

Ep #43: Teamwork Makes the Dream Work



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Sarah Michelle

Ep #43: Teamwork Makes the Dream Work

Welcome to *Becoming a Stress-Free Nurse Practitioner*, a show for new NPs and students that want to pass their board exam the first time and make that transition from RN to NP as seamless as possible. I'm your host Sarah Michelle. Now, let's dive into today's episode.

Hello, my friends. In the spirit of Thanksgiving week for those who celebrate, I thought I would do a little bit of a different podcast episode than normal and talk about my life last November versus now. Because Thanksgiving week actually marks the hiring of my very first employee for Sarah Michelle NP Reviews.

And so I'm feeling pretty sentimental this week, as I reflect on this last year and how much my business, and ultimately my life, has changed as a result of creating this beautiful powerhouse of a team that I now have beside me. Because I will be the first to tell you that my team of employees makes everything that you see and feel today possible.

And looking back, I honestly can't believe I did it all myself for so long. I mean, it literally feels impossible looking back on it. Every single day, for every single woman on my team and what they bring to this company, and ultimately what they're able to bring to you guys as students and new nurse practitioners.

So today, I want to dedicate an episode to the team that I've built and how incredibly proud I am of them every day. Building my team is truly a hallmark piece of my own journey to becoming a stress-free nurse practitioner. And I definitely wanted to celebrate that on this holiday week with you guys as well.

So to start this episode let's go back in time, kind of rewind a little bit to a year ago at this time, actually, exactly at this time. And y'all, I was drowning. And I think drowning is a really nice word. I mean, barely treading water maybe is a more accurate description because at that time I was working 40 to 50 hours a week at my main job. I was spending every free second I had outside of work talking to students about my review courses.

[Becoming a Stress-Free Nurse Practitioner Podcast](#) with Sarah Michelle

Ep #43: Teamwork Makes the Dream Work

So to give you a little insider perspective into my world of business, because so many people out there assume it's always been this clean and polished. At this time last year I had thought getting my first website in October was going to offload some of my workload. But my website that I had created almost created more problems than it really did anything else.

Every day, I would get up at 3 to 4am, if I could even sleep that long. I would start checking my Facebook groups, start checking my messages, start checking my emails. And then if I was lucky, by about five o'clock in the morning I could start working on my first website and all the issues that came with it. With my very first website I would have to manually reset every customer who canceled.

So what this means is that if you purchase today, and you cancel your subscription today, then it didn't automatically let you have access until the end of your paid month. So I would literally go in every morning and every afternoon, look for who had canceled their subscription that day, when they had purchased and do a manual date reset.

Between that and the hundreds of Facebook messages that I received daily, I was swamped. I had all of these ideas for new courses and new things that I could offer you guys for board prep, like the live study groups for example, but there just genuinely were not enough hours in the day, even if I didn't sleep at all. And so as crazy as it sounds, I didn't even think about hiring an employee.

I think part of it was being so deep down in the weeds and details of my business, I really couldn't see the bigger picture at that point in time. And so instead, I remembered that one of my nursing friends had once had an idea for a taco truck. And when she did, she reached out to a business coach that she worked with for a few sessions.

I thought maybe hiring a business coach would give me more resources and tools that I didn't have already. And I was definitely at a point where I was ready to run my business instead of it running me all the time.

Ep #43: Teamwork Makes the Dream Work

I absolutely love educating, I absolutely adore making courses, I even more so adore seeing all these students pass all the time. But the more in and out minute tasks add up and they were really distracting me from what I truly love to do and what I like to call my zone of genius. So I called up Hell Yes Coaching and I got a hold of who has now been my business coach for the last year, Becca Pike.

I explained my situation, I explained my dream for my business, where I was at currently, which was nowhere close. And even just on one call, I was starting to see I could have a business and I could have a life. And I really didn't even think about it too much. I just immediately signed up to do business coaching, which I sometimes very affectionately call business therapy. And guys, I needed all the business therapy.

So my first call with my coach Becca, she said, "Sarah, I usually don't do this on call number one, but you need help. You need to hire someone as soon as possible. Like I want you to hire someone before we even talk next week." My first instinct was to butt heads and say no, no way, I'm good. But that was really just because I was so overwhelmed at even the thought. I was like, where do I even find employees? How do people do this? How would I train someone to be me and help me? I had so many thoughts running in my head. I was committed, though, to making a change.

So I Googled for a hiring website as soon as we got off the call. I put an ad out looking for what they call a virtual assistant. I didn't even know what word I was looking for, I had to find that. And it was literally only three days later that I had two interviews set up with who I felt were the top candidates and had excelled at the little interview task I had given them.

If I had known that I could be that quick and that easy, I would have done it so much sooner. But it's one of those things you don't know until you know. And that is how I hired my first employee, Maddie last Thanksgiving. Her job at the time was to spend five to 10 hours a week doing those manual resets of customer accounts for me.

Ep #43: Teamwork Makes the Dream Work

At the end of her first week, I realized how helpful even just those five to 10 hours a day have been. And by the end of September, she was working at least 30 hours every week and now she's a full time employee. And so that little taste of time freedom gave me so much more flexibility immediately to be creative. It was like I was rejuvenated. And guys, I was stunned. It was like I finally realized, "Okay, I don't have to do this all myself. In fact, my students are even better supported when I'm not doing this all myself."

Which led to me less than a week after Maddie started, to hiring a friend of mine from nursing school to help me run my brand new idea at the time, the live study group program. Basically I asked Anna to help me create practice questions for our private community and join in on the live sessions for the first time around as chatbot support while I taught.

And now Anna today is literally our entire program director and orchestrates so much of the live program alongside me. Having her presence in those initial groups gave me the time and the energy to really start perfecting the content and the structure of the program, which is so unlike anything else out there for board preparation. She has also helped me create the kind of student experience in these groups that I can only dream of.

The live study groups are now coming up on a year old as of December 6th, and are by far what I'm most proud of within my company. But I never would have had the time to even have the idea or do all the creation that was involved, there's so much behind the scenes in that program, if I hadn't paused, realized that I couldn't do it all myself and hired help.

This applies to so much outside of business too. This is not just a business thing. Pausing and asking for help can be so difficult, but it can make all the difference in our quality of life day to day. And so it was the three of us from last Thanksgiving all the way until May. The fact that we did it all that long, just the three of us, that's amazing in itself.

With it being just the three of us, I was still swamped in so many different things going on. There's so much that goes into the day to day of running a

Ep #43: Teamwork Makes the Dream Work

business and our live study groups were quadrupling in size for the big May graduation season. And so we started the process to hire our nurse practitioner success team.

A handpicked handful of nurse practitioners who had already completed my programs and embodied all the things that I feel are my company. So positivity, empathy, and integrity, our big three core values. That right there, that's when it all changed.

Despite having delegated a chunk of my workload compared to what I was doing at Thanksgiving last year, I was still the point person for the content emails, the daily Facebook posts, responding to content questions all day long and night. Spending time in our private community for our live study groups, creating study guides, creating more videos, creating practice questions, the list goes on and on.

And now I have team members that help daily with all of these areas and can truly do it so much better than even I can sometimes because their focus doesn't have to be as split as mine. In the background I'm always in a meeting of some sort. So whether it's an accounting meeting, a legal meeting, a marketing meeting, a coaching meeting, that list also goes on and on. And so having nurse practitioners who are truly dedicated to each and every student alongside me and that student's success has made a huge difference for me, but also for my student community as well.

Having this team of amazing women beside me, brings my dreams to reality over and over again. It allows me space to breathe and create and embrace new possibilities so that I can continue to bring you guys all the things that you need to prepare for boards. Because of these women, we will have a very big announcement coming soon about what is likely going to be our biggest release to date outside of the live study group program.

And I never could have done it without their help and their guide. Every Friday at my company, we do Friday wins and shout outs in hopes of everyone on my team always knowing how much they are valued and appreciated within my company.

Ep #43: Teamwork Makes the Dream Work

Every contribution, every project makes this company better for that next anxious student who comes along and wants to become a real deal nurse practitioner, but doesn't totally know how. We all work together to show each student the path to success and their own journey to becoming a real deal nurse practitioner.

So I tell you this story about my employees because this evolution in my company has also led to such an evolution in myself. If you had told me even two years ago that today I would be running a company with 10 employees. And that each of those employees would be just as excited and motivated to help educate as I was, I'm not sure I could have even envisioned a world where that was possible.

Seriously, I'm just a girl who happened to create a review course based on all the things I felt like I was lacking from my board preparation process, and found my own corner of the internet with people who were just like me, suffering from test anxiety and feeling like they had nowhere to turn.

The fact that I get to do this job I love every day and help so many of you out there become the real deal alongside the help of my amazing and my incredible team makes me feel just so much insane gratitude.

I feel like my team is truly the epitome of that silly little phrase, teamwork makes the dream work. But seriously, it does. They help me live my dream of educating every day so that you guys can fulfill your dreams of becoming the real deal when your time comes. And that's it for this week, guys. I'll be talking to you soon.

As an extra bonus, friends, if you're looking for support no matter what phase of your nurse practitioner journey that you're currently in I have communities available for both students and new nurse practitioners. In these communities we work to uplift one another and grow this profession together every single day. Links to join will be included for you in the show notes.

Ep #43: Teamwork Makes the Dream Work

Thanks for listening to *Becoming a Stress-Free Nurse Practitioner*. If you want more information about the different types of support we offer to students and new NPs, visit stressfreenp.com. See you next week.