

Be the Woman God is Creating & Calling You to Be:
Conquering Low Performance Purgatory with Faith-Powered Productivity
Beth Tran -- 2024-10-17

INTRODUCTION: We welcomed back former TASTE member and first-time speaker Beth Tran. She began by taking a poll to see how many non-procrastinators there were among us, and no one raised their hand! So clearly, we are all procrastinators at some time or other. The biggest problem with procrastination is that it fosters depression which creates a cycle of procrastination and depression feeding off each other. And people who procrastinate are more likely to sleep poorly, to eat poorly, to feel anxious which can lead to feelings of depression. Beth calls this downward spiraling a low performance pattern. There are other such patterns like poor time or energy management, lack of focus, failure to prioritize, poor communication skills, depending on others for direction. The good news Beth taught us is that we can escape these patterns and turn them into “faith-powered productivity.”

PURGATORY: Low performance patterns can cause big problems such as depression, anxiety, stress, poor health, insomnia, strained relationships, missed opportunities, stress about money, feeling overwhelmed, or just an overall feeling of being stuck. If we are seeing these things happening in our lives, we may be stuck in what Beth calls low performance purgatory. Purgatory is an evocative word, often misunderstood. Purgatory signifies cleansing, a fire of love, pain, and waiting. We can see our destination, but cannot quite get there yet, especially not on our own merit. Many of us have already experienced purgatory multiple times in our lives. Some common examples are finding the need to declutter, or knowing it is time to let go of something or someone we are attached to. When we experience the painful process of purging, we are in a purgatory since we see the destination and we cannot quite get there. Imagine the pain of being in a place where we have a deep desire to love God deeply, yet we are aware of every time in our lives when attachments became more important than Him, and we failed to love Him well. Low performance purgatory can be a glimpse of that kind of pain – we have a strong desire to do God’s will, to love Him well, and to be the woman He is creating and calling us to be, and yet so many things get in the way. And we know that we are not meant to stay there. It is a temporary place, and with God’s grace we can move through that painful fire, we can stand after we fall, we can step into God’s purpose for our lives, and we can be the women, and even the leader, He is calling and creating us to be. What does THAT look like? We cannot do it on our own. We can get unstuck with God’s grace and move forward. And we need additional support, and this is an area that Beth feels passionate about -- helping women.

CALLED TO BOLD ACTION: Beth helps women with systems, strategies, tools, and especially prayer practices to get more done, reach goals, and be productive in ways that are more meaningful. God is calling us to bold action -- something that is big enough that we know we cannot do it on our own, we need the support of God’s grace, and the support of others around us. Bold actions call us to increase our trust in God. “The world will offer you comfort, but you are not made for comfort. You are made for greatness” (Pope Benedict XVI)! Each of us is created with unique gifts and talent. In any moment of every day, we have available to us all the grace that we need to do God’s will in that moment. There are things that prevent us from seeing that reality; sin can do that. We have a responsibility to receive that grace that is available. And when we do see grace and the other gifts, we are called to recognize them, receive them, cultivate them and share them with others. The gifts are not for us, they are for others.

SANCTIFYING PROCRASTINATION: Shame can be a part of habitual behaviors that rob us of the possibility of taking actions. Procrastination is not a personality trait, it is a habitual behavior, and because that is true, it can be transformed. Beth introduced us to turning moments of delay into opportunities for prayer and growth in holiness by seeking God’s grace in these moments. This helps enrich our spiritual life at the same time, and demonstrates how our struggle can be the thing God uses to make us holy if only we let Him. The ultimate goal is to help others their efforts and in turn, magnify God’s glory through them.

PATHWAY PILLARS: Beth introduced us to five strategies she called “pillars” to help us discover and rediscover our faith-powered productivity toward what matters most on our way to becoming the women God created us to be.

- **Gather** – Experience the beauty that happens when we come together, the essential need that we have for community. We have a loneliness epidemic in our world today. It is causing emotional, physical and mental health issues impacting the very fabric of our society as we know it. The solution is social connection. We need to be spiritually fed and reminded of who we really are. It is up to each of us to take responsibility for creating opportunities for relationships to grow, to create opportunities for connection, for growth and for support, a space for women to come together to empower, and be empowered, and to discover who they really are. This sounds like TASTE! Marian Frentz, our founder, is a clear and profound example of what it looks like to be prepared, to seek and to respond to God’s will with obedience to the Holy Spirit. We are enjoying the fruit of her obedience.
- **Encounter** – Encounter is an experiential opportunity. We discover and rediscover our real selves. It is a journey, where we learn to understand who we are, who God is, and who God says we are. It is about understanding and learning to practice

true humility. Many of us have worn certain labels like procrastinator or perfectionist, like masks we have been wearing for so long, we cannot tell where the mask ends, and we begin. Moments of questioning, of seeking, often happen at crossroads in our lives, as we enter into new seasons. These moments of confusion and asking ourselves what is next for us are not trivial. These moments can come with many feelings – restlessness, anxiety, depression if they are not addressed. This is why encounter is so vital. It is designed to be a safe space, entering into this work to explore the big questions, to peel away the masks we have been carrying with us, and to discover or rediscover who we really are. When we were created, we were given certain unique gifts, and talents. The women we were meant to be are not different than the women we are now. We are those women, even if still we are works in progress. Each day, we should ask ourselves, “Today am I being the woman that I have become or am I choosing to be the woman that I am becoming?” One focuses on the past, the other looks forward, looks for opportunities available through God’s grace.

- **Discern** – Discernment is an opportunity for us to dive into learning and practicing how to make decisions through prayer. It is about figuring out where God is calling us in this season of our lives. It is possible, when appropriate, to speed up the process! We can get stuck in discernment. In order for discernment to be fruitful, it must be “intentional and active.” When we intentionally and actively enter into a discernment process, then there is a time for completion. There is a time to make a choice and move into action. “If I only knew what God wanted me to do, I would do it!” The issue is not about knowing what God wants, but it is that we have not been intentional about entering into and completing the discernment process. God is inviting us into a conversation and a deeper relationship with Him. God has so much in store for each one of us, and discernment is the key to unlocking that potential. We are all leaders. Do we believe this? We are visionaries and we are individuals committed to growth and excellence in our lives.
- **Lead** – LEAD stands for Leadership through Excellence, Awareness and Determination. Beth focused on virtue-based leadership. How do we go from knowing to doing? How do we ensure that the path that we have recognized as ours IS the path that we are confidently walking on? It is about integrating virtue into the process. It is about asking ourselves daily what virtue do we get to practice to take these actions? It is about the marrying of awareness with action as an obedient response to God’s grace.
- **Multiple and Magnify** – Although Beth did not discuss this, it along with the others can be found [HERE](#).

PROCRASTINATION: Beth gave us a new way to look at procrastination. It is not just about laziness and poor time management. It is deeper than that – it is a pattern that we can all get stuck in from time to time. It often comes with shame. Beth has developed a tool called the Procrastination Shift Protocol. The goal is to SHIFT our approach from shame and guilt to understanding and action. We need to get rid of the shame surrounding our procrastination habit. Shame is like quicksand – the more we fight it, the more we sink. The Procrastination Shift Protocol is about breaking the shame cycle. It is a simple tool. The moment we start to shift away from self-criticism to understanding and patience with ourselves, we open up a pathway to real change. Procrastination is not a life sentence, it is a habit, and like any habit, it can be changed. The Procrastination Shift Protocol is not just a strategy, it is a journey from self-criticism to true, honest humility, and understanding that God’s grace is the real change agent.

TRUE HUMILITY: What is true humility? It is not self-loathing and it is not self-pride, it is right in the middle of these two. True humility is being ourselves exactly the way God sees us, no more, no less. God sees everything about us, all of our short comings, failures, sins, and at the same time He is crazy in love with us with the only perfect love in existence. His will is always for our ultimate good. When we see ourselves with true humility, we recognize how we are already equipped to move through our moments of low performance purgatory with God’s grace. This is how the process of overcoming procrastination can become not just productive, but also a source of peace and even joy.

CONCLUSION: If we are feeling overwhelmed by the storms of life, sinking into doubt and fear, feeling stressed, anxious, depressed, then we are missing out or just stuck, even in low performance purgatory. Maybe we are struggling to trust that God will provide for our every need, or we are feeling far away from God’s grace and purpose for us. Then join Beth in thinking about these pathway pillars we talked about today. Together, we can weather the storm, we can step out in faith and we need to let go. We can keep our focus on God to help navigate the challenges and distractions that life throws our way and breakout and conquer low performance purgatory to be productive, hit our goals, and be the women that God is creating and calling us to be. To help us, Beth gave us a gift – a downloadable copy of her Procrastination Shift Protocol. See [HERE](#). “Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.” (St. Catherine of Siena) This is more than an encouragement – it is a call to intentionality, actively recognizing the gift God has already placed in us to cooperate with His grace as He is forming us into His masterpiece. We all have a responsibility to cooperate and to cultivate and share those gifts and to step into the greatness for which we are created. To break out of low performance purgatory requires us to embrace the essence of who we are meant to be. It demands that we cast aside the doubts that cloud our vision, and the fears that stop our progress and the complacency that dims our light. There is no challenge too great and no obstacle insurmountable and no achievement beyond our reach because God is with us, and nothing is impossible for God.