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WHEN SHOULD I QUIT MY JOB?

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Hello there, my friends. It's Mel Savage here from The Career Reset podcast.

Today, I want to start with a little story. I remember waking up in the morning looking at the ceiling, and the feeling of my heart just sinking. Because I realized, I have to go to work. I have to get out of bed, get dressed, have a shower, and go to work at a place that I can't stand going to, at a place where I feel underappreciated. I wasn't excited about what I was doing. I didn't trust my boss. I didn't feel safe in a place where I didn't feel safe. I would get out of bed and I would go, I don't want to go to work.

My husband said to me, '*How can you be so miserable? You get paid so much money.*' What you didn't realize was the reason I stayed in this job that I didn't love was because the money made me feel trapped. The money made me feel like I'd never get a job paying as much again. I really need this money. I need to pay my mortgage. I have responsibilities. I can't quit. I got to suck it up. I have to figure this out.

But secretly, I just wanted to quit so bad. I just want every day I would get to work and I would think, I just want to quit right now. How can I quit my job and give myself enough space to figure out what I want to do next? That was what I was always thinking. I know that there are a lot of people out there in the same situation.

Today, I really want to cover what you need to consider before you quit your job. What you need to have in place before you quit your job. I want to answer the question that comes up so often. I can't take it another day. What if I can't take it another day, can I just quit? I get that feeling. I wanted to do that so many times in that particular job. I'll tell you, I was working for a company that at one time I really loved working for. I was working at a job that I really loved.

But things had changed, the company had grown, the culture had shifted, and the person I was working for shifted. Although I still love the people, and although I still liked a lot of the work I was doing, it really was not the right environment for me. I was going down an emotional, black hole, or whatever you want to call it. I was really losing my mojo and I needed to get out of there. But I was so far down the hole and had lost so much mojo, I lacked the confidence to do something about it. So I just wanted to quit. I just wanted to run away every single day.

I get that feeling. It's this combination of panic, fear, misery, and excitement, I guess. All at the same time. Today, I want to talk about it. I want to talk about when you should quit your job. This is also relevant, I would say to

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people who may not be as far down that black hole, who may still have a lot of their mojo left but have read the signs. They read the tea leaves early and they know that this job is not for them.

So let's start with, really, the very first thing you need to do and this feels obvious. I know it's going to seem obvious, but this is the first thing that you need to sit down and suss out. It's why you want to quit. I know what you're thinking. It's because you hate this job. I know. But let's go a bit deeper than that. If it's just I hate my job, and I hate my boss, and I'm so bored. Those are level one reasons. But really, I would actually think they're symptoms, they're symptoms of a bigger problem.

What is it you hate about your job? What is it you hate about your boss or the relationship? What is making you so bored? You really want to get underneath those first-level symptoms and really understand what the problem is. Why do you really want to leave? Just go to a new space, go to a coffee shop, get a journal, sit down with a piece of paper, and just brain-dump everything. It's really important you brain-dump it. If you want to type it into your computer, type it into your computer. I love writing it down. Just brain-dump it.

Once you get it all out of your system, look at where there are similarities. Look for consistencies, look for trends, and bucket them together. Maybe there are a lot of things around how you're treated. Maybe there are a lot of things around the things about your role that you like and you don't like. Maybe there are a lot of things around the people that you work with. Bucket them into those kinds of buckets and see if there are some consistencies.

The reason I'm saying this is because it's going to help you identify in the long term what it is you want from a job, and what is going to make you happy. Because that's another thing that keeps people stuck, they want to quit, but they don't know what's going to make them happy. They don't know what's happening here. They do not want to jump from the frying pan into the fire. Got it. So look for those consistencies and break them into consistent buckets.

I have a tool that's going to help you do that. But what you're going to notice is all the things on your brain dump list are going to really fall into one of two categories, ultimately. Even if they're in the buckets of the people and the job and the boss or the appreciation or the culture, whatever it is. They're still going to fall into one of two buckets. One is *things you want to get away from* and the other is *things that you want to run towards,* things that you really want.

Let's talk a little bit about the things you want to get away from. It could be things like, you want to get away from this difficult boss, or maybe you want to get away from someone you work with who is driving you crazy, or it could be the hours that you want to get away from. Maybe you had a bad review or some bad feedback, and you disagree with it. It's eating away at you and you're really upset about it. Maybe you want to get away from that feeling. I get that. That's not always an easy thing to take on.

Maybe you want to leave because you want to avoid dealing with something or someone because it feels too hard. And you're just not either functionally equipped or emotionally equipped to deal with the situation that's coming your way so you want to get away from that. It's really important that you evaluate. Maybe just put a *big A* beside those things that you think are things that you're trying to get away from. The A stands for AVOID.

Put a big A beside those things. I want to avoid this bad boss, I want to avoid this feedback, and I want to avoid those kinds of hours in the future. I'm saying avoid because these are things that you want to get away from. It's

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not always a bad thing to avoid something but sometimes, it's not productive. It's not always one thing or the other, but just put a big A beside it so that you know these are the things you're trying to get away from. These are the things you're trying to avoid.

The other reason that you may want to leave is because there's something else that you want, something you want to run towards. Maybe you're not learning what you want to learn and you feel like you could learn more somewhere else. Maybe it's a good time to leave because things are going sideways, you're recognizing it and you want to get away from this culture that's evolving or you can see the writing on the wall that the situation is evolving and you want to be in a more healthy culture.

I had a boss who had a boss, who always said, *Leave the party when you're having a good time when you're on top.* Sometimes that's a great way to do it. It maintains your reputation. It's hard to do because you're having a good time. I hate leaving the party when I'm having a good time. I have this FOMO thing, I don't want to miss out on a good time. But sometimes it is the smart thing to do in your career so maybe it's okay. This relationship has reached a natural conclusion and I am ready for my next one.

Maybe the values of the organization have changed, like it happened for me at McDonald's, where when I started, it was much more family-oriented, everyone-had-each-other's-back-type-of-place. Ultimately, it turned into a very corporate, everyone-was-stabbing-each-other-in-the-back-kind-of-place. It went from a very family-supportive culture to a very fear-based culture. Because the initial culture was based on loyalty, I stayed way too long. Also because I was afraid, also because of the money, also a lot of other reasons.

But I kept hoping that the culture that I had loved would be the culture that would come back and that was naive. Sometimes, things change and you just have to accept it and move on. So maybe that's what's happening to you. Maybe the culture that you're working in, the values of the culture that you're working in aren't aligned with you anymore and you need to go find a place that does align with you. That makes sense.

Maybe you do have a difficult boss and you've tried things that haven't worked out. You just need to find a better situation because the relationship is unhealthy and it's not something that you're willing to deal with anymore. It sounds like you run away, but it's almost like you're running towards a relationship that works better for you.

If you're being honest with yourself, you'll be able to tell the difference between running away from this relationship that I'm not equipped to deal with, versus, I've tried to work with this relationship, this person and I don't match. So I need to find someone who I prefer to work for, who has X, Y, Zed competencies, capabilities, management style, whatever it is. Maybe there are things in your life that have changed.

Maybe you moved, maybe you have a house where the commute is longer, maybe you changed office spaces and the environment or your office isn't working for you anymore. There are a lot of things that happen that affect your stress levels at work and sometimes, environmental stress is a real thing. What you wear, the light, the room you work in, the noise around you. Those are all real things that can cause stress.

Maybe on a day-by-day basis, you don't feel it. But it piles up and all of a sudden, going into work is making your shoulders go up when you go in there. That could also be the case. Maybe you move floors or moved office

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buildings or whatever it is, the environmental stress is getting to you and you want to you need to change your environment, you need to change your outlook. Those are all things that are real.

So make that list, do the brain dump, bucket the similarities, and then put a *big A* beside the things that you are avoiding and put a *big T* beside the things you want to move towards. Avoidance and a T for the things you want to move towards.

That's the first thing. It's really an assessment of why you want to quit. Get real about it. Take a half an hour. Take 15 minutes over three days. This is work that you really want to do. But this is work where most people stop. This is tough work to sit down and do because it brings up a lot of feelings. And that scares people. I get that. But I want you to think for a second about the kind of homework that you do for things when you spend money.

When you go buy a house, when you go buy a car, when you go buy your next smartphone, you do your research. You'll spend hours on Google, searching things out. When it comes to spending the money, we do our homework. When it comes to making it, we don't. But it's so important.

So I really encourage you to sit down and do a little homework. If it's tough, do it in small doses. But you got to do it because it's really going to help you. So do that assessment first. Then based on that, you can start putting your plan in place. Based on where you land, you can look at the big not happy drivers that came out of your brain that were part of a dump and you can put a plan in place. There are two possible tracks, and maybe a combination of these tracks. It shouldn't just say there are two possible tracks. There are always many options.

But here are two main tracks to consider and then you could figure out how you want to mash these out for yourself. The first one is dealing with the challenges that are coming up at work and maybe making some shifts in the process. Behavioral shifts might be based on this. Some behavioral shifts that you want to make, some leadership shifts that you want to make, based on how you've been showing up.

Take a look at your A's and think, *Is there anything that I could be doing better to shift this situation to improve the relationship with my boss, to shift how I look at the relationship with my boss?* See if there's a way to work it to your advantage. Identify some common patterns that are getting in your way. A pattern that's getting in your way could be, *Every time my boss gives me something to do that I don't want to do, I don't put 100% in or I complain about it, or I just get mad.* Is that a pattern that's getting in your way? Is there another way that you could react?

Look at some patterns in those situations, those eight situations and see if there are some patterns that you could break. I'm not saying go and break them today, I'm just saying write them down. Just capture them so that you understand what you're talking about. The other thing that you can do is look at some of the challenges you're facing and see if you can reframe them as opportunities.

A big one is a difficult boss situation. We get a difficult boss and all of a sudden we get small, we complain, we don't like it and we think, *Holy smokes, I'm going to have to leave this job because this boss is just not working for me.* That's a way to handle it.

Another way to handle it could be, *Okay, this person is lacking some leadership skills. Let me do my own assessment of where I think their gaps are and see how I can help fill those gaps* or, *Clearly, my boss is a little*

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insecure, and that's why they are acting out this way. How can I help them feel more secure, and build a trusted relationship so that I can have a relationship that's working for me?

Because honestly, if you can make your bad boss relationship work for you, the other people in the company can see that this person is not the most effective manager. But if you can make it work for you, it's going to demonstrate your leadership capabilities within the organization. People are going to go, *I don't know how they did it because that boss is really difficult to deal with, but they managed to get that person on their side. That's amazing.* People are going to be impressed.

Is there a way to reframe some challenges and see them as opportunities? Challenges with your people, challenges with not being appreciated. Sometimes people don't feel appreciated by others, by their boss, by their peers. But think of appreciation as a bonus. First, I need to appreciate myself. If I appreciate the work I did, if I feel good about the work I did, then anyone else coming and telling me *good job* is just icing on the cake.

Find ways to appreciate yourself and don't place the value you have on the work you're doing in someone else's hands. Start with yourself. There are a lot of ways and things that you can do. Get a mentor to help you with these behavioral shifts. If you can, ideally, get a coach, because the coach is going to be unbiased. A coach is going to push you in ways that maybe you haven't been pushed before in your career, depending on where you're at in your career and what you hope for in your career. This is an investment, like anything else.

A coach is a tool to help you get to where you want to go. If you are stuck, you don't know how to find a great coach, book a 15-minute chat with me, and I'll walk you through it. I promise I will not hard sell you on working with me as a coach because that is something that I do. But I will give you a checklist of things to consider when you're looking for a coach. And then it's just about doing your homework. So really think about a coach. A coach is a great opportunity.

Dealing with some of the challenges and making shifts, there are shifts that you can make in terms of your behavior and your leadership style. There are also some shifts in terms of setting boundaries. A lot of the time we find ourselves in these situations because we are people pleasers and we suck it up. I'm a big suck it up girl. Suck it up and do it.

But often what happens is, we suck it up, or we people please for so long, we get resentful. And the person that we're resenting doesn't even know because they didn't know what we wanted in the first place because we didn't set any boundaries. That happens at work, that happens in our marriages. It happens a lot of times. It happens in any kind of relationship, even with our parents. So what boundaries would you need to set to create the ideal working environment for you? Think about that.

Remember that boundaries are what you will do if someone does something. You can't set a boundary for someone else. You can't set a boundary and say, *Don't give me work after five o'clock.* That's you telling someone what to do and you can't control the actions of anyone.

What you can say is, *If you give me work at five o'clock, and want it to be done at 9 am, I want you to know, I won't be doing it. It's too stressful for me. I'm not delivering my best work in that short of a timeframe, which reflects on my reputation and my performance level. So that's becoming unacceptable. I can't do that anymore. Let's talk about how we can work together to plan better to deal with these types of situations. Because if the work comes at*

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five o'clock, I won't be delivering it for 9 am the next day. That's a boundary. If you do something, then this is what I'm going to do.

Here's another example, *If you yell at me, I'm going to tell you to come find me later when you're calm and I'm going to walk away.* You can say that. I know it's scary to say those things, obviously, because not everyone would be saying them if they weren't scary, especially to your boss, especially to a position of authority. My suggestion would be to take it one step at a time.

Figure out what your boundaries are first, and then decide how to inject them into your work environment because I don't recommend, first of all, having a list of 10 boundaries, and then sitting down with your boss and going through all 10. That would be overwhelming to anyone and it's likely that situation won't work out for you. But you have to think about how long have you been letting it go.

Because it's really shocking to some people when you've been doing something a certain way for a while and all of a sudden, you show up and say, *I can't do it that way anymore.* They're going to need to understand why. Don't come in all defensive. Don't say, *If you yell at me, I'm going to come and tell you…* Don't do it that way. Sit down with your boss and have a conversation. Obviously, I can't tell you exactly how to have a conversation because I don't know your boss, and I don't know your relationship.

But if you can, find a way to have a calm, rational discussion with your boss, where you say, *Look, I know I've been doing X, Y, Zed for a while. But I have to tell you, it's not working for me anymore. I've thought about it and now, this is what I'm going to do. I know that I have been there whenever you needed me to take work and turn it around overnight but it's really stressful for me. It's really affecting me and my enjoyment in the job that I'm doing right now. I need to tell you that from now on, I can't do that anymore. It's too stressful. I'm not delivering my best work, and it's hurting my performance and reputation in the organization. If you give me work at five o'clock, I can't turn it around by 9 am. I just can't do that. Let's talk about solutions, where we can work together to plan better and deal with these situations as they come up because I can't do it.*

I have no idea how your boss is going to react to something like that because I don't know your boss. But standing up for what you believe, what are your options? You either need to start to put boundaries in place that make sense for you to enjoy your job, or you need to find a new job. You need to find a situation that works for you. Because what you're doing now in tolerating a situation that's not working for you is not sustainable for you emotionally and it's just going to put you deeper into that black hole vortex.

Think about how you can set up boundaries. Maybe start small. Maybe start with your spouse. That always feels like a safer place to do it, or maybe your parent or maybe your kid or whatever. Just try it out. Set up a boundary, and then say, *Okay, I'm going to work up to this and do it with my boss.* There are lots of ways to do it. But as I said before, try not to pile on too many boundaries at the same time. You know your situation better than I do. Everybody likes to take small steps. That's what I recommend there.

And within that whole piece around behaviors and setting boundaries, there might be some lateral moves you can make in the organization that you're in right now. There might be some shifts that you can make in terms of your environment, or what's going on, where you can actually stay where you are right now. Maybe it's not all at a

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loss. Maybe some behavioral shifts from you, and some boundaries and a few tweaks to some projects that you're working on, would make where you work a really great place for you again.

Who knows? It depends on your situation. Don't think that you have to leave until you've done this assessment. Let's say you've gone through his whole assessment, you tried a few things, and it is not working and you want to plan your exit. That's what you're saying, *I need to plan my exit.* It might also be that you wanted to do this first stage of thinking about how to deal with the challenges but also plan your exit at the same time. Who knows? That's entirely up to you.

But if you said, *No, I'm ready. I'm planning my exit.* Okay, great. Because you've done the assessment, you know what you're looking for now and you can start to plan for your exit. These are things like getting your resume sorted, practicing your interview skills, updating your LinkedIn profile, start applying for jobs. There are lots of functional things that you need to do to start to plan your exit. If you're someone who wants to change their career completely, then you're going to need to do even more homework.

As I said before, hire a coach. These are big decisions that you're making. There's no 100% certainty in anything but hiring a coach is going to help you really zero in on where you are and why so that you can make more informed, more educated decisions as you move forward.

So what you've done is you've decided why you want to quit, you really assess that situation, you have put your plan in place, whether that's dealing with your challenges or planning your exit, you've got this toolbox that you're putting together, and now it's time to just talk to your support network. Run the whole thing past some of the people in your support network. Maybe it's a mentor, maybe you have a coach, maybe you have a trusted close peer that's outside your organization who really knows you, and is really good at this stuff.

You don't have to wait until the very end. You can actually engage your support network all the way along, even when you do your brain dump, even when you bucket things into A's and T's. Get their feedback on and get their feedback on your decision to plan your exit and how you're planning your exit. When I say career change, it could even just be dealing with your boss, changing your situation at the job you have right now, changing jobs in your existing field, or making a complete career change.

When you're going through any kind of career change like this, it's a scary thing to a lot of people. You're being courageous, and you're going after it. But I would say be careful of bias with your support network. Because this is a scary thing, sometimes people will put their own fears into the feedback that they're giving you.

My mom does this to me all the time because she loves me, and wants me to be safe. She wants me to feel secure so she always wants me to take the low-risk road. Just put on a smile, show up, and make it work. That's where I get it from. I know that her feedback is going to come with that bias so I'm not going to go to her with some decisions that I think are scarier ones. Just take that into consideration. I mean, I love you, Mom, but I don't want to scare you with some of the scary decisions that I'm making.

Take that into consideration. Make sure you choose the right people to go to. People who have a mix of a sense of courageousness and are grounded. It doesn't all have to be the same person but make sure you get a mix of people so that you can get a really good 360-degree sense of the input into your plan. Just know this is your

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decision. Your decision. Not anyone's feedback is going to be absolutely correct. You're going to take the bits and pieces from what people are saying, and you are going to make it work for you.

One last thing that I want to address before I shut this down. And that is the question that I get quite. *I can't take this another day, I need to quit right now. What should I do?* If that's you, I totally understand. I just want you to take a minute before you do anything. Know that quitting your job without a plan could just put you into a deeper emotional hole. Because you're already at your wit's end, that's why you're even considering this question.

If you put yourself under financial stress, that is going to put another layer of complication on you, where you're not going to give yourself the time to make informed decisions about what you want to do next. You may not make decisions like hiring a coach or getting the right support that you need to make the right decision. You might take a job just to take a job and find yourself in a situation that's not working for you.

Again, anything's possible and you know you better than me. I don't want to throw up these flags, saying, *Don't do this because this bad thing could happen.* Bad things can always happen, no matter what decision we make. It's always about how we handle what happens after the decision. You can turn any challenge into an opportunity if you want to. I truly believe that. I'm just saying it's already a very emotional time and adding a layer of stress is just going to make it harder. It's not going to make it impossible, it's going to make it harder.

My suggestion is, if you are in the situation, just get your finances sorted. Make sure you have about six to nine months of runway before you're going to start to feel the pressure of the financial stress. Take a look at your savings. Try not to touch your retirement fund. Get a good grip on what your expenses are month to month and do the math. Give yourself some space so you're not penny-pinching.

If you're someone who goes for dinner once a week and likes to shop and all that stuff, make sure that you're giving yourself the room to do some of that, or else, again, it's going to impact your mindset. So do the math. Make sure you have some runway and make sure you have a plan of what you're going to do to figure out what's next. You may not exactly know what you're going to be doing next, but you have a plan on how you're going to figure it out. Because then, you can hit the ground running.

I'll always believe that it's easier to figure out what you want next when you're employed than trying to just start over. But I know the situation. Sometimes the situations are so toxic, that you need to get out of that situation before you can figure out what's next. I just urge you to make sure that you have the financial runway and to make sure that you know how you're going to be figuring it out.

Now I want you to know, that I ultimately did quit my job. The corporate job that was plaguing me, and I didn't go through a lot of this work in hindsight. I really needed to. I'm going to be completely honest with you. I didn't do my self-assessment, the one I'm recommending to you. I should have because I may have made a few slightly different decisions.

But what I will say that I did is, I did orchestrate my exit. I took advantage of an opportunity where the company was downsizing in certain ways. I put up my hand, I got myself the financial runway that I needed to be able to make a move, and I knew how I was going to figure out what was next.

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As I said earlier, I know it's hard to do all this work. It feels like a lot. It's not, really. Just take it one step at a time. Remember, you would do 10 times this amount of work when you go buy a luxury item, car, house, or go on a big vacation, or buy a smartphone or whatever. I'm talking about, probably like 20% of the amount of work that you would do to really sit down and understand yourself.

If you have any questions, just send me an email and ask me. Just ask me the question, and I'm happy to help because I know how stressful this is. That's it for this week. That's it for this topic. If you have any questions, you know what to do. I'll see you next week. Bye for now.

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