

Episode 003



Knowing What You Want

January 17, 2021

Hello my friends.

I am SO glad you joined me today.

I'm so glad you joined today.

Because we're going to talk about **Knowing What You Want**.

Or more specifically, why so many of us **DON'T**.

And what you can do about it.

Because too many of us default out of our ability to choose what we want and end up in a career that's less than it could or should be.

Listen, your career is the ultimate choose your own adventure.

It's something that gets to be about YOU. Not your parents, your partner, or your kids.

You get to decide what you want to do with the time you spend working.

Why leave something that important – and potentially that exciting and fulfilling – in the hands of chance?

If nothing else, I think 2020 proved to all of us that **CHANCE** isn't really our friend. Right?

I mean, hello pandemic. Right?

Let's promise ourselves in 2021 that we won't leave the choice of what we want in our career, up to fate or chance?

So, let's dive in.

If Not Knowing is a challenge for you, you're not alone.

Without a doubt, it's one of **THE** most common things I work on with my clients.

And it's some of the most important work we can do.

Why?

Because when we stay too long in **Not Knowing**, we drift.

By default, we're making the decision **NOT** to decide.

And when we do that, we don't make the progress we'd like to make.

Which means our career can stall and if it goes on long enough, maybe even derail.

Even worse, we can end up on a path we're not even interested in.

And there's **nothing** worse than that.

Knowing what you want is about choice.

What that's what makes it go from fun and exciting – the ability to choose – to intimidating.

Choice is about listening to what's going on inside.

Your intuition.

To look at the intersection of three things: what you know you're good at, what you're passionate about and what you can make a living doing. And **then** having the courage to say, "that's what I'm going to do."

In theory, this sounds fun. Exciting even.

But for many of us, when faced with having to make that kind of choice, too many of us just don't do it.

But why?

In my coaching experience, it comes down to three core reasons – all rooted in emotion.

Let's explore them.

The first reason we get stuck in **Not Knowing What We Want** is Fear.

In this scenario, we cause ourselves to get stuck because we think, "What if I choose the **wrong thing**?"

The belief that there's a right or wrong decision causes us to feel fearful, which pushes against our desire to choose because we've convinced ourselves that there's too much at stake.

After all, we don't want to get it wrong. Right?

So, we tell ourselves we'll just think about it some more.

Or we'll wait for a sign so we can know **for sure** that it's the right thing for us.

Here's the truth. This type of black or white thinking doesn't serve you.

A different way to think about it is that there is no wrong choice.

Just make the best decision based on how you feel and what you believe right now.

Then go in with your whole heart.

And if down the line, your experiences or options change and you want to make a different choice, do it.

Don't make yourself wrong. Wrong doesn't serve you. It stops you.

So "what if I'm wrong" is number one.

Reason number two is self-doubt.

This happens when we know what we want, but then our brain goes to work, trying to convince us that we might not be able to do it. You think “I might fail” or “I’ll look like a fool.”

This is a different kind of fear.

It’s not about being wrong.

It’s about fear of failure.

It’s about a lack of confidence in yourself.

And maybe a little about how it’ll appear to others.

So, it keeps you stuck.

And there’s no way of getting out of this one other than to get in touch with what you’re thinking in the moment and deciding (yes, you DO get to choose) to think something different.

To choose a different thought, which might be something like, “I’ve got this” or “This is the perfect thing for me.” Even if it doesn’t feel true.

Overcoming self-doubt is about remembering that sometimes, our brain serves up thoughts designed to scare us into NOT doing something scary.

It’s just your brain trying to keep you safe.

You get to decide to think something different.

So, reason number one was about fear and reason number two was about self-doubt.

Reason number three is about judgement.

In this scenario, we get stuck in worrying about what others think, so our brain serves up thoughts like, “I shouldn’t do x, I should do y.”

Maybe it’s something someone we respect told us – like a parent, teacher, or mentor.

Many times, those tend to be things we should be doing at things we’re good at, but not the least bit interested in.

Like maybe we’ve always had a passion for teaching, but our father wanted us to be a lawyer.

Or we want to pursue a passion for art or music, but our spouse thinks we should stay with the ‘safer’ corporate choice.

Caving to judgement isn’t fun.

It’s about running from what we really want and locking ourselves into what someone else thinks we should do.

This is never going to lead to anything fulfilling.

Giving in to “should’s” is the road to resentment and misery.

So, to recap, the three reasons we “don’t know” are fear, self-doubt, and judgement.

All three of these things happen when we you stop connecting to your true desires and aspirations and instead, put the opinions of others before your own.

This leads your brain to serve up thoughts designed to keep you safe.

Safe from making the wrong decision.

Safe from trying and maybe failing.

Safe from the judgements of others who want you to choose a different path.

So how do you get past it?

You first connect to that thing that sits at the intersection of your interests, skills, and ability to make a living.

Whatever that is, you name it.

“I want to do or be xyz.”

There, you’ve decided.

And then, when your brain immediately kicks into the fear, self-doubt and judgement overdrive, you simply observe those thoughts.

The things like “I might fail” or “what if I make the wrong decision” or “but my partner wants me to do THIS not THAT.”

You don’t give into the emotion they cause.

You simply allow yourself to notice that they’re there.

And instead of focusing on them, you instead choose a new thought like “I’ve got this.”

Even if you aren’t sure you do.

By telling yourself “I’ve got this” you’ll start to feel confident, determined, excited.

And by feeling this emotion, you'll give yourself permission to start pursuing it. To taking the specific actions you need to take to achieve that thing.

And even if you don't make it happen on the first or the fifth try, you just keep going.

Because after all, it's what you really want.

It's your career. Don't live it in fear of failure or self-doubt.

Don't pursue something your heart isn't really in because someone you love and respect thinks you should do it.

This is YOUR career. Decide what you want to do with that time you spend working.

And then go for it.

Remember, a purposeful career doesn't just happen. It happens on purpose. And only YOU can do it.

You deserve everything you dream of and then some.

So, this week, take the time to connect to what you want.

Name it.

Decide how you want to think about your ability to do it.

And then start moving.

Until next time, make it a great week my friend.

