

68: The Truth About Motivation



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

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Welcome to *The Wealthy Mom MD Podcast*, a podcast for women physicians who want to learn how to live a wealthy life. In this podcast you will learn how to make money work for you, how you can have more of it and learn the tools to empower you to live a life on purpose. Get ready to up-level and your life. I'm your host, Dr. Bonnie Koo.

Welcome to episode 68.

So, I think it was the last episode that I talked a bit about a process goal versus a destination or a milestone goal. Now today I want to talk about motivation. Now, I already talked a bit about motivation before, I think it was episode 44. And we'll put that in the show notes so you can reference it if it's been a while or you haven't listened to that one yet. And now I want to sort of continue that conversation.

So recently on a group coaching call inside my program Money For Women Physicians, we do these weekly live coaching calls. They are by the way for lifetime access. And this topic came up actually with one of the members who was asking me to coach her on how to feel motivated.

Now, I don't remember the specifics but she had this recurring task she has to do and she basically told me that whenever it's time to do it in her schedule she doesn't want to do it. Does this sound familiar? Of course, we've all been there. Myself included.

And so what I told her may surprise you. This is what I told her, I said, "Okay, I'm happy to coach you on this and help you create some new thoughts." Which she had done some of that already on her own. And I said, "There's actually another option that many people don't consider." And so I asked her, before I even said about this other option I asked her, "Why do you think you need to feel motivated to do that task?"

And so I'm asking you this question for whatever that thing is that you've got to do but you don't want to. Like maybe it's clean up your office, for me it's clearing out my closet.

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Now, on that episode on motivation, episode 44, I talked about focusing on the end result of the task versus the actual task. Now I'm here to tell you that that's not even necessary.

Let's go back to that client who wanted to feel motivated. So when I asked her that question, "Why do you need to feel motivated?" She paused for a few seconds and said, "Hmm, I never thought about that actually."

And so that's when I presented the second option, that being motivated isn't actually required. What if it's not required to feel motivated? And what if we just expected to not feel motivated when that time comes? Because she told me, every week she puts it on the calendar and then when that time comes, I think she's got a timer, she's like, "Ugh, I don't want to do this."

I think what happens is that there's something we have all the best intentions to do and then when it comes time to do it, we don't feel motivated. Our brains say, "I don't want to." And then we think it's a big problem because we aren't feeling motivated.

But if you just expect that this will happen, that you're not going to feel motivated, well then you won't be surprised by the lack of motivation. Because really, so what if you don't feel like it? Feeling like it isn't required.

All right, sure, it's nice to have for sure. But it's not required. Because listen, if you're always expecting to feel motivated to get shit done, you're going to be waiting a long time.

Now, this doesn't mean that you don't coach yourself and spend time creating some motivating thoughts because our thoughts create our feelings. Motivated is a feeling. I just find that so many people don't consider that this other option is available where feeling motivated is not required.

Now, the episode, I think it was the last one where I talked about my goal of losing 10 pounds and instead, I decided to make it a process goal of

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developing the habit of working three times a week, Monday, Wednesday, Friday.

And I'll tell you, pretty much every time it's time to work out, actually, every time so far, guess what? My brain says, "Don't want to work out." And it immediately finds all sorts of other things that we can do instead. Like all of a sudden let's check email, there might be some important task to do.

But every time I do it anyway, despite my brain's objections. Despite never really wanting to work out, something happens. And this is important, I create more self-trust. I start to learn how to trust myself to do the things I say I'm going to do.

And each time as I develop this habit, this habit of doing things because I said I was going to do it even when I don't feel like it. The mental friction decreases.

Now, to this day, it's only been a few weeks, my brain hasn't said, "Yay, let's lift weights!" But the I don't want to voice gets a little quieter each time and I have so much less drama. I expect my brain to offer resistance whenever it's time to work out.

Like this morning, today is Monday and my brain, as usual, said, "Let's not work out." In fact today my brain was pretty successful in distracting me for about 30 minutes. But I got on the bike and worked out anyway.

And so as you develop this habit, as you learn to trust that you'll do what you say you're going to do, you waste so much less time too. A lot of my clients, I coach on money not on time, get a lot of questions on time management. Time does not need to be managed, but your mind does.

I find that most of us waste a lot of time because we don't want to do things. And then we spend a lot of time arguing with ourselves or doing something else instead. But if we just did the thing that we want to do, even when we don't want to, you're going to find so much more time in your day to relax or to do nothing.

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So here's my suggestion, the next time there's something you want to do, but then when the moment comes you don't want to do it. Remember, motivation is optional. It truly is.

Now, on a related note, I find that a lot of my clients think that at some point certain thoughts should just stop happening. Meaning your brain should just stop offering certain thoughts. And they're surprised when I tell them that's not the goal.

Again, it would be nice if that happened, just like it would be nice if we could feel motivated whenever we want to. I mean you can, remember it's just thought work. But sometimes it's just easier to just not deal with the thought work and just do it anyway.

And here's the thing with thoughts, negative thoughts, unuseful thought, they don't just stop happening in your brain. The difference between someone who “manages” their mind is that they understand that their brain is always going to offer unuseful thoughts like, “I don't want to do this. This isn't a good idea.” Especially when you're trying something new, especially when you're an entrepreneur.

The difference is, the person who has learned to manage their mind understands that those thoughts aren't a problem, that it's okay that they're there. So it's kind of similar to what I'm saying about motivation. It's great if you're feeling motivated, but it's also fine if you're not.

We always have the option to believe or not believe our thoughts. And when it comes to feeling motivated, I mean, the thought that you would need is basically I want to do that, or I want this. Or some version of that. And so when your brain offers up, “We don't want to do that” it's fine. You don't have to listen to your brain. You don't have to believe what your brain says. You really don't.

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And so here's some of the things that I like to tell my brain when it's offering up thoughts like, "We don't want to do this. Let's do something else. Let's watch Netflix."

Actually, I pretty much watch Amazon Prime. I'm currently watching the show Billions. If you haven't watched it, it's so good.

My two favorite things to say is, "Thanks for sharing, brain. We're going to do it anyway. That my second favorite thing I think I heard this from Jody Moore actually, it's "Settle down brain." So whatever works for you. I think it's good to pick a little comeback to your brain when it starts having a tantrum basically because it doesn't want to do something new, like workout.

So I hope this was useful. I hope this helps you do the thing that you've been avoiding. And I'll talk to you guys next week.

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