

Ep #108: Wanting a Goal vs. Wanting a Feeling



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

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Ep #108: Wanting a Goal vs. Wanting a Feeling

This is *Feminist Wellness*, and I'm your host, Nurse Practitioner, Functional Medicine Expert, and Life Coach, Victoria Albina. I'll show you how to get unstuck, drop the anxiety, perfectionism, and codependency so you can live from your beautiful heart. Welcome my love, let's get started.

Hello, hello my love. I hope this finds you doing so well. There were a couple tiny little signs of spring in the last few days, and it was so glorious to hear the birds chirping. We'll find out if this is fool spring, that little moment of warmth before the next huge dump of snow in April. We'll see. How delightful. Nature will keep doing her thing, won't she?

Before we get started today, I would love to ask you if you haven't subscribed, rated, and reviewed the show on Apple Podcasts, I would be so grateful if you did. As always, my goal with that request is to be able to get the show to more people. The way iTunes, Apple Podcasts works is the more reviews a show has, the more people find it in search. And this is a free resource that I want to share with the whole wide world. So if you're enjoying the show, go give her a little review. I'd be grateful if you did.

Alright my darling, so today we are talking about wanting a goal versus wanting a feeling. So one of the stories I hear so much in my practice is this; I will feel better about myself, my life, my relationships when. When x, y, z happens, I will be happy, at peace, calm, grounded. I will love myself; I will feel good about myself when I buy the house, get a bigger apartment, get married, have the kids, get the degree, lose the weight, gain the weight, on and on.

It's March now and most of our New Year's resolutions have been thrown to the wayside because we were focused when we set them on the thing and not our true motivation, which is what we want to feel, what we want to believe about ourselves. The way we want to think about ourselves as the kind of person who can achieve that goal.

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We are not focused on our values in this world and instead, we are taught to focus on the external guidepost as a stand-in for our truth. And that kind of thinking, "I'll be happy when," can be so problematic because of what it does to the now.

It takes us out of this present moment and posits the thought error that you will feel something different when your circumstances change. And I'm just not buying it. It's disempowering and leads to so much suffering now because you haven't met that goal, crossed that proverbial finish line, and let's be real my darling, my perfectionist, overthinking, codependent darlings, your goals are likely based in a fantasy and not reality anyway.

And they're so often these wild notions of what a human can do. Like I will feel better when I get the raise and the promotion and buy the house and fit some clothing size, and while I'm at it, do these 473 tasks today and every day. And when you don't achieve them, of course you beat yourself up for ever having them in the first place because that's what the perfectionist thinking mind loves to do.

And I think this whole notion is particularly problematic, I will feel better when, I'll be happy when, when it's about self-acceptance. I will love myself when I lose those last 10 pounds, I will stop berating myself on the regular when I stick to that magical morning routine all the blogger gurus tell me to.

And feminist side note, to be clear, those guys, those blogger gurus are usually guys. Usually white cis straight dudes who are not also managing a household and kids and a job while doing their 40-hour morning routine. They are not managing the stress of living in marginalized bodies and they tend to have women in their lives who make sure that all goes perfectly in the background.

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They're sitting there doing their hour of journaling, their hour of drinking bulletproof coffee, their two hours of exercise, and they're not doing the daily emotional labor of keeping an eye on the stock of TP or paper towels or dish soap. They're not keeping an eye on the homework, the dog's vet visit schedule, right?

So everything in its place, my darlings. And one of the things I see all the time is that as you learn about, practice using, and become more familiar with the thought work protocol, which we detailed last week in episode 107, start to use it to change your life, you'll gain more ease with seeing the thoughts that cause your feelings in the moment or soon thereafter.

And as you start to see those habitual conditioned thoughts that lead you to feel sad, frustrated, angry, et cetera, it is so common and understandable to want to jump to change your thought immediately, which we've already identified in previous episodes as not being the jam here at *Feminist Wellness*.

You can call it thought swapping, emotional or spiritual bypass, it's a way of buffering, of not doing what the thought work protocol is built for, which is helping you to feel your feels. And it's a very common habit that does not serve you, tender one, because of course you want to feel better. And when you have the tool of thought work, it can be so tempting to want to jump to change your thought, but if you're not feeling your feelings, you're skipping the real growth, my darling.

So when your feel your beautiful mind saying, "This thought makes me feel terrible, I need a better thought right away," or, "These things in my life are untenable, I have to take all of this action and change everything immediately," I want to invite you to breathe, pause, and slow your roll.

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When our goal is sustainable, life-long healing, and thus both engage in our neuroplasticity, which is our brain's ability to shift out of her default thinking, and therefore to believe new thoughts, and to engage with our somatic experience of being alive, of feeling our feelings deeply in our bodies, the work is not done by simply choosing a new thought or taking a different action.

It is about increasing your awareness, being your watcher on the daily, and getting meta with yourself. Thinking about your thinking and noticing what you're feeling in your body in response. The somatic bodily intelligence, the information your body is giving you about your experience of being alive, of being you, and having the mindset you do in relation to your perfect nervous system and its state of regulation.

That awareness is so vital and that's the huge shift for so many of us. Stepping out of our habitual codependent and/or perfectionist habits of not feeling our feels. Doing so from that externalized worldview that has kept us worried about what everyone else is feeling and not feeling what we're feeling, which makes it so vital to start to really get in touch with what the subtleties of our feelings feel like in our bodies and to recognize them as vital messengers to and for us, from us.

And the thing to remember is that whatever we hope for, wish for, dream of, set goals around, what we really want, really, really, really want are the feelings we think we'll have when we get those things. The marriage, the picket fence, the bigger apartment, the new car, the better job, the relationship with x, y, z characteristics, all the things.

You want the thing because of how you think it will make you feel in the future and because thinking of that future feeling now can feel really lovely. So you get to ask yourself what you really want. What do you want to feel? And what is that goal a stand-in for in your life?

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Because the rub here is that getting the thing won't actually make you feel any differently. Studies are clear that when you lose the weight, you want to lose more. When you cross the finish line, you want to go again. When you're chasing a feeling, you're going to keep chasing a feeling and call it goal setting.

And I'll invite you, my love, to grab that journal and write it down freestyle. No spellcheck, no grammar check, just a wild list of your heart's most amazing desires on all planes. So let's write it down and get really detailed. The car. What kind of car? The job. What kind of job? The relationship. What kind of relationship? Start the business. What kind of business? Buy the house, sell the house, have the kids, whatever those goals are for your life, get detailed and write it out. I'll wait.

Now, nice slow breath in, long breath out. I'll invite you to flip the page of your journal from that wild list of your wildest dreams and wildest desires. The next step is to get a layer deeper and to ask yourself what you really, really want if you're not thinking about your conditioning and your socialization.

Like not what your mom wants for you or your boss wants for you or your partner wants for you or what anyone else has told you you should want. The same things may come up, but different ones may as well. See what comes up and get really present with it. Pen to paper. Write it down.

Now, sit with it. Read it over. And ask yourself again as you look at this list, what else? What more? What's the deeper layer of what I really, really want? Finally, ask yourself how you believe you'll feel when you get what you want. Happier, more secure, more loved, more confident.

You'll find that in each and every case, it's the feeling you desire. More than the job, the relationship, the chocolate cake. At the end of the day,

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that's phenomenal news. When you consider that our feelings come from our thoughts, which we get to choose.

In my life, this realization has been an absolute game-changer because it means I no longer need to wait around for what I really want. I no longer have to put off feeling good or better about myself until I've hit some goal because I now no longer want to rest my joy, my peace, my confidence on something outside of myself, like achieving or producing or hitting a goal.

If I want to feel loved, I love myself harder first. I put down the codependent cassette tape thinking that says I need someone else to love me harder to prove that I can be moved. I can give this to myself first. If I want to feel joy, I find the joy in my heart and in the beauty around me every day. And I create more joy for myself, while honoring the complexity of life and that not everything is joy-inducing, not at all, and that's okay.

Because of course we don't do false positivity in this family. And I think there is something magical about finding the moments of beauty and joy when and where you can, even when things feel terrible, even when things suck. If I want to feel worthy, I celebrate my own worth on the daily. Each and every day because I was born worthy of love, completely perfect and amazing and so were you.

Perhaps your conditioning from your family story, from the patriarchy, from white settler colonialist stories about who is good and who isn't your socialization just got in the way of you believing and knowing that. But you get to believe it. If you want to feel worthy, you get to celebrate your own worth first.

See where we're going here, my tender little lamb chop? So let's step back and look at an example. So let's say that you fantasize about moving to the country from the city. Some surface reasons may include more space,

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cleaner air, more trees and nature, quiet, less stress. Okay cool. If you keep asking yourself why, why, why, like an annoying toddler, sweet little toddlers, they're not annoying. They're just learning about the world.

Okay, but they can be a little annoying at first. I love children. Thank goodness nature made them super cute. That was really smart because they really will ask why like, 100,000 times. But anyway, if you keep embodying that little toddler self and you keep asking yourself why a bajillion times, as many as it takes, you'll start to uncover your deeper driver. What you really value and want that is generally not the thing, but the feeling you want to feel when you get the thing.

Here in this example, to feel less stress, less worry, more peace, to stop thinking about things like pollution, subways, people, overcrowding, what's desired with that desire, to not have those thoughts, is less stress, less worry, more peace.

Now, listen, there's nothing wrong with wanting a thing or wanting to feel a thing. But if you, for example, want to live in the country because you think it will make you feel peaceful, you're missing the opportunity to cultivate peacefulness within yourself right now. Exactly where you live. Without having to change anything at all external to you.

Same thing with your job, your relationship, your exercise routine, your morning routine. And when you do so, when you believe the goal will make you feel better, smarter, safer, happier, more self-love, you, my darling, are giving away your power. Do you see that?

If you believe that you can find peace in every cell of your body if you believe it is yours to tap into, a life with less stress and less worry is yours to create for yourself. And when you start to really believe that and to program that into your mind by choosing those thoughts, feeling those

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feels, by loving up on your inner children, resourcing and regulating your nervous system as you bring this new belief in, create this new neural groove, by starting to choose yourself in a new way, then you stop giving your power away to the fantasy that a move to the countryside will solve it all for you because it can't. It won't.

To quote Jonathan Kabat-Zinn, "Wherever you go, there you are." And by believing in your capacity to build that internal peace, you do the most amazing long-term sustainable healing work, which is building trust in your perfect self versus telling the story that something needs to change for you to feel okay.

No matter your circumstances, the one thing you can always control is your own mind and thoughts in relation to those circumstances. If you want to change the circumstances and you like your reason why, do that. But don't do it because you want to feel differently.

So my love, to be very clear here, I love it when you have goals and wants and desires, when you're in touch with them and they're for you and not for anyone else, which can be challenging at first to even sort through from a place of codependent thinking. Listen, if you don't feel safe where you live, move. If you want to train for a marathon or go for the promotion or ask that human to marry you or get a divorce, do it. Do it.

But do it because you want to do the thing. You want to be the person who takes care of themselves, who runs, who get married, not because of the feeling you're chasing. And what's very important I find coming from codependent thinking is to make sure to run a check and to make sure that your dreams and goals are just for you. And not to attempt to please anyone else or make anyone happy or keep them from being upset or disappointed. Not to get anyone else's approval. Just for you, my beauty. Just for you.

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And the more you can recognize what it is that you want, that accomplishment, goal, or dream to make you feel, the more you can cultivate and give that to yourself now. Whether you get that thing, reach that milestone or not, because it becomes immaterial. It's no longer about the move, the relationship, the external marker of success. It becomes about you generating the feelings and energy you want for you now.

And this shift can open up all this clarity and space in your mind, body, and spirit to then ask yourself if you really want that thing at all, or if you just wanted the feeling you thought it would bring you. If you really want that thing or if you want to make others think well of you, approve of you, appreciate you, praise and validate you for doing or getting it.

So breathe into it, practice being that toddler asking why. Holding judgment-free, openhearted space to get really real with yourself about your own wants, feels, and needs. And your own internal motivation and intention when you're setting those gorgeous, important goals of yours. Focus on the feeling that you want the goal to help you reach and give yourself that feeling now, my beauty. You deserve it.

I want it for you so much. And if you want support around setting goals, around feeling your feels in your body, if you want support and love to learn how to manage your adult mind, reparent your beautiful inner children and get in touch with your real deep internal motivation and drivers, I'd love to invite you to check out my six-month program, Anchored: Overcoming Codependency.

It's a beautiful six-month deep dive into the topics we talk about each week here on the show and over on the Instagram @victoriaalbinawellness. I would love to share this amazing program with you and the upcoming group is a little over half full. So if you've been hearing about the program and wanting to join me, now is your opportunity.

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Head on over to victoriaalbina.com/anchored and learn all about how we can work together. I'm so looking forward to reading your application and getting on a call with you to talk about it.

Alright my beauties, let's do what we do. Gentle hand on your heart if that feels accessible and safe. Bring your attention to your breath. Nothing to change, just awareness. You are safe, you are held, you are loved. And when one of us heals, we help heal the world. Be well, my beauty. I'll talk to you soon.

If you've been enjoying the show and learning a ton, it's time to apply it with my expert guidance so you can live life with intention, without the anxiety, overwhelm, and resentment, so you can get unstuck. You're not going to want to miss the opportunity to join my exclusive intimate group coaching program, so head on over to victoriaalbina.com/masterclass to grab your seat now. See you there. It's going to be a good one.