

027 MDB Rising: When to Sell Your Six-Figure Business with Sara Dean



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Rachel Rodgers

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Sara Dean: I was talking with her about it and freaking out. She's like, "You know, at the end of the day you're still going to be on a real short list of women who have sold businesses." And I was like, "That's all I need to know. Done. I don't even care about..." It was like \$100,000 I was like, "Bye, you're going to put me on a list of people who... Very few people are on? Cool."

Sara Dean: So really reframing things to look at how they can be wins and how they can be successes versus me just harboring resentment over \$100,000.

Welcome to the Million Dollar Badass podcast. I'm your host Rachel Rodgers; wife, mother of four children, lover of Beyoncé, coffee drinker and Afro wearer, and I just happened to be the CEO of a seven-figure business. I am on a mission to help every woman I meet become a millionaire. If you want to make more money, you are in the right place. Let's get it going.

Rachel Rodgers: Hello friends. I'm sitting here with Sara Dean after many technical issues trying to get this podcast started, and it ties very well into your brand of being a shameless mom, right?

Sara Dean: Totally, 100%. Shameless imperfect action every damn day.

Rachel Rodgers: Talk about imperfect, this has been very impressive. Oh my God, you guys I need some technical skills for sure. Thank you for being so patient, Sara. So tell everybody who you are so that they know a little bit about you, who you are and what you do.

Sara Dean: Sure. So I'm Sara Dean. I'm the host of The Shameless Mom Academy podcast. I help moms find their identity again after motherhood, and a lot of that is about just helping moms step into their power and build an identity outside of being a wife, a mom, coworker, a colleague, a sister,

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a mother, a daughter. All those things just being themselves and connecting to something, or a lot of things that are just for them rather than always being observers.

Rachel Rodgers: Yes. I love it so much. Also, you didn't have terrible podcasts on that, which would include me. By the way, can we just talk about this whole back to school period as moms because I feel like we should just get a pass for being on point for like the first... I don't know, the week leading up to the kids going back to school and then like for one or two weeks after. I think we should just get a pass for being on point. What do you think?

Sara Dean: Yes. This is the first summer I haven't had full childcare the whole summer, so I would like a pass for the whole summer, and we still have some time before we go back to school, so I'm still in it, but I think that it's okay to acknowledge seasons where things are just super chaotic. And right now my motto for the summer was to embrace adventure over chaos so that I could be in the mess and appreciate it rather than feeling stuck in the chaos.

Sara Dean: And I know in motherhood a lot of times we're counting down time for chaos to be over, like I'm counting down til vacation is over, I'm counting down until the kids are back in school, I'm counting down to this, and so I was really focusing on being in it, enjoying the magic, even when the magic is super messy sometimes. So that's kind of where... I'm in the last couple of weeks of that.

Sara Dean: And then I'm also real excited to get back to full time routine, and so recognizing... I'm constantly talking about recognizing the season that you're in, giving yourself grace in that season and also keeping yourself accountable. You can't use the chaos as a crutch every single day and it would be really...

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Rachel Rodgers: Totally. Especially when you're a mom with little kids, there's basically constant chaos.

Sara Dean: Yeah. There's no day where you're like, "Today I have extra time. Maybe today's the day I can pursue a hobby." No, you're always going to have to find time that you think you don't have to do anything that will move the needle anywhere.

Rachel Rodgers: Yeah, 100% I totally agree. I also think too, I forgot... Yesterday I had the realization we went to go see the kids. It's like the open house so they get to go see their new classrooms, and so my kids are going to first grade and second grades. We got to meet their teachers and go see the new classroom, and then we went to go get pizza and my daughter had a complete meltdown and started sobbing while we were eating pizza.

Rachel Rodgers: And I'm just like, "Oh, I forgot." Kids are like a complete mess when they go back to school because it's like the emotional turmoil of like changing from the summer routine back into a school routine, it's a new class, new teacher, I forgot. I usually I'm on point with this stuff, but this year I was like, "Oh yeah, this is the part where you guys act like a hot mess for like the next two weeks." Yay.

Sara Dean: I booked my son a dentist appointment on the first day of kindergarten. This was last year, the first day of kindergarten, and then I was like, "We'll just go to the dentist at 3:00, what could go wrong?" Oh my God. Worst parenting move. He hates going to the doctor or the dentist. It was the first day of kindergarten after he'd been in the same preschool for four years, worst move ever.

Rachel Rodgers: The only thing he needed was a snack and a nap after-

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Sara Dean: Right.

Rachel Rodgers: ... preschool. Oh my gosh. Yes, this is why I think being a shameless mom and talking about this stuff and having comradery around it and not pretending like we get it all perfect is essential. And also taking that time for ourselves, for our own dreams is also essential. It can feel really hard when you're in the mess, and I have to keep reminding myself that this is this season, it's like literally two weeks, maybe two and a half, and then we'll be back in our routine, back in a groove and it'll be awesome.

Rachel Rodgers: So I'm like, it's just messy right now because I'm like, "Oh, let's have a meltdown this morning." I need to have my own personal meltdown just because holding space for everybody's emotions. Then I'm like, "Oh yeah, it's just because it's this particular week of the year that's always a little bit messy." So I think talking about it with other moms and realizing we're all going through it and none of us are on point is essential.

Sara Dean: So that's a huge... I think the connection with other moms, and this is something we talk about in my community all the time that... So among women and among moms specifically, there's an epidemic of loneliness, isolation, depression, and anxiety. And it's because we don't connect with other people.

Sara Dean: We put on a happy face and put happy faces on social media, but we don't acknowledge like this is a really hard day, or a really hard season, or I'm in a really bad place, or should I really have had the second or third child because oh my God, it's feels like a million kids now. And we don't talk about, and the experience-

Rachel Rodgers: It is a million kids, it is definitely a million kids.

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Sara Dean: You're like, "FYI PS it is one million." One two equals one million. So I think absolutely you have to have a place where you can connect with people along those lines and have those kinds of really open conversations where you can all share like today was horrible, I hate my husband, don't really love my kids that much either, and for other people to be like, oh my God, me too because otherwise we just sit and we think we're all alone and we're like, I'm the worst person in the world because I don't love my partner and my kids today.

Sara Dean: And we internalize that and make that our identity rather than reaching out and connecting with other moms.

Rachel Rodgers: Yes, exactly. I think that community is so huge for motherhood, for business. This is like... Essentially, I think there's parallels between being an entrepreneur and growing a human. It's a ton of responsibility and there's so much growth happening and so much stretching happening all the time that you really need that community to lean on.

Rachel Rodgers: Okay. So I want to talk a little bit about how you wound up here. Tell us how you wound up starting this Shameless Mom Academy brand and business. Where did you come from? Where were you, let's say spring of last year? I'm just randomly choosing that, not really. But tell me where you were spring of last year and why you decided to start this business and brand.

Sara Dean: Sure. I'll back it up a little bit further than that because it's important to the story. I owned a gym, I'm here in Seattle, I owned a gym for a few years before I had my son, he's almost seven. So I had this gym for a few years, then I had my son. I had built this gym all around transformation programs, so basically selling weight loss programs to women. And I was extremely proud of the community.

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Sara Dean: It was, is a really amazing community of women. I felt really good about how I operated it. But after my son was born, I realized that I had built a brand that was all about helping women shrink their bodies, and that was not at all in alignment with my core values after I became a mom myself. So I had this community of moms who were always coming in with goals around like I want to lose 20 pounds by this date, or I want to work on my belly fat. And their identity for their whole lives in many cases had been wrapped up in shrinking their bodies.

Sara Dean: And the more I saw this after becoming a mom myself, the more I was like, I can't do this. And so I did rework a lot of my messaging, but still people were coming in wanting weight loss as like their primary goal, that it'd been their primary goal of their life forever. So what started happening over time is I realized that I had built a business at a certain point that was no longer in alignment with my core values, and so I decided that I wanted to be talking about motherhood, my experience in motherhood, and really be having conversations around helping women take up space rather than always trying to shrink.

Sara Dean: And so that's where the podcast is born. And it started off as a passion project where I was like, I'm just going to do this, have conversations and just have fun with it and see how it feels, so it was very experimental. And within a few months I was like, this feels really good. So then I decided that I would figure out how I could grow it and evolve it, turn that into a business, I ended up selling the gym and building a business around the podcast.

Sara Dean: And so come last year, the gym sold in April of 2018, and then as that was happening, I was looking for a new business coach. I had been looking for a little while. I had found Rachel a Little bit prior to April of 2018, but I knew when the gym sale was going to be done, I was like, I need to

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go all in, and my goal was to replace multiple six figures that the gym had been making as quickly as possible.

Sara Dean: And so I was like, okay, if I hire a super strong badass coach, I want someone to lead me to make this business a six-figure business within the first year of selling the gym, and so that's what we did. So I gave myself from May 1st, 2018 to May 1st, 2019 to get those first six figures, and I beat it by like a landslide, which was awesome. So now the podcast has six streams of income and is on track to do multiple six figures in its second year of full time.

Rachel Rodgers: Awesome. I love it. Okay. So tell us a little bit about the transition because I think transition is something that people struggle with a ton. So when you first got this idea of like, okay, this gym isn't it anymore, was your first thought like, okay, I definitely need to sell it? Did you think, should I just get rid of it? Or did you try to make it work for you where you were like, no, I need to stick with this, I've already built it?

Rachel Rodgers: People really struggled to leave the thing that they've already been doing, so tell us a little bit about what that experience was like.

Sara Dean: That's a really good question and it's something that I've given some thought to, especially as I've been coaching women through transitions as well. One of the things I was able to do was that the gym brought me a ton of security and stability because it brought me good income. And so I knew it was really risky to walk away from that, but I also knew after I started the podcast and I was like six months in or so, I knew that in five years I did not want to be in the gym anymore.

Sara Dean: And so I think what you have to look at for transition is to look down the road. And when I signed the last lease on the gym because I had

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such a hard time getting a lease, commercial real estate in Seattle is wild, and so when I got that lease, I was like, I want a 20 year lease. I want to have this locked in forever because I had had to move multiple times. It was just really stressful.

Sara Dean: So it's funny, I went from like give me the longest lease you can possibly give me to then suddenly over the course of just a few months being like, I don't want to be in this business five years from now. And that was very clear to me. I didn't feel ready to sell at that time, I just knew I didn't want to be in it. So I just got really curious and I started... I always talk about data collection, so I was like, I just need to collect some data, see what my options would be.

Sara Dean: At that time I was like, I have no idea if this is even something that I could sell. I don't know the first thing about selling a business. So I got two referrals to people who are basically business brokers and I just went and met with them and got information around like, do I have something I can sell? Is it worth my time to sell it? If I'm going to make like three grand, it's not worth my time. If I'm going to make a hundred times that let's talk.

Sara Dean: So I met with two different people and I was like, oh, I totally have built something I can sell, I had no idea, which was also another big lesson to me. I talk to women a lot now about building something that you can sell, but... Anyway, so I started getting that information and then I also... So I took action before I felt ready. So I met with these brokers and I was like, "I don't want to do this right now, but I'm just collecting information." And the second woman I met with, she's like, "You know, we could just list it and see what happens."

Sara Dean: She's like, "It might take a few months." And I was like, "I don't know." And I remember we listed it and I was terrified. I think it was October

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that I met with her and we had it listed by Thanksgiving time, and I was dying because I was like, “What if this happened super-fast? I'm not ready and I don't know how I'm going to replace this income.”

Sara Dean: Then it took 18 months and it was awful. Oh my God. And I was so glad. And not that that would happen to anyone in my team helping me with it was great, but just a bunch of circumstances made it really complicated and it took forever, so by the time it actually went through, I was like, somebody take this, like I will sell this for \$10.

Rachel Rodgers: Anybody.

Sara Dean: Yes. Up for grabs.

Rachel Rodgers: Give 20 bucks. Free, I'll pay you to [crosstalk 00:14:33]-

Sara Dean: Yes. Not because I didn't love. Again, I love the community, I loved everything I built, but oh my gosh, the process and dealing with banks and lawyers and oh, it was just... And it kept everything just was so complicated. So the lesson to me was like, look down the road five years and decide where do you want to be, and then you have to look at like where do I need to be taking action today? And you have to take action before you feel ready.

Sara Dean: And that's in everything. No one is ever... When you have kids, you're not like, today I feel super ready to be a mom or I'm super ready to add a second kid, third kid, whatever. You always are taking action a little bit before you feel ready a little... Rachel is always like, “I'm going to take action even though I feel like I'm going to have diarrhea right now.”

Rachel Rodgers: We talk a lot about diarrhea in our confessions.

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Sara Dean: Yes. Rachel stresses out my GI tract in a big way, but it's also always really good. It's always for the benefit of growth and evolution in my business. That was what that transition looked like for me was looking at what I wanted the long-term plan to look like and getting clear on that, and then also taking action before I felt ready, just knowing that I never would be like, "Today's the day I'm ready."

Rachel Rodgers: Yes, exactly. And the day you're ready also is not necessarily the day that a buyer shows up, so that's why you got to plan for it and start moving in that direction even if you don't feel ready today. I love that you shared that and it always... I feel like what happens too is that it feels like your life is on hold when you're waiting for a transaction like that to go through or you're waiting to...

Rachel Rodgers: I remember when I was transitioning out of my law practice and I was waiting to get these cases wrapped up and I was closing cases one by one and not taking new clients, which is also super scary, but then bringing in new clients for coaching and it's super messy because I'm coaching, I'm wrapping up legal work, I'm saying no, I have a ton of inquiries for people who want legal work and I'm like, "No, you can't hire me for that anymore, but hire me for this thing over here that no one knows me for."

Rachel Rodgers: And also too, it actually went better than I could have planned, but it is a little bit messy, but I do think you have to think about like do I... For me it was like, do I still want to be practicing law in five years or in two years? I don't, I want to be done. I'm tired of the deadlines and I'm tired of the repetition, I'm bored. So I decided to do the much more complex work of coaching women to build businesses, which is way more challenging than being a lawyer just so you guys know, just FYI.

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Sara Dean: Right. No, I would say the same like telling people how to work out and helping them count their reps, way easier, but also not stimulating. There was moments for sure when people had breakthroughs or whatever, and also you just outgrow things. And so like recognizing like I've done something really awesome here and I'm ready for the next thing, and I'm ready for a bigger stage, and I'm ready for a bigger platform, or to help people in a more profound way, or there's all of it.

Rachel Rodgers: Yeah. And I think an important thing to think about in the transition period is just... People I think get into this mindset of like, oh, I've wasted this time. I've wasted all this time building this gym, I've wasted all this time building this brand or building this community around my law practice or whatever, or I've wasted time on a law degree and money.

Rachel Rodgers: But it's not wasted, it's an essential step and it's your catapult to your next level. I 100% would not be doing what I'm doing today if I hadn't been a lawyer first and practiced law the way that I did first. Do you agree?

Sara Dean: Yeah. I also think it's a huge credibility and authority booster. So now when I look at making that transition, I talk really openly about I've built three businesses, and I've built two of them to multiple six figures. It's like one of my accolades, it's not like this wasn't working, I decided to walk away or I didn't want this anymore or anything, it's like it's on the list of accomplishments and it's a big one.

Sara Dean: So yeah, I think that it's important to reframe that in a way that's not like, oh, I got tired of it, that's like I was ready for a bigger stage and I was ready to build something that was going to impact people on a different level, on a more deeply impactful level. So yeah, I think it's all how you choose to frame it.

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Sara Dean: I actually had... There was a situation that happened in the sale of the gym where we ended up losing a big chunk of money from the original sale price that was agreed upon, which was really painful and I was really bitter about it for a while. I was working with a coach at the time who had sold businesses and I was talking with her about it and freaking out. She's like, "You know, at the end of the day, you're still going to be on a real short list of women who have sold businesses."

Sara Dean: And I was like, "That's all I need to know. Done. I don't even care about..." It was like \$100,000, I was like, "Bye, you're going to put me on a list of people who... Very few people are on? Cool." So really reframing things to look at how they can be wins and how they can be successes versus me just harboring resentment over \$100,000.

Rachel Rodgers: Exactly. And that's not an easy loss to take, but I agree. I think when you really look at, like look at what I've done so far, and I think it's good for women in general to take stock of like look at my accomplishments so far. Even in a corporate career or whatever you've done, you have a track record of success and use that to catapult you to the next level.

Rachel Rodgers: Awesome. Okay, so fast forward, you started this brand. Tell us why you chose Shameless Mom Academy. How did you come up with that as the brand for your podcast?

Sara Dean: I wanted a space to talk about women, to talk about moms specifically being unapologetic, stepping into their power, taking up space, being loud, shining over shrinking, all the big things that women struggle to do, struggle to be I think especially in motherhood, and also a place that gave moms permission to build something for themselves outside of all of their obviously defined roles like wife, mother, et cetera.

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Sara Dean: So I really wanted it to be a place where women got to show up and be themselves and build an identity just about them without asking for permission, without needing other people's support, without being apologetic about it. And so that's where it came from, and it's been really awesome. I will say it started off as The Selfish Mom Academy, and I got a cease and desist in my first week after launching the show.

Rachel Rodgers: Wow.

Sara Dean: Yeah. That was a whole experience as well. There was a trademark infringement issue, and I learned some lessons about how selfish moms do business. Basically, the women who came after me could not have been less pleasant. That was the whole thing, it was awful. But anyways, so we ended up having to change the name super quickly before I got sued, but it all worked out.

Sara Dean: What ended up happening is we switched from Selfish Mom to Shameless Mom and it's worked out way better. I've been able to build a brand that really helps women build their identity and step into their power and not feel like they need anyone's permission or anyone's blessing to do whatever the heck they need to do for themselves or they want to do for themselves.

Rachel Rodgers: I love that. I really like that you wound up changing it, I think Shameless Mom is actually a more powerful brand. And also that's a great lesson to you guys to do your trademark searches for your brand names-

Sara Dean: Yes.

Rachel Rodgers: ... before you launch them.

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Sara Dean: It's a great lesson for that, and it's also a great lesson that as Marie Forleo says, "Everything is figureoutable." So when I got the message, I was getting on a plane and I saw this email come through and I was like, "Oh my God." And it was right when they were like, "You need to put away your phones, put them in airplane mode." I sat on a two-hour flight from Seattle to LA like-

Rachel Rodgers: Oh my God.

Sara Dean: ... about to throw up. And I was so nervous and I was like, "This is it, it's over. That was nice for one week." But it was such a great lesson that that kind of stuff's going to happen all the time. You're going to mess up, people are going to get mad at you. You're not going to know what to do, you're not going to sleep, you're going to have an anxiety attack, you're going to have diarrhea, and the next day you're going to figure it out and you're going to move on.

Rachel Rodgers: Yes. Exactly.

Sara Dean: I was so panicked about it because I put so much work into launching and then it was like such a blip on the radar in the grand scheme of things.

Rachel Rodgers: Right. Exactly.

Sara Dean: But we're often in the moment, we're like, this is going to be a defining moment, and you're like, maybe it is, maybe it's not. It's not going to stop me from moving forward.

Rachel Rodgers: Exactly. And that's just a choice and how you're going to respond to it. And you chose to say, "You know what, that's fine. Going to

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change the name, keep going and I'll have a little meltdown and then I'll move on.”

Sara Dean: And I now have a good story at the end of the day.

Rachel Rodgers: Exactly. It's a great story. Okay. So you launched this podcast. How far were you into the podcast last year when it was like April 2018, you sold the business? How long had you been doing the podcast at that point?

Sara Dean: At that point I had had the show for two years. The first year I didn't do anything to monetize it, it was just strictly a hobby. It was like my reward at the end of the week with all my gym stuff. As soon as I finished my gym work for the week, on Friday afternoon, I would record. So it was just passion project. Then the second year I did a little bit of monetization, but low, low five figures, like maybe 11 grand, something like...

Sara Dean: I did a little bit of monetization, like just dabbled my toes in a couple of ways to do small little coaching programs, some one off, one on one clients and a couple of very small sponsorship things. So then when we started, when I sold the gym, then I was all in, and so that's when I was immediately trying to figure out how am I going to build this and scale it.

Sara Dean: And I was really conscientious around... I was so aware that with the gym I had built something that I didn't... Like I said at the beginning it was no longer in alignment with my core values, so I was really conscientious around how I was going to build something that was in alignment with my core values. And also with the gym, I had really worked myself into a position of being the COO, and so all my trainers were on site and they were running all the stuff with clients and I was sitting at home behind spreadsheets, which is not my zone of genius.

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Sara Dean: So I spent a lot of... It was not fun for me anymore. It was really fun if I went into Saba class, which I did about two times a year by the time I sold it. I would go in and I'd be like, "Oh my God, this is amazing." But the rest of the time I was sitting at home with my child doing spreadsheets and it was not fun. So I had worked myself into a position in my company that was not my zone of genius and was not like lighting me up at all.

Sara Dean: So with the podcast I was like, I need to make sure I build something that is in alignment with my core values as they are right now, and also that I'm not going to work myself out of the best spaces in this business-

Rachel Rodgers: Yes, for you exactly.

Sara Dean: ... which are like... Yeah. That was where I was very early on starting from a year and a half ago.

Rachel Rodgers: Okay. I love that. And I like that too you're pointing out your strengths that you really like to be on the mic or onstage, in front of a crowd and that's what lights you up. And I had done that too in my law practice where I wound up drafting contracts, reviewing briefs that my attorneys were drafting and everything about my job sucked. And every time I got to do a Webinar, I was like, "Yeah. People."

Sara Dean: Right. Yeah. The teaching and the coaching, and the connecting, and seeing people change right before your eyes, that is all so much better than an AutoSum in Excel.

Rachel Rodgers: Exactly. But there are people who live for the spreadsheets and like want to die at the thought of like standing in front of a room all day. Okay. So what was the problem... So the problem that you wanted to solve is that you wanted to basically replace your income from

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the gym and do it in a way that really aligned with your core values and allowed you to do what you loved. Is that right?

Rachel Rodgers: Okay. And tell us about the time constraint because I feel like this is something that... And that is not necessarily unique to you, I think all moms and all women building businesses don't want to work a hundred hours a week, but some of them are more strict about their boundaries than others, and I find you being really strong with your boundaries of like, I don't want to work all the time. I'm not doing things that's going to require me to work 80 hours a week. So tell us a little bit about why that's a priority for you.

Sara Dean: I knew that I've always wanted to be pretty hands on with mothering. And when I say pretty hands on, I mean my kid's still is in school and then goes to after school care every day. Pretty hands on is like parenting from like 5:00 to 7:30 PM. Before he was born, before I had my son, I loved working from like 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM every single day. I loved it, it was great, and my husband did the same thing, and we didn't feel like that was suffering or struggling.

Sara Dean: So with him I wanted to make sure that I was able to be done at a certain time, I was able to make it to practices and games and all that kind of stuff and have a super flexible schedule. And this actually came up in one of our early calls with Rachel and I where I was able to identify time freedom is my highest value. And so I will work my butt off, and I will work actually as many hours as needed, but I want them to be the hours that I choose.

Sara Dean: And so when I was looking at building the business and figuring out what I wanted to scale this or how I wanted to go about scaling to six figures and beyond, I was really clear that this isn't going to be me doing one-on-one life coaching with clients because that won't give me the time

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freedom that I need. And so I ended up building around a membership model where I have very few locked in hours on a weekly basis, and I have a big community that's always running. They're always in communication with each other, but I don't have to be there all the time.

Sara Dean: I pop in daily, multiple times a day often, but it's when I have time, around the things that I have scheduled. This summer, for example, there's been weeks where I've worked less than 20 hours a week, and it hasn't impacted my bottom line. And I've been able to work... Like I was at my mom's house for a week, and I worked from like 6:00 to 8:00 AM, and from like 8:00 to 10:00 PM and spent the whole day with my mom and my child running around, going to pools and doing family things.

Sara Dean: And so those kinds of things, I knew where my top criteria when I looked at what I was going to build and what it was going to look like.

Rachel Rodgers: Yes. Awesome. I love that. And I love too that you're modeling for people that you can have a multiple six figure business, a seven-figure business. This July I had my biggest month ever. Last month was my biggest month ever, and I didn't work for three weeks. I worked one week in the month of July and I was like, hmm, what is the message here?

Sara Dean: I actually had, and you heard me talk about this I think over in our MDB community, but yeah, I had a similar thing in July where I had taken multiple days off during multiple weeks and still was able to bring in way more than I had expected. I had thought like, oh, I probably won't really bring in much revenue in July because I have a lot of things going on, and then at the end of the month I was like, oh wait, I made like five times more than I've ever made.

Rachel Rodgers: Funny how that works, right? It's really about that focused work and not necessarily hustling all the time.

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Sara Dean: Yeah. I will say it wasn't accidental, it was being thoughtful around like, okay, if I'm only going to do three things this week or if I'm only going to work five hours this week, what am I going to do with that time? It means I'm not going to sit in my inbox and return emails, and I'm not going to return Facebook messages.

Sara Dean: There's a lot of things that I opted not to do knowing that like every time you say yes to one thing, you just say no to a bunch of other things. So I'm not going to say yes to Facebook messages because that means I can't say yes to like writing email promos that are going to allow me to connect with people and be of service to them in order to invite them into my membership community or in order to invite them into one on one coaching with me.

Rachel Rodgers: Yes, exactly. Okay. So tell me so far... We worked together for a little bit over a year now, so I think we're on like 14, 15 months at this point. So tell me what three parts of the system that you learned in Million Dollar Badass have been the most effective for you.

Sara Dean: What three parts? Are there three specific parts that you're looking for or just three things I've learned?

Rachel Rodgers: Yes, three things.

Sara Dean: Three take aways.

Rachel Rodgers: Yeah.

Sara Dean: Okay.

Rachel Rodgers: Three things that you've learned, three strategies that you've used.

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Sara Dean: Okay. Is it a multiple choice? So building something that's scalable, definitely for sure. And this is something that you constantly push me on, defining my value and charging what I'm worth.

Rachel Rodgers: Oh my God, yes.

Sara Dean: That's-

Rachel Rodgers: These are all-

Sara Dean: ... hard.

Rachel Rodgers: Every time I have to talk to Sara about a pricing issue, that's always fun. And usually there's diarrhea involved.

Sara Dean: Yes. For sure. And I walk away every time. Just our last call you were like, "So what do you think?" And I was like, "Uh-huh?" In my mind I'm like, I'm not doing that. And then literally like two months later I'm always like, I guess I am ready to do that thing now that Rachel suggested two months ago.

Sara Dean: So building something that's scalable, establishing my value. And I would say looking ahead at the bigger vision and being clear on... I think in the past, and this is something that I've seen you model so beautifully. In the past there was a little bit, maybe a lot of scarcity around like, if this doesn't work, or if it goes poorly for x amount of months, then how will I get out of it kind of a thing. Always having a backup plan for like if this fails.

Sara Dean: And I think now I have really wrapped my head around that even if something fails in a day or something breaks or doesn't work as I want over the course of a month or two or whatever, that doesn't mean that

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the whole thing is going to fall apart. And I've proven to myself because I'm in my 17th year of entrepreneurship and in my third business, I've proven to myself that the trajectory is always onward and upward.

Sara Dean: So even if something's really hard and bumpy, that doesn't mean I'm going to move backwards. There might be a hiccup or a detour, but this trajectory will continue to be forward and up. I see you talk about that all the time, and I've used your example of the first three retreats I did with you and the things that happened at those retreats that were so beyond your control and every single one was still amazing.

Sara Dean: And so this idea that nothing really needs to be a showstopper, and you have modeled that. Like you had a retreat where you couldn't leave your hotel room because you were so violently ill yet everyone who showed up got a ton of value from the way your team was able to deliver. And so I've seen that nothing really needs to be a show stopper as long as you know I'm just going to keep going.

Rachel Rodgers: Exactly. It's a really just a choice. It's like the plan B, because you have that plan B, you allow it to take over and you allow it to rule. And it's like, no, no, no, if you didn't take the plan B and just decided that this is going to work one way or another and that went wrong, that's fine, we'll fix that and then we're going to keep going. It's really about that decision is so much more important than the external factors that could happen.

Rachel Rodgers: Okay. Tell us a little bit about the event that you did because I think that was so huge and I know that you had a lot of fear around doing it, so talk a little bit about the event that you had and how that went for you and what you enjoyed about that.

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Sara Dean: I had so many great lessons and it happened very fast. I had decided that I wanted to do a live event. I mentioned it really casually at one of our MDB retreats. When you mention things casually at an MDB retreat, all of a sudden you have to do the thing that you don't feel super casual about. And so I had mentioned like maybe I'll start live events in 2019, and I'm thinking maybe on like December 30th of 2019, like let's like wait till the very end of the year to have as much time as possible.

Sara Dean: And Rachel and a couple other people were like, "Cool. So by the next retreat?" And I was like, "Crap. I was not thinking like in three months or two months." But that's what I ended up doing. So I had had people in my community who had said... I have a membership community, and in the membership community they were all saying like, "When are we all going to get to meet?"

Sara Dean: And they had all gotten so close online through our... We have weekly calls and we have a Facebook community, so they were like, "We all want to meet in person." And I thought, okay, I can put something together for them to me. And what if I just make it an open, it can be for members and nonmembers and it can just be a big Shameless Mom Events.

Sara Dean: So we did Shameless Mom Con, and this was in the end of January that I was considering it, and I started looking at my calendar and I was like, okay, I can do this in April or I can do it in September. And because I was at MDB, at the retreat, it was like we have to make three-month goals, so I guess I probably should try to do this in three months.

Sara Dean: And I also knew if I had it hanging over me til September, I was like, I'm just going to be terrified. I don't need diarrhea for nine months, let's just-

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Rachel Rodgers: Yes, let's just pull off the Band-Aid and get it out of the way.

Sara Dean: Right. So we did it two and a half months later. We did the retreat, I had 51 moms show up from all over the country and I had one million and a half stories about like, people aren't going to be able to afford the event, just the event ticket, they're not going to be able to afford buying plane tickets and hotel and all these things. I'm like, everyone's going to have a million reasons why they can't make this work.

Sara Dean: And then my members, I had 30 members come, which was a lesson to me, like people who are already in your community are the people who are going to be most eager to make-

Rachel Rodgers: To deepen that relationship, right?

Sara Dean: Exactly. Yeah, deepen the relationship.

Rachel Rodgers: To work with you in other words.

Sara Dean: Right. So I had 30 members, I had 21 non-members. And then I again at the end of the retreat was like, "Maybe in 2019 I'll have a higher-level offering." And so then of course Rachel and other people at the retreat were like, "Yeah, so you could just offer that at the event." And I was like, "Yeah, no, no. We're not ready for that." But then it occurred to me that some of the people in my community were ready for higher level of coaching and higher-level community, and some people, I didn't really love the one on one coaching model I had been using.

Sara Dean: I had been signing people up for like a whole year of coaching, it was feeling a little bit long, so I ended up putting together a higher level group coaching program, like a mastermind program and selling that from

[Million Dollar Badass](#) with Rachel Rodgers

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the live event, and it sold out at the live event. And I had never sold from the stage before. I was absolutely terrified, convinced like two people will sign up maybe, but it ended up selling out.

Sara Dean: So I sold 10 spots at the event and then an additional five after the event, I saved some spots for my numbers, my existing members who couldn't make it to the event because I didn't want it to be super exclusive to people who were already in the community. So that's how that all worked out.

Sara Dean: And I learned, again, like speed of implementation for sure and do it scared. And also my biggest lesson, and I sent this to Rachel at the end of the event, was... So selling out this program was obviously a big impact on revenue that I hadn't expected, so that was exciting, but I said in my messages to Rachel at the end of that weekend, I was like, "That feels good, but it's nothing compared to the magic of being in this room and being like, holy cow, I created this space. Like these are my people and they want to be here, and the magic and the energy and..."

Sara Dean: It was just an intensity and it was life changing for me. Immediately I was like, we're clearly doing this again, it's already booked for 2020. The numbers were exciting, but the feeling and the value that I felt I walked away from, non-monetary value, and I felt like everyone else walked away with was just beyond what I ever could have imagined.

Rachel Rodgers: Yes. That is so beautiful. And I love that when you're doing the right thing, the money becomes a byproduct. The money is amazing and you make great money, but the magic of the work that you're doing is so much more meaningful, and that's the stuff that gets you out of bed every day.

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Rachel Rodgers: Okay. So I know you got to go soon, so just tell me really quick, would you recommend the Million Dollar Badass mastermind and who would you recommend it to? What kind of people do you think are a good fit for it?

Sara Dean: I think people who want to show up and do more with their business, but they need some strategy around it. They also are ready to be pushed. So I was ready to be pushed out of my comfort zone for sure. I knew that I needed to take some steps and be pushed in bigger ways. Also I knew that I needed some specific strategy and support with strategy, and I had had a lot of coaching prior from multiple people that was excellent, but it was more around mindset.

Sara Dean: There's plenty of mindset stuff in MDB, but I really wanted some specific strategies. So I remember at our very first retreat, one of the things you had us do was build a Facebook group while we were sitting right there. And I was like, "I don't know, I'm not ready. I don't know." Now I have a Facebook group of thousands of people and it's been amazing to have people connect. So I love the strategy and the implementation on the spot has been really, really good.

Sara Dean: So I would say yeah, people who are looking for that support around strategy and then they're looking to really step into their power in ways that they might not hold themselves accountable to, or that they keep saying like, "I'm going to wait until this milestone or that thing." They just keep pushing it off, which I think all of us do. I'm just going to wait until next year, or when the kids are a year older or whatever, and they know that they need to like hashtag do it scared and do it now.

Rachel Rodgers: Yes. And be shoved off a cliff because that's basically what happens to...

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Sara Dean: Right.

Rachel Rodgers: But it's always good. The results of being shoved off the cliff are multiple six figures in a single year, which is awesome. And now it's time to smash that seven-figure goal, which I'm super pumped about, yeah, let's do it.

Sara Dean: Yes.

Rachel Rodgers: Awesome. Okay. So tell everybody where they can find you.

Sara Dean: One other thing I want to add, I also think people who want to... It's a really good fit. So I have, and I think this is probably common among women business owners. We have ideas around making money and around that can feel uncomfortable and it can feel braggy, and it can feel all these things that it can feel about... greedy, whatever. And so I think for me getting... It's also been really helpful to get clear on and really confident in the level of value that I am providing in conjunction with making good money.

Sara Dean: And so it doesn't feel greedy and it doesn't... Because I feel like I am changing lives in huge ways and there's no doubt about that in my mind. So then I can say with pride I have a multiple six figure business, and there's a difference between that, and just like walking around being like, and I've seen this in the fitness community like, "Oh, but I did x amount of dollars in revenue last year."

Sara Dean: It's not necessarily around a priority of changing lives, it's more about like why these many people on AutoPay and half of them aren't even showing up. And so I'm like, I have people on AutoPay and oh my God, they show up all the time and it's amazing. So that value piece, that value

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that you're adding and then seeing how that impacts people is really... it's completely life changing and that again makes some money secondary.

Rachel Rodgers: I love that so much that you said that and I think it's absolutely true. And I think it's true for women that we default to adding value and changing lives, but then we don't ask for money for the value that we're creating in the world. And so that's a big thing that I want to shift and that's why we have this podcast and the mastermind and all the things.

Sara Dean: Right.

Rachel Rodgers: Okay. So now tell them how they can find you.

Sara Dean: Yes. You can go to shamelessmom.com is my website, and any podcast app, Pandora, Stitcher, iTunes or Apple Podcasts, Spotify, iHeartRadio, we're in all those places at The Shameless Mom Academy, on social media at The Shameless Mom Academy. And our Facebook group is [shamelessmom.com/facebook](https://www.facebook.com/shamelessmom.com/facebook).

Rachel Rodgers: Tell us when The Shameless Mom Con is for 2020

Sara Dean: March 26th and 27th, 2020 in Seattle, Washington.

Rachel Rodgers: Awesome. So you can go check that out. I think tickets-

Sara Dean: Yes.

Rachel Rodgers: ... are going on sale soon from what I've heard.

Sara Dean: Tickets will be on sale soon, yes. I cannot wait.

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Rachel Rodgers: Awesome. Thank you so much. I think this was very impactful for people. Thank you for sharing your story.

Sara Dean: Thank you for having me.