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Five Steps to Knowing and Getting What You Want

January 23, 2022

Well hello Friends! I hope you guys had an amazing week.

Ever since I aired episode #56 on “Your One Big Crazy Goal”, I’ve received so many DMs and emails from you guys. So. Many. And they all say some version of the same thing, which is “But I just don’t KNOW what I really want.”

If that’s you, I want you to know that you’re not alone.

“I don’t know what I want” is absolutely one of the most common things my clients say. And if you think about it, that’s not particularly surprising. After all, we’re talking career and business on this podcast. So, knowing what you want is ideally guiding you along your path. I mean…who wants to get 10, 20, 30 years into your career, only to find yourself miserable and going through the motions. Living for Fridays and dreading Monday mornings.

It happens to too many of us.

To reinforce this theme, episode #3 of this podcast which talks about “Knowing what you really want” is a different way into that same topic AND it just happens to be the most listened to of the podcast even though it’s a year old now.

And I’m sure you’ve heard friends, family (or maybe even yourself) say something like, “Well I know what I DON’T want but I have no idea what I DO want.”

This is a human challenge. It’s not unique to you.

So, I share all of that because I want you to know that if you haven’t figured out your thing yet – even if you’re well into your career at this point – you’re not alone. And the sad truth is, some people NEVER do. Because it takes a little work.

And I REALLY don’t want that to be you. Because I believe that knowing what you want is related to your purpose. To the reason you’re here. Without getting too into the woo here, I believe we all came into this world with our unique set of strengths. And those strengths are strongly related to what we’re meant to contribute to the world during our time here. I deeply believe this.

So, because this theme of not knowing what you want is so widespread, I wanted to do an episode dedicated to anyone who hasn’t yet connected to their heart’s desire. And I wanted to give you five steps to doing that.

Notice I didn’t say ‘easy’ steps. Because while it’s very important that we do connect to what we really want and these five steps will get you there, it’s kinda complicated. And here’s why. Because to really connect to it, you’ll have to get past the voices of others and your own inner fears so you can listen to the part of you that knows the truth.

And while I know it might not feel that way right now, you DO know the truth. Some part of you DOES know what you want. There’s just been a lot of distraction and noise and outside influences that have gotten in the way. And it’s made it really hard to hear what that part of you is trying to tell you.

I did a worksheet for this episode to help you do the exploratory. So, you might want to hit pause while you go out to thepurposefulcareer.com/whatyouwant and download it. You can also get there by going to Insta and hitting the link in my bio which will take you to that page. And while you’re there, please follow us. We’re just starting to focus on growing our social presence and there’s going to be lots of fun new things coming. So, head on over to Insta and let’s connect. Also, we’d just love to get to know you.

So, this episode is going to be a good one. It’s going to be a very step by step how to with a little context behind each so you understand some of the issues that’ll come up for you as you try to connect to what you really want.

First, I’ll share the five steps and then we’ll take them one by one.

1. Name it
2. Feel it
3. Choose it
4. Believe it
5. Do it

The first one is Name It.

And we’ll spend a little time on this one because this is where most of us get tripped up. Because in order to name it, which is the first part of connecting to what you really want, you’ll have to quiet your primitive brain. That’s the part of your brain that wants to keep you safe. It’s the same part of your brain that helped your caveman ancestors stay alive instead of getting eaten by the lion.

So as soon as you start asking yourself big questions that might inspire you to put yourself out in the world in a scary, new way, your primitive brain will kick into high gear and start throwing up fear-based reasons and limiting self-beliefs to stop you from really acknowledging what you want. It wants to convince you that the answer to these questions is dangerous and impossible so you’ll stop and settle back into playing it safe.

We’ll get more into this in #2 of this process. For now, the first thing you must do is ask yourself some really dialed-in questions. And when you do this, I’d like you to be somewhere quiet and undisturbed so you can focus.

If you’re into meditation, you might even want to ask yourself these questions while meditating.

I’ve also had clients speak their answers into the “recording” function of their phone. For some, saying the words aloud makes it easier to connect to the answer than writing them down. Just do what feels right for you.

So, the first question is: What do I really really really really really really want?

Now for many of us, our brains will just keep it simple and answer by saying, “I don’t know.”

Remember, I don’t know is coming from your primitive brain. It’s trying to keep you safe. So, it’s important to not settle there and instead keep working for that answer. You can do this by asking yourself questions that work around that resistance to knowing, like:

“If I did know, what would I say I really really really really want?”

The other thing you could do is ask questions that remove all the noise that’s caused by your programmed patterns of thinking that get in your way. The thoughts that trigger your self-doubt, fear of judgment, fear of failure and the like. These are things like:

“If I could have whatever I want, I would…”

Or

“In a perfect world I would…”

Or

“If I knew I could not fail, I would…”

Or one of my favorites to use is

“If my life was completely different I would…”

These statements are less likely to trigger fear because they’re more detached. They’re exploring what you really want in a more clinical way, almost like you’re thinking of it in the third person. And therefore, it’s less likely to trigger your fear and self-doubt.

And last thing on this one is to make sure you’re being honest with yourself. In order to connect to what you really really want, your answer must be about YOUR truth. Not your parents or your partner’s or anyone else. This is one of the most important questions of your life and the answer gets to be about your heart’s desire. Not someone else’s.

So, number one is about naming it.

The second thing is to Feel It.

This is closely related to number one as it’s about overcoming the primitive brain and our programmed patterns of thought that might be holding us back. So, it takes some persistence.

Because even though those questions from number one were designed to help you maneuver around thoughts that cause fear or self-doubt or impossibility or impracticality or whatever else is in that brain of yours, you DO need to face them. Ultimately, once you have completed #1, you must look it squarely in the eye and explore the thoughts and feelings that it brings up for you. Because if you don’t, you’ll quit before you even get started.

So, based on how you answered number one, when you look at the words on that page or listen to the audio recording…however you did it…how do those words make you feel?

Do you feel excited? Delighted? Energized?

Or…do you feel afraid? Petrified? Maybe defeated?

This is important because as we’ve talked about a lot on this podcast, how we feel always determines what we do or don’t do.

So, if you’re someone who regularly quits on things. Or maybe just doesn’t even get started, I can promise you that what you’re feeling is the reason.

And what you’re feeling is caused by what you’re thinking about those things you wrote down in number one. So, when you look at your answers to number one, you might be thinking things like:

“I can’t do it.”

“It’s too late.”

“I have too many other obligations now.”

“I don’t know how to do that”

“I could never do that”

Or sometimes it’ll be around the potential judgments or others, like:

“My partner will never support that.”

“What will they think?”

And each of these thoughts will bring up a specific emotion.

A negative one. Like defeat or fear or self-doubt or resignation. That’s perfectly normal. But it’s important to really explore this. What you’re thinking and feeling but this is where it could end for us. With you knowing what you really want but denying yourself the opportunity to even start.

So, look at your answer to number one and ask yourself:

“When I look at that statement, what comes up for me?

Then write it down. ALL of it. The good, the bad, the ugly.

Then ask yourself, “Why do I think that?”

And based on how you answer that question, ask yourself, “Is this something I want to think or believe?” Why or why not? (Again, write it all down).

When I look at the way I answered these questions, how does it make me FEEL?

And when I feel this way, what does it make me want to do or not do?

You’ll then have the answer to whether your thoughts about what you want are serving you or not. Because if they’re causing you to feel afraid which makes you want to hide or avoid going after that thing, then you know you’ll never get that thing unless you shift your perspective a bit.

That doesn’t mean magically forcing yourself to think something positive. But it does means you need to do some work to shift your perspective. And that’s best done with more questions. Things like:

But what if it WERE possible?

Or what if I felt afraid and decided to do it anyway?

Or what if I stopped worrying about looking foolish?

Because when it comes to Knowing What we Really Want, I think it’s important to understand that at least at the beginning of the journey, the negative thoughts and feelings are usually part of it. For almost everyone.

And that maybe it’s about allowing yourself to believe that you can still go for it WHILE feeling a little afraid. That fear and action can live side by side for a while.

The important thing with number two is to connect into how you really FEEL about the thing you wrote in number one. Because I can promise you, that feeling which was caused by the thought you were thinking about it; that’s why you haven’t connected to what you really want before.

You were trying to avoid FEELING that fear or self-doubt or whatever.

But I can promise you this.

Discomfort is where **all** big, exciting things start.

So, what if you looked at your dream in that way?

What if you just decided to let yourself feel uncomfortable for a while? To get used to feeling that way. Knowing that it’s only temporary.

If you can do that just for a little while, eventually you’ll get used to going after the new things and it won’t look so scary or impossible anymore.

So that’s the second thing. You have to Feel it.

The third thing is to CHOOSE It.

And that’s important to know. Just because you now know what you really really want, it doesn’t mean you have to do anything about it. You don’t HAVE to pursue it. You get to decide whether you want to.

But that’s why it’s important to first understand how you think and feel about it because you don’t want to decide whether the pursue it or not based on your unconscious limiting beliefs.

You want to KNOW what you’re thinking and feeling and then after considering it from all sides, choose whether to pursue it or not.

To walk into it knowing that at first, it’ll feel uncomfortable but that doesn’t mean it’s not for you. It just means you’re doing something new, and you’re not quite used to it yet.

And by the way, it really IS your choice. And there’s nothing wrong with deciding not to go for it. However, I want you to do it from a place of understanding that while the thing may be your heart’s desire you’ve decided not to go for it for a set of reasons. Reasons that you like.

And if you DO decide to go for it, then you want to move into Step Four, which is you need to Believe It. Because whenever we go after something new, we must believe that it’s possible for us. And part of that is learning to see yourself and your possibilities in a new way.

You must believe you can have, do and be the person who gets that thing even before you have a reason or any proof that it’s possible. Belief is like faith in the spiritual sense. It’s making a grand leap into the darkness and trusting that you’ll land on firm ground. It’s believing you have the ability to be amazing at things you’ve never done before. It’s about trusting in yourself.

And did you know that you can just decide to Believe that it’s possible? And you can hang onto that belief? It really is that easy.

And last, #5 is you have to Do It.

After #1 and #2, Doing It is probably the most challenging. Because it involves work. And failure. And uncertainty. And discomfort. And maybe the judgments of others.

And you’ll have to dig deep to find the commitment, the resilience, the grit and the determination to stay with it despite all of that.

The truth is, we can dream all we want to but that business isn’t going to start itself.

The promotion you want, isn’t just going to happen by magic. You can’t sit quietly in the corner pecking away at your keyboard and expect to get noticed. You need a plan. And then you’ve got to give it your all.

You have to take action. Good old fashioned, roll up your sleeves action.

And the beautiful thing about that is, as you dive in and start going after it, it gets easier and easier to believe in yourself and all of those old feelings of self-doubt and fear and impossibility and discomfort fade away and they’re replaced with something new. Replaced with things like confidence and self-belief and excitement.

Because by DOING IT, you’ve actually, step by step, become someONE new.

This is the way to not only knowing what you want but to making it happen.

This is the way to put to rest those niggling feelings of “is this all there is?”

This is how you can be sure you’re living the life YOU want to live. Not the life someone else wants you to live.

And that is what I hope for each of you.

You’re too gifted, too good, too important to settle for less than you were meant for. And I hope that this exercise helps you connect into that part of you that knows the truth. And that you choose to go all in and pursue it.

Nothing feels better than betting on yourself.

I know it’s scary. I was the queen of hiding for a very long time.

But I can promise you, once you connect to and start living your truth, your world just continues to open in ways that right now, you might not even be able to imagine. And that’s what you deserve.

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