

Ep #75: Chronic Consumption Mode & The Proper Process For Learning New Things



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Olivia Vizachero

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You're listening to *The Less Stressed Lawyer* podcast, Episode 75. Today, we're talking all about chronic consumption, and the proper process of learning. You ready? Let's go.

Welcome to *The Less Stressed Lawyer*, the only podcast that teaches you how to manage your mind so you can live a life with less stress and far more fulfillment. If you're a lawyer who's over the overwhelm and tired of trying to hustle your way to happiness, you're in the right place. Now, here's your host, lawyer turned life coach Olivia Vizachero.

Hello, hello, how are you? I hope all is well in your neck of the woods. My September is going pretty okay. I've got some changes on the horizon. I'm getting ready to move to Charleston. I'm so excited about that. If you've been following along on social media, mainly on Instagram, you might know a little bit about that already. But I'm looking forward to doing that.

I'm in Michigan right now. So, I'm enjoying the change of the seasons. I hope that you're enjoying whatever season you're in. Whether it's geographically where you're located, or the season of work that you're in, or the season of life that you're in. I hope you're enjoying it.

If you're not, there's no need to fret. You are in the right place, listening to this podcast, learning how to work through it, so you feel better, so you get into a better season.

Now, one of the things that I see people do, it's one of the mistakes that they make that actually keeps them stuck in a season that doesn't serve them, and that's what we're going to be talking about today. I talked a little bit in the last episode about the messiness of learning new things. I really wanted to dive in today, again, a really specific issue that I see people with.

I've devoted this entire month on social media to talking about time management. I've already done a really comprehensive time management series on the podcast, which I'll link for you in the show notes. Go back and binge that if you haven't.

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But I want to talk about some of the problems that I see people encounter. One of them was what I talked about in the last episode, which is that people want to avoid the messiness of learning new things. Because they want to avoid that messy process, that clunky process, they don't embark on learning new things.

They just stay stuck in this season of struggle, and they don't work through it; they don't improve, they don't figure it out, they don't learn, they don't keep implementing and making changes and learning more and making more progress and just constantly improving.

Another thing that I see people do all the time, and I am calling myself out here because I used to be so guilty of this, and this is how I know how to spot it in other people. But people will chronically consume. They just stay in consumption mode.

This definitely comes from those perfectionistic tendencies, where we keep telling ourselves we don't have enough information to get started yet. We need to keep learning more. There's one more thing that we haven't read, yet. There's one more thing that we haven't heard, yet. There's a tip out there that's really going to unlock everything for us, and we've got to go out there and find it.

We can't get started implementing yet, until we've exhausted basically every resource imaginable, everything that's available to us. We have to leave no stone unturned. We keep bingeing content; we just keep listening, keep reading, we keep consuming, we keep watching.

We keep taking in information, but we don't ever actually get to the part where we implement what we've taken in to actually begin the full learning process and to complete the learning process.

So, today I'm going to talk to you a little bit about a process that I created. I recently spoke, I gave a keynote presentation at a marketing conference hosted by Roman Zelichenko, who is a good friend of mine. His marketing conference is specifically tailored towards immigration attorneys and

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people in the immigration industry, outside of legal professionals or outside of attorneys, specifically.

When I was brainstorming my keynote speech for GMI CON, which is what the name of the conference is, I was thinking to myself, "How do I make sure people get the most out of this conference? What holds people back from implementing what they learn? From actually taking advantage of all of the information that gets presented to them?"

What do I see from my clients, time and time again, that holds them back? That keeps them stuck. That keeps them struggling and suffering in that season of confusion of not knowing how to do something? Of continuing to tolerate a problem because they haven't completed the learning process to reach the solution?

So, I started to make a list of all of the things that I see people do, that really gets in their way of making progress, of solving problems, of learning new things. As I started to make that list of problems, I was able to put together a learning process that I have been giving to my clients. I taught this when I was in Montana, and I taught it to Roman's conference attendees as well. It's just a really good framework for learning anything new.

So, the first mistake that I see people make is what I was talking about at the beginning of this episode, it's that chronic consumption. People just consume, consume, consume, and they never get out of consumption. They never feel satiated. They never feel full. The learning process never feels complete. They keep wanting more because they haven't ever defined what enough is to begin with, so they just keep consuming.

Another thing that I see people do is they keep remaking the same decisions, right? So, they'll decide to work on something, and then they'll change their mind. Then they redecide it. They keep staying in that decision making process, questioning themselves, second guessing themselves, changing their mind, hemming, and hawing wavering.

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That slows you down, and really stops you altogether from making any progress. Because how can you move forward if you keep moving backwards and remaking the decision you already made? Right? If you're thinking about the conference that I spoke at, it was a marketing conference, so just redeciding, am I going to do social media marketing?

People will decide that, and then they'll redecide it. Deciding, when do I enter my time during the day? Do I do it contemporaneously? Do I do it at the end of the day? Do I do it at the end of the week? Do I do it at the end of the month? Do I do it first thing in the morning?

If you keep redeciding that it's going to keep you in confusion. You're not going to follow through with the decision that you already decided upon if you give yourself permission to keep reopening that discussion and to decide anew. Alright? This is totally a defense mechanism. It keeps you safe. It feels really productive to continue to remake the same decision.

But it doesn't actually work. I actually used an analogy at the conference... and this totally applies to time management too; think about deciding what you're going to do for the day and then you remake that decision. You scratch your original plan and then you're like, "Okay, what am I going to do today, now?" Then an hour goes by, and you're like, "Okay, really, what am I going to do today?" You keep remaking the same decision.

It's sort of like when you make a list of what to pack for a trip, and instead of then moving on to actually packing your suitcase, you tear the list up, and you remake the list of what you should pack for the trip. You'll never end up with anything in your suitcase because you keep remaking a decision that you've already made.

Now, deciding things feels like you're moving the ball forward, but you're really not. You need to make the decision and then take action in accordance with that decision. You need to put that decision into practice, into play.

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Another thing that I see people do is that they don't make a plan. They'll decide, but then they don't make any plan to actually implement the decision that they just made. So, they have really no clarity on how to progress, on how to proceed.

Then they just stay in a place of confusion, thinking, "Well, I don't know what to do next. I don't know where to go from here. I don't know how to figure this out. I don't know how to get to the result I ultimately want to create." It's very hard to implement when you haven't come up with a plan for what implementation is going to look like. Okay?

The other thing that I see people do, if they've actually overcome any of the things that I just mentioned, and they get to doing the stuff that they need to do in order to solve the problem that they're facing, they won't evaluate. So, they won't gain information from what they've tried already, and they won't glean learning from it. They won't find the wisdom that's come from the tries that they've done.

Now, if you were a person who struggles with any of the things that I just mentioned, I want you to check in with yourself. Pause the episode for a second if you have to. Just get clear, where are you doing some of these things? Are you doing all of these things? You want to be able to spot your pain points because that's how you're going to get better over time.

You've got to be able to catch yourself in the middle of working on this process that I'm going to teach you to know where you're likely to get stuck, so you can catch yourself and work through it. You can course correct, you can interrupt yourself, get out of your normal habit to freeze, to spin, to indulge in inaction. You want to be on to yourself ahead of time so you can spot it as soon as you see it. Okay?

Here's something else I want you to be on the lookout for, while we're speaking of things to be on the lookout for. I also want you to pay attention, if when you're working on solving a problem, or you're telling yourself you're going to learn something new, are you lying to yourself? Are you telling

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yourself you're "working on it?" Are you telling yourself that you're trying to learn something?

If you're telling yourself these things, I want you to tap in and be really honest with yourself. Get super candid, radically candid, and be honest with yourself right now? How exactly are you trying to learn this new skill? How are you trying to improve? How are you working on it? Walk me through the process that you're implementing.

Typically, when people tell me that they're trying to get better at something, like, "I'm trying to get better at time management. I'm trying to learn how to manage my time. I'm working on getting better at time management. I'm working on my time management," and I ask them, "How? Please regale me with all the ways that you're trying. Describe to me exactly what your process of 'trying' looks like. What is 'working on it' look like for you on a day-to-day basis?" They're going to struggle to articulate it.

Because they're stuck at step one, typically. They're still in that consumption mode. They haven't moved out of it. They haven't come up with a plan. They haven't formulated what exactly they're going to do to create clarity so they can actually move into the implementation process, and move forward and just follow the yellow brick road.

They haven't done any of that stuff. They're telling themselves, "I'm working on it. I'm trying," but in reality, they really aren't. They're not doing anything to move the ball.

So, I came up with a process that you can follow to learn any new thing, any new skill, or to solve any problem, any problem that you're facing. Okay? First and foremost, you've got to identify what it is that you're going to learn or what problem that you're going to solve. You've got to get clear on that.

I want you to make sure that you can articulate it very simply. Can you put it into one sentence? "This is what I want to learn how to do. This is the problem that I want to solve." It should be very specific. I should be able to

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come in to your life with my little clipboard, and make sure that you've learned the skill or solved the problem. All right? We want to make sure that it's specific.

From there, there's a five-step process that you're going to follow. The first one is to consume information. You might need to go out and gather information. If you're learning how to manage your time, I highly recommend you go listen to the very comprehensive series of episodes that I did on time management.

Now, when it comes to consumption, you're going to have to constrain. So, I want you to limit the experts you follow, the amount of information you're going to consume, how long you're going to spend learning. Because you can just spend all of your time learning and learning and learning.

There are enough books on time management for you to keep yourself busy for probably the next 10 years, if we're being really honest. Maybe even longer than that. You could listen to YouTube videos or podcast episodes every night for the next year, and you would be in no better position when it comes to managing your time because you're stuck in that chronic consumption mode.

You won't move forward into that messy part, where you actually start to make decisions, you start to make plans, you implement them, you do it messily, then you learn and evaluate, and then adapt your action plan based on the evaluation. So, we're going to consume, but we're going to do it in a really constrained and restrained manner. All right?

If you try and listen to everything, you're never going to be able to move forward. So, you have to decide how long am I going to consume information for? What content specifically am I going to consume? Who am I going to consume content from?

You want to make these decisions, and you want to limit it, so you actually are very clear on when you will move forward into the next phase. So, step one is consume in a constrained manner.

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Step two is you've got to decide. Decide exactly what you're going to do moving forward. So, if you've listened to some podcast episodes, if you've watched some YouTube videos, if you've talked to experts or colleagues and learned how to do some things from them, that's all that consumption, right?

Now, you have to decide what you're going to do moving forward. Whose methodology are you going to use? What's your approach going to be? What are you going to try and do? What are you going to not do?

If you're thinking about marketing on social media for your practice, are you going to be on all of the social media platforms? Or are you going to consume content to figure out which platforms might be the best platforms for you?

Then you're going to step two; decide how you're going to proceed. Once you make your decisions, now you've got some clarity. What's it going to start to look like to move forward? Now remember, when it comes to deciding, you're going to decide one time, and you're going to honor that decision moving forward.

You're not going to remake that decision unless you come up with information, through your evaluation process, after implementing your original plan, for a long enough period of time to gather reliable data. I suggest six months. If you want to do three, do three, but for a while. To gather enough information, to where you can really rely on it and start to see trends.

You're going to decide, and not remake that decision until you've gone through the rest of the process, evaluated, and you have a really good reason, a reason supported with facts and data, to make a change. Alright? So, step one, consume with constraint. Step two, decide. How are you proceeding? What are you going to do? Whose process are you going to follow? What information are you going to take? Then leverage and apply.

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Step three, with that clarity that you have gained from making that decision, you need to make your plan, your action plan, that you're going to use to implement. Now, you may be able to map out a complete plan start to finish. But sometimes you don't know all the steps yet.

Especially when you're learning new things, you only know the next few steps, or maybe you only know the first next step that you need to take. If that's the case, then your plan is going to be short and sweet. Okay? More information is going to be revealed to you at a later point, after you've begun to implement, and then you'll be able to make more of your plan. You'll be able to flesh it out further.

If you're someone who really loves to know all the steps, A-Z, at the start, check in with yourself. Recognize that that is your perfectionism trying to drive the bus and control what you do. It's okay to give yourself permission to only know the first couple of steps, or just the first step, and get started.

You want to gain a lot of clarity here, though. You want to make sure that you don't have confusion about what your next step is. Even if it's only that first step, I want it to be clear in your mind so you can begin to implement.

So many people don't begin to implement because they're still confused. They don't really know what they need to be doing in order to move forward. So, ask yourself, as you make your plan for step three, is there anything I'm confused about? Is there anything that I think I don't know yet? That's preventing me from moving forward with my best educated guess on how to proceed?

If the answer is no, then your plan is complete. If the answer is yes, go get that question answered. Go find the answer to that, and then make that part of your plan. Fold it into the plan that you've created.

Now, step four, you've got to implement your plan. It's going to be uncomfortable. You're not going to want to implement, you're going to want to stay in the safe zone of making decisions and remaking decisions, and making plans and remaking plans, and chronic consumption, and all of that.

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But we've got to get you to the doing because that is where learning really happens. You have to take an educated guess, work your plan, and see what happens. Gather data, conduct an experiment, learn what works and learn what doesn't work. You've got to see how it all plays out.

You're going to figure out what are your preferences? What's effective, what's not? What were you assuming was going to go one way that actually went a different way? What were you wrong about? What were you right about? What do you want to do more of? What do you want to tweak a little bit?

You've got to do all of that, and the only way that you're going to learn and gather all of that amazing information that's going to help you learn new skills and solve problems, is by actually getting to work implementing your plan and doing each one of the steps necessary to create your desired result.

Now, think about this. Think about trying to learn a new language. You can research all of the different apps or tools or programs that you could use in order to learn a new language. You could listen to podcast episodes about which ones are the best ones. Then you could pick one. Then you could redecide and keep redeciding. Maybe you're not going to take a course, you're going to hire a private tutor. You just stay in that indecision.

Then you make a plan. "I'm going to do it every day. I'm going to practice learning this new language every single day. I'm going to do it in the morning, and then for 30 minutes at night." You make the plan, but if you never implement you will never learn the language, right?

Same thing, if you say, "Alright, I'm going to listen, every day for an hour; 30 minutes in the morning, 30 minutes at night. I'm going to listen to Italian being spoken." But you never actually practice speaking words in Italian, yourself. You never try to have a conversation with someone. You're not going to, ultimately, learn the language.

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You might learn a couple things, but you're not going to learn it completely, right? You're not going to get to the end result that you ultimately want, if you don't engage in the full implementation process, get your hands dirty, get in there, let it be messy, let it be clunky.

You've got to actually implement your plan, otherwise you're not going to learn the new skill you want to learn. You're not going to solve the problem that you're facing.

Think about this when it comes to time management. You've got to work the process. You can listen to me talk all day long about managing your time, but until you decide to use my process, that I teach, rather than anyone else's process... and I'm recommending that because it's really easy to get confused. I teach time management differently than someone else.

So, if you're half pregnant between my way and someone else's way, and you don't decide to just follow me, you're going to stay so confused trying to mix different methodologies together, and not being sure how that works. You're just going to continue to spin and not move forward.

You've got to consume my content, and then decide to follow me, constrain to me, and then make the plan. I give you the plan that you need to follow. I tell you the step-by-step process. And, if you want to hear it from me all over again, come to the webinar I'm teaching this month. It's September 29, at 12pm. Eastern; How to Manage Your Time. I'm going to walk you through the step-by-step process for managing your time.

But there is a specific process to follow, and you have to implement that process in order to actually learn how to master time management. You can't just hear me talk about it; you have to do it. You have to practice it yourself. It's the practice that's going to make the progress.

It's the practice that's going to take you out of being stuck in that place where you're like, "I know what I need to do, but I'm just not doing it." Respectfully, you don't know what you need to do. If you did, you'd be

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doing it. You think you know what it takes, but you actually don't know what it takes.

The way to figure out what it takes is to implement your plan, to follow my process, to do it in a really messy manner, and then learn what it actually takes from you. Learn what feelings you have to feel as you implement the process. Learn the tricks and tools that I teach and why I teach them, the reasoning behind them.

Why I recommend that you should have an electronic to-do list and not a handwritten to-do list. Why I tell you to pick 'start and stop times' for when you're going to start work and end work. Why I tell you to do a time audit, so you learn how long things take you. Why I tell you to double the estimate, when you're estimating how long a task is going to take.

You're going to learn my reasonings behind all of these rules when you actually get into the messy implementation of the process that I teach you. Okay? That is how you're going to learn.

Then, of course, you go to step five, evaluate. Evaluate the action that you took. We always want to be acting and then auditing and adapting; act, audit, adapt. That's how we learn. That's how we make more and more progress. We don't just stagnate and stay stuck with the same problems that we continued to have.

Through evaluating, and then adapting what you have been doing, tweaking it with your newfound theory, your new experiment, "Hey, this didn't work, I'm going to guess that this might work instead," you go out there and you adapt.

You change it up a little bit, and then you implement some more. You see if that worked and you evaluate again, and you're just going to get closer and closer and closer to the finish line. Okay?

This is the process that I want you to follow. You're going to consume with constraint. You're going to decide how to proceed. You're going to make a

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plan, a specific plan for how you're going to proceed. You're going to implement the plan. You're going to evaluate. And then get back at it, take more action.

That's the five-step process for learning new things and for solving problems. That's what I want you to do. Pick something that you want to learn, pick a problem that you want to solve, and work these five steps. Watch how it gives you clarity of how to proceed, of how to progress. It's going to make it so much easier for you to move through the different phases of the learning process.

You can work this with intentionality, and you're going to get so much further faster if you do. All right? That's what I've got for you this week, my friends. Again, if you want to come and hear me teach you all the things you need to know about how to manage your time, the link to register for How to Manage Your Time, on September 29, at 12pm Eastern, is going to be linked in the show notes.

You can also go to any of my social media platforms... LinkedIn, Instagram... and get access to it there. Or you can go to LessStressedSessions.com/signup, and register for How to Manage Your Time there, as well.

All right, that's the first reminder. Second reminder, remember, I am doing a giveaway. So, if you are loving the podcast, please do me a favor and leave a rating and a review. It helps me get my podcast in front of more people, into the ears of more listeners who struggle with the things that you struggle with, which is why you're listening to this podcast.

So, we want to get it in front of them as well, so they get the help they need also. Alright, so go leave me a rating and review. If you do it now, between now and the end of October, I'm going to pick five reviewers and I'm going to give away five prizes: one for each review.

Because it means so much to me that you take your valuable time, and you do me the honor of that rating and review. So, go do that.

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Then, just a little teaser for next week's episode. I'm so excited to record this podcast topic. I'm going to teach you how to deal with procrastinators. A lot of my time management content is about people who struggle with time management. It's about the people who want to get better at managing their time.

But a lot of my clients are actually really good at time management, and they're on the receiving end of other people's bad time management habits. So, if that's you, and you're up to your eyeballs in frustration with other people's over promising and under delivering, other people's procrastination, other people's unrealistic timelines, and under estimating how long tasks are going to take them.

If you've had it up to here with being on the receiving end of that behavior, I want you to tune in for next week's episode. I'm going to teach you how to handle these people, how to work with them, how to manage them, how to help them navigate this problem.

It's going to save you a ton of frustration, really reduce the headaches that you have when it comes to this issue. I can't wait to dive into it.

Until then, I hope you have a beautiful week and I'll talk to you in the next episode.

Thanks for listening to *The Less Stressed Lawyer* podcast. If you want more info about Olivia Vizachero or the show's notes and resources from today's episode, visit www.TheLessStressedLawyer.com.