

## **RCC 86: Start Thinking and Behaving Like a Time Creator with Jill Farmer**



### **Full Episode Transcript**

**With Your Host**

**Susan Hyatt**

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Welcome to the *Rich Coach Club*, the podcast that teaches you how to build your dream coaching practice and how to significantly increase your income. If you're a coach and you're determined to start making more money, this show is for you. I'm master certified life coach Susan Hyatt, and I'm psyched for you to join me on this journey.

Do you have time? Or does time have you? Those questions come directly from Jill Farmer, our guest on today's show. Jill is a coach who specializes in time. And she's the author of a book called *There's Not Enough Time: And Other Lies We Tell Ourselves*.

She's brilliant. You will love our conversation later in this episode. But before we get into all that, first, I've got a few suggestions for you, some hot tips on how to become a time-creator. I know your time is precious, so let's cut to the chase and dive right in. It's go time.

We're starting with a segment that I call your Two-Minute Pep-Talk. And this is the part of the show where I share some motivation and encouragement to get your week started off right. And I try to keep things to two minutes or less.

One question I get all the time is, "Susan, how the heck do you do all the stuff you do? Manage a team of 10 employees, roll out a new podcast episode every week, plus rolling out newsletters and blog posts and videos too, running several different coaching programs, running an online community, BARE Daily, with hundreds of members, writing books, plus riding my Peloton, lifting weights, making chicken and bean chili in my Instant Pot, being a wife – I just had my 27-year anniversary – and a mom, you know, having a life?"

I didn't always operate this way. I used to be so bad, y'all, at managing my time, like comically bad. But I've made huge improvements over the last 13

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years. I've transformed from being a time chaser and a time waster to being a time creator. And I've got a few tips for you.

So, first, what's a time-creator? Exactly what it sounds like. It's someone who finds ways to create more time. So, how do you become one? It starts with a mental shift. And instead of asking, "Why am I always running out of time?" You start by asking, "How do I create all the time I need and more?" New question, new attitude.

How does a time-creator think, behave? As a time-creator, you delegate. You delegate household chores, errands, post office trips, laundry, anything you can possibly delegate to someone else, you do it because that frees up an astounding amount of time. And as a time-creator, you choose high-quality activities.

You're extremely selective about what goes onto your calendar and you choose activities that make you feel rich and activities that help you get rich. If it's not helping you feel rich, get rich, or both, then it's not going into that precious 1PM time slot on your G-Cal'.

As a time-creator, you make self-care the highest priority; physical exercise, deep sleep, nourishing food, plenty of water, meditation or some other practice that helps you clear the debris from your mind and distress. You treat your body like it's a Ferrari – Scott Hyatt will love that reference – and not a janky busted up old Honda from '72.

When your self-care is on point, you become ultra-productive. This means if you've got five hours to sit at your desk and work, those five hours are going to be ultra-prolific. You've got a clear mind. You're alert and inspired. You'll be able to accomplish more in five hours than many people do in 15 hours.

A strong self-care routine allows you to bend time. It's like magic. I'm not kidding about this, y'all. Bottom line, people, you can become a time-

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creator. And like pretty much everything else in life, making this change starts with changing your attitude.

Start asking new questions, “How can I create an extra hour of free time today? How can I get this done faster? What’s the best most important use of my time today? How can I create more energy so that I can produce more in less time? How can I create all the time I need? How can I create even more time than I need; a surplus of time?”

These questions will change your relationship with time and change your business and income too. You are in charge of your life. And if you don’t like where your time is going, you can change things. You can start right now, this very moment.

The best time to upgrade your life and business is always right the hell now. That’s your pep-talk for this week. Pep-talk complete.

Coaches, meet Jill Farmer, time expert, author, coach. Jill specializes in working with people in corporations who feel like, “I never have enough time for all the things I want to do.” And I’m guessing that’s totally you because, honestly, who doesn’t feel this way?

When’s the last time you met someone who was like, “I have way too much free time,” or, “Gosh I just feel so relaxed and my schedule feels so manageable.” Yeah, you don’t hear that too often. Most people in our culture have major time issues. So, without further ado, let’s talk to my friend Jill and get ourselves straightened out.

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Susan: Alright, welcome to the show, Jill Farmer.

Jill: I’m so glad to be here.

Susan: So, Jill, you and I have known each other – how many years has it been now?

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Jill: Well, just about exactly 10 years.

Susan: I know. And I was actually just looking at a Facebook memory from when we both had speaking gigs together like five years ago or, god, it was longer than that. Maybe it was five years ago. Remember when we did that – it was the same day I got in that car accident...

Jill: And we got to be kind of the opening act for Maria Shriver and Martha Beck. That was a fun experience.

Susan: Super-fun. So, let's talk about your specialty, which is time and stress.

Jill: Yeah, time and stress management is my jam, not because I was born particularly good at it, but that's where I discovered coaching helps me the most, all those decade-plus ago. My old job in life before coaching was in TV, reporting and journalism. And I really left that career because of time and stress.

I thought it was the career's fault and that was what caused all my issues. And so, I got home and was trying to regroup and decide what I was going to do next with my life, as I was staying home and taking care of my small kids. And I realized, I'm just as stressed out here away from what I thought was the cause and the source of all this stress and overwhelm.

And that led me on a journey of self-discovery and realizing how much of my own stress and overwhelm I was carrying around with me in my brain and in my habits and patterns and in my old behaviors. And so, learning that has created a lifelong, I think, mission for me to try to help other people understand ways that we can break those patterns, change the behaviors, shift our thinking, work with our bodies so that we aren't just constantly using stress and overwhelm as a catalyst to perform and to try to achieve.

Susan: You bring up such an important point. And I think that many of us that have gone into life coaching have thought, like, I'm out of this corporate gig, or I'm no longer working for the man. And then we get home

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and we realize that we bring all of our patterns and habits into this new gig, unless we're really taking stock and taking a look.

And so, I do think, as you and I were discussing before I hit record, that many of you coaches listening, like us, blame other things for time and stress. And there's really some critical skills you could learn to learn how to manage and create time that suits you.

Jill: And, of course, it's understandable. I mean, we can be kind to ourselves. It's not because we're bad people that we take those patterns and habits with us. Particularly as we're launching a business or launching something new within a business as a coach, that's uncertainty. And uncertainty is going to trigger a sense of that fear in us because it is unknown, it does, at our most primal level, register as a threat.

And then, what happens a lot of times is, if we don't pay attention to that and recognize, then these old default patterns take over. And before we know it, we're overworking, we can't collaborate, we're stressed out, we're losing 13 IQ points because that's what happens when we're in fight or flight mode. And then we have trouble making decisions. So, we make decisions and look at them later on and go, "What was I thinking in that situation?"

So, it's not because there's something wrong with us or other people somehow are doing it right. It takes some awareness and some willingness to kind of repattern some habits and defaults, to learn some new ways of doing it so that we can get into a better brain space to create, to innovate, to be efficient, to be meaningfully productive and to do what matters to us.

Susan: So, something that you just said that I think is so interesting – I had not heard this before – that when we're in fight or flight, our IQ drops 13 points?

Jill: Yeah, sister. And I don't know about you, but at least in this phase of my life, I have none to give away.

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Susan: I was going to say, I need all those points, Jill.

Jill: Me too. I'll take bonus points if anybody's got them to hand off to me as well. So, yeah, this is based on a study done at Princeton. When people were told they didn't have enough money or were put in a situation where they were not going to have enough money to do something, they lost 13 IQ points. And it was duplicated now a couple of times. So, we have a better understanding.

A little bit of what we might define as stress is okay. That would be in the clinical model of psychological productivity Yerkes-Dodson model says we need just enough arousal – you know, it's not really sexual but that's the term they use – arousal or enticement or motivation or pressure to be motivated into doing something. But real quickly, when we have too much pressure or stress, or that turns into that place where we can start really feeling it in our body as panicky fear, then the model drops down and we lose cognitive ability, 13 points, and our productivity just goes into the crapper.

A lot of what we're doing when we get to work for ourselves is discovering how do I play with that space of being willing to be challenged, being willing to get in there and do something that matters to me, but not do it at the level where I'm overworking, stressed, pressurized? Because we know that the consequences of that are poor results and burnout. That's the other big consequence.

Susan: All of you listening who are trying to set up shop, work from home, have regular business hours, that are really struggling with this structure – it's similar to when I talk with people in the BARE program – you don't need more willpower. You need more pleasure. And I think that applies to business as well.

I think people are white-knuckling these business hours and what you're saying here is that if you're not managing your stress, it's not going to matter what kind of stuff you put together to manage your time.

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Jill: Right, and we do know – most coaches are working from home, or at least working from home part of the time. And the productivity studies around that are great. We can get more done when we work at home than people going into an office. We just need a little light structure around it.

And most people take that to mean, “I’m going to chain myself to my desk for six to eight hours a day because that’s what I’d be doing if I was going to an office and it doesn’t count otherwise.” And I think we have to be more willing to look at ourselves, what’s our prime time of day.

Most people have a hard time focusing for more than 45 minutes at a time at something. Daniel Pink’s new book takes a lot of studies that have been done in the last 10 years and tells us what is our ideal time, meaning length of time to work. And for most people, that’s around a time block of 30 to no longer than 90 minutes.

A lot of people’s sweet spot is 45 to 50 minutes. And then you have to get up and you’ve got to take a break. Because that’s the other thing I notice a lot of people doing is, okay, my work hours, my office hours mean that I’m literally chained to my desk. And sometimes not eating, sometimes not doing any of the other things that we know we need in the brain in terms of glycogen to actually think, be efficient, produce.

Another really quick interesting study showed that – they had two control groups. One group had a really hard math problem to do. And then was told, “Okay, now take a break for a few minutes and then we’ll get back into it. But you need to really take a break right now.”

The other group was given a pause for the same amount of time as the first group and then was told, “Okay, now it’s time to start in again.” So, they were both pausing the same, but one group was told, “You’re taking a break.” And the group that was told to take a break performed vastly better when they went back to doing the problems because it turns out the brain switches gears and refuels, if you will, when we take breaks.



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And that doesn't mean, you know, I work for 20 minutes and then I take a four-and-a-half-hour break where I'm doing nothing but looking on Facebook and seeing how inadequate I am because I'm not doing as much as everybody else. You have to be, just like you talk about, sort of cleaning up our mental environment and paying attention to what we're paying attention to.

We need to be intentional and pay attention to how we're taking those breaks too. 10 to 15 minutes is often great. Getting up and moving your body is really good. So, whether you go take a walk around your house, whether you do one of those quick on your phone seven-minute workout apps, whether you just go to the bathroom and get something to drink.

But if you're on your computer just turning your head to a new page on the computer, it's not going to do that code switch thing in your brain that's going to allow for that break.

Susan: That's such a good point. Because I could already hear everyone thinking, like, "Well I take a break. I go chat with my friends on Facebook or Slack." And you're saying, no, you've got to get up and move a little bit.

Jill: And I've had so many clients, executive clients and corporate clients try this and they're like, "It's amazing." They'll say, instead of chaining themselves to their desk for two and a half hours in the morning, they'll do a 45-minute work block break, 45-minute work block, break, and then a shorter email containment thing where they don't mess with email and let that interrupt their other work blocks. They try to do that uninterrupted.

And then they do like a 20-minute process their email, respond, put it on their calendar, put it in files if it takes a longer response. And they're like, "I'm getting stuff done that used to take, in that morning block now that I'm taking more breaks and being intentional about what I'm doing in those blocks, then I did three days in a row of supposedly dedicating my whole morning to trying to get that stuff done.

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So, it doesn't have to be complicated. It's simple. It's just restructuring how we're focusing our attention and using what we know, get our brain to work in partnership with this, when it's at its most innovative, creative, and has the highest focusing ability.

Susan: I love this tip because I'm definitely – I mean, I'm somebody who's very much ass in the seat, get it done. But listening to you talk through it, I think I do naturally – I have a fireplace in – my home office is off my living room and I have a fireplace in the living room. And especially in the winter time, like, in between calls, I get up, I go stand in front of the fireplace and stretch and then come back.

It's like, I wasn't even consciously realizing, I think I was naturally doing that. But now that I hear this from you, I'm going to be much more intentional about – listen, I have four pets. They make me get up anyway. So, I think that for everyone listening, I'm already encouraging you to have regular business hours, to time block your time, have creative time, everything Jill was just saying, but let's build in these breaks and see what happens.

Jill: Right, so then some people are like, "Breaks are not a problem, Jill and Susan. My whole life is distraction and I've got the breaks." And if that's more of the issue, it is also interesting to know that our brains, you know, there's all the great scientist whose name has six syllables and I can never say it right, who wrote a great book called Flow. And that's helping us to understand that when the brain is in the state of flow, we get so much more meaningful work done in less time than when we're in that kind of normal trying to do that multi-tasking thing.

And brain state of flow, the simplest way is when you're kind of lost and you don't even know, all of a sudden, you're like, "Oh wait, where was I? I was doing this thing. I lost track of time." It's this, you know, there, totally engaged, totally engulfed in the moment.

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And so, we know being in the brain's state of flow is a really positive thing. How do we do that? Well, we have to turn off alerts and we have to give ourselves blocks of uninterrupted time, otherwise it's sort of like flying the plane, and then every time we get an email or a text or interruption, we're landing the plane. And you don't have to be an aerospace engineer to know that ain't so efficient. That's using a lot more fuel and effort to get from point A to point B.

And so, if focus and really staying focused on getting something that matters to you done is your problem, I like to turn off alerts, that's at the simplest level. There's a fun new free app called Forest, and you can set it with your phone and you can say, I really want to focus on getting this copy written for 30 minutes because I keep starting it and now, you know, 10 different time blocks later I still don't have the damn thing done.

So, you set it for that 30 minutes and it plays some nice kind of nature white noise for you. But if you pick up your phone and do something else, your tree withers and doesn't grow. In order to plant your forest, you have to leave that and it quiets all of those alerts for you so you can have blocks of time that are uninterrupted and focused.

And I've done it with timers for years, but I just kind of like this new app. It's been helpful for me in my writing work for really helping to create a little container and put your headphones on and it sort of stays in that focused mode that really does help.

And I still hear coaches say, "Coaching's great because I'm a really good multitasker." And I'm like, bullshit, you are not. The science shows us that if we're doing two or three things at a time, it's taking four or five times longer than if we did each of those things separately.

So, just throw out that old 90s thing that somehow, we glorified and said that multitasking was a good thing. It's not. A, we can't really do it. Our brain code-switches between stuff, so it's switching back and forth, it's not doing those things quite to the same degree at once that you think it is. And

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number two, it's taking more time than if you give yourself permission to do one thing at a time, focus on it, complete it, for shorter durations of time so that you don't have diminishing returns by just trying to force yourself there.

Susan: You know, years ago, I mean, it had to be 12 years ago, I taught a class on time and I remember, I stumbled upon a piece of research that showed that multitasking was the equivalent to the brain of taking a hit off a bong. I was like, listen, this is not what you think.

Jill: Yep, your IQ is about the same as if you're stoned if you're multitasking.

Susan: Oh my god, I forgot. Well, it's interesting because I think that women in general are better at multitasking than men. And so, we think it's somehow a superpower. And it is not. We need to quit that shit and hyper-focus. You're the second person in 24 hours to talk about this Flow book that I've heard.

And it actually was somebody talking about, in an Instagram story, that having your brain in a state of flow and engaging in activities that allow your brain to get into that state of flow is an anxiety reducer. So, particularly during this time – we're recording this during the pandemic – it behooves you to stop multitasking and allow yourself to engage in activities that allow you to lose track of time.

Jill: Yeah, it really does. And the other thing is – I talk about time management and stress management being intrinsically connected – if you're really stressed and you're trying to work out your stress by creating and in this busy frenetic pattern of just doing something for the sake of doing something, you're probably not going to reduce your stress, and you're probably not going to love your output, to say the least.

And so, it's really important to do those things that we know have a biochemical ability to allow us to complete the stress cycle. Do some exercise. It doesn't have to be – if you're running short on time or you've

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got a whole lot of people under your feet with everybody home or whatever, even durations of five minutes up and down the stairs, those five to seven minute apps on your phone, just some bodyweight exercises, a brisk walk around the neighborhood, especially for the mental health side of things.

If you're thinking about what's stressing you out while you are exerting yourself physically, you're metabolizing stress hormones. And that's a good thing. It's a really good thing. The other thing we know, you know, the Mother Theresa effect that when we have stress hormones, it lowers our immune system, when we experience the emotion of kindness, it actually boosts our immune system. That's what they call the Mother Theresa effect, based on a study done at Harvard a number of years ago.

So, if you can find places to be kind to yourself and to others, that's a really helpful way to metabolize. That doesn't mean add 20 tasks to your list to go serve or become Mother Theresa. It just means that people in the study just watched a video of Mother Theresa being nice and that was enough to boost their immune system. So, let's start with something ridiculously small.

Even very short meditation and mindfulness practices help lower our reactivity, which helps our judgment, which helps us stay out of fight or flight, where we're less likely to have that cognitive loss. And then just being in connection with people that we love in whatever form that takes, thanks to social distancing, if it's not in the physical proximity, are other ways we can make space for that.

And we know, if we make even the shortest duration of time for the things that help us to more effectively process stress instead of using stress as our activator or catalyst to get stuff done, on the other side of it, we can get a lot more meaningful work done in less time.

Susan: That is so helpful. Particularly it's interesting, during this pandemic, one of the things that has really helped me is kindness in terms of turning towards what can I do to help someone, instead of focusing on what's terrible about this for my personal situation. Like, pulling myself out of it by

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going into Rich Coach Club or my mastermind groups and saying, “Who needs help right now?” But then also can I do something, buy gift certificates, whatever.

Just small acts like that and posing about it, saying like, “Hey guys, if you can take carry out from your local restaurants, please do that.” That keeps me out of fight or flight during this time. So, it’s really interesting that there’s research behind that.

Jill: Yeah, there really is. And not only is it helping you keep out of fight or flight, it’s boosting your immunity.

Susan: Yeah, so I’m not going to get it, knock on wood...

Jill: I can’t say that.

Susan: I mean, obviously, y’all listening, reducing your stress so that you become a time creator as opposed to trying to leverage stress, I can’t tell you, Jill, how many people say to me, “Well I can’t get anything done unless I’m down to the wire.” You know, they create stress for themselves with deadlines...

Jill: And again, a little bit of that – some people do perform better than others with some time constraints. That’s their arousal or activation. It’s a pretty tight wire if you’re always used to waiting for that. And most of the time, we cross over right away into that unhealthy unproductive not effective overload of stress. And so, I think it’s learning to play a little bit more on the other side is what does it look like if I don’t push it so that I have that sick feeling in my chest and the tightness in the gut? And that’s my wait-until-I-act space. What does it feel like to be more like, “Oh, a tingle. This is interesting. It’s time for me to get going here.”

Susan: So, talk to us about – obviously in the show notes, we’re going to have all kinds of info about the lovely Jill Farmer. But you have a book on time, which you wrote, gosh, how many years ago?

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Jill: Seven years ago now, I can't believe it. Yeah, it's called *There's No Enough Time: And Other Lies We Tell Ourselves*, which really focuses on how to dare to use something other than the thought, "There's not enough time," in order to launch action and make decisions.

And the rest of the time now, my work is going into corporations and organizations and companies, everybody from Edward Jones to Purina to places like Harvard Medical School, to talk about time and stress management. And that's what I do in the world these days. And I really, really love it.

Susan: Yay, alright, you guys, check out Jill's book. Look her up on Facebook. And I just so appreciate the work you're doing and sharing it with us today.

Jill: It was so good to be here with you.

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One more quick thing before we say goodbye for now. Earlier in the episode, I shared some ways to become a time-creator. As a time-creator, you delegate. You focus on high-quality activities, money-generating activities. You prioritize self-care, which keeps you energized, which makes you way more productive, so you can do more in less time.

So, I want to add one more thought, one more tip. As a time-creator, you systemize your life and business. You create consistent efficient systems, systems for growing your online audience, growing your list, ad acquiring leads, systems for converting leads into paying clients, systems for scheduling client sessions, for invoicing people, and getting paid, systems for everything.

Instead of reinventing the wheel every Monday or just winging it, you build systems that lead to the biggest results in the least possible time. This is something my COO, Ana Micka has helped me with so much. Ana is a systems genius and has seriously whipped my company into shape.

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I was doing pretty alright before she joined the team, but damn, since Ana got here, our systems are on fire. And that's bringing our audience size and our revenue to a whole new level. Side note, if you'd like to work one on one with Ana and myself, both our brains focused on your business, we can do that.

Just email [support@shyatt.com](mailto:support@shyatt.com) and ask for info about working with Ana and me. We've got a special package with the two of us that you'll love. We'll hunker down with you, whip your business strategy into shape, burn through your money blocks, identify areas where you need better systems and get your systems popping.

It's like a makeover for your business and your mindset too, so again, just email [support@syhatt.com](mailto:support@syhatt.com) to inquire about this. And the email just has to say, "Hey, I'm interested in working with Susan and Ana." And we'll send you all the info you need. We would love to get you all sorted out.

Thank you for listening to today's episode. Start thinking and behaving like a time-creator. What's one decision that you could make today that would immediately create more time? What could you delegate, delete, cancel, change, or systematize? And how could you create all the time you need?

Ponder that. Come up with something you could do and do it. Boom, just like that, you've become a time creator. And now, since you've got plenty of time, you can take two minutes to post a five-star review about this show on iTunes, or wherever you listen. Oh, I know, that was sneaky.

But seriously, my team and I love and appreciate your reviews so much. If you've heard something on this show that made a difference in your day, let us know, alright? Post that review. I know you've got some time now. That's all for now. Have a beautiful week. Take good care of yourself and I'll see you next time.

Thank you for listening to Susan Hyatt's Rich Coach Club. If you enjoyed today's show, please head over to [shyatt.com/cash](http://shyatt.com/cash) where you'll find my

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brand-new money magazine. Now listen, we designed this magazine to be entertaining, educational, and help you make serious bank.

So you can download the magazine, there's a money quiz inside, there's an interview with one of my favorite clients who went from making no money and being served eviction papers, to making over six figures in a very short amount of time. So the magazine includes that feature, lots of resources to help you do it, lots of resources about creating wealth and investing money.

It's pretty robust, y'all. So head over to [shyatt.com/cash](http://shyatt.com/cash) to get that magazine. And you'll also find a link to join my free Facebook community, especially for coaches called Rich Coach Club. So bring your coaching practice and your income to the next level at [shyatt.com](http://shyatt.com). See you next week.