#163: How to Build a Heart-Centered Business as a Busy Mom with Sara Chana Silverstein

Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Debbie Sassen

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You're listening to *The Jewish Entrepreneur Podcast* with Debbie Sassen, Episode 163.

Welcome to *The Jewish Entrepreneur Podcast*. I'm your host, Debbie Sassen. I went from being a financial adviser, author and chronic under earner to building my business to six figures as a financial planner and money mindset coach. And then, on to multiple six figures as a full-time money and business coach.

I help entrepreneurs create money making businesses and build wealth using sales and money mindset strategies in alignment with authentic Jewish values. Now, let's dive into today's show.

Hello my friends and welcome back to the podcast. Do I have an amazing interview for you this week. But before we jump into the interview with Sara Chana Silverstein, I wanted to make sure you know about my new Telegram broadcast channel, 24/6. The channel launched just a couple of weeks ago, and the reception has been fantastic.

A few times a week, I share very actionable trainings inside this Telegram channel, which you can access on the go and implement quickly in your business to elevate your self-perception as a CEO, strategize and monetize your business for your income success and your impact in 2025. 24/6 is the place that you want to be to have Debbie, that's me, in your back pocket or in your purse, however you like to have me, on the go in 2025.

Go to my website, debbiesassen.com/246 and learn a little bit more about my Telegram channel because we are really going all in on our businesses this year, and I wanna make sure that you have everything you need to show up and be all that you can be and create that really beautiful, impactful dream business that you have desired, which is a beautiful lead-in to our guest on the podcast this week, Sara Chana Silverstein.

Sara Chana is a master herbalist, classical homeopath, and board-certified lactation consultant with over three decades of expertise. Sara is known for

her appearances on national TV news affiliates and as a sought-after keynote speaker both in the United States and internationally.

Sara Chana specializes in blending alternative medicine with conventional treatments, empowering people to make informed health decisions. For 32 years, she has run a thriving pediatric and women's health clinic in Brooklyn, New York, where Sara Chana focuses on personalized care for children and women.

Sara Chana is the author of the bestselling book, Moodtopia: Tame Your Moods, De-stress, and Find Balance Using Herbal Remedies, Aromatherapy, and More. And I am so excited to have Sara Chana Silverstein on the podcast this week. Really listen in. There is so much to learn and glean from this episode as a working woman, as a mother, as someone who has a humongous heart. And with that, I'm just going to invite you into the podcast. Let's go.

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Debbie Sassen: Hello, Sara Chana. Welcome to the show.

Sara Chana Silverstein: Debbie, it’s such an honor to be speaking with you. I’m really looking forward to this interview. Thank you.

Debbie Sassen: I am as well. I'm just going to tell the audience that right before we started recording, we both found out that we're originally from Los Angeles. And I think that is just such a fun point of contact to LA girls doing their thing in the world. And really, I think we're serving our communities, each one of us in a different way. So it is so nice for me to meet you this time and just get you to meet my audience and share all of your wisdom as a woman building a business.

Sara Chana Silverstein: Yes, I'm currently residing in Brooklyn and they say it's very hard for LA girls to move anywhere. So Brooklyn is definitely a change from LA.

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Debbie Sassen: So is Israel and I miss my beach. Do you miss the Pacific Ocean?

Sara Chana Silverstein: Yeah, I really did have a connection, I agree with you. And the canyons, I love driving the canyons. That was my favorite.

Debbie Sassen: Okay, well, I get some good hiking in here in Israel. So you probably don't get that in Brooklyn. You gotta go a little bit far to get the hiking in.

Sara Chana Silverstein: Yeah, for sure.

Debbie Sassen: So, Sara Chana, I want you to share with our listeners today. As a stay-at-home mom who also built a business, let us know how you got started because you're also in a very unique field. A lot of my clients are coaches and healers. You're in the healing world and you also do a lot with herbs. Tell us a little bit about how you even landed upon this type of work.

Sara Chana Silverstein: So first I'll tell you what I do. I'm an international board certified lactation consultant and I've helped over 45,000 babies breastfeed over the past 32 years. I also went back to school and I did a five-year program in classical homeopathy. I did a three-year program and became a master herbalist. I have a woman's clinic where I help kids with chronic ear infections, chronic strep throat, ADD, ADHD, attention issues, focus issues.

For women, I deal with staining, miscarriages, pregnancies, and also emotional issues. I wrote a book called Moodtopia, which has been number one on Amazon, I'm proud to say, and has been translated into Chinese. And that book is all about how to help women stay emotionally stable during times of chaos, like right now.

I do TV segments for NBC, CBS, and Fox News, teaching people how to safely integrate herbal medicine with conventional medicine. And I guest

lecture at medical schools and speak at medical conferences across the US all while being a mom to seven children. So I've had a little bit of a very busy life.

Debbie Sassen: Is there something you don't do? Do you cook?

Sara Chana Silverstein: Well, I do on Yom Tov and Shabbos, not as much during the week. True confessions, yes.

Debbie Sassen: Okay, great. That's all right. We can't do everything. That was something when I graduated from college, I went to Smith College, and I don't remember who was the speaker at our graduation, but it was pretty much like you guys, you can do everything, and it might not be all at the same time, or it might not be everything that you wanna do now. Some might wait five or 10 years, but let's just talk about when did you start doing the work, even from the breastfeeding, the homeopathy, the herbs, what was your trajectory like learning what you're doing?

Sara Chana Silverstein: So one of my children had very bad allergies and very bad compromised asthma. And I went from doctor to doctor, and they really said that this child was gonna be on steroids, anti-inflammatory, and asthma medicine for the rest of his life. And I really didn't feel comfortable with that.

I had been invited to a program through Yale University and I spent a semester at Oxford. And when I was in England, I spent a lot of time in the library reading about botanical plant-based medicine. It helped me with my allergies a lot. It was a little more in theory. I was quite intimidated to try it with a child 6 months old and then I said this is ridiculous.

And so I went to a Chinese medical practitioner and she started giving both my children at that time herbal medicine and the transformation was remarkable before my eyes the inflammation went down, the breathing

became more clear, the eczema started to clear, and I said, this is super, super important to know.

So that's when I went back to school and I studied herbal medicine and classical homeopathy, and I knew that the Jewish world was desperately missing this. It says in Tehillim that Hashem gave grass for the cattle and herbs for the service of man and the word there is service.

Debbie Sassen: Okay.

Sara Chana Silverstein: It also says that Hashem put the refuah in the world before the illness and He created plants and trees before man. So I knew as a Yiddish woman that this plant-based medicine is something that we have used for generations. In every place we were dispersed we weren't accepted by the community around us. It was midwives that took care of us. They were the bone setters, the lactation consultants, the pediatricians.

So I knew when I started studying plant-based medicine that this was how Jewish women heal Jewish women. And I want to say that I was sitting in my first homeopathic class and, you know, I was the only one with a shaytel covering my collarbones, nylons in the heat, And I'm sitting there, you know, no Jews are anywhere to be found. This is over 36 years ago and our teacher was European and he said, why do you want to become homeopaths? And there were a lot of MDs and nurses and they're giving all these reasons. And he said, I'm going to tell you the reason.

He said, because the maker drops a soul in the body and the body is a vessel to carry that soul to do what it needs to in this world. And if the body becomes ill or in pain, it won't do things like helping a neighbor who's sick or bringing over food for someone after they gave birth or helping babysit someone if someone's unable to do it. He said, so we're fixing the body so that the soul can actualize in this world. And I'm sitting there going, is this a Torah class? Like I was shocked.

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Debbie Sassen: Wow. Amazing.

Sara Chana Silverstein: And that's when it hit me that I needed to help. And it's much more popular now, but when I was starting it, no one was using essential oils, no one was using herbs. All these kosher companies were not making these kind of herbal products. They weren't, And I said, this is what I need to reunite and educate in the Frum world.

Debbie Sassen: I'm fascinated. So two things, another point of contact, my husband is from England and he studied at Oxford. So there you go. We're connected that way. When my daughter, she's 32 now, when she had chronic ear infections as a baby, I went to a homeopath.

So that was already over 30 years ago. I was, I mean, I didn't become an herbalist. I didn't become a homeopath, but it was something that, listen, I guess that's the LA girl in me, right? The fruits, the nuts, the looking for alternative medicines, but I knew that there must be something else out there. Antibiotic after antibiotic was not helping her.

So I just love so much what you're saying and what you're sharing and bringing to the world. But let's just jump ahead a little bit because now you've done all of this studying or you kept doing all of this studying and training. How as a mom of seven, did you actually build your business?

I think that's such an important story that I want you to share with our listeners because as Jewish women, we have a lot on our plate, especially in this generation. I don't know what your kids are doing, but certainly in Eretz Israel, so many of our women are working and they're supporting their husbands in learning, which means there is so much of the responsibility for the home and the income falling on their shoulders. How did you make it work?

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Sara Chana Silverstein: So I wanna begin by saying a very funny story. I remember when I first started going to school, there was a woman in our neighborhood, she was quite a bit older than I was at the time. And she was one of the first women in our neighborhood that actually got a job in a bank in Manhattan. And she rose very high in the ranks, and it was very unusual at the time.

So she always tells the story that she's like Friday afternoon, you know, getting out of work at like 12, Shabbos came in like six, and she was reading an article in the New York Times, it said, if you're having a dinner party for eight, how to plan it the month before. And she was laughing hysterically because when she got home by one, she was making challah from scratch, She was making kugel, she was making dessert, she was making dinner for like 25 people all in less than four hours.

And she laughed because how does she do it? She's multitasking while she's listening to, you know, something from her work. So yes, our lives as full women are very different. It's something you mentioned. And we really need to be able to multitask and be able to do a lot of things at the same time.

So what happened was when my kids weren't feeling well, yes, I could have just gone to another practitioner. This was an older Chinese lady and I could be very reliant on her to do it. But I felt as my family grew that I needed to do it. I also didn't have any problems breastfeeding, not at all. But I heard in the pediatrician office that everyone was complaining about nipple pain and engorgement and breast infections.

And I was sitting there with a little baby saying how could it be like if a sham wanted people to breastfeed? Why would we have so many problems right? I was so confused. So I went and got a medical textbook on the physician's guide to breastfeeding. Literally like at a library and I started reading it was by a woman named Dr Ruth Lawrence.

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And I realized that there was a science to breastfeeding that most people did not know about. And so what I did was it was imperative for me to gather this information. Then of course, I went back and I spoke with the Rabbanim and I wanted to know the halachas. I wanted to know the gemora around breastfeeding.

So for me, I wanted to make sure that everything I learned in science was compatible with halacha, which it was, of course. So I, anyways, I'm not answering your question, but what happened was I realized that there was a need in our communities to have someone that was Frum and understood the lifestyle.

Debbie Sassen: Correct.

Sara Chana Silverstein: Understood breastfeeding, knew when to go to a rav with either breastfeeding or ear infections. Like a woman is advised to get tubes in her child's ear. She's very concerned, is the hearing gonna be affected for the rest of their lives. So when I take this on I have to make sure that I'm also working with a rav. Now I know we can treat ear infections.

That's quite easy to treat. So when I started my path to learning I made sure I had a mashpia in breastfeeding. I had a mashpia in herbs. I had a mashpia in homeopathy, and I had a rav that I always checked in with. That was the most important for me in my path.

Debbie Sassen: Fantastic. So now let's take it back to, you're a mom with a large family, Kanahana and you built a business that was connected to your home so that you could actually be there for your children when they came home from school, if they weren't feeling well. What was your unique way of building your business that people need to think about, consider that, you know, now we have the online world, but when you were starting, there was no online world?

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Sara Chana Silverstein: Not at all. So I want to tell you what I did was, I rent in Brooklyn. When I moved here, buying was impossible and it's still pretty impossible to buy in Brooklyn. So when the studio apartment next door to my apartment opened up, I grabbed it. I mean, no one in my building had two apartments and I literally had to talk the manager for weeks into letting me take that apartment.

So what I did was I took the apartment right next door to me, I broke open the wall and I turned that into an office. And my decision was to be a stay-at-home working mom. And I do want to encourage your listeners to think and understand, and now especially online didn't even exist. We didn't even have computers at the time.

Debbie Sassen: Right.

Sara Chana Silverstein: But being a stay at home working mom was a super important thing for me. So I opened an office in my house and I'm really good at what I do, thank God. I mean, I'm not good at everything. I always tease my clients, I can't fix your refrigerator if it breaks. I'm not techy, I can't fix your computer, but I certainly can fix breastfeeding or ear infections.

And people would come to me and be like, Sara Chana, we'll get you a fancy office. You know, we can get you like, you know, the main drag of Borough Park or Williamsburg or Crown Heights. And I was like, no, I wanna stay at home. So at first it almost seemed unprofessional to have an office in my house for people, but without advertising, within a year, I did not have enough hours in the day to fill as many people that were reaching out to us. So I really learned that the quality of care was even more important than a fancy environment.

Debbie Sassen: My homeopath at the time that I went to him 32 years ago pre-smartphones, He had a rotary phone, maybe not rotary, but his secretary would literally answer the phone and she would just leave it on

the desk. Sometimes I'd have to call back like for hours in order to get an appointment because it was so old-fashioned, but he had such demand because he was so qualified.

Sara Chana Silverstein: So I did make my office very nice and charming. I think it's beautiful. People do love coming, but even to this day, as my children have grown up, I have not moved my office because when it's Erev Pesach and I have, you know, five kugels going, I have someone that's helping me, I'm there to check eggs, which is really an important thing. I'm there to turn on the fire. So even as my children have aged, and yes, I could go to a fancy office, because I'm a Jewish Frum woman, I still need to make Shabbos and Yontif, and I'm able to do that by having my office in my house.

And here's the bottom line as a lactation consultant, If it's 10 o'clock at night, I mean, I don't want to advertise this, but if it's 10 o'clock at night and someone has a terrible breast infection and she can't sleep and her baby's screaming, I have the ability because I don't have to drive to an office, open it up, turn on the heat.

I can see clients and I'll tell you like Motsi Shabbos is one of my most popular times because there's usually a husband's home that can stay with the other children. So I've always been open Motsi Shabbos because it makes the availability to my clients easier for them. Sundays are my busiest day because that's when husbands can stay with the children or their mothers or mother-in-laws very often are not working and they'll come. So I can have an unconventional office that functions very well and so does my Jewish home.

Debbie Sassen: Tell me a little bit about your work-life balance because from what you're telling me, I mean you'll be working and you're so much in demand that I'm envisioning that you're running from your office to like turn on the fire and the kugels are going in and then you're back. I don't know if

it's true that you're working like 12 hours a day in your business, in your clinic. Tell me a little more.

Sara Chana Silverstein: I work between 10 and 12 hours depending on the day. And that's exactly what I do. I will put in a kugel, I can turn on a timer and know when it needs to come out. I do have help, thank God, which I've had a woman with me for many years, so she knows my style and what we need. But yeah, I work many hours.

But for instance, if my grandchildren are coming, I can just decide to not work during the day and work in the evenings. If they go to bed theoretically by eight, I could see a client at eight, nine thirty and 11 if I need to. So because my office is in my home, I have this flexibility that if I have three emergencies, I will say to them, I can see you at this time.

I remember I had to do 2,500 clinical hours way back when. And at that time, I was not the professional with the reputation that I have now. And I did a lot of my clinical hours in Williamsburg. And I remember, because I had, you know, little kids at home, and I would say to the women, look, you know, I can see you, I can be there at 10pm. And you know, then I know my kids are theoretically asleep.

And the response was, that's a perfect time for me. Wow. Cause I'm staying at my mother's house and it's the most quiet time. If you'll come at 10, that would be fantastic. And then the mother and the bubby would be in the room with me. This is when I used to do home visits. Now I'm way too busy.

And they would be, it was the happiest thing. I would be there from 10 to 11:30. I'd get back home by midnight, able to sleep from, you know, 12:30 to 7:30. And I was able to be a mensch during the day and I was shocked at how thrilled people were.

So all my clinical hours outside of hospital setting, because I did have to two days a week do clinical hours in Beth Israel and St. Vincent's, but I at least could do my clinical hours in the middle of the night, you know?

Debbie Sassen: I don't think there's any other community in the world. I mean, I don't know all the communities, but the fact that someone's staying at her mother's house and would allow you to come in or welcome you in at 10 o'clock at night, I think that only happens in the Jewish communities.

Sara Chana Silverstein: Yeah, and they were thrilled. They were absolutely thrilled. And to know, again, I'm repeating that I can see clients Motzi Shabbos, you know, if Erev Shabbos, I'm usually booked now, but in the beginning of the days, Like if we went into Shabbos and a kid was having terrible strep throat and had already been on an antibiotic for four days and still in so much pain, they knew Erev Shabbos if they called me that they could come in Motsi Shabbos. So it made them calmer during their whole Shabbos to know that they could get that care. Fantastic.

So obviously things have changed with cell phones and WhatsApp, you know, and Zoom. Things have definitely changed than when I first started. So one of the things we do open up in our office is we do allow our clients to send us text messages or WhatsApp messages. They have to be very clear. It can't be, hey, call me. It's got to be details on the message and then we'll answer you.

So if you say, oh my gosh, you know, I've been trying this homeopathic remedy, silica, you gave me heparasulfate, these are names of remedies, as a backup. I feel like maybe I could switch. My child's been very thirsty. There's yellow goop coming out of their eyes. I can answer it now right away.

It's very important for me to meet the client and the family because as we learn in herbal medicine, we're treating the patient, not the condition. So we can have in homeopathy and herbs, five children that got E. Coli, G-d

forbid, Has Hashalom, and they all five have diarrhea, right? Lovely topic. But all five can be completely different.

One can have a fever and diarrhea. One can have vomiting and diarrhea. One can have painless diarrhea. The other one could feel perfectly fine and you'd never know it, and it can be the same bacteria. So when it comes to homeopathy, herbs, or breastfeeding, we're not looking at the breast infection, we're looking at the person that got the inflamed breast and how are we treating that person? How's that person gonna be compliant?

So I think that's what made our office, and now my daughter's my partner. Begrudgingly, she learned lactation because there's just so much need for it in our area. I think one of the things that was and is so wonderful is that each person that comes in our office is an individual. And since you're a business coach, I'm going to jump to, I find that care of the individual is what has allowed my business to grow without ever advertising.

I mean, I started a new school, Moodtopia Academy, which we'll discuss in a moment or two. It's the first time that I ever advertised, but it was just, it grew by word of mouth. And I see in the world, like customer care is so non-existent. It's so non-existent. Everybody goes to these medical clinics. I know Israel socialized medicine, but in America we have all these clinics. You never see the same practitioner. The practitioner has really no idea who you are.

And every consult I have is an hour and a half. So I could probably make more money, and you can advise me on this, if I kept my visits to 45 minutes. But I don't see anybody for less than an hour and a half. By the time they take off their coat, by the time they get comfortable, by the time they get a cup of water, by the time they explain for 30 minutes why they're even there, by the time I take their case and then I give them 20 minutes to discuss the protocol I suggest for them.

And then we have to see if it meshes with them. They could say, you know, Sara Chana, I just can't eat protein three times a day. We gotta come up with another plan. So even if in my mind, it's so brilliant and I know exactly how to treat them. If they can't comply, then it's a waste of their money and time.

So I think what I've learned as a business woman is to take the time with the person and see where they're at. Not where you think they should be at, not where you would like them to be at, but to see exactly like, when I work with a woman that just gave birth, the first thing I do is say, who's helping you? And they're, don't worry about that, Sara Chana. I'm like, no, before we even begin, please tell me your support network. And no one's really asked them that.

Debbie Sassen: Probably not, because she's just a woman with a breastfeeding issue. And rather than looking at it as part of like, you know, it takes a village. So not thinking that there's a mother, that there's a husband, that there are sisters and aunts and right, my daughter just gave birth and so and another one gave birth about a month ago. And yeah, we all contributed to the Shabbos, all take care of the kids, and that's so important.

I wanna ask you a couple of questions, especially because you're so dedicated to the work that you do. It's just, you know, it's mind-boggling, and you and I come from a similar generation. And it's a two-part question, and we'll try to keep it short.

But number one is, how did your kids react to the fact that you spend so much time, you know, in the office with your clients? And did they ever feel like they were playing second fiddle, that you weren't there for them. And interestingly, your daughter is working for you now.

And then the second part of that is, it's really about boundaries. Because it sounds to me, listening from the outside, is like, you don't have any

boundaries. I mean, you have Shabbos, right? There looks like there is a pride in not having boundaries. I'm not saying that you should, but, and maybe when you had a bunch of littles, now they're older, they're married, they're out of the house, maybe all of them, maybe most of them or some of them, right? But you obviously don't have like a nursing baby anymore.

You need to have different boundaries when you're nursing your own child. So tell me a little bit about how your children reacted as you were building your practice, and then tell me a little bit about boundaries. And it comes back to that like work-life balance issue. And I think it's a three-part question because in this generation, I think there might be some entitlement that people have on how much they need to or should or be expected to pour into their business as they're building it? So we've got three parts to this question here.

Sara Chana Silverstein: Sure. So number one is, I guess you'd have to ask my kids.

Debbie Sassen: They talk to you still?

Sara Chana Silverstein: Yes, thank G-d. And I still have some kids that live at home, by the way. So I would hope they feel that whenever they had a chumash party, a sitter party, I never missed it. If they had a school performance, I never missed it. If they were leaving for camp, I was there packing, their bags with them and bringing them to the bus.

If there was a visiting day at camp, very often I was in LA, so sometimes I missed it, but their life was 911 to me. I have a boy who was the only Frum boy on a college baseball team and they called him strings because he had strings. He had his tzitzits out. And I don't believe I ever missed one of his baseball games from the time that he was seven and eight years old

playing baseball all the way through university. So I would always schedule my clients around my kids' lives.

So I think they felt that I was there for them. I hope a hundred percent. If they got braces and they needed an appointment, that was scheduled in. I mean, my kids to this day will say, ma, can you put me in the book? And I'll say sure, and they'll say what does Tuesday look like? And I'm like Tuesday's kind of a crazy day. I'm really open on Thursday. So they'll literally put themselves in my book. Is that good? Is that bad? I'm not sure, but they'll know that Thursday from 10 to 11:30, we can talk and figure out what's going on.

Debbie Sassen: Yesterday, my married daughter called me. It was 5:00 in the afternoon, my time. She's like, you know what? And she has six kids. We haven't been to visit in a long time. Can I come now? And I'm like, well, actually in 45 minutes from now, I'm meeting with a client. So we have to put it in the books, as you said, like a little bit in advance. And Tuesday for me is also a very packed day. It's not a good day. So I love that.

Sara Chana Silverstein: So that was really the way it is. When I do go and travel and visit my kids in person, Not everybody lives in the New York area. I will then schedule my homeopathy and herbal clients. My lactation, I do virtual because there's not many lactation consultants around the world these days. I really like to do a hands-on, but I will always schedule a couple homeopathic and herbal clients even when I'm traveling to visit my kids so I can keep up my Parnassa.

And like if I want to go away for a Shabbos to one of my kids that lives in Maryland, I will get there Thursday evening, have a client Friday morning via Zoom and I'll have a client Mozi Chavez via zoom when they're putting their son to sleep. Make sense.

So I try to not let it impact my relationship and then Sunday morning we're out and about and we're visiting, we're doing things and having fun. I'll

come back Sunday afternoon, again, dinner time, maybe bedtime, I'll see one or two clients again. So I've always had that luxury, especially now with modern technology, that I can still see clients. So if I know ahead of time, like I'm going to be traveling to LA soon.

So if I have any, well, I always have herbal and homeopathic lines, but I will book at least one to two a day when I travel, it's so funny because I used to be a birthright chaperone and I would leave for 10 days, be on a bus with 45 mixed students. And I would every evening because of the time difference, like 11 PM Israel time, I would see a client before I went to bed. So even when I was traveling, I would still see clients all the time because the need is out there.

Debbie Sassen: So you really never, other than Shabbos, you never turn off. You are really in your business every day of the year, almost. Maybe not Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, but you're so dedicated to your clients.

Sara Chana Silverstein: Even if I'm not seeing clients, we can get like 50 messages per day. So I can sit there and my daughter who works with me, we can sit there for 45 minutes just answering texts and WhatsApps. So you were talking about borders.

So borders is probably something that I really need to work on for sure. I always feel if there's a Yiddish baby or a Yiddish person that's suffering or struggling, I'm really there to help them. You know, it's very funny because one of the things you said in the beginning is that I'm a healer. So I want to let you know that I'm not a healer. Hashem is the healer. I am just a shalia in the world of Teva.

So I tell my clients all the time it's not that I'm bringing light into the world I literally crawl through the mud with my clients like postpartum bleeding, breast infections, ear infections that are popping, tonsils that are swollen, adenoids that are swollen, upset stomachs, IBS, right? So I feel like I'm in the drudges, I'm in the trenches with my clients and what I'm trying to help

them understand or integrate is Hashem's plant-based wisdom into their lives.

So a lot of people come to me, Debbie, after they've gone through tons of antibiotics, like you explained for ear infections, and if the antibiotic worked, high five, exciting. Usually people come to me after their kids have already had two rounds of tubes, ear infections, they've done all the antibiotics and it's still not working.

So I want to say that as a herbalist, if conventional medicine works, fantastic. I wrote my book, Moodtopia. It's all about women and moods and sadness and depression and challenges and like, if their Zoloft or Prozac works and it's gotten them out of the drudges, fantastic. You'll never hear a negative thing from me about that because Hashem also created conventional medicine.

I'm there more if the conventional medicine didn't work and or the side effects are worse than the initial challenge, that's when we'll bring in botanical plant-based medicine. So I just want to let everyone know that Hashem is the healer. He's the light. I'm just trying to help facilitate. So maybe I'm more of a facilitator than anything else.

Debbie Sassen: I like that. I want to talk about it before we hear a little bit more about your Moodtopia group and your book, but I want to talk about money because when you have a business, the way we measure financial success, not how many 45,000, you know, breastfeeding babies. Wow. That number is inconceivable to me a little bit. There's a lot of kids, Although probably in my neighborhood we have at least that many, multiples of that, thank God.

But how did you decide to set your prices and what has been one or two money blocks or limiting money beliefs that you have had as a business owner?

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Sara Chana Silverstein: So money's been really hard for me, and maybe you couldn't completely judge my success with money. When I first studied herbal medicine, we did what was called community herbalism. And herbalists at the time would open clinics and people would give whatever they could. They would bring a loaf of bread, they would bring over some eggs, they would maybe work in your field a little bit. So midwives of old, my training and herbalism was more barter and be and accept what the person can pay.

So that was really my hushkafa. So it was very hard for me to charge. So when I first began as a lactation consultant, I charged $75 for home visits. And I would spend anywhere between an hour and a half to two and a half hours. And then I would include two follow-ups.

Meanwhile, I'm paying for a babysitter at home, plus sometimes I would have to take a cab there and back, and I was losing money the first year and a half.

Debbie Sassen: Yes, you were.

Sara Chana Silverstein: Having already paid for my education, I had to pay for my undergraduate degree, I had to pay for my graduate training, I had to pay for my graduate training. I had to pay for my 2,500 clinical hours. And there was actually a man that his wife had suffered with breastfeeding, breast infections. Her nipples were falling off her body. The baby wasn't gaining weight.

The baby was crying. And after the first visit, she had no nipple pain. She never had a breast infection again. The baby was happy and started gaining weight and he came over to me and he said you are nuts. I was like what he goes you are literally crazy. And I was so nervous. I was like, oh my gosh, is this a lawsuit?

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He said, you charged me 75 bucks. He said, you changed my life. My wife's not crying, my baby's not crying, my baby's gaining weight, I have tears in my eyes. He goes, you are insane to not charge. I was like, but this is a Jewish baby eating. Like I couldn't even conceive of charging. I'm being very honest with you.

Meanwhile, I still to this day live in a teeny tiny apartment in Brooklyn because it was very hard for me and I did a lot of tzedakah like if someone had a premature baby, so charging was a struggle. I needed people to demand it from me. Make me lock down prices. It was very hard because another lactation consultant came in around the area and ended up charging like the same price I was charging after I had done it for 15 years. And she had just gotten out of school and I was like, what? Like you don't have the knowledge or the experience I have.

So it took me a very long time to charge and not feel guilty about it. And even to this day, like I'm always giving away gifts to my clients and my daughter, who's my partner, is, Ma, you're paying for those herbs. You're paying for those creams. So I definitely have a block in this area. And then I recently opened my school. It's an online school, excuse me, called Moodtopia Academy. And what it is, we get two Zoom workshops per month. One, let's say is ear infections.

And then two weeks later, we do a Q&A on the lecture of ear infections or anything that comes up for my students, if supplements or anything. Then the next month I'll have hemorrhoids and varicose veins. The week after that we'll have emotional health for women. The week after that we'll do health for... So I have this phenomenal school and I actually hire other master herbalists to come in and teach with me, because there are so many brilliant people out there that the Jewish world doesn't know.

Now, I only charge $19 a month, because I feel like the Jewish world doesn't understand that plant-based medicine is available to them, that it's

inexpensive. So even women vetch about $19 a month. $19 a month, Sarhana, how can I commit? And I'm like, it's like a filter fish in a half roll.

Debbie Sassen: I'm like, what are you talking about?

Sara Chana Silverstein: What are you talking about? But you see, what I have behind me is I have a whole staff in Israel. I have a man who's in charge and I have an assistant in the Philippines. Because every time I do a class, we send out reminders, email reminders, we send out texts, we send them the link. Then after they do the class, they get a replay, they get a handout that printed with a Hazara, a synopsis of the whole class.

I get discount codes for them from different companies that have Hechsherem on them, but they're good companies. I'm working my guts off for this $19 per month. And I think a lot of people don't understand what the backend is. So I'm still struggling with that.

Debbie Sassen: You and I will have a discussion another time because, no, because really when you are marketing your class, people need to be marketed to where, because they're gonna go to someone in person and they'll pay them a few hundred dollars for a visit in their clinic. But for them to understand, not just like $19, how can I pay for that? And really, if you go and you buy challahs for your family, for Shabbos, you've spent way more than that already. But it's so valuable to them. Like, look at what this man said to you.

You've given me my wife back, you've given me my baby back, and all of his nerves were probably fried, Right? And now the rest of that baby's nursing journey and his wife, and she's gonna feel confident in the next baby. By the way, I never had any nursing problems either with my eight kids. I don't know what changed between you and me having babies and the rest, but we don't have to talk about that now. I guess we're still from the like, the Shifra and Pua generation, and then it's sort of something fizzled out after us.

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Sara Chana Silverstein: I want to say that it really depends on the shape of the nipple and the shape of the breast, the shape of the baby's mouth. So it could be that your structure and the DNA between you and your husband work.

Whereas we can, I just want to say this so women know. We can have flat nipples, inverted nipples? We can have babies that are low tone babies that have high pallets. There's so much that goes on with the shidduch between the mother and the baby that I don't want anybody to feel bad out there if their nursing was a challenge. You know, that's very important to know.

Debbie Sassen: But anyway, I just wanna, I wanna go back to the marketing, but like it is so valuable what you are giving your clients and how you are changing their life and the ripple effect of no ear infections. So baby sleeps, mommy sleeps, daddy sleeps, or asthma if you're dealing with asthma, the woman and her hormonal system, right?

When women appreciate it, how much their life can change, then they'll be like, oh, not $19 a month, $119 a month because you're giving me my life and my health and that's really everything. So I'm gonna give you a push one day to raise your prices and we'll talk about that offline because all the listeners should jump into Mootopia. Now we'll put the link in the show notes.

Sara Chana Silverstein: I agree and it's so interesting because the last lecture that I did, and again, I know this is important and that's why I want to give it away for free, but I do have all the backend. I had a woman who's a cancer specialist. She's a very brilliant woman and anybody that's going through chas ha-shalom, chemo or radiation or any kind of cancer treatments, she knows the difference between the chemo's, the difference between the radiation and she will formulate a supplement protocol to help prevent the side effects. So I introduced her to the Frum community. We had a class on how to prevent Yenemachlah, right?

Although, you know, Hashem's in charge. And then if you know someone that's going through it, that they can be supported to not have the exhaustion, the anemia, all the other side effects. And I was just so excited to bring her to the Frum World that I would have given it away for free because we need to know about this woman. We need to know that she's there.

I remember I was working with a young girl that had pituitary cancer. Many years ago, I was young and dumb, and we were doing homeopathy at the same time. And this mother was part of a clinic. And she said that all the young girls, their daughter was like eight years old. She knew everybody that was in the clinic, they'd all get treatments around the same time. She said she felt so bad because her daughter was the only one not having side effects from the treatment because we were using homeopathy which did not conflict at the same time.

And I remember just being in my office sobbing that like, thank G-d, baruch Hashem, we were able to help this girl. Look, I wanted to say that alternative practitioners that are well-educated are never against conventional medicine. We're never gonna say don't get that chemo if the chemo fits the cancer, which it did for this girl. But we wanna make sure that we can mitigate a protocol that doesn't have those side effects.

So I agree, I'm always torn. Like I just wrote a book, which will be on the market soon, on children with emotional challenges and ADD and ADHD. And it took me, of course, two years to write the book.

Debbie Sassen: You're busy. You're so busy.

Sara Chana Silverstein: So many kids are on Ritalin and so many medications. I had a girl come in my office the other day and she said, when I was in fifth grade, they started Zoloft, which might be needed, but that's a little early. And so the whole book is about herbs that women and men, you know, can try with their children before they jump to the medicine.

So my gut instinct would be to give the book away for free, but I can't because I paid an editor. I'm working with a publisher. So I think for me as a businesswoman, because this is a business show, so I want people to know now that I do charge for my time and I kind of put my foot down about charging because there was one era of Pesach where I had, I was young and dumb and I had five clients for breastfeeding and two I charged and three I did for free because I felt bad for them.

And at the end of Pesach, the two I charged were breastfeeding fully and the three I didn't were not because they were listening to my advice and their cousin and their aunt and their sister-in-law and their mother-in-law. And I did learn a lesson that when people pay for their service, they do take it seriously.

So I, over the last 10 years, have definitely gotten stricter about payment. I don't compromise as much. And what it does is for other business women out there is it gives me the ability to take more classes, to do more training myself because there's always more to learn out there and if I pay for my education so I know how important it is for me to charge so I can continue to improve my skills.

I charge also so I can go visit my children and grandchildren Which I think is important for them because yes, they did sacrifice a bit because their mother was working. And I need to be able to have that money to get on a plane or a train.

So I definitely have learned as I've grown with my business is successful. I do make a profit. I'm not in the red. I don't give away as many free gifts, although I want to, it's heartbreaking for me. But I really have learned the importance of being a businesswoman and it's something that I'm still growing and learning. But if you come in and look at my books, you will see that there's not a month that I'm in the red anymore.

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Debbie Sassen: Good for you, that's huge. That is really huge. And I will, for anybody listening, and we're not gonna go into your personal situation, but I love that you said very openly, there's not a month that I'm not in the red anymore, and you charge so that you can continue learning. I mean, your love is learning. The fact that you were in Oxford and learning and you went and took the medical textbook on breastfeeding, I mean, you're one of those personalities who just loves learning.

But money to take care of yourself today, to go visit your kids is one part of our relationship with money, but then there's also making sure that you have money in a retirement account. I mean, G-d should bless you that you should have a lot of strength and a long life to keep doing this, and sometimes G-d has other plans and we have to stop working before we would like to.

So I'm just gonna like drop that for anybody listening that making sure that you're putting money into a retirement account, whether it's an IRA, a solo IRA, 401k, in Israel we have different types of retirement plans. It's so important. And my husband had cancer, by the way, 22 years ago.

Where were you when we needed you for his nausea? He took the medication and thank G-d it was fine. But our insurance, we had critical health insurance, you know, and that also came in handy just when we needed it because we got a big payout from our insurance company which helped us to fund extra child care and medical care while he was under treatment and he couldn't work.

He didn't get disability. He wasn't off of work long enough, but he did have to take more sick days than he was allowed. So that did impact his income for that year and there are so many things that we don't know. So making sure that we're making sensible financial decisions and not just making sure that the books aren't in the red, but making sure that our family's not in the red, that we can visit our kids and take care of our future self is something that it's really important to talk about.

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Sara Chana Silverstein: And I'd like to say, because I had to share with your listeners who I was and how my practice was set up. But I do get a weekly massage. For me, I don't consider it a luxury. I consider it my medicine. And I think that's super, super important. Every Friday, that's where I go. That's where I can be found. It allows me to get all the tension out of my body. I do get acupuncture whenever I can fit that into my schedule. I take about a three to four mile walk every Shabbos. No I don't run, but I do walk to increase my circulation.

So I have learned over the years with having such an intense work schedule that I do do self-care. And I think that's really important. In the beginning, I felt guilty about it because I had seven kids with all of their needs and I helped all of them get their undergraduate degrees. I have a son in medical school, a son that just got his PhD in applied mathematics and physics. So yes, this is a family that we do pride ourselves in education. A lot of my boys got smicha, very important.

But as a businesswoman, I do know that I calculate my self-care into my budget. And I don't feel guilty about that. And I encourage my patients and clients to do that also. But as a business owner, I'm gonna make a lot better business decisions if my shoulders are not tense and my back is not in pain. So I think that's really important because I do work a lot.

I do have help. And one of the most important things I feel when you get to a certain point of your business is to get as much help as possible. I have a wonderful woman here. She comes every day. She knows my house. She knows my kitchen. She knows the clothes. She knows everything. She's a business partner for me. She takes care of the house while I take care of my office. So I've really worked on that.

I do have a staff in Israel that helps with my Moodtopia Academy, so I don't have to take that on as much. I have a young guy in India that takes care of a lot of my Instagram, because I put a lot of, anybody can follow me

@sarachanas. He helps me edit my videos and post for me. So I have learned over the years to get help, which I think is important.

And I want to say that I just got back from a 10-day trip in India. I went with Kosher Tours and it was the most phenomenal 10 days. And I really had to pre-save money for my lady to stay in my house working the week that I was away. And I made sure that I did probably 14-hour days the two weeks before I left and the week when I got back.

But I've also grown to the point that I knew I needed to explore the world and I had the best 10-day trip in India. So I think I've learned that as I've aged as a business woman, I am an entrepreneur, I am a business woman, and that's a really big step. And I would encourage younger Jewish women that are in business to calculate that into their finances because I came back so rejuvenated from India with so many stories to share with my clients. I was able to see Ayurvedic medicine in India and I brought it back into my business.

So I didn't even look at my 10 day India tour as like hopping out and taking a vacation. It was something that enhanced my business. So I think the massage as much help as you can get around the house, taking extra classes in your field, vacationing.

And I remember I was speaking to an older person when I first started in my business. And he said, you know, he said, I come from a different generation in America. He said, but if you were a paper boy, we practice to make sure we delivered our papers in the middle of the driveway. If you're someone that shines shoes, learn to be the best shoe shiner.

I see in this generation, and I'm sure you agree, Debbie, that people get their degree as a speech therapist, doesn't mean that they become the best speech therapist that they can. They get their degree as a medical assistant. It doesn't mean they're the best.

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So no matter what you're doing in a field, I do believe and encourage and think my success is because I tried to be, and I'm still trying to be the best practitioner that I can. I'm open to learn. It's not my way or the highway. If there's something I was doing that was not the best, I'm willing to shift and change. And I think that's what's kept me popular for 32 years because I'm growing with the times I'm growing with Instagram I'm growing with the internet I'm growing with Zoom and I'm not locked in any place in my business

Debbie Sassen: Sarah Chana, it has been such a pleasure. You have years, you have worlds of wisdom. It's not, you know, I think that you're also an old soul, even though we're about the same age, right? I just feel like your wisdom, the way you've grown your business, your dedication, you're there for your clients, you're there for your family, you're there for the Jewish world, and you're there for yourself. And there's just so much that we can take away from this interview. Thank you so so much for being on *The Jewish Entrepreneur Podcast.*

Sara Chana Silverstein: Thank you, Debbie. It's been a pleasure. Thank you for your insights. They're greatly appreciated.

Debbie Sassen: Bye-bye for now.

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Thank you so much for tuning into this week's podcast episode of *The Jewish Entrepreneur Podcast.* And I'm going to drop the links to Sara Chana's Mootopia Academy in the show notes. This is where you want to be if you wanna learn about the power of herbal and homeopathic medicine. And Sara has been sharing her knowledge in so many formats, including her book, which we mentioned in the episode and which we will also drop links to in the show notes.

And I want you to really share with me one takeaway. If you just take one takeaway from this episode and implement it in your business, I know that you will set your business ablaze in 2025 and grow with your big heart.

As you heard on the podcast, Sara Chana is a mom to seven children, five boys and two girls, which I love because I'm a mom to five boys and three girls. And we have made it work as moms of large families, which means that you can too. When you keep focused, when you are really showing up, as you heard, with your big heart, and I know that you have what it takes to make your business thrive.

And if you need more support in your business, make sure to join me in my new Telegram broadcast channel, 24/6, go to my website, DebbieS assen.com/246 and find out more and join me on Telegram. I will see you next week on *The Jewish Entrepreneur Podcas*t. Bye.

Thanks for listening to *The Jewish Entrepreneur Podcast*. If you want to stop underselling and underearning and close more sales, you need to clear the limiting money beliefs that are sabotaging your business growth.

Head on over to DebbieSassen.com/mindset and download my free Money Mindset Workbook. Uncover and dissolve money blocks, like hundreds of other entrepreneurs who are now building six-, multi-six-, and seven-figure businesses and creating true financial freedom.