

ONLINE  
BUSINESS STRATEGY

*elyse tager*

# From Chaos to Clarity

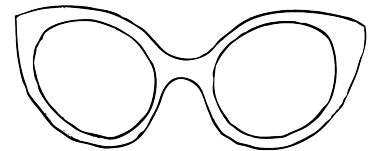
## Growing Pains? Here are 5 Solutions

**H**ave you ever had young kids in your life? Do you remember the “storm before the calm” –

that period right before they collapse for a much needed nap when all hell breaks loose? They scream irrationally, can't be consoled, and work themselves into a frenzy. Then they suddenly fall sound asleep. That's what happens as we approach the next stage of growth with our business.

Every business goes through stages: From the seed of an idea, through initial startup, followed by progressive levels of maturity and growth. Each stage has its unique challenges, and none are easier than the last.

During these transition periods things can feel out of control. Many of your carefully crafted processes are no longer working, and you and your company just feels like it is bursting at the seams.



“These are growing pains.” as my mom used to say. Growing pains are an unavoidable part of a thriving business at all stages of development. However, with some wisdom and strategy, you can make the most of these transitions while minimizing the pain of expansion.

After working with hundreds of small business owners in the past 7 years, here are the 5 most common issues I've come across time and time again - and what you can do about them! Do any of these situations sound familiar to you?



“Everyone is starting a podcast (or virtual summit, or YouTube channel). I should be too!”

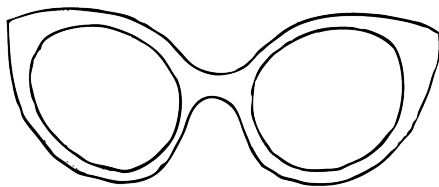
**B**right Shiny Object Syndrome can strike at any time, at any and all stages of your business. When you look at competitors at a similar stage of growth, they seem to be accomplishing more, earning more, and growing faster. It can trigger feelings of inferiority: “Do I really have what it takes to run this business?”

Just stop. If you are still in business after a year or two, you are doing just fine. You *are* enough! Be wary of getting too caught up with the latest short term trends, building a presence on every single social media platform, or chasing every fad for growing your business. Instead, build a solid plan that works for you and take action. “. Stop the research and start taking action.

**Stop paying so much attention to what others are doing with their business.** “You be you,” as my son says. Create a thoughtful, just-right-for-you, strategic plan for your business and stick to it.

**Earmark new projects, platforms or creative advertising strategies for the next time you are in planning mode.** This will allow you to factor new directions into what works best for your team, your pace, and your growth model. This is *your* business!

**Design it for yourself, not everyone else.** For example, you may only want to work 3 days a week. or 9–3 while the kids are in school, or 7 months out of the year. Design your business around your ideals and pay no attention to what others are doing.



## 2

“The only one who can do it is ME, ME, ME.”

**Y**ou built this business by yourself and you know every inch of it. You know exactly what needs doing and can do it faster and with more accuracy than anyone else. But if you are doing or closely supervising most of the tactical labor, you are severely hampering your own growth. At some point, perhaps sooner than you think, you will need to let go of control and train others to fill in for the majority of your functions. This is the only way you can start acting like a true CEO.

The mindset shift from working *in* your business to working *on* your business like a true CEO, is a major change that has to happen if you are going to accelerate your growth and get to that next level.

**Build CEO time into your schedule.** Block off a half-day each week, a full day each month, and perhaps a weekend each quarter, for planning your future. These are strategic planning blocks, not time to take action. In fact, a CEO doesn't do much day-to-day labor. A CEO creates content, finds and nurtures high level partnerships, and strategizes the future direction of the company.

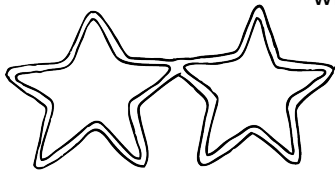
**Know when to hire help.** If you are an “In-Betweeners,” no longer a startup but not yet at 6 or 7 figures, don't wait too long to get the help you need. Hire a VA for as little as 5 hours a week, find a designer and copy writer to use when you need them, or outsource some of the technical work such as bookkeeping. Jump in sooner to bulk up with support to create room for growth and free up your time so you can function as a CEO.

### 3

#### “I am EXHAUSTED.”

**O**wning and running a business is not easy. We all know that. Especially in times of transition, it's easy to run on all cylinders, work more than a normal workweek, and not pay attention to anything *but* your rapidly growing business. You will burn out, and both your family and business will suffer. I guarantee it. The worst part is that you may not recognize the symptoms until you are in pretty deep.

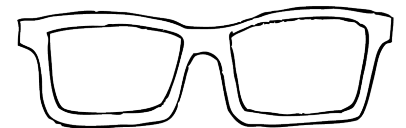
**Before you get to that stage, build self-care into your schedule.** This is not frippery: It's crucial for your survival as a CEO, a woman, and perhaps a mother and a wife. Decide what replenishes you. Is it time spent with your family, incorporating exercise into your day, reading a book, going to a movie? Schedule repeating blocks of time on your calendar and make this non-negotiable. Self-care is necessary if you want to go the distance!



### 4

#### “My to-do list just grows and grows”

**T**he common thread I see with female entrepreneurs at all levels of business is that they have forgotten the KISS principal: *Keep it Simple, Sweetie*. In the rush to find new revenue streams, build new packages and courses, and create new formats for their content, streamlining what's already in place goes right out the window.



**Have a strategic plan and stick with it.** You will have formulated your vision for the next 6 months to a year during your scheduled CEO time. Once that is in place, don't deviate. Find the top 3 tasks (or one task!) that you, as the true CEO, need to accomplish each day. Don't build out another activity until the ones already in place are smooth as silk, with processes in place, and your teams are making them happen.

**If you find your own to-dos are getting out of hand, stop and re-evaluate.** Are you doing more than you initially planned for in your strategy? Do you have the right support staff? Are they getting the job done? Do they have a clear understanding of your expectations?

**When you have too much on your plate, take it as a sign that it is time to bring in more help.** Otherwise, you may become the bottleneck of your own company. (See key number 2). It may be that you need help in a specific area for only 5 hours a week to make the difference. It may be that you need some help with refining your processes and procedures to streamline what is in place so that you can work with your current support team. If you need to, find an Online Business Manager or Project Manager for some short-term consulting to help you figure this out.



**“I have a good sense of where I want my business to go, but I can’t figure out how to get there.”**

**T**his is probably the most challenging part of every growth spurt you will experience with your company. The processes, procedures and structures you carefully put in place for the first stage of your business may not be right for your next stage of growth. You spent a lot of time and effort creating your business during the startup stage. Maybe you thought you’d never get beyond that? (A bit of imposter syndrome?) Or, maybe you did not have a clear enough vision of what the next stage might look like.

**This is THE time to look outside yourself for support, direction and new ideas.** You can’t possibly know everything! One of the joys of being an entrepreneur is the independence it provides. However, it can also be lonely and isolating. Find an outside source for guidance and inspiration.

**Join a Mastermind or group coaching program.** Seek one that is a paid program. (Skin in the game creates a more focused result.) If you can, find one that has several members that are more advanced in their business than you. Be sure you are a bit outside your comfort zone so that you have to stretch to participate. You will grow and your business will thrive as a result.

**Find a Business Coach, even for a short period of time.** (3-6 months is the shortest I would recommend.) They help you see beyond your own walls. Others have stood in your shoes. You don’t have to reinvent the wheel.

**Of course, your network of “Biz Besties” is always a great source of support and inspiration.** Build time for them into your schedule as well. But keep in mind, at this point in your growth, you will want a more structured, scheduled, challenging format to guide you into your next phase of growth.



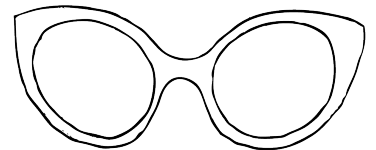
## About Elyse Tager:

A long-time marketer and passionate entrepreneur, Elyse has helped hundreds of small businesses, associations, and nonprofits develop and implement effective online marketing strategies to grow their business or organizations.

Elyse is a popular motivational speaker, writer, and educator known for providing her audiences with the practical tools, techniques and strategies they need to grow their business or improve their lives.

Elyse has been providing new customer acquisition and lead funnel strategies to clients for over 20 years. She can help coaches, consultants and service-based businesses scale grow to their next level by providing clarity and eliminating the chaos and confusion that can occur with growth.

She has run 3 successful businesses and is passionate about helping women entrepreneurs reach and exceed their goals. In the past, she owned Elymedia, an innovative media agency for 11 years, that provided traditional, online, and social media marketing services to a diverse range of clients, including: Cisco, Symantec, Williams-Sonoma, and Design with Reach.



**Contact Elyse to get more tips on growing your business to the next level!**

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