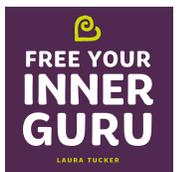


Free Your Inner Guru – Episode 21 Feeling Like a Small Fish in a Big Pond?



Laura Tucker: Have you ever felt like a small fish trying to swim in a big pond? Welcome to this week's episode of Free Your Inner Guru. I'm your host, Laura Tucker. It's not always the best experience, is it? Realizing that you are or feeling that you are a small fish trying to make a ripple in a big pond.

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At one end of the spectrum, it can feel very, very difficult. The thoughts going through your mind might be something like, oh my goodness, this is so hard, everything is taking so much time, so much effort, so much money. On a deeper level, it can sound like, I'm not good enough or I feel like I can't make a difference here. There's too much competition, too many voices, too much noise.

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At the other end of the spectrum where the glass is half full, there's feelings of anticipation and worthiness and aspiration and positivity. I think we can all think of somebody that we know that seems to live down at that end of the spectrum, but let's face it, most of us go back and forth. We oscillate between knowing that hey, I'm playing really big right now, so of course it's uncomfortable, and oh my gosh, why is this just not moving along the way that I hope it is?

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What if this resistance, what if these uncomfortable feelings were just part of the process? If you've never done something before and you're stretching, it means that you're stretching yourself. As far as I've ever seen or experienced, when you're stretching and reaching, there is discomfort. The challenge is that discomfort is not made conscious and isn't supported.

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As you might have guessed, I've been going through a period like this myself. I've really been stretching myself, particularly the last month or so, but I would even say since the inception of this podcast. Everything has been new, different, bigger, better, faster, required more effort, more resources, and some of the things that I've had to put in place in order to maintain it are things that I have never done before.

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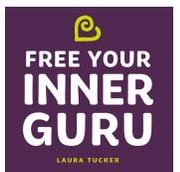
I'm going to take you through some of this because within the last 48 hours, I've had three conversations with three other people who are having a very similar experience.

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If you're feeling like you're a small fish in a big pond and you can't make a difference, I'm just here to tell you that you're absolutely wrong. Of course, you can. Others have and you can too. What we need to do is make sure that it's supported, so you can either go down the route of thinking and being creative and creating your own pond,

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or finding ways to influence the one that you're in.

[00:04:00] I want to talk to you about resources and the difference between resources and resourcefulness. A lot of the time, when we get down to that frustration of feeling like small fish, big pond, I'm not making a difference here, it's not moving fast enough, we feel like it's because it's limited resources - not enough time, money, energy, contacts, you name it. Whatever it is that's got you in that uncomfortable place.

[00:04:30] One of the wisest things that has ever been said to me was that it's not about resources, or at least not always about resources, it's about resourcefulness. I want to ask you, if you're identifying with this, are you spreading yourself too thin? Spreading yourself too thin is not just a sign of limited resources, it's a sign of limited or priorities. If you're spreading yourself too thin and trying to do everything, you're diluting your results.

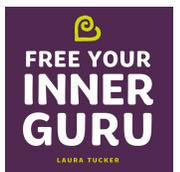
[00:05:00] If you do have limited resources, it's incumbent upon you to leverage the resources that you do have, starting with your time. Your time is probably one of your resources that you have the most influence or control over. The second thing that I want to look at is the tools that you have, or things that you have spent money on that you may not be leveraging to their full extent. The third thing is people who you have in your circles who can help you that you may not be comfortable asking.

[00:05:30] A lot of the times being resourceful is like playing the game of ask. The game of ask is when you let go of all expectations of what the answer is going to be, whether it's going to be a yes or a no, and you go out and you ask anyways.

[00:06:00] I played the game of ask several months ago at a very small networking event that I was at, and it was interesting because when I arrived and there was a very small turnout, I was initially dismayed because I thought when you go out and you invest your time, one of your resources into something, you're hoping for maximal return. Instead, it was a very intimate gathering, and at the end, I was thinking, what do I really need in my business? The answer that came back to me was not more clients.

[00:06:30] What I really needed in my business was someone to help me to get my podcast up and posted and out every single week, and to go back and rebrand the past images once I had allocated my resources towards going through my recent rebranding. On a whim, otherwise known as inspiration or intuition, I said, "You know what I really need? I

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need somebody to help me who knows WordPress, and that I can train to do what I have to do to get the podcast out."

[00:07:00] At the end of the meeting, one of the women came over to me and she asked me a couple of questions, more specifically about who I was looking for. I asked her, "Well do you know somebody?" She surprised me when she said, "I'm actually thinking of me." That was the start of a very great partnership because she was in a position where she wanted to acquire some more skills, and I was in a position where not only did I realize that I had to allocate some of my financial resources to the podcast, that I can absolutely train somebody.

The relief that has brought to me has been unbelievable, and it was a totally different outcome that I was expecting. Part of what you can do, and I'm going to admit, I kind of fluked it that night, but when you can get clear on what you really need, and then you can ask, it's amazing. People can come out of the woodwork, literally, to help.

[00:08:00] The second thing that you can do to help yourself is to really understand that this is the time for being your own leader. If you have projects out there that need to be moved forward and you know or you even sense that these are smaller projects because, hey, you're in a stretch game right now, effective communication is something that will always serve you well. Stay on top of your email, get as clear as you can in your writing and your requests. Again, get resourceful so that you can make things as easy as possible for people to help move your goals along.

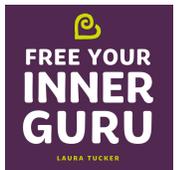
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[00:09:00] The second thing that you can do is find yourself a mentor. Find yourself somebody who has gone before you, and pay attention to them. Your mentors don't have to be people who you necessarily know personally.

Now something just came to mind. The last thing that I want you to do is get up in front of a great big crowd at an event, and ask somebody who is a million steps ahead of you in the game that you're in to be your mentor. Find somebody who's one or two steps ahead of you and pay attention. People are always willing to help.

[00:09:30] Find partners. Find people who are also playing big and who you can leverage each others' resources and realizing that what they say is, "It's not what you can get, it's what you can give." You'd be amazed how much things can free up when you are focused on how you can help other people, instead of always what you need.

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[00:10:00] There is almost always a bigger pond, especially if you're playing big. A couple of weeks ago, I found myself saying in my frustration over and over again, "I'm punching above my weight." That's a belief, and I caught myself, and I was like, "Really? I'm punching above my weight. First of all, what am I doing using a boxing metaphor to begin with? What if instead of punching above my weight, I'm actually punching up to my weight?"

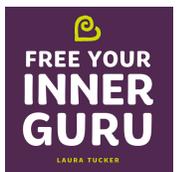
[00:10:30] Some things are out of your control, but there is so much that you can influence. Taking from an experience that I had on Sunday, I was at the shore of Lake Huron for the day, and I was wanting to take some pictures in between some of the writing that I was doing. I looked around, and it was absolutely beautiful to the eye, but it was one of those days that's not so beautiful to the camera - open sun, no cloud, everything is very harsh contrast, so the environment wasn't quite great.

[00:11:00] There I was, literally, sitting beside one of the biggest ponds in the world, one of the great lakes, and it became clear to me that I had my tool, the camera, and it was time to get both creative and resourceful. Instead of trying to shoot away from the sun and avoid it, I shot into the sun because I know how to use that tool. I have put all kinds of energy and time and resources into learning how to use the tool that I have. What came out of it were some extremely creative, not exactly gallery quality photos, but some really great shots. You can get a fantastic result when you're able to use your tools, use your resources, use your creativity and adapt to the conditions that you're in.

[00:11:30] If you're a small fish, the way I see it is, you can be steadfast and determined and do everything you can within your influence to move things forward, knowing that at some point, you're going to reach that point where it doesn't feel like you're at a bottleneck anymore and things are going to flow. It became clear to me when I was feeling the difference between how I wanted things to be and how they actually were when they were seeming hard is that it's a feeling of being out of flow.

[00:12:00] When I was putting my notes together for this podcast, I thought, I've got to have something here on my bookshelf that can support somebody who is listening and identifying with this uncomfortable position. I turned around and I pulled two books off of my shelf. One addresses some of these challenges of prioritizing and productivity in a very straight forward manner. It's called The ONE Thing by Gary

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Keller. The long title is The One Thing: The Surprisingly Simple Truth Behind Extraordinary Results.

[00:13:30] I recommend it, it has a way of helping you focus in on what that one thing is that you need to move forward. With the focusing question, what is the one thing I can do, such that by doing it, everything else will be easier or unnecessary? There's a lot more to it, obviously, than that, but that's one of the great big takeaways from when I first read that book.

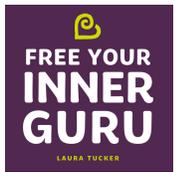
[00:14:00] The second book I pulled down off the shelf, which I'm cuing up to re-read is one from a few years ago, and it's called Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience, by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. I know I just butchered that, the gentleman's last name, but it is unbelievable. One of the core statements is, "A person can make themselves happy or miserable regardless of what is actually happening outside, just by changing the contents of their consciousness." That's the main premise there.

[00:14:30] What if - and I put this out to the person I was speaking to yesterday - what if all of this feeling like being that small fish in the big pond, pushing water uphill, what if that is just a part of the process? What if the people who you perceive as ahead of you on your path, what if, in their own way - because if they're worth paying attention to, they are continuing to play big - what if they were still having that same experience right now because they're looking at the next big pond for them? What if it wasn't about you in particular or me in particular, and that was just the amount of effort that it took to take your game to that next level? I believe that's where the truth of this lies.

[00:15:00] If it's coming back on you as feelings of extreme frustration, negativity, and feeling like it's not worth the effort, then I'm going to suggest that not only do you focus on all of the things that I said earlier, including those two books about focusing your priorities, leveraging the resources that you have, learning to play the game of ask. If you're in that position and you want it that much more, then I would consider taking a look at hiring a coach, and I'm not just saying that because I'm a coach.

[00:16:00] If you can get a hold of an honest to goodness coach who has been there, done that, done the thing that you want to do, and is willing and able to invest their time in helping you, then I suggest that you consider, once you've exhausted all of those other suggestions that I had earlier, that you take a look at who can I get on my team as my

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coach?

[00:16:30] If that's something that you want to take a look at via me, you can come on over to lauratucker.com, and there's a way to get in touch with me through the website, and request a Discovery call. I will leave a link to that in the show notes, but I will also leave those two books and an outline of the suggestions that I had for you.

[00:17:00] I hope you've found this timely. I know it was definitely the talking to myself that I needed to give myself the last couple weeks when I was pushing up against all that resistance of what felt like limited time, energy, and resources. Now on the other side of it, I can see that, you know what? It just means that you're growing. Thanks for joining me here on Free Your Inner Guru. Have a wonderful week, and get out there and be that small fish. The small fish eventually turns into a big one.

[00:17:30] Speaking of the game of ask, can this small fish ask you for something? My intention for the podcast is that it helps thousands of entrepreneurs and leaders make a positive difference through their life and their work. If you've been enjoying and receiving value from listening to this or other episodes of Free Your Inner Guru, I need some help to make that difference.

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