

110: The Truth About Right and Wrong Decisions



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

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110: The Truth About Right and Wrong Decisions

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 your money and your life. I'm your host, Dr. Bonnie Koo.

Welcome to Episode 110. So, if you listened to the last episode where I talk about keeping things simple as much as possible, I had mentioned that I was really excited about the next few episodes because I guess you could call them new idea babies.

I mean, they're not new ideas, but it's just more like I just started riffing in my brain about some common themes that I've seen around my clients and in my life. And I know we all have human brains, and human brains kind of have like the same glitches, I like to call them. Or thought errors but I think glitches are a bit more easier to relate.

So I have talked a lot about making decisions, I haven't talked that much about looking back at past decisions. I mean, I have a little bit in terms of, I think it was the future self, past self episode, but I kind of want to break it down a bit more. And now I feel like I have something to help those that are so afraid of taking risk and losing money. Let's get started.

A lot of us categorize past decisions as right or wrong, right? I'm just laughing because, first of all, what does right or wrong mean? And we all have our definitions, okay? So in the context of money, most of us will probably categorize a wrong decision if we lost money. And here's what I want to question, why are there just two choices, right and wrong for decisions that you've made in the past?

And this is something that's just really common, the concept is called all or none thinking, where we literally have only two options and they're the complete opposite, right? It's like it was either right or wrong and there's nothing in between. Kind of like you're pregnant or not pregnant, there is no such thing as a little pregnant, right? That's not a good example.

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But notice that you've really limited yourself to only two ways to categorize it. And why do we choose right and wrong as the actual choices? Like, what if there was no such thing as right? What if there was no such thing as wrong?

Now, I don't pretend to know the history of why we do this. Well, I know a little bit, meaning that when you have a perfectionistic brain, which is you, all or none thinking is really common. Like it's either perfect, or it's not perfect. Nothing in between, we can't even celebrate what we did well because it wasn't perfect. And so it's really similar to right and wrong.

I also think the whole right and wrong thing is also steeped in religion. I come from a Christian background so I can only relate to that, like we're told there's a good and bad way to do things. And so right and wrong is very similar. So I just want you to consider these questions, why are you limiting yourself to only two choices? And why are the two choices right versus wrong?

And then I also want you to ask yourself this question, what do I mean by a right decision versus a wrong decision? Now, this is going to be probably specific to whatever decision you think was wrong in the past. And I just want to share that last year, I really thought of as me making a lot of wrong decisions in my business. Now, I also knew that I learned a lot about things in my business.

So kind of in my mind, I was like, yeah, I'm not really thinking it was all wrong because I know I learned something. But there was still something there to uncover. And basically, you know, for this situation for me I realized what the connection, or rather how I was defining wrong. And basically, here's what it was, losing money, making less money, having less money, equals wrong, equals wrong decision. So whatever decision I made that led to that was obviously the wrong decision.

So I want you to think of a decision you made where you think it was wrong, okay? And I really want you to try and figure out why am I thinking

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that it was wrong? Because you basically made some connection to this happened, I got this outcome. And because I got this outcome it was obviously the wrong decision.

And let me just add another layer of why, not why we do this, but why it feels so bad to make a wrong decision. And it really comes down to this, we make not just the decision wrong, we make ourselves wrong. We beat ourselves up. And how I define beating yourself up is you're talking to yourself negatively. You're being shitty to yourself, basically.

And here's what I see happen when you think you've made a series of wrong decisions. A, like I said, you're feeling horrible about it, you're making yourself wrong. You're telling yourself mean things. What I see happen a lot, and this happened for me too, is then you're afraid to make new decisions.

You spend a lot of time in indecision, you spent a lot of time thinking about the pros and cons. But the only reason why you do that is because you think you might make a wrong decision and you've literally trained yourself that wrong decision equals bad, you're going to feel bad about yourself, mainly because you're going to be so mean to yourself.

So here's what I want you to consider, what if right and wrong just wasn't a thing when it comes to decisions, and honestly, everything else? We are the ones calling it right or wrong. We are the ones deciding what is right, what is wrong, and why. And also, we just made it up, like literally just made it up. I know it doesn't feel that way, but that's actually what's happened.

You are just literally making up, this happened and so clearly that was wrong or right. As if like that's the thing. And what I mean by that's a thing is it's as if that's factual. And here's the thing, a lot of your friends or peers might agree with you. Yeah, that was the wrong decision, or that was the right decision. Who cares if they agree with you or not? It's not up to them,

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who cares if they agree? Really, we're the ones who decide it's right or wrong, not other people.

And what if there is no right or wrong? What are some other ways you can think about the decision? What if you just decided that every decision you've made in the past was the best decision ever? And if you need a reason as to why it was the best decision, because I know some of you are arguing with me, like that's crazy, because you made a decision and did something, meaning you made a decision and took action.

In fact, when people ask me what coaches do, simply I help my clients make decisions and take action. I help them make decisions for them by trusting themselves that they can make the best decision for them. I can't make that decision for them. I know a lot of my clients want me to tell them what to do. And it's not that I never make suggestions, but honestly, like, my goal for all of my clients is that you always have agency over your life.

And you always do, even when it doesn't feel like it. Because whenever you're thinking it's not your decision, you literally are saying that someone else makes a better decision or that it's not up to you. So if there was no such thing as right or wrong, if there was way more than just two options, what if a decision that you made was neutral? Meaning that the decision in itself has no inherent meaning.

And that's kind of what I've been saying because we're the ones who make up the meaning. I joke a lot, mainly because it's true, we are as humans meaning making machines. And I'm not saying it's bad to do that, because otherwise we would kind of be like robots who didn't enjoy your have feelings, but the reason why that concept, I think, is so important for all of you to really not just understand, but to get is that we're the ones making up the meaning. No one else is.

It doesn't matter what anyone says, you are the one who decides the meaning of a decision that you've made in the past. And since you are the only person that can make up the meaning of your past decision, why

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would you tell yourself that you made a wrong or shitty decision? Why would you choose to be shitty to yourself? Why would you choose to beat yourself up?

I think a lot of us think that beating ourselves up is useful and will produce some kind of better behavior. It doesn't, okay? And if you're a parent, shaming your kids is not useful. If someone shames you, like tells you that you've done something wrong and you feel bad about yourself, does that actually help you? I mean, maybe in some instances it has, but what if it's not necessary? What if beating ourselves up is completely optional? It is completely optional, it always is.

Now, I sometimes think that not beating yourself up, specifically being nice to yourself for whatever has happened will mean that I'll become some lazy person who only eats cookies and watch Netflix. What if that's not true? What if we'll actually take more positive action and feel better as we're doing it?

I mean, when I really think about it it's kind of crazy to me that we think feeling bad about ourselves is useful. Like feeling guilty, feeling shame, et cetera. And I get that it doesn't always feel like a choice, but what if it was a choice? And if it is a choice wouldn't you want to feel good about yourself, right?

So that's what I want you to ponder, what would it be like to always tell yourself that you've made the best decision, to always tell yourself that you did a great job? And I know some of you are like, but won't that make me like a narcissist, or irresponsible or whatever outcome that you really don't want? What if it doesn't? Why don't to at least try it? And if you don't like the way it's going, you can always go back to being crappy to yourself.

Now, in terms of a, what I call a brain science explanation as to why this does actually work, it's because when you are nice to yourself, which feels good, you are literally making your own dopamine. Because when you feel

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good, your brain pays attention. It's like, whoa, hey, we're feeling good, this feels good, let's squirt a little dopamine.

And when that happens, you want to do more of the feeling good. And when you are feeling good about yourself, you get inspired, you get motivated, you get determined, you feel committed. And these emotions I just mentioned, they're all what I call amazing fuel for actions that will help you create the outcome that you want. Because listen, when you're feeling shame, when you're just feeling so bad about yourself, what do you do?

I mean, at least I don't do anything productive. I just want to like clean my closet, yeah, watch TV. Like I just do whatever I can to distract myself because I don't want to feel shitty about myself. The thing is, by doing these other things I don't actually feel better. I might think I am, but I'm really just avoiding feeling bad. And I'll do anything that I can to not feel bad. But the thing is, I'm not actually feeling good about myself when I'm avoiding it.

All right, so I know I talked about a lot of stuff. I know I probably went into some complicated tangents, but here's really what I want you to walk away from this episode is, what if there's no right or wrong? What if beating yourself up is optional? What if being kind and feeling good about yourself is actually going to help you going forward? Okay, I will talk to you guys next week.

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