

66. Being Productive with Marla Beech



— WITH DARA TOMASSON —

FULL EPISODE TRANSCRIPT

**With Your Host
Dara Tomasson**

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I absolutely love this podcast in helping you learn and grow and in order to do that, it's so helpful to bring other people in who have incredible expertise and experiences. I'm always so inspired by other people, and I met Marla at Impact 2.0 this summer, the summer of 2022, and we just hit it off and wanted to have her share her perspective of her journey as she had come out of quite a large depression and how fabric and playing and sewing and working on our brain has helped her so much.

And so you're gonna love this episode. And I'm so happy that I can share it with you here on my podcast. And I'd love of course to hear any of your feedback. So here is my conversation with Marla from Hunkeedori .

Dara: Hello everyone. I am loving having these amazing women to come on my podcast because we all learn and grow. And today I have a very special guest who I met when I was in Utah in the summer, Marla Beech and as she is an overburdened coach, she helps women when they overburden themselves.

And so she has an amazing podcast and we can share all of that in the show notes. And Marla, you can introduce yourself and tell us what you have done in the world has helped impact other women and how even our conversation will help people so much.

Marla: Well I'm really excited to be here with you too. It was an awesome coincidence that we met, and I'm excited about that. But yeah, like Dara said, I'm Marla Beech and I am the owner of Hunkeedori, I'll explain that a little bit more in a minute, but I actually think of myself first as I'm a wife to a man that I adore. We've been married for 27 years, but he waited for me while I went on a mission for my church. So I've actually been with him for 30 years, is how I like to think of it. And so we have four pretty much grown up children. My oldest son is 26 and he was married this last spring, and so we're excited for them. They're amazing together. And then I have two daughters that are 24 and 20, and then my youngest is a high school senior, so I am getting close to that phase of life I never thought that I'd get to. I'm almost an empty nester.

But like I said, I own Hunkeedori and it's a business that I've built over the past seven years, and I adore it. I design and I create traveler's notebooks and fabric inserts, and I'm also, like Dara said, I'm a teacher and a mentor for women about being overburdened. And even more than that, connection. I want every woman to feel excitement of endless possibilities because of how unique she is, because of her gifts and her talents. And I teach that through self connection because I want, when you know who you are and what you want, and you're connected to yourself, then you're

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able to give to the people and connect with the people you love the most, even better. So that's a little bit about me.

Dara: Love it. So, um, you went from a fabric business, like fabric building of things to now connecting with women. So talk about that transition. It's kind of similar to mine in a way where I was like, professional quilter and now I'm a weight and life coach.

Marla: Yeah. I think that's interesting too, how we've, We've figured that out. When we met each other, I think it's really cool. But yeah, so I've always been, I've been a professional seamstress since I was 18 really, where I started, doing alterations and things like that. And then I've always wanted to have my own creative business and my husband and I had one for a while and it kind of tanked in that recession back in 2008 is when it really tanked.

And so we, I've been looking for something else and just continued to create and I found what, I found was the perfect mesh of my passions. I've always been a planner, but I didn't want to get in on more planning stuff. And so when I heard about what are called traveler's notebooks, I first thought of them as like another planner, but what they are is actually something that can hold your live plans.

And so I started making them for myself because I couldn't find one that was exactly like I wanted. And so I just put my skills to use and designed my own, and then I decided to start selling them. And so I got into that, making them unique for each person. But then I started, when I started putting my life in my traveler's notebook, it came together because I got to create the life that I wanted. And so it became more about what was inside my traveler's notebook as opposed to what's on the outside. So now I've had to balance my business, why I only do the sewing a couple of times a year and offer that. And then offer, like I said, what I think is the most importantest. Most importantest part.

Dara: I love that. Make up your own words. It's all good.

Marla: That's my word, now I'm gonna, I'm gonna take that. But what the most important part is what I've put inside. And so that's what I teach.

Dara: All right, perfect. So when you think about overburdened, like what is your story of, of getting you to a place where you aren't so overburdened?

Well,

Marla: I won't go into a very long story about that in my podcast. I believe it was episode 16. It's called the Hunkeedori story. I talk about how I went through a depression and I've pretty much been had. Signs of depression my whole life. But at this one point, um,

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I had a major depression. And so I, after I got the medical help that I needed and got out of that depression, which it's not gone, but it's more, it's managed now.

And I got out of that and I started feeling the fog of wanting to connect with myself again and decide exactly what I wanted and how I was going to do that. And so I started reading and learning and just finding out all these things that helped me.

Dara: So, you had depression. It is manageable now.

Marla: Yeah. I call it my, this time of fog of my, when I was coming out, I felt better, but not all the way better but I was starting to have desires again, and so I started learning a bunch. Things I would just read and read and read and I would try things and see how that they worked for me. And, and as I did that, I came to this whole system of things that I would do in the morning, things I would do in the evening, and then just a way of thinking through what I needed to do.

And by doing that, like my brain chatter slowed down, I was able to focus on exactly what I wanted and how I could use that. Once I like spent that time on myself, I was able to give to my family and my husband and my friends and my community so much more because I was myself, because I got over the overburden of worrying about being compared myself to other people and what they were doing.

And when I used to fill my calendar, the only thing that would go on my calendar is what everybody else needed me to do. And when I started learning these other things, I decided, okay, I'm gonna decide what my priorities are. And so I painstakingly went through this system of what are my top priorities? What are the order of them? And I even just changed one last week, believe it or not. And when I do that, I'm able to show up more of myself, like I said, and I don't feel overburdened anymore.

And here's a little clue, a little thing that I learned is that a lot of the things that I did didn't change because I was doing the things that were most important to me. But I was viewing them through the lens of, Okay, so, so and so needs me to do this instead of, I want to go help my kids at the school, or I want to take this family meal instead of somebody else ask. It just changed. It just changed the way that I looked at it. So I don't feel overburdened no matter what goes on my schedule because I feel more in control of it because it's my priorities.

Dara: Mm-hmm. That's amazing. So one of the things that I find is that the idea of prioritizing yourself sometimes feels selfish. And I know that was the way I used to perceive that, and I see that with my, um, the people on this podcast, the people in my membership. So talk a little bit about that.

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Marla: Okay. So I used to be in the exact same boat. And not to say that I don't get in that boat every once in a while, but I honestly feel that when I give myself the time that I, I told you that I have these certain things that I do for myself every day. When I do that, it doesn't feel selfish because I know that I am more fully who I am for those people. And I honestly, the people in my life that I love so much, and I honestly believe each one of us has been given talents and gifts that are unique to us for the purpose of serving the people around us. And when we ignore taking care of that person, how can we show up for those people we love so much if we're not fully her?

Dara: Right. I'm like, it's been such a game changer for me as well because my kids don't see this exhausted, overburdened, over tired mom.

Marla: Absolutely. And even though my kids aren't in my home anymore, They need me in a different way, and I am so thrilled to show up for them knowing that I'm me and part of me feels bad, I mean, I should say that all of me feels bad, but I don't, Part of me feels bad that I wasn't Who I am now for them when they were home. But I also believe everything happens for a reason, that I had to have those hard times to get me to believe who I need to be now. And I, I guess I could say I'm one of the lucky ones that my kids didn't go through these hard things as teenagers, but they have had some really hard things as young adults. And so when I look back, it's easier for me to say it happened exactly as it was supposed to.

Dara: Yeah.

Marla: I'm gonna share that, one of the things that helped me to find out exactly who I am is through a process that I was using to try to find out what business to start. Like what form of my creativity I wanted to use and it was in the artist's way.

I don't know if you guys have ever heard talked about that before. It's by, It's a book from Julia Cameron and it's called The Artist's Way, and she teaches morning pages. And it's to, and it's a whole creative journey, but the part of it that I'm talking about is like morning free writing where you just write whatever comes to your brain.

And that's how I like kind of got to how I talked through the hard things that would get me to procrastinate or stop working on my business or things that I wanted to do. But what it's turned into now, and this is the part I wanted to talk to you about, is that when I journal, I call it journaling or free writing now, where I just sit and I just write to myself. It's like I have a conversation with myself and I say, This is what's bugging me right now, and I don't know how to work through it. And sometimes I just write, I don't know. I don't know the answer. And you know, you just write whatever comes to your mind.

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But I started seeing that there's my brain that would have all these questions and then myself, my true self, which I refer to as my spirit, my intelligence has always been shows up for me and reminds me of who I am. And she shows up in the most kind and loving ways, and she is who's helped me to remember who I am and what I want and what my priorities are. And that's who shows up for those people. Well, at first I show up for myself. And I teach myself, and then I get to show up for my children and my husband and my friends in the way that is truly me and unique to me. So I've loved that practice. Journaling is my number one thing that I would get outta soapbox forever talking about.

Dara: Yeah ,so one of the things we do is, Well I'm a big fan of the journals, um, but we do a thought download, so it's kind of similar where we just like put everything, like all the thoughts in our head and we just dump them out and we can see what's really going on, and then we, we need to take the shame out of whatever's going on for us. Or even the blame, like, I can't live my life because my kids need me, or my husband or my job, and I, So then that way it can just be you.

Marla: Yeah, those pages, in fact, I've told some of my, the people that I teach, so burn your journal if you don't want anybody to hear what you are saying to yourself or you're, you know, you're like complaining that somebody else is taking all your time and you never would want them to feel bad about that, but you need to work it out, like burn it, shred, whatever you gotta do. It's all good.

Dara: Yeah. That's why we have just the loose leaf paper, and then we have the pretty journal. So if, you know, it's not gonna, you don't wanna keep it. Just put, get the loose leaf, the coil bound journal.

Marla: Okay. The, the 50 cent ones at the drug store. Right. Back to school days, right?

Dara: Yeah, totally. Totally. I hear you. Okay, so you have three top suggestions of helping women feel less overburdened. So would you like to share those with us?

Marla: Okay, well, we've talked about a lot of them, but I have a lot of them, but I'm gonna tell three of them today, and my number one is that you've got to get yourself pointed in the right direction every morning. You've got to look at this by asking yourself what you need first. And I call this self-care to service because I'm a big believer in taking care of other people and serving other people, but through this whole process, I came to learn that I have to take care of me first. So that's why I call it self-care to service, and it's the first thing that I do when I, I have a little planner that I wanna give to your audience, that I write down what I'm gonna do for myself today.

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It's either what I take care of first thing in the morning or something I'm gonna plan to do later. Like so, I'll ask myself what do I, what do I need today? And I'll just sit there in that thought and I'll come up with a decision. And maybe it's what I can do that first part of the day. You know, I don't need to take a lot of time, but do I need to, you know, give myself some positive affirmations? Do I need to talk to myself a little kinder? Do I need to give myself half an hour to sit down and read a book today? Or do I need to get out there and get with people because I'm feeling lonely? So that's what I do. The first thing I do is I start with self-care to service.

Then, okay, this is another one. I do a little practice that I call looking forward. This is different than a to-do list. You think about, you think about what you have to do today, but you're gonna take it one step further. You try to imagine yourself doing these things. Now, obviously, if you have a million things on your list, you can't do this for everything, but you take the most important ones, you think about how you're going to do it, you're gonna think about how you feel while you're doing it, and you're gonna think about how you want the other people to feel while you're with them or how you'll react to them. And it might seem a little strange that you would go through this and write it out.

But, I share this on my podcast too, but there's a time where I had, there's just situations that you come to. Like, for example, I was going on this bike ride with my family, and I hate going downhill really quickly, but I didn't know before we got there that there was gonna be this big hill. And so I had just thought about how I wanted to react to my family. It was gonna be cold. I hate being cold. I decided that I was not going to complain. So that was something I did during my looking forward, decided I was gonna pay attention to the scenery if things got hard. This was a really shortened version of this, but you know, it doesn't really take very long to write it down, but it takes a long time to say it sometimes. And I also wanted to spend time with each of my kids on this ride.

So when I got there and the, the hill was there and it was really fast, and instead of focusing on the hill, I focused on the scenery. That's just an example of a really quick way of saying that, of looking forward to the things you having have to do not knowing exactly how they're gonna come to pass, but you decide ahead of time how you're gonna react. So that's one, that's number two.

And the third one is looking backwards. So this is at night. I do this part at night where I look back on the things in my day and I decide on one thing that I don't wanna forget. One thing that happened that I want to learn from, or one thing I never wanna repeat, or one thing that I want to remember forever. And so I write down that too.

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And part of what I teach too is I, I really believe that memory keeping is important and there's all sorts of ways you can memory keep from scrapbooking big, beautiful pages to just writing in a journal. It all, you know, we just all have our different ways we like to create. And so looking backward, it helps us to bring awareness. That's one quote that I really like to say is that when we look forward, it brings us possibilities brings us excitement, but when we look backwards, it brings awareness and it helps us to remember.

So that's why I like to do those two things in conjunction. One's in the morning and one's at night. And it's really important when you look backward to write down your feelings, not just the events and you know, the, the dates and the times and the people that were there. You know, how did it make you feel? What was it that made it so special, and why do you never wanna forget it? And what can I learn from the situation?

So all of those things, really, those three things really have helped me to feel less burdened because, when I, you know, if we look at memory keeping as this big thing that we have to get done all the time, that's a burden, right? So if we make it so it's just one quick thing we can write in this planner that I'm gonna give you guys. It makes it less of a burden. And when I look forward and make plans and things don't go exactly as planned, I at least know how I wanna react to the situation. And above all of that, I take care of me first so I can show up in every situation the best that I can be. So those are my, my top three I'd say.

Dara: I love it. So because one of the things that happens, like overburdened, overwhelmed. One of those issues is that when you feel that way, then it leads to inaction. And so I love your tips and I, I've been writing everything down because I, so not only are you gonna get, Marla's journal, but I always have a, like a handout that's attached. So I'll just include that with this. But just of, I like how you just limit it to just keep it simple. Like what is one thing I want to remember today, or what's one thing that I can do? Because otherwise if you're just overwhelming yourself, it, you really don't do any of it, and then you never move forward.

Marla: That's absolutely true. If all I ever did was, when I was first scrapbooking you, everything was big and I never, you know, you can't get to it all. But I do so much better now. I put one little picture, if I take a picture and one little memory from the day, and I try to put a stamp on it or something to make it cute and that's about it. And I can do that in 10 minutes, you know?

Dara: Yeah, totally, and I think about you know, with the trains, When they have just one little switch, it's just that little switch and like you can go from Chicago, like one little switch, you go wrong way. You can go all the way to Chicago versus going to Georgia,

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whatever the example. But, so just those little tiny things that we do in our life, they have big impact. We don't have to reinvent the wheel, We don't have to do a whole bunch of things in order to live this Pinterest worthy kind of life that so many of us think we're supposed to, we're supposed to have before we can actually feel happy.

Marla: Yeah, we don't have time.

Dara: Yeah, right. Come on. We have so many things to do in life. Well, it has been so good to talk to you. I know it's gonna be so helpful. I do believe we have a lot of similar ways of approaching things, but I love giving people new ways of thinking of it and just even the way you describe it and just like the three steps has helped me just through that concept of like self-care to service, like just that little phrase that helps me to refocus myself and reevaluate and looking forward. And I like what you said, looking forward brings possibilities, but looking backwards brings awareness, and it's, none of that has to do with judging yourself. None of that has to be being a jerk to yourself.

And the last thing, I just wanted to, just to conclude with this podcast, because I think sometimes the danger is you listen to these podcasts and you get really inspired in the moment and it feels so wonderful and you think, Oh, why can't I be like more like Dara? Or why can't I be more like Marla? But what happens when you commit to yourself and you just decide, I'm gonna do one little thing different, that example of you changing, people will watch you.

And if you are struggling with feeling selfish, think about your little granddaughter, or your adult son or if you still have kids at home like I do, they notice all the little things. And so when you make just little changes, they will notice those and you can feel good that you are making generational changes. And so it really is worth the time and effort.

And then the last thing is, you need to put something into practice. So just commit right now as you're listening to this podcast, I'm gonna just, even if you put on a piece of paper, the words looking forward brings possibility, looking backwards brings awareness, or self-care to service. Whatever that is, I want you just put a reminder on your phone, just one little change, and I can promise you it's gonna make such a difference.

Well, thank you for being here, Marla. That has been so kind of you to share your time and I know that my listeners are gonna really enjoy this. And can you let people know where they can find you? If they wanna connect with you?

Marla: Yeah, everything that I do is called Hunkeedori and um, so you'll find me on Instagram @Hunkeedori. You can contact me Marla@hunkeedori.com and my website's

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hunkeedori.com. The only thing that's not is my podcast, it's called Overburden No More.

Dara: Okay, perfect. And those will all be in the show notes. So thank you for spending this time with us. Take care everyone.