



**This Is Your Life Podcast**

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Michael Hyatt

**Michele Cushatt:** Welcome to *This Is Your Life* with Michael Hyatt, where our goal is to give you the clarity, courage, and commitment you need to do what matters. My name is Michele Cushatt. I'm your cohost today, and I'm sitting in the studio with Michael. Hi, Michael!

**Michael Hyatt:** Hey, Michele!

**Michele:** Today is always our favorite episode because it is our Q&A where we get to listen to and answer your questions.

**Michael:** I love this. Yep.

**Michele:** I am always so excited about this because, honestly, we never know what to expect.

**Michael:** I know. I haven't reviewed these at all, so I'm totally responding to these shooting from the hip.

**Michele:** Which means I'm in absolute control, which makes me feel really good right now.

**Michael:** No, I'd be very nervous if I were you, because you don't have any idea what I'm going to say.

**Michele:** That is true!

**Michael:** I don't have any idea.

**Michele:** You don't have any idea! But I have some great questions this week, and I'm really looking forward to diving in. We're just going to get right to it.

**Michael:** All right.

**Michele:** All right. Bruce from Missouri called, and his isn't so much a question as a comment, but I thought we could talk about it a little bit. He simply said, "Thank you for making so much available for free. I use your business principles in my home, trying to make my family time more effective and relaxing." I thought that was interesting.

**Michael:** That is interesting. Now what interested you about that, the family thing or the part about free stuff?

**Michele:** Both.

**Michael:** Okay.

**Michele:** It was actually both. First of all, I love just his gratitude for free content, which is always really nice.

**Michael:** Yeah.

**Michele:** You are very generous with giving as much as you can. This podcast costs you money to produce.

**Michael:** It does.

**Michele:** And yes, it's free content for your audience that is very helpful.

**Michael:** Yep.

**Michele:** I love that you do that, but perhaps what I'm most fascinated by or interested in is just how he is using what you're teaching on this podcast and on your blog in his home with his wife and his family.

**Michael:** Yeah, that's really intriguing. I've believed and practiced for a long time that what works in business often works at home and vice versa. Leadership is leadership, and whether you're trying to lead your family or you're trying to lead your business, usually the same principles are in play. So it doesn't surprise me in a sense, but good for him for taking it to the next level.

**Michele:** I love that in so many of your topics. With the exception of maybe the firing episode...

**Michael:** Yeah, yeah. Other than that...

**Michele:** We don't want people firing anybody in their family.

**Michael:** That's right. You can't really do that. That's unfortunate because sometimes it would be awesome. I won't mention any names.

**Michele:** True. We'll just move on from there. Okay. Thank you so much, Bruce, for calling in with that feedback. We love what you are doing with applying this to your family at home.

**Michael:** Keep doing it.

**Michele:** That's great. Caleb from the Ukraine called. Isn't that nice? He's from the Ukraine!

**Michael:** Yeah!

**Michele:** He was commenting on the “Leading from the Heart” podcast. I just wanted to note right now that we got such great feedback on the podcast called “Leading from the Heart.”

**Michael:** It was huge. Yeah.

**Michele:** If you haven’t heard that, you want to make sure you go and check it out because it just really resonated with a lot of our listeners and viewers. Caleb said this. “You talked a lot about how we should check our own hearts and how it is important not to close down. I’m in contact with and lead people who are closed down because of the current situation in the Ukraine (with the war going on, etc.)”

He said, “They’re deeply hurt. They have deep wounds, and understandably so. So how can I help them? How can I be sensitive to the hurt that has been done to them and yet still help them to open up?” Do you have any ideas?

**Michael:** Yeah. Well, first of all, what an extraordinary situation.

**Michele:** Yes. True.

**Michael:** I mean, I honestly can’t begin to understand that, because I’ve never been in a situation like that. All I can do is refer to experiences that might be parallel but certainly not at that magnitude. I come from a background in business where the most recent assignment I had before I started my own company was as a CEO. As most people can imagine, most of the world of CEOs is spent fixing stuff. They might actually mess them up worse than they already were, but their job assignment is to fix stuff.

When I was in CEO mode, somebody would bring me a problem that couldn’t be fixed at a lower level in the organization. It had filtered up to me, and now this had become a very thorny problem that nobody seemed to be able to fix. So they wanted my input. My job was to get to the solution as quickly as possible. That worked. Everybody appreciated that efficiency. That was what we were there to do. Take that same mental framework and move it into the family. It does not work.

**Michele:** Mm-hmm.

**Michael:** So when my daughters would come to me or my wife would come to me with a problem, if I jumped quickly to the solution, it ticked them off.

**Michele:** Mm-hmm. True.

**Michael:** It was evidence that I didn’t have empathy, that I didn’t listen.

**Michele:** Yes.

**Michael:** Many times, the healing in a situation and in situations like that is really in the listening and allowing people to process.

**Michele:** Yes.

**Michael:** So my guess is that in a situation like the Ukraine, part of what you have to do... I know this from police officers I know who deal with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Policemen or policewomen who have been involved in a shooting are trying to process that after the fact. One of the most important things they can do is let people talk. Years ago, more than a decade ago, I went through a series of gun training courses with the guy who was the head of the Nashville SWAT team for the police department.

**Michele:** Okay.

**Michael:** One of the things he said was that the biggest cause for police deaths up until that point was suicide. It was typically police officers who had been involved in a gun fight who did this. They had survived the gun fight, but they couldn't survive the trauma of the gun fight, so they would take their own lives. People began to do some research on this, and one of the things they discovered was that the very same thing happened in soldiers returning from Vietnam.

**Michele:** Yes.

**Michael:** Because up until Vietnam, soldiers would get on a boat, and they would have literally weeks on board to process what had happened with their fellow soldiers, to just talk it out.

**Michele:** Exactly. Exactly.

**Michael:** But then in Vietnam, they would leave Saigon by airplane in the morning and be back in the States many hours later (maybe a day or so later), but they had no processing time.

**Michele:** Well, it was complicated by the fact that there was such negativity toward the war that they were not allowed to even talk once they got home.

**Michael:** Oh, absolutely. Yep.

**Michele:** It was shut down, and they were shunned.

**Michael:** Exactly.

**Michele:** I just know this from my dad's experience. That made it even worse for them.

**Michael:** Yes.

**Michele:** Continue.

**Michael:** I don't think we can underestimate the power of empathy and the healing power of listening. So I think that if I were in that situation, the place I would go to first based on my limited experience would be to ask people questions and let them talk through it. I would do that without shaming them and without offering a way to fix it. If somebody is angry, let them be angry.

**Michele:** Let them be angry.

**Michael:** Let them express that.

**Michele:** In this case especially, they have a right to be very hurt and very angry.

**Michael:** They do, and that has to be acknowledged.

**Michele:** Mm-hmm.

**Michael:** Until it is, it's unresolved and continues to fester.

**Michele:** True.

**Michael:** Once they can kind of get it out there in the open (these things fester and grow in the dark kind of like mushrooms), the daylight is the very thing that will disinfect and heal it.

**Michele:** Yes.

**Michael:** I would suggest to Caleb that he read some of the writing of Brené Brown, for example.

**Michele:** Oh, yeah. Absolutely.

**Michael:** She's a shame therapist, which is slightly different, but I think some of these principles and techniques she teaches would be hugely helpful for this.

**Michele:** Well, she teaches a lot about mutual vulnerability, that in order to encourage vulnerability on the other person's part, you have to be willing to go first.

**Michael:** Yeah.

**Michele:** That can be part of that strategy as well.

**Michael:** Well, part of what so often happens in a situation like this... I can imagine somebody feeling like there has been some injustice committed and being very angry about it. Then they share it with somebody who tries to defend the other position or talk them out of their anger, and that only further entrenches them in it.

**Michele:** Well, it just deepens the wound.

**Michael:** It deepens the wound.

**Michele:** Because it's like wound on top of wound.

**Michael:** Exactly. I would add this this too. We can listen and then get frustrated if the other person doesn't talk. We're like, "Okay, I'm going to be available, and I'm going to give them an opportunity to talk," but if they don't jump in and start talking right away, we can get frustrated and bail pretty quickly.

**Michael:** Or fill the air with our own words.

**Michele:** Exactly. I think there's the gift of steadfast availability for as long as it takes.

**Michael:** Yep.

**Michele:** And it may take somebody weeks before they're willing to open up even a little bit.

**Michael:** Absolutely.

**Michele:** But just continuing to show up and create an environment where they are safe to talk if they want to is key.

**Michael:** And our nonverbal communication is important too.

**Michele:** Yes.

**Michael:** The reassurance, the acknowledgement, the recognition... All of that is key.

**Michele:** Well, I just want to affirm Caleb for a second, because the fact that you're asking this, Caleb, says a lot about you.

**Michael:** It's huge.

**Michele:** It shows the fact that you really care about the people who you're working with and interacting with, so well done. Again, just the fact that you're asking this means you're leading from your heart, which is beautiful.

**Michael:** That is beautiful.

**Michele:** I love that. All right, the next question came in from Athens, Greece. He said, "My email inbox was bombarded after a recent trip to Brussels. What do you do after being away from the Internet for 1-3 days or maybe a week, and how do you get back on track?"

**Michael:** Great question. It's a very common problem.

**Michele:** Yes.

**Michael:** I think there are two things to do. One is to set it up right before you actually go away so that you set the expectations.

**Michele:** Yes.

**Michael:** Now you can do everything from maybe coming up with some kind of arrangement if you have an assistant where they're going to go through your inbox, handle what they can handle, and only leave what they can't handle for you... This way, you come back to a curated inbox that's only the stuff they couldn't deal with.

As I went on my recent sabbatical (as we've covered on this program), one of the things I did was just tell people, "Look, I'm going to be gone for 30 days. Here's what you need to do in the interim, but know this: This email is about to be deleted from my inbox, and I will not be responding. Because when I come back, I don't want to come back to a full inbox, and I don't want to come back and answer issues that have already been resolved."

So I came back from that trip to Europe for 30 days with no email in my inbox. I think there's a way to set it up on the front end and get people what they need, but not return to a full inbox. But let's say you haven't done that, so now you're coming back.

**Michele:** And you have a ton of email to deal with.

**Michael:** Yeah, you have a lot of email.

**Michele:** Yeah.

**Michael:** Also, before I tried that little experiment... One thing I would do is schedule time on the back end, like a free day or... I literally put an appointment on my calendar for when I'm going to catch up with email.

**Michele:** Okay.

**Michael:** Sometimes, depending on the trip, that may be a three- or four-hour block of time, but it's not going to be something you're ever going to catch up with if your reentry means you hit the ground running and go right to the next appointment.

**Michele:** In fact, I kind of feel like it almost needs to be the first thing I do, because then I can start to tackle everything else.

**Michael:** Yeah.

**Michele:** But I have to get my email under control, which kind of cleans things up. I kind of know where I'm situated, and then I can move forward from there.

**Michael:** Well, I had been gone for 10 days before this recording session, so I have time tomorrow afternoon when that's the first thing I'm going to do. I really want to take a couple of days off, but I don't want to...

**Michele:** The email time is not time off.

**Michael:** That's not time off. That's right.

**Michele:** I'm just saying. I'm reminding you.

**Michael:** You're absolutely right. Thank you. Thank you for the reminder. I need that.

**Michele:** Email time is not time off. That's great. I love that. I really like your comment about trying to set it up ahead of time so you're not playing catch-up.

**Michael:** Yep.

**Michele:** I just recently did the same thing, where I set up an autoresponder...

**Michael:** I got that autoresponder. That was actually very good. You did a great job with that.

**Michele:** Thank you! I kind of set the expectation, and then my assistant had access to my email. It's wonderful. My email inbox will stay clean, and it won't be this pressure.

**Michael:** That's right. If you want to respond (as you did in my case), you can.

**Michele:** Mm-hmm. You can, but there's no pressure to.

**Michael:** There's no pressure.

**Michele:** Which has changed everything. Okay, he also had a second question. He asked, "Do you have any suggestions for the creation of a new business card?" What should be included? Do you need to include social media accounts on that? Do you have any suggestions on whether it should be a traditional size or it's better to create something completely unusual?

**Michael:** Well, this is kind of a true confession, but I really don't use business cards. I have business cards, but one of two things happens. Either I forget them, I never take them...

**Michele:** Been there, done that.



**Michael:** Or nobody really asks me for them anymore. People want to know, “Okay, what’s the best way to contact you?” I just say, “Go to [michaelhyatt.com](http://michaelhyatt.com). Any way to contact me is right there on the site.”

**Michele:** Okay.

**Michael:** So I would probably be sure that I had a good web presence with the ways to contact me, probably in the order of preference listed there. If I did have a business card that I actually used... I do have one, and I thought about this during the design process. I think there are a lot of clever ways to do it so you kind of stand out, and if you’re in a business where you depend on physical networking, you’ll probably want to do something like that. But I literally put my logo and my name on the front.

**Michele:** Okay.

**Michael:** And on the back, I put the social media channels: how you can contact me on Twitter, Facebook, and everything else.

**Michele:** That’s exactly what mine looks like too.

**Michael:** You do it too? Yep.

**Michele:** Yeah. They’re exactly the same. It’s the logo. It’s all very branded and consistent with my website and everything.

**Michael:** Yeah.

**Michele:** Then the back side has my primary social media channels, my email, and my website.

**Michael:** Yeah. That’s a good way to do that. If you could only remember to take them with you...

**Michele:** Yes. They look beautiful sitting on my desk at home. All right. Moving on. Matthew called from Sydney, Australia. By the way, I love the fact that we get calls from all over the world.

**Michael:** I do too.

**Michele:** It’s really nice.

**Michael:** It’s very energizing.

**Michele:** He actually just called with a comment. I don’t know if you remember this from last season, but we were talking about how some of these callers, because they’re calling from all over the world, have different accents, and we can just listen to them talk all the time because they just have nice accents. We were like, “The American accent isn’t that cool.” But Matthew begs to differ. He says he

called back regarding our accident and wanted to let us know he thinks it could in fact help him make something of himself if he had an American accent.

**Michael:** Well, it proves the point that the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.

**Michele:** Yes.

**Michael:** You know?

**Michele:** Yeah.

**Michael:** I mean, it's a little bit more exotic no matter where you're from.

**Michele:** Mm-hmm.

**Michael:** I'm still not convinced that the American accent is that attractive, but...

**Michele:** No, I think it's...

**Michael:** I do think that in a global economy and a world where we are talking to people around the world, the bigger issue for all of us is to remain sensitive to the cultural diversity that's out there. Yet at the same time, I think we should not camouflage, hide, or apologize for our cultural distinctives.

**Michele:** Mm-hmm.

**Michael:** To me, that's what makes the world rich and beautiful. I'd hate for it all to be homogenized.

**Michele:** Mm-hmm. That would be boring.

**Michael:** One accent, one culture...

**Michele:** Totally true. Totally true. But I am very grateful that Matthew decided to call in and affirm our very boring American accent.

**Michael:** Good!

**Michele:** So thank you for that, Matthew. We appreciate it. Peggy called, and she's looking for advice on choosing a publisher for a self-published book. She originally published an e-book version on Amazon, but now she realizes it needs to look better. She wants to take it up a notch and kind of make it more professional, so she's looking at options like [lulu.com](http://lulu.com) and Balboa Press. What kinds of things does she need to consider, and what should she look for in a self-publisher?

**Michael:** Well, this is kind of an interesting question because I assume that what she means by this is that she's looking for the tools... If you're a self-publisher, you are by definition the publisher, right?

**Michele:** Mm-hmm.

**Michael:** So all you're looking for is somebody to help you put it together.

**Michele:** And package it.

**Michael:** Package it, print it, and all of that.

**Michele:** Mm-hmm.

**Michael:** I'm going to be honest about this. While you can self-publish... I've self-published too. I have a book on Amazon called *The Virtual Assistant Solution* that I self-published. It was way more work than it was worth, in my estimation. I've completely changed my perspective.

**Michele:** I've heard other people say the same.

**Michael:** My own perspective is that my first priority is to get a traditional publisher if possible.

**Michele:** Okay.

**Michael:** Yes, you'll make more per unit if you do self-publishing, but you probably won't get the same distribution, so I think that's kind of a wash. I don't do that for the money anyway; I do it for lead generation. That's a whole other discussion. But I'd use a traditional publisher if you can. If you want to do self-publishing, I don't really have any advice, especially for the physical aspect, because I just don't have any experience doing it.

**Michele:** Okay.

**Michael:** That's one of the reasons that I bailed from self-publishing my next book. I didn't want to go in there and learn all of that stuff.

**Michele:** Mm-hmm.

**Michael:** It just wasn't a good use of my time.

**Michele:** It is a lot of work.

**Michael:** It's a lot of work.

**Michele:** I should say it's a lot of work if you do it right.

**Michael:** Yeah.

**Michele:** I mean, it can be less work to self-publish if you just throw it together, but to really get the kind of quality product you want, you have to be willing to invest a ton of time into the process.

**Michael:** You do.

**Michele:** Because it requires design, editing, and everything else that a traditional publisher handles for you.

**Michael:** The only reason I would do that would be that I didn't have an option somewhere else.

**Michele:** Okay.

**Michael:** Because I really believe that in almost every area of our lives, the more narrowly we can focus on our activities... We don't have to be jacks-of-all-trades, but we really can master a few.

**Michele:** Okay.

**Michael:** The more we can do that, the more successful we'll become.

**Michele:** All right. Well, we're going to take a quick break. However, stick with us. We have several more Q&A questions coming right up, and we will be right back.

**Michael:** As a busy and successful blogger, podcaster, author, speaker, and consultant, I'm constantly asked about the tools I use to get it all done. Now for the first time, I'm going to pull back the curtain and let you peek inside my toolbox to see the software and hardware I use for everything from blogging and podcasting to productivity, social media, and speaking, plus so much more. You can't buy *Inside My Toolbox*, but you can get it for free by subscribing to my free email newsletter.

When you subscribe, you'll receive my newest content right in your inbox. You'll never have to worry about missing an important post or update again. To get your free copy of the *Inside My Toolbox* ebook, visit [michaelhyatt.com](http://michaelhyatt.com) and enter your name and email address into the form on the page. Don't waste any more time or money using the wrong tools. Sign up today at [michaelhyatt.com](http://michaelhyatt.com).

**Michele:** We are back, and we're doing our favorite episode today, which is our Q&A. We always love hearing from you and all of the different questions you send in, so thank you for that. Let's go ahead and go on. We have another question from Steve, who lives in California. He said he's getting ready to launch a new blog.

"I'm looking at doing a reader survey. What do you recommend in terms of a pre-reader survey? At the very beginning, before you've launched and established your audience, how do you survey the people you know, your potential audience, to get an idea of the best way to launch well from the beginning?" This is kind of a tough question because he wants to do a survey when he doesn't necessarily have the readership, but he wants to create content that really fits, so he's trying to figure out how to survey, how to do that.

**Michael:** Well, I think that what I would do at the very beginning if I didn't have any readers and I was just starting straight up... I wouldn't do a survey per se. I would do a focus group that included the people who I was trying to reach.

**Michele:** Okay.

**Michael:** I would probably do that physically. I would assemble a group of friends or people who were in the target market and who represented the people I was trying to reach. I'd put them in a room and just ask them a bunch of questions. I'd try to find out where the gaps were. I'd try to find out what their challenges were, what their frustrations were, and what their aspirations were, because that can really shape the content you create.

Then once you start getting a little bit of traction, you can do a reader survey. But when you're asking somebody to do a reader survey, you're asking them to make a commitment to you, and most people aren't going to do that unless you've given first, until you've invested in them. When I do a survey... I told this at the recent Platform Conference, and I think people just couldn't believe it. I asked 53 questions in my last reader survey. That's way too many!

**Michele:** That's quite a few questions.

**Michael:** Yeah. But I've been blogging for 11 years now.

**Michele:** Okay.

**Michael:** I've really sowed into the lives of the people who read my content, and I got 3,500 responses.

**Michele:** Which is amazing to me. Yeah.

**Michael:** It's astonishing. It was almost too much to go through. It took my staff and me a considerable amount of time to go through all of those, and we did go through all of them. But I recommend that when you're just beginning... Let's assume for the person who has a little traction. You ask about 10 or 12 questions, and you process that information as you build the relationship. In subsequent years you can ask more questions. Reader surveys are hugely helpful, but at the beginning I'd start with the focus group.

**Michele:** Okay. Focus group. I've done this a little bit, and it's not quite the same as a focus group, but I'll even... On Facebook, I tend to gather a circle of people around me with whom I have kind of similar interests anyway, and I'll just put a post that kind of surveys too. I can get some good feedback that way.

**Michael:** Totally. Yeah.

**Michele:** That's just another way out on my social media streams.

**Michael:** Well, you know one of the things Pat Flynn does is that when you subscribe to his email newsletter, the first thing he sends you is, “Hey, tell me what your frustrations are, what your aspirations are...”

**Michele:** “Tell me what you’re struggling with,” is what he said. I love that.

**Michael:** Yeah. And then they reply to him, and then he’s getting this feedback constantly.

**Michele:** I thought that was brilliant.

**Michael:** It is.

**Michele:** That was brilliant because most people want to talk about what they’re struggling with, because they’re looking for a solution.

**Michael:** Yeah.

**Michele:** So it’s a great way for you to get feedback right away, not to mention the fact that it’s telling you what kind of content you need to create.

**Michael:** Yeah.

**Michele:** Fabulous. All right, moving on... The next question is from Stephen, who’s from Keller, Texas. He says, “I’m in the process of going through the Dale Carnegie success program, and a lot of the training I’m receiving coincides with your training. Have you had experience with the Dale Carnegie program?”

**Michael:** No, I haven’t. I wish I had. I would like to go through that. However, when I was a high school student, my dad paid me to read Dale Carnegie’s book.

**Michele:** Okay.

**Michael:** What’s it called?

**Michele:** *How to Win Friends and Influence People*.

**Michael:** He paid me to read that and then just give a little oral report to him.

**Michele:** I would love for somebody to pay me to read a book.

**Michael:** I know, it was great.

**Michele:** That’s nice!

**Michael:** Well, actually, it’s the only book he ever did that with.

**Michele:** That's great!

**Michael:** He just thought that would be so life-changing for me, and it was! It was extremely helpful.

**Michele:** Oh, that's really probably the best money he spent.

**Michael:** Well, probably some of those seed ideas are now given expression. I have just lost track of where they came from.

**Michele:** Okay. Fabulous. I like it. All right, Tom called and said, "We have both a website and a free WordPress blog. Should we just focus our attention on one or perhaps upgrade to a theme on a WordPress blog and then drop the website?" What do you suggest about that?

**Michael:** Well, it's hard to know without knowing more specifics.

**Michele:** Yes. It's kind of vague. Yeah.

**Michael:** But there are two different things here. One is a static website that doesn't change. I don't know why you would focus on that after you get it built.

**Michele:** Yeah, it just kind of sits there.

**Michael:** You're going to redesign or refresh periodically, but you get that done and it hangs there. All of this can be done in WordPress now. For example, on my site, the home page is my blog because dynamic content is there. The content is changing. It gives a reason for people to come back, and that's what you want.

If people come back, you begin to develop a relationship and build trust (again, that's the foundation for any kind of sales work). But I'm about to change over to something. I don't want to give this away too soon, but I'm going to use WordPress so there is also going to be a static homepage.

**Michele:** Okay.

**Michael:** If you're visiting for the first time, that's what you'll see. It'll be an introduction to me, all that I have to offer and all I have available. You can click over to the blog. Once you're not a first-time visitor, you'll see the blog.

**Michele:** Okay. It will just kind of sense that out? It'll know?

**Michael:** Yeah. It's actually going to do it through a cookie.

**Michele:** Okay.

**Michael:** If you don't have the cookie on your machine, we're assuming you're a first-time visitor, and we'll show you that static page.

**Michele:** Got it.

**Michael:** But if you've been there before and there's a cookie on your computer, then we'll bypass that and go straight to the blog.

**Michele:** I've gone back and forth. When I first started blogging, I had just the WordPress blog, and then I went to a static homepage for a while with the blog that was a link.

**Michael:** Yeah. Inside of WordPress?

**Michele:** Inside of WordPress.

**Michael:** Yeah. Good.

**Michele:** Then I went back to having the blog be the main part of the page.

**Michael:** Yeah. The truth is, though, that you can do it all on WordPress. For all of my services, all of my products, and all of that stuff, I have static pages that are hanging off of the blog.

**Michele:** Yes. But really, the point of what you're trying to say is that having two completely separate sites (unless you have like two completely separate businesses) is just thinning you out in too many directions.

**Michael:** Yeah. Or if you have brands for which there needs to be a static site... For example, if you go to [getnoticedtheme.com](http://getnoticedtheme.com)... That's where my WordPress theme is. That lives on its own domain.

**Michele:** Okay. That's static.

**Michael:** That's static.

**Michele:** That makes sense.

**Michael:** It's basically a sales page.

**Michele:** Yeah.

**Michael:** Platform University is another thing. That's a community and a sales page and all of the rest.

**Michele:** Okay.

**Michael:** Members log into that. That deserves its own site, but I would try to be simple before you get complex.



**Michele:** Okay. Makes sense. Yvonne called and asked, “Are you retired?” Actually, I thought this was kind of cute. She said, “You said you do three blog posts a week. In order to do it that often, are you retired? Although I love blogs and love to do them, I’m usually teaching in the classroom setting, and I don’t have time, so if you’re not retired, how do you have time to do all of this?”

**Michael:** I’m going to try not to react to this question, because there are few words in the English language which I hate more than the word *retired*. I hate the concept.

**Michele:** Uh-huh.

**Michael:** It’s basically a concept that was developed in the age of factories to bribe factory workers into doing work they didn’t like, where they felt undervalued and underappreciated, but if they would just hang in there, they would finally reach the Promised Land of retirement and they could do what they wanted. Forget that. I don’t believe in that philosophy, and I know this is a sidetrack to what she’s talking about...

**Michele:** Yeah, I think this is an interesting topic.

**Michael:** Yeah.

**Michele:** We might have to do a whole podcast on this.

**Michael:** I think you have to live the life you want now.

**Michele:** Mm-hmm.

**Michael:** This is the whole topic of a lifestyle business, but when I started my blog in 2004, I was the President of Thomas Nelson Publishers. I worked an average of 60 hours a week. I had five kids at home. I was very, very busy, and yet I made time for blogging. At that time, I was blogging three times a week. After I became the CEO of Thomas Nelson in 2008, I was blogging five days a week and ultimately seven days a week.

**Michele:** Okay, I don’t even know... That just sounds like death to me. Seven days a week?

**Michael:** Yeah. Well, I’m not saying it’s even... I eventually came back to three times a week because that’s enough.

**Michele:** Okay.

**Michael:** But this has nothing to do with how much time you have. It has everything to do with what the priority is for you. If it’s not a priority, it’s not a priority. That’s okay, but don’t tell me you don’t have time.

**Michele:** Yeah.

**Michael:** Because people make time for what's important to them. For me it was important. It was important to me as a CEO because I was trying to get a handle on this digital technology shift that was taking place in my industry. I wanted to experience it first, and I wanted to be able to speak authoritatively to my board, my employees, authors whose work we were publishing, and so forth. So I was going first as a leader.

**Michele:** Now I think that behind Yvonne's question is that (I would imagine) a lot of people feel like writing a blog post can take hours and hours and hours.

**Michael:** Yeah.

**Michele:** You have taught me this, and we've had episodes and blog posts on this. Writing a single blog post doesn't have to take as long as we typically spend on it.

**Michael:** It doesn't. And I'll say this. Obviously, I have a lot of practice, so I can be very efficient and very fast at it. But whatever time you have... I think, for example, that if Yvonne wants to blog and she thinks it's important for building a platform or whatever... How much time does she have available? Could she take two hours a week and do that? Maybe she could only get one blog post up a week. By the way, I think that's the minimum effective dose.

**Michele:** Yes.

**Michael:** I don't think you can build a platform on less than a blog post a week.

**Michele:** But if all you can do is one, it's still good. Do one.

**Michael:** Yeah. I mean, guys like Tim Ferriss who have huge followings only do about one blog post a week.

**Michele:** I do one a week right now.

**Michael:** Yeah, and that's fine.

**Michele:** That's just kind of where I am, and it works for me.

**Michael:** Yeah.

**Michele:** I would love to do more, but it works for me right now. You do three, and that works for you.

**Michael:** Yep.

**Michele:** But I agree with you. Anything less than one... If you don't make a weekly appearance, that typically doesn't work.

**Michael:** Yeah. I'd just find something else to do.

**Michele:** Yes.

**Michael:** But again, it's not an issue of time. That's the thing I want to get across. I get that Yvonne is busy, and I get that a lot of our listeners are busy.

**Michele:** Mm-hmm.

**Michael:** I mean, I'm busy too. I'm busier than I have been at any other time in my life. I'm way busier now than I was when I was a CEO. The cool thing is that I have more control of my time now.

**Michele:** Yeah. You get to choose.

**Michael:** I get to choose, so I choose to make that a priority. But even when I was in meetings all day long, traveling around the country with a busy, busy job with 650 employees, it was just a matter of my scheduling that time. I connected it to a bigger why: why it was important.

**Michele:** One suggestion I have (this is something I've discovered recently) is that... Rather than writing one post a week, I block off a full day and blog. I may kind of craft rough drafts of three or four blog posts.

**Michael:** That's a great way to do it.

**Michele:** Then all I have to do each week is tweak it, fine-tune it, and make sure I have the image.

**Michael:** Yep.

**Michele:** Then it's only like an hour-long job rather than an afternoon-long kind of task to do a whole blog post.

**Michael:** That's good.

**Michele:** It takes the load off of my mind. I know they're coming. I know they're already in the queue, and it's just such a relief.

**Michael:** Well, it's not unlike how we're doing the podcast now.

**Michele:** Mm-hmm.

**Michael:** I used to do them where I did these every week. I got into my studio at home, and it was a task I faced every week. It took me several hours.

**Michele:** Well, that kind of takes some of the joy out of it if you have a regular kind of task that is always coming up.

**Michael:** It does.

**Michele:** You get one blog post done and you're so relieved.

**Michael:** You relax for a moment.

**Michele:** Then you go, "Oh no. I have to come up with one for Wednesday."

**Michael:** But the way you and I are doing these now... We're recording 13 podcasts in about a day and a half.

**Michele:** Uh-huh.

**Michael:** We gear up for that. We do all of the prep. We sit in the studio. We get them done, and then I don't think about it for another quarter.

**Michele:** I love it.

**Michael:** I love it too.

**Michele:** I'm all about batch production.

**Michael:** Me too.

**Michele:** All right. Thank you, Yvonne, for that question. It's an excellent question. Just as a reminder, we want to let you know we do want to hear from you. If you have a question about leadership, personal development, platform building, or productivity (those are kind of the topics we tend to talk about here), please leave us a voicemail. You can find the app for that at [michaelhyatt.com/question](http://michaelhyatt.com/question).

Yes, I personally listen to all of your questions and messages. I love hearing from you. We'd love to feature you on an episode of *This Is Your Life* and perhaps help you a bit with your calling and your message. If you enjoyed today's conversation, you can get all of the show notes and a complete transcript for the episode at [michaelhyatt.com](http://michaelhyatt.com). In addition, if you'd prefer to watch instead of listen, we have the video available on his website as well.

Could you do us a favor? We'd love for you to head on over to iTunes and rate the program. This is huge for us. It's literally the very best way to get this content into the hands of people who truly need it. So if you could just take 30 seconds to do that for us, we'd be really grateful. Any final thoughts today, Michael?

**Michael:** No. I think I may have said this on our last episode when we did the questions and answers, but just stay curious. I think that's one of the best ways to grow as a leader and a person. Just be curious. Be asking questions and reading books. Keep learning.

**Michele:** Absolutely. Well, thank you for being with us today.

Until next time, remember: Your life is a gift. Do what matters.