



## Regions Next Step Podcast

### Young Professionals Series: Avoiding Burnout at Work

In this podcast, you will hear young professionals offer tips for avoiding burnout in the workplace, such as mastering delegation and finding the right mentor to serve as your career guide, as told by:

- Will Davis, Branch Manager and Vice President at Regions Bank's Alder Trails Branch
- Pierce Bush, CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters Lone Star
- Kelly McCormick, Managing Director at UH RedLabs
- Grant Pinkerton, Founder of Pinkerton BBQ
- Ryan Soroka, President and Co-Founder of 8th Wonder Brewery

### *Episode Transcript*

Narrator:

You're listening to Real Talk with Regions. In this special podcast recorded at a panel discussion before a live audience, Chris Matthews, Finance and Innovation Reporter at the Houston Business Journal continues his panel discussion with five young business leaders.

In part three, we'll hear all about avoiding career burnout, mastering delegation in the workplace and finding the right mentor. Will Davis is Branch Manager and Vice President at Regions Bank's Alder Trails Branch. Pierce Bush is CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters Lone Star. Kelly McCormick is managing director at University of Houston RedLabs. Grant Pinkerton is the Founder of Pinkerton BBQ and lastly Ryan Soroka is President and Co-founder of 8th Wonder Brewery. Now, let's hear from the city's young professional leaders themselves brought to you by Regions Bank.

Chris Matthews:

Kelly, come back to you. What are some of your tips for avoiding career burnout?

Kelly McCormick:

Well, I think it's really important to be very intentional about your priorities and then pick things that you want to do and continue to work on projects that are really working towards those priorities. I have a problem with saying yes to basically anything anyone asks of me. So, if you ask me to, you know, be a board member or help you with this committee, I'm like sure I'll be there. And then I end up with a million different things and that is definitely what I think happens when you get burnout.



So, I think it's about -- I do better with burnout when -- or with the feelings of burnout when I'm like trying to pick the things that I really want to work on and spending most of my time doing that and I'm getting better at saying no to things that aren't really in the -- going to actually move me forward with my personal vision for my own career.

But I also think it's interesting -- burnout is interesting just because the phrase is often a stigma for the person who is actually having it and oftentimes the organizations, corporations are set up in a way that it's almost -- it's obvious that is going to happen to you. When you're working 50, 60 hours a week and it's something that you're not passionate about or potentially like you can tell the employer doesn't really care about you as a person or you moving forward. I'm not suggesting it's always going to be the responsibility of a corporation or a company but I think that it's not -- I understand why that happens to a lot of people and I think oftentimes unfairly it's like something that you need to deal with. Now, I will say given that too, my own personal -- if I ever have that it's definitely not because of University of Houston because I work with the best people who are like celebrating when I say no. They're like yes, great, you did it. You said no to something. But I can see with other people that I've worked with in the past jobs that just like how could you not burnout when you've been doing this for five, ten, 15 years working all this time and potentially there's not a lot of care for your own life outside of that.

Chris:

Right. What about you, Will? How do you avoid, get tired of it all?

Will Davis:

I would say, again, you got to mirror your passion with what you're doing every day and when you have passion in your work and those two things align, you're in a great space. Back to what she was kind of sharing as well. Make sure that your values and what you're passionate about align with the corporation or company you work for. I'm blessed to work for a company that one of our core values is enjoy life. And I definitely get to do that from time to time with my family and I think when you are able to mirror your passions and find things that your company's passionate about as well and mirror those two and mirror those two you really do find success that way. But you just got to remember as well to remember when work is work and when it's time to turn off the phone or shut the laptop and when family time is family time and that same feeling that was there cheering you on when you got that job, well will still be there when you shut the laptop to be able to celebrate things that they're doing in their life as well. So, just find that balance and know that sometimes it's time to shut the laptop.



Chris:

What about in the brewing industry, Ryan? I mean I know you're kind of overseeing the business aspects of things as well but how do you keep things fresh? Not get burnt out?

Ryan Soroka:

We struggle to do that every day. The marketplace is getting more and more crowded and it seems like we're always chasing trends and trying to stay ahead of trends and what's the new beer, the new style and I mean that can wear you down. And then another thing that I think we see a lot on the hospitality side and Grant mentioned this as well is these reviews. So, I'll stay silent about Yelp but my thoughts are not too far off from Grant's as well. Everyone is an expert. Everyone has an opinion and we respect that. But listen, you know, in an industry where you live and die on people's opinions, you cling onto those amazing reviews, right, and every so often you're going to get something that really just breaks your heart, right, and you have to not ignore them but you can't live and die by the negative reviews. You have to kind of just take them in stride. So really kind of and it's hard for me since I run the social media and all the online things, but to disconnect is so important and I think that's kind of our natural refresh and reset but it's easier said than done when you've got your computer in your pocket and notifications all day long and emails and tweets and Instagram posts. So, it's staying up to date with these trends and comments and opinions without just losing your sanity over them.

Chris:

I want to hear how you all avoid career burnout. Do we have any volunteers to explain how they keep their work/life fresh?

Audience Member:

One of the things that we talked about is seeing self-care as a commodity, right. Right now a lot of people sell self-care as a commodity and so when we talk about burnout and how do we really look at what are we doing, how do we actually relax. I was telling my cousins recently I'm like I don't know how to relax. Like I've been here for a week. I'm bored already. I need to be doing something. And so, really understanding what does self-care look like outside of the things that people sell you. They want to tell you you need a massage. They want you to buy the face mask. They want you to do X, Y and Z. But really again, how do we look at this idea of self-care in a way that means that we reflect on who we are, what we want to do and where we want to be. So, that we can continue to make an impact and draw on that as a means to then avoid burnout.



I'm experiencing that right now in terms of like obviously being burnout of the field of higher education and so understanding truly like what makes you wake up in the morning and say this is what I love to do and this is where I want to go and then also within that how do I build things that continue to make sure that I say I want to go back to that. And I want to continue to make an impact in the best ways possible.

Another thing that I also wanted to say too was that sometimes tradition can be toxic. So understanding when tradition has become toxic because then it now becomes a way that you need to break your routine in order to really avoid that burnout later on.

Chris:

So, Grant, how do you prioritize work and without jeopardizing your personal life?

Grant Pinkerton:

Well, obviously in the food and drink industry I think that's people's greatest struggle.

Chris:

You live at your restaurant, don't you?

Grant:

I actually live above the restaurant. So, I am there a lot. However, I will say that it's been actually really great because it has forced me to pull myself away and get away from the restaurant. And I was telling somebody earlier, one, some of your best ideas come when you're not going through the monotony of every day and, two, reentering the restaurant after I've been somewhere else I see all the problems, right.

So, it's kind of refocusing and go in and tweak stuff. But for me, and I think this is applicable to all businesses is I'm fortunate early on I realized the importance of delegation. I told somebody earlier that it is kind of like playing -- being a captain on a football team and being playing defense. If you try to run around and make every single tackle, they're going to score on you and you're going to be really fricking tired at the end of the game. Oklahoma football fan probably knows something about that. So, it's really important to get everybody in those positions where they're going to excel and do a heck of a lot better job at it than you try to get spread an inch deep and a mile wide.



In the restaurant business, it is so easy to want to jump in and hyper focus on every dish going out, all that kind of stuff but relinquish control. Let others help you. Find teammates that are going to be excellent teammates for you that you can trust. When you can do that, then you can go and concentrate on growing your business. But if you're constantly in the weeds, your business is never going to grow. Find out what your best asset to your business is, do that and find others to help you.

Chris:

Pierce, what about you? How do you maintain work/life balance?

Pierce Bush:

Is anybody here in a nonprofit just out of curiosity? A lot of people, good. So you guys know this. I think people mistakenly think nonprofit might be easier than working at a corporation. Yeah, a lot of no's to that. It's really tough. I mean my job is 24/7. And there's always something to go to, there's always somewhere to be. There's always a donor that needs to be handheld in some way. And there's always a volunteer that you need to hear out. It's a lot of -- I think my job, yes, I'm the CEO so I'm at the top of this pinnacle with reporting to the board, but my job is like a legislative leadership job and it takes so much out of you. And so, really it takes time to figure out where do I need to be. Where can you maximize that time? I think that's anybody's job frankly.

And then, also, realizing this story -- just the power of delegating. I mean I learned this from one of my great mentors, Steve McDaniel. He's a great business guy here in Houston. One of our board chairs. And he said look, Pierce, when you delegate at first you're going to say this is 80 percent as good as if I had done it myself. At best. The truth is I'm really not good at a lot of things and I realize that and so the stuff is like 180 times better sometimes, right. So, just figuring out what you're good at, kind of like what Grant was saying is so important. I've seen some studies that say you should spend 80 percent of your time what you're best at. And in the nonprofit world for me that means, okay, I need to go help bring in new partners, fundraise, do all these things, right. And then try to figure out if you have the right people in the organization to do some of the operational stuff. So, it's just kind of figure out what you're good at, where can you best serve the organization, not try to do everything and then hire great people and delegate. And empower. I cannot speak enough the greatest leaders I know are people that understand how to empower, and they have time to think strategically, to do things in a long-term way.



Narrator:

Certainly. Mastering the workplace has its challenges. And to reach success you must first work through those challenges. Leveraging smart advice, tools and resources like those we learned about in today's discussion are great ways to set yourself up for success. Helping you achieve your goals is something Regions Bank understands. Regions Next Step is a financial education program offering advice, tools and guidance to help you accomplish your goals at every stage of your life. No matter your goals, Regions will help you with each step you want to take.

Chris:

So, what traits should young professionals look for in a mentor? How should you go about finding a good mentor?

Ryan:

Don't just find the mentor who's an industry leader. I had the misfortune of selecting a mentor at the University of Houston -- I'm going to keep names out of this but very respected industry leader. I was so excited to partner with this mentor and share this idea of a brewery, and he literally told me this is a bad idea. Are you sure? And I couldn't believe that I heard that. It was a little bit soul crushing but again as one of those people who I said I'm going to prove you wrong. I'm not -- you're not going to be my mentor. Not that he cared. And I found someone else who was fully supportive and dedicated their time, and look whether or not she thought it was a good idea or not, she didn't tell me it was a bad idea, And she let me pursue this and was there with whatever questions I may have had, and she was definitely a guiding force to where we are today.

Kelly:

I think there's actually -- I agree. I think mentors can be -- you need a mentor that's very supportive. I actually feel -- I have two big mentors in my life that have really helped me throughout my career and one of them is a huge supporter of like everything that I want to do and he like is always trying to move me forward, giving me tools and resources and connections to like get to the place that I want to be. And I think the other one -- well he's wonderful as well but he's always really challenging me. I would say almost kind of negatively but not in like I'm shooting down everything you want but challenging me to do the best possible thing that I could do. Like if there is any mistake that I've made I swear he's the first person that notices it. If I have like a misspelled word on an Instagram post, he's like, did you see this misspelled word? It sounds a little intense but it's --he really does care about making my professional work and my career like the best possible thing that could be and he's constantly trying to challenge me.



But also to your question about finding mentors. I think it's really important actually to start looking for mentors before you need them. Because I think if you are looking for a mentor because you're looking for a job or you're looking for connections or opportunities, it becomes really transactional, and the best mentorship relationships I've had has been from just organic relationships that I developed because I liked who they were as people and I wanted to hang out with them and I thought they had great career paths and I wanted to learn from them. But I wasn't doing it with the intention of saying you are mentor and I like you are the person that I need help from. Just more grew that way. And I think there are formal relationships that can be set up -- that are for that very purpose, like connections, but I think the best ones that I've found are the ones that I wasn't really looking for and just it developed.

Pierce:

First of all, as it relates to mentoring for our kids, I love to say that we are not an army of saviors for kids. We are calling out what is already there. In fact, our new kind of tagline is together we are defenders of potential. Just love the beauty in that. We're not placing something in a kid that wasn't there already. We're kind of calling out and defending those God-given gifts that everybody has. I'm a big believer that everybody is given gifts at birth and because of circumstances sometimes those gifts are harder to pull out, but they are there and they need to be pulled out for our world to be the best possible world that we can call create together. So, first of all, that.

First of my own experience with mentors I agree with everything that was said by Kelly and everybody else. I just think first of all having someone that you respect and you want to be more like is so important. If you're in a job by the way as a side note, some of my favorite conversations with friends that are my age now say I don't know I don't even want to say the industry just in case people are here but they're like I look at the people who are the most successful I don't want to be those people. It's a good sign that you're either at the wrong company or in the wrong job. If you like look at the lifestyles of the people who are running the company you say I want no part in that, then go do what Grant does and where some shorts and grill some stuff, do something that fills you up and so just make sure that those people that you aspire to be are so clearly in your path and people love to help people. There's something so fundamentally human about that.

Chris:

And so, Will, we were talking and you said that you've climbed the ladder to Regions. So, how do you stay true to yourself and your values when you're trying to get that promotion and climb up through the ranks?



Will:

Never compromise who you are. Remember what got you there. That family that cheered you on through the process, the late nights at school, all of those things. But I would also say is having a mentor and remembering three parts of that mentor which is asking that mentor for feedback. So whether it's going through the interview process or just in your everyday role asking for feedback. And then accepting what that feedback is, hearing what they're sharing with you and then really activating on that feedback. So, putting what changes you need to put into place, but remember putting those changes in place without compromising who you are and the reason that you're there and the why behind what you do every day. Taking that information and really putting that into play really will help you elevate your career to the next level.

Chris:

Pierce?

Pierce:

I feel like it's important to always be yourself. If you feel like you're not in a position where you can be yourself, you're at the wrong place. Life's too short. You know what I mean? I mean, if you can't be yourself in a place that honors that true self then you're in the wrong place. So, stay true to that for sure.

Narrator:

And that concludes part three of a special three-part podcast recorded live in Houston, presented by Real Talk with Regions Bank. If you missed parts one and two, make sure to listen and learn all about finding your passions, jump starting your career, leveraging social media, overcoming career obstacles and more. Thank you for listening.

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