

**Ep #102: Getting Work done at Work with Dr. Sarah Smith**



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## Ep #102: Getting Work done at Work with Dr. Sarah Smith

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** Hey, this is Dr. Priyanka Venugopal and you're listening to the Unstoppable Mom Brain Podcast, getting your work done at work with Dr. Sarah Smith. Today, I am thrilled to bring you a very special podcast guest. This is Dr. Sarah Smith, who is a practicing rural family physician and also a charting champion. She's a charting expert who helps physicians specifically get their work done at work. So when they leave the office, they can really truly feel present with their family. And in her words, as she describes on the podcast today, create bucket loads of time. I have been aware of Sarah now for years. She is in a lot of the same circles that I am in, and I have seen the work that she does impact so many physician women, and I knew that a lot of what she teaches physician women could really apply to professionals in every industry. And I know based on what Sarah has shared in some of the circles that we're in, that her perspective, her strategy, and really the mindset that she brings to her clients would be so impactful to bring to this podcast. So I cannot wait to dive into today's podcast episode with Dr. Sarah Smith. She's going to share truly some tangible tips that you can start applying today to, in her words, create bucket loads of time at home, where you get work done in the workplace and really feel more present being at home with your family.

And before we get into today's episode, I want to make sure that, you know, the *Unstoppable* group is currently open for enrollment. The April cohort is enrolling. Now spots are limited and they are filling on a first come first serve basis. This is my intimate six month, small group coaching program, specifically designed for professional working moms who want to lose the weight they want this year without the fads and the gimmicks. I teach my clients a simple science backed strategy that really you can fold into your life forever. One of the things that I used to do and I don't want you to do anymore is believe that you have to just lose the weight quickly with quick fads and gimmicks, but then when you lose the weight and you reach your goal weight that you go back to your "old way of being". When you do that, you will inevitably gain the weight back. If you're interested in working with me, if the work that we have been doing together on this podcast resonates with you, Do not wait another day to grab your consult call with me, where we will discuss if you're a good fit to work together, you can grab your consult over at [theunstoppablemombrain.com/group](https://theunstoppablemombrain.com/group), where you will learn all about the nuts and the bolts of the program, the features and all the fun things that we do together. Plus there's a button there for you to book a call with me. If you don't see a call time that works, don't worry. Email my team over at [info@theunstoppablemombrain.com](mailto:info@theunstoppablemombrain.com) and we will find something that works. The next group is starting in April. I want you to get immediate access or right now, the moment that you joined where we unlock the curriculum, you can start losing weight. Even before our very first coaching call in April. And truly more than that, the moment that you join, you will feel such relief that you have a science backed strategy that is actually going to work.

So without further ado, let us get into my conversation with Sarah Smith. And I hope you guys really love this episode as much as I did. If you want to reach your ideal weight and create lightness for your body, you need to have simplicity, joy, and strategic decisions infused into your life. I'm a physician turned life and weight loss coach for ambitious working moms. I've lost over 60 pounds without counting points, calories, or crazy exercise plans. Most importantly, I feel calm and light on the scale and did my life. There's some delicious magic when you learn this work and the skills I'm going to be teaching you. Ready? Let's get to it.

Hey everyone. Welcome back to the Unstoppable Mom Brain Podcast. Today I have a really, really special guest. This is Dr. Sarah Smith. I have been following her. Forever. She is in so many physician communities and really a coaching expert on getting your work done. At work. Specifically, she works with physicians. I'm going to have her introduce herself. I just cannot wait for this conversation because as a professional working

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mom, if there's one thing I know it's you want to get your work done at work, and when you come home, you want to be present at home. So Sarah, introduce yourself and we are just gonna jump into this conversation. I'm so excited.

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** Perfect. Thank you so, so very much for inviting me. I love the space. I love what you do in the world too. So yeah, I'm a working family physician. I also work in the emergency department in patients and I also help physicians and clinicians with their clinical day, like any aspect of the clinical day that's interfering with you getting home with the work of the day done. So I know there's a lot of pressure from different healthcare systems and EMRs and things. But even then, even with your patient load, we're trying to work on your best and most simple solutions for getting you home. So you can be the person you want to be at home.

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** Yeah, I love it. So tell us a little bit and tell us a little bit about how you went from being a rural family physician to becoming, I mean, I think of you really as an expert in the field around getting your work done at work. And I know that you specifically work with physicians in charting, but how did you go from being a physician in, you know, probably also struggling with maybe some elements of this to becoming an expert in getting your work done at work and being home? Tell us a little bit about your, your whole journey.

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** Well, sure. So it's interesting because this, this was what I struggled with. Of course, right? So I am the original decades and decades of leaving the office knowing I wasn't done and having to come home and finish it in the evening and on the weekends and having my life kind of disappearing in front of me with these little kids at home. So, from my perspective, we have two kids. We have Harrison, who was born when I was in fifth year med school, and then James was born in my year after internship, so I'm from Australia. And I have the fortunate position of having a husband who wanted to stay at home with the kids, so that was awesome. So we had a parent at home, but I would still get the text at like 6:30. This was hours after the last patient left. Where are you? Are you coming home? Like what is going on? I'm like, Oh yeah, so I got to get home. So I'd go home, either help with dinner or be there for dinner, have supper with the kids. put the kids to bed, and then I would be back on the computer. And on the weekend, they'd be like, oh, should we do this this weekend? Should we do that this weekend? And I would be like, yeah, I have paperwork. And so my brain was constantly filled with this toss up between, do I say yes to the barbecue and the going out to this thing on the weekend, or do I stay home and get these? Um, I had these three forms done that I brought home for the weekend or whatever it was that I was working on. And that constant pulling of the difficulty between the, the mom duties and the work duties, right? And I started in a position where there was no EMR at home. So like this was me. And in the process of this, we moved continents. We came to Canada 11 years ago, right? So I had bigger kids by then. So we're in a different medical system. A different EMR, a different way of seeing patients. I actually have two rooms to see patients in, in Canada, which is totally different from how I did it in Australia and the same problems happening again. This time I do have access to my EMR at home, so I would be able to still get the text at 6:30 saying, where are you? Kind of head home and then work in the evenings, but at home. So then it was just me. I was the only one suffering at that point.

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** Right? Right. And this is just like an example of you sharing, like you changed continents, you changed jobs, you had a totally different system. Effectively, your circumstances changed, totally different circumstance, but you were still finding yourself in the same problem, in the same pain, in the same problem.

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**Dr. Sarah Smith:** It doesn't just get better. And every single mentor along the way, I'm like, how do you do this? How do you do the paperwork? And they were like, you come in on Saturday. That was the answer. We'll come in on Sunday. That was the answer. That was the only answer I ever got. And so on my way to a medical student orientation, I was interested in becoming a more motivated, motivational educator for my medical students. I love precepting. I love educating the next generation. That's part of what we do as rural family doctors. We grow our own next, you know, replacement. So I'm like, okay, well, I'll find. A podcast. I've never listened to one of those as I hopped on the one that popped up at the top, which was a life coach and five hours later, right, the nice big long drive, right?

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** Yes. So good. I love that you're sharing that Sarah. So very similar for me too. I love it.

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** It was impossible is possible. And I'm like, but you don't understand, this is like the impossible, impossible problem. This is 15 years worth of impossible, possible problem, right? I'm like, well, I've transitioned country, I've transitioned EMR, I've transitioned patient population. I think this problem will follow me. And I'm like, well, buckle up sister, we're going to have to figure this out because there's no one else in the world figuring it out. So it was a step by step process to first step into the mindset of what if it is possible to have a different experience of clinical medicine? What if it is possible to be having a different experience of our Day. That could create what we want. And what did I want? Well, first of all, I said, well, I don't want to work at night. Okay. Interesting. I want to be home on time. Okay. So I need to finish hours earlier and with everything done. Hmm. That means a lot of stuff is going to have to be changed up in my clinical day. But holding onto that, where am I going? What do I want to actually achieve? Kind of starting to open my eyes about what is happening within my day that is stopping me getting there and starting piece by piece, low hanging fruit, conversations with others, changing up the way I do things so that my clinical day becomes keepable within the hours of the day.

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** Right. What I'm hearing you say is the pain point was very clear to you. You weren't under any illusion around medicine is amazing and everything about medicine is amazing. You were very, you were very aware of the fact that while you loved maybe a lot of what you did as a physician, and I can, I totally understand that feeling. There were so many aspects around your practice of medicine that felt painful and it was creating your home life that in a way that you didn't want it to. So before maybe you thought, I don't think this can ever change to, I wrote this down. You said. What if it is possible to have a different experience? And Sunny Smith was actually on the podcast recently. She said, you know, it's almost like when you put questions into the Google search engine, you get different results. So you started planting that question. I wonder if it's possible for me to have a different experience of my work life. And I do this with my, with my weight loss clients. For me to lose the weight I want, what if I could have a totally different experience? And you put that into the Google search engine. All of a sudden, the solutions that you find are going to be. I mean, so much better. So, okay. So keep going. So then how did you get to becoming the charting coach?

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** So I, I figured it out it took, it took a full 18 months of, of starting the process of where am I, what do I want and how do I get it and doing the work of change and creating this. Different experience and bucket loads of time. Like you would not believe the amount of time you can create. Like we are talking about creating bucket loads of time in your life. Evenings, coming home, sitting on the couch, going, I've got nothing to do. What? What? That's, that's insane. And then weekends of. Well, what are we doing this weekend? Like

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it's, it's not even necessarily fun or exciting. Initially it's kind of a restlessness of, yeah. Oh, it's space in my brain. This is, this is delightful. And what the heck? And then the, the whole like 15 years of doing it one way and now I'm doing it a different way and it's so much better. And I become a coach in the process because I wanted to do the coaching. For myself, because within my clinical day, helping my patients excel, take ownership of their health and decide what they want and going after it. It was really exciting. 15 years as a family physician. Suddenly I'm having different conversations with my humans in the room saying, what do you want? What can I help you achieve? I noticed that you think the boss is toxic. What do you want? How do you want to show up at work? How can we change your experience of work without changing the boss? Right. And it was so intoxicatingly fun. So then I said to my fellow physician humans, what do you want help with? Well, the resounding, resounding answer was the paperwork. Well, I hung my head. I'm like, Oh no, the thing I finally got out from underneath and they want me to delve back in there. And then I'm like, but wait, I figured that out. Maybe I can help them too, maybe. And so I stepped one by one through the same process that I'd taken myself. One by one by one, 500 hours later, within six sessions, they're all going home with a paper done. I'm like, it works. So that is the, I'm the dream keeper of possibility that I'm not going to take your brain's current opinion of your day and tell you what can't be done. I'm going to hold for you your dream of, can I make this sustainable? Right. And I make this sustainable my way so that I can achieve what I want to achieve, whether it be my family or my weight loss or my, like, can we make a difference within the day to give me some space or time back to do the other things I want to do? And so I let your brain get away with the whole questioning of, can I create something different? I'm like, Absolutely. It's been done hundreds of times now. Right.

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** And, and I think that that's like speaks to so much around the power of having a process that works, a process that you've seen work again and again and again, and now it's repeatable in a way where it's not just applicable to maybe a small subset of physicians. It probably applies to, which is why I wanted you on this podcast applies to high achievers in it. It could apply to every industry if you identify as a working mom. So when you really parse out and think about your personal experience and what you've seen with your clients, what do you think is the real problem that has been in the way for people to create this on their own? Like what, what is it in terms of their mindset, maybe in terms of their strategy that, you know, you might try to buckle down and work harder during the day, but it just doesn't seem to last. What do you think has been their, the real problem?

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** Yeah, that's a great question. So I think the step back and notice. So I'll tell you an example of that. So I would see patients and I would just leave the chart until later because that's kind of how it was done or I had just learned to do it. I'd kind of put that off to later. And then the other things of the day. So, you know, when the last patient or the last phone call, the phones finally get turned off at your workplace, right?

If you're not seeing patients and you're like, there's no more incoming. Now I can just look at the pile and get it done without interruption, right? We, we kind of wait for that moment and we get to that moment and we look at it and we're like, Oh, it's a mountain, a pile of charts that you have to get through. This obstacle course between me and home is insurmountable. It doesn't even matter if I start, I'm not going to get done. And then my brain would say things like I could work for 24 hours and still not be done. And it would say things like, why bother starting? You're never going to be finished. Or where do I even start? Does this ever end? Do I have to get off this house? Do we offer it to end? Like this was the experience I was having the dread of. I don't wanna go see more patients 'cause that's just gonna make more work.

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**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** It's almost like instead of seeing a patient and wrapping up the history that you would see is, you'd see the patient, you'd rush off to the next patient. Yeah. And it's almost like I'll, I'll deal with the charting later. I'll with that later off to later. Do you think that the reason that people do that, and I'm curious, and for anyone that's listening, I want you to take this as an opportunity to think about how this apply if you're not a physician, how this applies to you in your work day where you take something maybe that feels like a small task or even maybe feels kind of overwhelming. I'll do this one later when I have spacious time. Do you think that the reason for that is because we're trying to quickly move on to the next, like the next patient or the next quick item to do? Or is it because we just don't want to do the charting? We just don't want to do that work and it feels boring. It's more fun to talk with patients. It's maybe more fun to do certain parts of the job and not other parts. What do you think is the reason we would put it off?

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** Yeah, there are so many reasons, but you're, you're hitting a lot of them is that we have a human brain. So human brain loves pleasure. We have a painful story about this unfinished work. A painful story. Charting is hard. It takes too long. Paperwork is hard. Writing that thing, is too hard. I don't want to have to think about that. I need quiet, opaque and quiet to do that work. That's a, that's a real one.

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** Oh, I've told myself this too. I need to be able to focus. I need to be in the flow. To get my best quality work done.

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** That was too frustrating. I don't want to go and write that down right now. Any of the above. Like, cause it's painful. Pleasure is I can go to that next meeting. I can go see that next patient. Like that's much more pleasurable. I just, you know, my brain is more entertained by that and the sitting down to empty that task box. No, that's not the fun part. Right. So we love pleasure. We don't like pain. We've told ourselves a very painful story about this charting or this paperwork. If we're taking it home, we're doing it on the weekend. Like that is stealing our life. Why would we want to do that? Like our brain is like, it's onto us. It puts it off. Okay. And we do things efficiently. So what I mean by efficiently is I had 15 years of practicing. I'll do that later. I'll get to that.

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** So it's almost like our brain has created shortcuts around habitual thoughts.

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** Superhighway of leaving it till later. Superhighway. Okay. So what I'm asking my brain to do now is the Gotra with rocks of different. So doing different is hard and takes brainpower to think about doing something in a different way. So first was noticing. I'll go back to that. So I'd see patients. I'd have charts to do, and then there was everything else about the day. I didn't even notice, take notice of how many things is that? How do I empty this? How do I get this thing out of my task box? I had no step back and think about it at all. I'd never been given a strategy about how do I design this so that I can get home. I've never even contemplated that that was a question that could be asked. It was simply shit that had to happen. Within my clinical day. Okay. It was the stuff that happened. So there was hundreds and hundreds of things that would come in in a day. I had never counted them. I had never had any appreciation about how long it takes me to get something out of this inbox. So say you wanna get home two hours earlier. Right. So a lot of my physicians, when they first kind of start looking at their day, they're like, Oh, the patients leave at 4 30 and I leave the office at 6 30. Interesting. I wonder why. And so they start noticing the process of how they kind of get there and the things about the day. And then they want to choose a different way. Right? So if they're going to choose a different way, they have to ignore the superhighway of how it's going to go easily and start using the GOAT track and making the GOAT track of I see a patient and close the chart. That is not normal for my brain. Right? And so now that is the GOAT track. That is the obstacle I'm going to hit my toe a couple of times. It's

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going to hurt to do this, see the patient and close the chart because that is not my normal way. Everything about my being wants to hop out of that chair and go see the next patient. And go to the, we want the superhighway, right? Because I have taught my that the next patient is more important than the note. Okay. So if you want different, it feels uncomfortable. It is much less efficient. It takes longer initially. It is not a pleasant journey, right? Superhighway is way more comfortable than the goat track of new and I'm unpleasant, but we want to choose the discomfort of what if I started to make changes about my day that were going to keep things that I'm doing closed behind me, right? So as I see something and I do it and I see the next thing and I do it and I see the next, so see a patient and that complete encounter is done. Now, instead of a disaster following me of things I'm just putting in the cart for later, it's empty. And I'm like, Ooh, that's fun.

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** It's almost like you end up having a little bit of a, like a love affair with the results you're going to create, even though there's discomfort along the way, your, your eyes on the prize of like, Ooh, but the cart is going to be empty. I'm not going to have a pile of paperwork sitting on my desk. I think this is really important to highlight that when you start something new, because you're used to the super highway and we're talking about being on a goat track with, with rocks. I love this visual so much when you do something new and you, it does take more time at the get go. Maybe you. It's not smooth right off the bat. You do stumble. How do you navigate it affecting other teammates or your colleagues or maybe other physicians or, you know, whoever else you're working with, they're going to get slowed down because they're used to you, listen, they're used to you being the workhorse and just like getting it done, getting it done and you spending your own personal time to do the charting. So how do you talk about navigating that obstacle for someone that does want to make the change, but maybe the change is going to affect their teammates, their colleagues, their staff.

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** I'll give you an example. This is a good one. Thank you for this question. So I had a palliative care. position come into my space. She's like, but I work with a team and we all walk together to do the ward route. I'm like, great, good. I said, do they all want to go home on time? Yes. Okay. That's about right. Right. And are they all going home on time? No. Why? Well, they're doing their charting. Interesting. I said, what if we said, Hey guys, Who wants to get out of here on time? Oh, yes, please. That'd be great. Okay, great. What would it take to start to make a difference within our day so that what will happen is we'll go in and see Mrs. Jones, and then we will do that and complete that and move to the next one. What do you think about this idea? And they were like. Well, that's an interesting and odd, but I'm willing to try it if there's this possibility of getting out of here two hours earlier. Well, dang it, a two or three weeks later, they're like zipping through that ward round. All the notes are done. They're delighted. They're all going home and the other teams are going, what did you guys do?

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** Right, and you know what Sarah what you're describing to me this and this is someone for someone like me who has historically been like I might be confident but I've always been a little bit of a shy. I might be shy to put these kind of ideas out there in a team space. So I just want to I wanted to drop that question here because sometimes it feels scary to be someone that introduces a new concept in the workplace or to your team, or maybe you don't, you're not in a leadership position, you're an associate in a practice, but also what we're talking about is practicing courage, really practicing, you know, using your voice to have a feel courage and take a step forward because what we're talking about is trailblazing. Trailblazing is changing the culture of how women work. So that like, is, is the prize worth it for us to feel courage, the discomfort, choosing the goat road and these rocks and like having and getting the team to buy in. I love the story you're sharing because now the whole entire community of people can get to benefit.

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**Dr. Sarah Smith:** The physician, the social worker, the dietician, the nurse, now they're all doing their notes as they go. And they're all having a different experience and they're seeing the same number of patients and they're done. At the end of the ward round, everything's done about those patients. There may be some conversations to come back to, you know, the family, the family want to talk. Sure. We'll send the right person back for that conversation at the end. But the actual, like seeing the patient and figuring out the work of the day for this person all wrapped up. Right. Yeah. That's just like kind of step one. And then the, the other pieces that may have had to change about that. For instance, the interruptions. Okay. So if we're in, in our day and somebody comes up to you and says, blah, blah, blah, right? What are those just taking notice of who interrupts you and what did they ask you? And then the step back would be, Hmm, I noticed that I get asked, you know, this every day, what would I need to do? Say, have a conversation about to empower that person to have the answer before ahead of time, or. If it is me who has to make that decision, when do I want that question? Which interruptions do I need right now? And which ones should we batch? And I'll come find you at X o'clock and you can give me all the questions, I'll give you all the answers.

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** What I'm hearing you say is there has to be almost like a retraining of number one, how we train our So we have to, we have to go first, we have to first say, we are going to not allow ourselves to get interrupted all the time, our doors on an open door policy when the middle of the work in the middle of a project, I'm not interrupted, right? So we have to have the discipline on ourself to batch when we're allowing interruptions. But the second piece of what you're talking about is really having an infrastructure and almost retraining your staff. Your team, your colleagues, unless there's an emergency that these interruptions also have to be batched. Do you find that there's a lot of resistance to that with the clients that you've worked with? Because I know for me, I used to feel like I want to help everyone. I want to be that, that helpful person in the office. So I'm curious, like whether there's resistance around wanting to be helpful. And not wanting to take that away from staff, colleagues, friends, versus what you're talking about.

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** Okay, so it sounds really lovely to be open door policy, but I want you to notice the internal when you're now putting out all the fires, right? So it's not normally, Oh, I'm delighted by you interrupting me. It's like, Oh, I'll put on my happy face. Cause I said, opened off policy. I know I have open door policy, but this is starting to hurt me, right? There are ways to be leaders within your place. And you may not be the leader or the boss, but you are a leader within the team that you work in. When you're teaching people to come. Find you because you would love to help them and they use your brain for all of the answers. It's exhausting versus, Hey guys, when you come to me and say, blah, blah, blah, I need a little more information than that. You know, if this photocopy is on the blink, what do we need to do to fix it? Do to someone who want to make a call, who's going to be best at that and starting to set up these conversations or finding time when we can use our people to the highest level.

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** And training them to, to, to operate in that way. I, you know, one of the things that I have seen with my clients, I'm curious if you've seen this, I feel like it's true with physicians is we're not even aware of how much we have been wanting people to need us. We have been wanting to be the person with all the answers. And I think that it's, unless you're aware of your tendency and the mindset around this. You might be operating with, without being aware. In my experience, what I've seen is women, professional women, we get a sense of pride and accomplishment and worthiness and value when we are the person that people come to with, because we want to be the ones with the answers. But I think the work that at least I've done with my clients, and I'm guessing this is very applicable here, is what would it be like for us to create our own pride,



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our own accomplishment, our own satisfaction, value, and worthiness without it being attached to people needing us? And how amazing we get to hold them in their highest regard and let them operate with their most efficient work strategies and then we get to also be the most efficient and actually go home and live our life.

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** Yeah, and it is a process to get there. So I remember when we were doing some work early on with team building, and we were talking. To the, we had a facilitator within these conversations, which was really helpful. And it was great training for me to even see how do we work as a team. And, and it's, it is really hard to let go when you're at that really high professional level, because the people that you're going to give a task to will not do it the way you do it. And the, one of the most important things I learned was what if they could do it. Better than you. And I'm like, no, I want to be the best. And then I said, okay, well, I know that when my brain objects to a statement, it usually means I need to press in and kind of figure out why that is. I'm like, okay, all right. I won't immediately reject that comment because I know for sure I can always do it better than them. But all right, what do you mean? I can always do better than them. All right. So a form, my favorite thing in the world is not a form to, so, you know, I'm being very sarcastic. At the end of a consultation, the patient brings out of their bag and hands you the form and says, Oh, here, I need this done. You can do it when you have time. And my brain would say there's an hour of my life gone, but it wasn't just an hour of my life gone. It was often an entire weekend because I bring home these. Forms that people said I could do in my own time and I would leave them there while I cleaned the house and refused to go out because I had paperwork, but I would do literally anything else because I was so painful to think about. And when I went to work on Monday, they still weren't done, which was just drove me completely bananas. I would fill in the form. I would find all the things in the chart to attach to the form. I would have this nice big package and I'd give that to the ladies and say, send that off. Right. Hours and hours. of very exceptional work, very exceptional work. I would despise every minute of it. Okay. And then there's these humans in the world who love doing forms and I'm like, they better at it than me. What? And they actually can be taught what to attach to this type of form. And they've got the time to do it. And so actually they end up better at it than me. All I had to do was, Hey, come alongside me and say, what would you attach to this type of form? That was a great question. If they didn't know the answer, I could teach them. And then I would say, don't send it. Just pass it back to me so I can just see if we got it right. Oh, I noticed that you didn't go find blah, blah, blah. That's also important. Here's where you find it in the chart and we hand it off and they do it better than me because they do it today and it's done not in eight weeks time. When I finally, finally overcome my objection and get it done, right?

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** To get the bucket loads of time, which is like the forever wish, I think, of the professional working mom who, the number one thing I hear is, I don't have the time or don't have enough time. To get the bucket loads of time, there's an investment of time at the start. There's an investment of effort and energy and bandwidth to train your Number one, to train yourself to let it go and also to train your team, your colleagues, your friends, your partners, whoever is in your bubble in how they can be optimized. And so there's, I imagine this is a part of the discomfort we're choosing, the goat road with the rocks. We're choosing this discomfort because we want the bucket loads of time later. Yeah.

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** And we want to be able to say, what is my highest level work in my day as a professional person? What is actually mine? And when am I being a very expensive secretary?

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** Right. Actually feeling fulfilled. The reason you got into your profession, you actually get to do more of that the part that actually fulfills you.

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**Dr. Sarah Smith:** All right. So let's take another example, which might feel even more weird and scary is a dermatologist, a dermatologist. Needs about three to five minutes with a patient to figure out what this is sometimes more. Absolutely. They're very interesting and weird conditions, but then the education and how to apply this thing and all of that. What if there was a team member who could do that better than you? So we had this example of a team in the States of dermatologists who said, we see high volume. We want to keep seeing high volume. We want to run on time and we want to get home with everything done. I'm like, great. Who's around? Who can help you? And so instead of thinking about it, like you're going to see Dr. So and so, we start thinking about it as we're going to go see Team so and so. When you arrive, Nurse Julie is going to do this, this, and this. And then Dr. So and so is going to come in. They're going to figure out what this is. They're going to talk to you about what the options are. We're going to choose the option for you. And then nurse Hannah's coming in and she's going to tell you the, how this works, what's going to happen about this, when to be concerned and when to come back and then you'll go see receptionist Sally, and she will rebook you to come in. And you'll come back. And so we're normalizing the physician staying in the physician, like doing the expert level job. And then the giving away of the education piece feels super uncomfortable.

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** I can imagine.

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** People look better than you because they've got the time, they've got the language, you've taught them well. Right.

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** I can imagine. I can just, I can, because I can see, I can hear so many objections even in my own mind because I can imagine that there would be someone on the receipt, like a patient. I can imagine a patient being like, what do you mean I'm not going to talk to the doctor about the education? I want to talk to the doctor only, right? So I can imagine the, the physician feeling, again, I know that these are our thoughts are going to create our feelings, but the, the physician really feeling. You know, the brunt of that. And I also think about this in terms of non physician examples. How someone on the receiving end of saying, Oh, the expert in my field is not the one that's taking care of all parts of my wellness or my care. It's going to be delegated to somebody else. How do you help someone navigate managing the thoughts and feelings of the recipient? of this.

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** This is what happens anyway. You go to the accountant and Sally checks you in and you meet with Matt who takes all of your documents off you and then your accountant comes in and spends the next 45 minutes going through sorts of things and then Wanda's the one who's actually going to put it together and email it to you and then it's Sally who's actually checking that you replied to the email. Your account has got nothing to do with any of that. It's already being done in so many industries.

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** Right, so it's valid, it's actually what you're saying, it's like just validating. The fact that actually it is a really normal experience to have systems and teams in place, but there's probably lots of pockets of time that professional women are taking on responsibilities that they could be delegating and actually giving yourself permission to play and experiment with training other people on your team to do something.

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** Better than you could, and then we come up with the objection of, I have no team. So you don't have a team member, you're going to do this solo. So start being noticing of what am I doing that takes so long? A really good example of this is a script renewal. So a request comes in for a script renewal. Now you have a choice. Always I say, yes, I want to renew them because I know this patient I'll have them in any way.

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I'll just get this done. But you look at the first medication and it's a thyroid medication, which you think you could just renew. But when did they last have blood work? And what is the indication for this? If this person's had thyroid cancer, I need to know that the thyroid function was done recently. But I also need to remember that about them. So in the prescription, the way I start to help future Sarah is I write, when I write that prescription, I write a little thing in the free text that says, this patient's had thyroid cancer, the aim for the TSH, the thyroid level. is this. That then is a so much faster prescription renewal. Otherwise, every thyroid renewal, I'm like, did this.

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** You have to dig through the chart and try to figure it out.

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** Digging eight minutes prescript renewal. I don't have time for that.

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** Right. You're what you're this is kind of, this is kind of mind blowing. What you're talking about is actually training yourself to be your own best team member so that you are helping future you to be much more quick and efficient with your process. So even if you don't have. You know, assistants and team and colleagues that are assist, to create a system in place, which is, I mean, I would love that for everybody. If you're a solo practitioner or a solopreneur or someone that's on your own, that you can become your own teammate, but this is requiring training yourself to be efficient in the moment.

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** Yeah. Even within business. So the, the example I, I will give is I was asked for this podcast to give my, you know, social media handles and my. Picture all that. Well, we have that all in one place. So I can just wunk it towards you rather than, ah, I've got to do that again. It takes me eight to 10 minutes to find that every single time by putting up those assets for your business, that assets for yourself, the things that you're asked to do over and over, how can you streamline that? So you do it once well, and then it just maybe needs a tweak or two each time we use it, but it is. In place. We're not recreating that every time.

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** Oh, I love that. It's like creating these like systems, almost like creating systems in place, which again, I think speaking to our earlier point, we'll take an investment of some time, energy, effort and bandwidth. It's like the goat road with the rocks and just choosing the discomfort in the moment. But we're talking about creating systems that will set you up for future you and future you is going to be so grateful that you've done this work and taken this effort. Sarah, if you could, I mean, I feel like we can like talk about this for like for hours and hours because I could nerd out on efficiency and all these kinds of things forever. If you could leave everyone with one piece of like strategic, tangible advice, physician or not, really women in any professional industry, what can they do to leave their work at work and get home on time? One piece of strategic advice they can start taking into account today.

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** Yeah, I think that first know that it's possible to create a different experience and what is it you want? Just get really imaginative, take yourself on a walk, have a long shower and just decide what, what am I craving? What do I desire? What would I love to go and create in the world? Just because it doesn't exist right now does not mean it can't. And even if it takes you three years to figure it out, wouldn't it be so much more fun to be there than here? Okay. So just that it's possible. And then just start to notice what is happening within your day. Kind of be awakened to this big step back and say, what is it that creates this same thing over and over? And the, one of the very low hanging fruit, easy things to start with is, can we complete work as we go? Even if it's just the easy ones. For the day or when do you notice that you're saying, I'll have a look at that. Oh, I don't have time for that right now. And you close it again, that's doing work twice or three or four times. When do you have the time to do that? That protected time to open that up and get it. Done. That's when we

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should be looking at it. So how do we start to plan our day so that when we're going to go and look sticky beak at that task, we actually have the time to complete that task.

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** There's three things that I'm taking away from this. The first one, I love the word, the use of the word awakened, because a lot of what we're talking about is we've just been subconsciously going through the motions because that's what we've been taught and we haven't challenged it. So being awakened and just taking inventory from your most conscious self to become aware of where are the obstacles in your day, where are the inefficiencies, where are the interruptions, where are you pushing things off to later? So that's the first thing. The second thing that I heard you say is really becoming aware of where you're double or triple working. So you open up the work and then you close the work and then you open up the work and then you close the work. I think that that is something that probably if you become awake, to this piece, you, you're probably double or triple, double or triple working. And then the third one, this is the most impactful is how can I close this work right now? Is it possible for me to close this right now? Like just wrap up the chart right now, wrap up the email right now. And I think another favorite one is just like, it doesn't have to be a work. It can be a minus. It can be a B plus. We can just get just to get it done and wrap up the loop so we can move on in our day. Yeah. I love it, Sarah. Thank you so much for coming on the podcast. Sharing your wisdom. I love having experts in their field come and share their perspective and their voice. And I know that people listening will find this episode so incredibly valuable. Tell us all how we can find you, learn more about you. Tell us everything.

**Dr. Sarah Smith:** So I also have a podcast if you're into podcasts called Sustainable Clinical Medicine, where we have others talking about how they've managed their clinical day or things like that. [chartingcoach.ca](http://chartingcoach.ca) is where you'll find me in terms of a website. Well, on Instagram as Charting Coach or in Facebook as Charting Coach.

**Dr. Priyanka Venugopal:** I love it. Tag us on Instagram. If you found a nugget, tag us both and let us know what you're taking away from this episode. I just find that when we really anchored to what we're taking away, we're not just passively learning, which I know is fun guys, and I'll listen to the podcast this month, we want to start actively implementing the things that Sarah talked about on this podcast. So tell us what you're going to start implementing today. And I hope you guys all have an amazing week. Sarah, thank you so, so much for coming onto the podcast and I'll see you guys all next week. Bye. I am just blown away by this conversation. I love bringing guest experts onto the podcast to share their perspective and their unique angles in how their work is impacting the lives of professional women.

So I hope you love today's expert, Dr. Sarah Smith and everything she shared truly. I love it when she said Bucket loads of time because I just know that the number one complaint. I know this was my complaint And what I see with my clients is the thought I just don't have enough time But I think what Sarah shared today was just starting with the possibility getting curious. I wonder what ifs It could be different. And I think this applies so much with weight loss too. I know for so many years, I used to think weight loss just must be hard because I haven't lost the weight yet, or it must take a lot of willpower and a lot of struggle and a lot of buckling down, and I just didn't want to lose weight that way. I want you to plant the seed of possibility. What if it was possible that weight loss could in fact be simple, maybe even fun. And also if you fold it in certain skills and tools that you could have your dream, ideal weight for a lifetime. If that is something that you are interested in, grab your console call with me and let's decide if we are best fit to work together, head over to [theunstoppablemombbrain.com/group](http://theunstoppablemombbrain.com/group), you will get all of the details about how we work. together and we'll decide if we're a best fit. The group is six months and the next cohort is starting in April 2024. If you're

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listening to this in real time, we have live weekly coaching calls every Wednesday. There is daily written coaching, personal mentorship, or you will get your unique questions answered. We will overcome your specific obstacles. I will often throw on my camera and do personal trainings with the obstacle that they're overcoming. And the beauty of this is. Everyone gets to benefit from it. There's the best, most amazing brand new on demand video curriculum that will teach you the process super fun workbook that you get the moment that you join. And honestly, I think more than anything, and something that I think is often understated, an intimate community of like minded women that also have the same goal. When you surround yourself with women that are similar to you, but maybe in different professions, they have different, different obstacles coming up. Your brain will become more valuable. I cannot tell you how many times I have heard my clients tell me I would never have thought to bring that one obstacle to this coaching call, or I haven't faced that obstacle yet, but I can totally see how that could be in my future. When you are in an intimate small group, your brain becomes as valuable as all of the brains in the room, which is why, in my opinion, intimate small group coaching is the best way for you to lose the weight you want. Not only do you learn science backed strategies, but you get to learn from the wins and the mistakes of how everyone is losing the weight in the most permanent and lasting way. So don't wait another minute. This group is truly amazing. It will feel like home and a landing spot for you where nothing is too big. Nothing is too small. I have. Coached on it all, and it is a physician approved roadmap for you to lose the weight you want this year. Don't wait another minute. I want to see your name pop up in my email inbox, grab your consult spot over at [theunstoppablemombrain.com/group](https://theunstoppablemombrain.com/group). And I cannot wait to see you in the group.

I hope you guys have an amazing day and I will see you next week. Bye. Thanks for listening to the Unstoppable Mom Brain Podcast. It's been an honor spending this time with you and your brilliant brain. If you want more resources or information from the show, head on over to [theunstoppablemombrain.com](https://theunstoppablemombrain.com).