're listening, you're going to recognize it right away, because I've been repeating it a lot the past few weeks. It's this, never cut a tree in winter. And that quote has just gotten me through so many things in life. It's from Robert Schuller. He was like the original Joel Osteen from back in the day. And I used to watch his sermons on Sundays on TV when I was a kid growing up and he said this, "Never cut a tree down in winter time. Never make a negative decision in a low time. Never make your most important decisions when you are in your worst moods. Wait, be patient. The storm will pass, the spring will come." So that's the full quote. And I like to just say, never cut a tree in winter. I love that so, so much. So whatever's in your heart right now, if you feel like you need to make a decision, just ask yourself, am I cutting a tree down in winter? In winter that tree looks bleak and ugly and you only see the branches and there's no blooms or leaves or flowers. And I personally actually like winter trees. I think they're really beautiful like sculptures. But for the purposes of this example, let's just pretend that we all think they're ugly. Okay, so in the spring, that same tree looks totally different. The green leaves, the blossoms, the scent. It looks like a different tree, but it's the same tree. Right now, it might seem like the whole world is going through winter, but it's the same world we had a month ago. It's the same world we will have a year from now and sometimes it will look like nothing is growing, when in fact it's just preparing for spring when everything grows.

So make decisions when you need to and if you must make one, you know, make one with intention and focus. But remember the spring. Keep the spring in mind when you do. So no tree cutting in winter. Got that. Okay. Sometimes this looks like big things such as quitting your job, by all means, quit if you need to, but make that decision when you're calm, you're





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cool, you're collected, you've evaluated your next steps, you've checked the balance in your 401k, you've updated your LinkedIn profile. All of those practical, really grounded kind of things. Now, some seemingly little things are things that you might not want to do when you're feeling overwhelmed or burnt out or really exhausted. Things like picking a paint color for a room in your house or visiting the car dealer for a muffler repair and risking leaving with a new car you had no intention of buying.

So seriously, stay home, eat dinner and be quiet about it. Okay. Next up is do not stifle your tears. So many of us grow up in situations where we're conditioned to pretend that everything is okay when everything is not okay and so here's a few things that are really important when you think about that. Don't hesitate to have a good cry. Let it all out with that person who can listen and hold your heart with gentleness and love. And as I mentioned earlier, like over the past weekend, I have cried and I have laughed. I have felt every feeling and letting all that emotion flow over me felt so much better than trying to pretend it wasn't happening. It's one of the things you learn as a life coach, that avoiding a feeling is ultimately way more painful than just letting yourself feel it, and then moving on from there. So if you need to cry, here's what I want you to know. I personally have a box of Kleenex in almost every room in my house, because I cry that often. So if you need to cry it out, let it go and just know that every emotion is part of life and it's okay to feel intensity, but it doesn't have to be. It doesn't have to be an emotion that takes you over. You don't have to let it take over. You could just feel it and feel it like a wave in the ocean that it be there and the moment you let a bit be there, it also passes. Okay. Now the next one, this says the don'ts for how to manage overwhelm and doubt. And this one is going to get maximum life coach points. Okay? So prepare yourself accordingly.

Here it is. Do not believe your painful thoughts. So you have thoughts, they are sentences in





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your brain and you do not have to believe them. You can accept them, you can reject them, you can question them, you can choose new thoughts. Now when we're in pain, we tend to have a flood of thoughts and we totally think they're all true. We think things like this will never work. I can't handle this. Life is so hard. I can't do this anymore. If that sounds familiar, welcome to humanity. We have all thought those thoughts at some point about something or someone or some situation we were facing. Here's what I want you to know. These thoughts are lies. They're the product of having a virus in your emotional computer. They're giving your sub routines, bad instructions, and the best thing you can do with these thoughts is notice they are there and say thank you, but no thank you.

Do not believe your thoughts when they're not helping you. So acknowledge them. Say hello to them. Notice which ones come, okay? And then the final do not do is do not. And I repeat to not lash out at your husband partner, significant other, beloved Chihuahua, anything like that. It is so easy to do when everything is freaking you out. The easy button is to start finding something completely insignificant that your honey did to annoy you and then maximize it to epic proportions. Please do not do that. This is when you need all the loving support you can get and letting that person that you love in, and letting that person support you really helps and really matters. So here's an insurance policy for you. This is something that you can say the minute you feel that stress factor rising, it's like a little mini script and I'm going to say it out loud.

And then if you want the script, just go to the podcast show notes and you can download the transcript and the script will be there. So here it is. "Oh dear. I had a terrible day today and anything that comes out of my mouth might be extreme. If I seem like I'm totally off or do something odd, please know it has nothing to do with you and everything to do with the day that I'm having." Then say that you're sorry in advance, ahead of time before you've even done





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anything. You say this, “I am sorry if I do or say something crazy. I just want to give you the heads up.” Okay, so why do we do this? This helps the person that you love the most not freak out too. A great rule of life is to try to avoid freaking out at the same time.

If you've both freaked out at the same time, you know what I'm talking about. My husband and I have an informal rule where we try not to freak out at the same time. Okay, so don't believe me. Try it. I'll tell you over the years I've been married over 13 I think this will be my 13th anniversary this year and over the years I've said this to my husband. I've said, “Oh, you know I had a really intense day.” And now he will sometimes say the same thing to me, which is amazing, I didn't ask him to. He just got used to, if one of us is having a really intense day, we give each other the heads up and then we don't take it too seriously if we say something snippy or that isn't really like our best self kind of thing. So don't believe me, try it, see what happens, test it out, which is really what I really invite you to do with everything that I mentioned in the podcast is think about how it can apply to you. What's your version of what I'm describing, and then test it. See what happens. Okay? So what should you do when you're feeling stressed and maxed out? We did a whole podcast episode on that, as I mentioned before, but sort of cliff notes version is pause, breathe, cry, hug, go to sleep early, take a break, read something inspiring, step away. Change the metaphorical channels you look at when you're watching TV and just change the channel. What would be the equivalent of changing the mental channel? Do that. And really don't try to solve your problems when you aren't thinking clearly. List them out. Write the most pressing ones or share them with someone you love, but don't take any action until you've had at least one good night's sleep.

And I like to say, you know that you're thinking clearly when you can multiply without a calculator or something like that. And what's funny about that is I'm terrible at mental math, so





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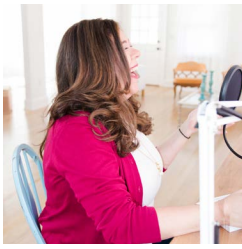
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that isn't really the best measure for me personally thinking clearly, but you know what I mean? Right. Okay. So I had written up all the notes for this episode. Everything I just shared, and I was ready to record it when I took a break from writing to note to do a coaching call and I realized I really wanted to add one more thing, and this was a question that I asked myself. What if the thing you're overwhelmed by is your partner? Or how you feel about your marriage right now, the state of your relationship, or if you have situations like you intensely desire sex, or if you don't intensely sex and your partner does, what is the number one do and do not do when the problem is your marriage, so to speak.

So first binge listen to every episode of this podcast for sure, and I really mean it. Listening to the way I teach marriage will change your brain, so it's a good idea to start there. Secondly, one of my favorite quotes from one of my mentors, Brooke Castillo, who I quote often on this podcast, I think she's the second most quoted besides Oprah, is this, your thoughts about your marriage are your marriage. So take a moment right now and ask yourself, what is my predominant thought when I think about my relationship? If you have thoughts that are in the family of things like this, my marriage is so hard. My husband never listens. I can't do it all at once. This isn't working. Just notice that those thoughts will never produce a positive result and then consider not believing them. As I mentioned earlier, question them.

Be tough. If you have the time and money to invest in a professional coach, hire me or someone like me. One thing that I have seen over and over again in both my clients and myself is when we feel overwhelmed and tired or burnt out, resourcefulness very often is the first thing that goes out the window. So it's like one day we can save the universe with a paperclip and a bottle of nail polish and the next day and we can't get out of bed. So if you're listening to this and it's one of those, let's put the cover back on days and go right back to bed, here's what you need





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to do: You need to figure out exactly what you need in order to get back to resourcefulness, whether it's questioning negative thoughts, saying no to things, taking a nap, saying yes to salsa classes, whatever's gonna feel nourishing to your soul that you can have a moment of clarity and come out of overwhelm and come back to resourcefulness.

No matter how small or silly it may sound, that is exactly what you need to do and you need to do it immediately. I am so serious about this. The world is going through this huge transition. Entire industries are changing and evolving. Some are dying, others are being born, and we're going to need to pull together all of us to create the next chapter of whatever this planet looks like. And if there is anything that we have learned over the last few weeks and months is that we all need each other. From the grocery cashier to the doctors and nurses to the truck driver and the school teacher, every single one of us has a contribution to make and you cannot make yours if you're exhausted. So the number one job right now is to come back to center so you can activate your own resourcefulness for your marriage, for your life and for all of us.

Okay? For this week's coaching homework, look at your schedule and find one thing to remove and remove it. Don't just identify it, remove it, and then look at your dreams and goals, the things that make your heart sing, right, and find one thing to add from that list. Okay? There you have it. How to manage overwhelm, the do not dos. Now next up, the Questions for Couples Book is available for preorder and I want to remind you all about that. I'm so excited for it to come out and I have a really fun client celebration about an Ivy league fortune teller, which just so fun. Okay. So you know, I love simple tools that will make your marriage stronger. And one of the reasons I'm so excited to share The Questions for Couples journal is it's so simple and so deep at the same time. So the journal is really designed to be super easy to use.





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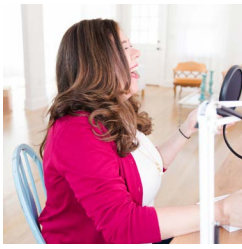
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So we have different categories of questions like your dreams and goals, your memories in the past, there's a section called intimacy that I wanted to rename sexy times and they let me add that to the introduction and that was super fun. I felt like the editor gave me like a special dispensation, which is so cool. There is a section also called your relationship and one of my favorites to work on were the just for fun questions that are just wacky and fun. And there are a couple of those where both my editor and I showed our hubbys the questions and both of our hubbys just laughed out loud at hearing some of the questions in that section. So I just want you to know that we have two hubby seals of approval right there and we really worked hard to make it a mix of deep and fun questions so you can get the most out of using the journal.

So if you haven't ordered your copy yet, I will put the link in the show notes so that you can get on that and it ships out April 21st hopefully that's when it'll go out. That's when it's scheduled to go out. Now let's wrap up today's show with another client celebration. And this is from a client Simone. She's amazing. She is an Ivy league grad, ex seminarian, hypnotist, fortune teller, who is now the CEO of her own company where she teaches life coaches how to market fearlessly. So awesome. And I have to tell you my clients really come from a wide background. So I've worked with a wide variety of professionals and business owners, from CEOs, engineers, scientists, doctors, nurses, coaching colleagues, therapists. But Simone has been my one and only Ivy league, former fortune teller. She's so cool. So here's what she had to say about the experience of working together.

"When I signed up with Maggie, I thought to myself, I am paying for a lifetime of happiness and that is exactly what it feels like. I can't believe that I was a well-educated, intelligent, 30 something year old and nobody had taught me the basic building blocks of a thriving marriage until I met Maggie. Now I trust myself at a deeper level than ever before and have what feels





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like a five-star marriage. I couldn't be happier. Also, what I didn't expect is that I learned how you do marriage is reflective of how you do all other relationships in life. It is truly the foundation and learning how to build a strong marriage has taught me how to build strong relationships everywhere. That was invaluable. Maggie models so much wisdom, compassion, and sovereignty. She's like the best of a loving, big sister, expert coach and wise witch of the woods combined.

Just being in her presence for an hour a week feels like a blessing. You're not just investing in your marriage. You're investing in your capacity for lifetime happiness and I can't think of any better use of your money." That is so beautiful. That really moved me. I love how she described the experience of working with me and I hope that even listening to this podcast, you get a little bit of that mix of big sister, expert coach and wise witch of the woods, I'm taking that on.

So thank you Simone. I really believe that too, that it's really the best investment you could possibly make, when you're investing in your capacity to increase your ability to love and forgive and have a lifetime of thriving. There really isn't any better way to invest your money, in my opinion. Thank you all for listening today. I hope this was helpful for you. If you know someone who is struggling with overwhelm right now, please share this episode. It might be the spark of inspiration they need to make different choices so they have the energy to make the changes in their life instead of feeling crushed by it. So please share it. And remember, you need three things to have a thriving, five-star marriage, perspective, partnership, and pleasure, and they're all in your control.

