

# HOW TO FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU WANT IN YOUR CAREER

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Hello and welcome back to The Career Reset podcast.

It's a big day folks. Today, I am talking about the number one thing that people ask me about when we talk about their careers and that is, *How do I figure out what I want to do with my career?* That, my friends, is the million-dollar question that I'm going to be covering today.

If you like where this goes, just feel free to send me that million dollars. No problem. I'll take it. E-transfer is totally fine. And for those of you who don't have \$1 million lying around, then you could just feel free to leave me a great review on this podcast if you like what you hear.

How do you figure out what to do with your career? That's a great question. This is part two of the podcast series that I started last week called, *How to Take Back Control of Your Career* because that's essentially what I do in my business. That's really what this entire podcast is about. Empowering you, empowering people, taking back control of their career which essentially means that you are making career decisions for yourself with purpose on purpose.

Last week, I said there are four main stages to taking back control of your career. The first stage is about taking the time to reconnect and rediscover when you're operating at your best, when you're showing up at your best, and when you're performing at your best. Because quite often, what happens when we're stuck in that job that we don't love or we're not connected to our mindset, our best self essentially is the first thing to go. We start to stop operating essentially at our best.

Stage one of this process of taking back control of your career is about re-grounding yourself and how you want to show up for yourself at your best. Never mind all the crap that's going on in the office. Never mind all that petty BS that you have to deal with and other people's attitudes and other people's moods. This is about you learning how to stay focused on yourself and showing up at your best.

Like I said last week, you don't have to nail stage one before you move on to stage two because nailing stage one is a process within itself. It's going to take time. It's a day-to-day thing. But you need to at least start that process before you move on to stage two because these stages aren't consecutive, they're concurrent.

You're dealing with all of the stages at the same time, but if you're starting from scratch, you don't want to start all of the stages at once because it can be overwhelming. Definitely start with stage one, and get some practice under your belt. Showing up as your best self, and recognizing the trigger when you want to show up as your best self because it does take practice. You're not going to get it right immediately,

It's like learning to play piano or going to yoga or learning any new skill. It takes practice. It's an ongoing practice and in the beginning, you're going to blow it more than you get it right. And that's okay. That's part of the practice. Just like when you're playing piano, you're not going to get it right the very first time you put your fingers on the keys. You're going to blow it a lot. That's what practice is for and that's perfectly normal. Give yourself the space to do that.

Especially you perfectionists out there, give yourself the space at least a couple of weeks to give yourself time to fall, get back up, build up some momentum, recognize your triggers, and recognize what's triggering you. And again, you're not waiting to be perfect. You're not waiting to nail this, but you do want to start to see yourself building up some momentum or at least some consistent recognition of what's going on with you, getting a bit more comfortable in that process of being aware of how you're showing up.

Like I said, just like yoga, career happiness is a practice. It's not a destination. It's a lifestyle. It's something that you need to manage and be in control of all the time. These first two or three weeks are really just about practicing, showing up as the best version of you, and getting comfortable with that. Then you're ready to add on. And that's what we're doing today.

So stage two is all about figuring out what you want for your career, figuring out your next move, and understanding what you want. And a lot of people who are stuck and trying to figure out what to do next with their careers are asking themselves a pretty consistent question: *What do I want to do?* I get that. That's the question we often ask ourselves for a lot of different reasons.

But in this case, that's the wrong question. Is it not entirely the wrong question? It's just mostly the wrong question. It's the TO DO part that's the problem. *What do I want to do?* Everyone wants to go right to the action, the doing, and the end game without doing any of the background work. We want to start doing stuff and I get that we're all extremely busy. We live in this *get-to-the-point* society and when we take action, we feel like we're moving forward.

But that impatient, *get-to-the-point* mentality isn't going to work here. This is a pretty important decision that you're making so you want to take your time and put the time into really making an informed decision. That's the whole point. That's why you're stuck. You don't feel informed enough to make the decision so you don't do anything. *How do you get informed? And what information do you actually need?* Well, that's an excellent question.

It all starts with asking yourself a different question. Instead of asking yourself, '*What do I want to do?*', start asking yourself, '*What do I want?*' And that question takes it from the functional, busy work of doing and brings it back to a more introspective mindset.

You're still taking action. You're just not pumping out resumes and going on interviews just yet. You're taking a minute to do the background work and understand what you want. That's the question to start asking yourself, 'What do I want?'

I know that sounds like a big question. In order to answer that question, you need to break it down into some smaller questions. I'm going to suggest three smaller questions that I recommend you answer. And I recommend that you answer them in this specific order. If I may be so controlling. *What do I love doing? What's important to me? What does that mean for my career?*

Let's highlight each of these now, but if you are someone who's ready to dig into all of this, then feel free to jump right to the show notes @[thecareerreset.com/04](https://thecareerreset.com/04).

But for now, let's start with *what I love doing*. And you might be thinking, "If I knew what I loved doing, then I would be out there doing it." Got it. But I'm not talking about, that one big all-consuming thing that you love doing. That's not what I'm talking about at all. I'm talking about all the little tasks that you do in a day that you really love doing and more precisely what makes you feel strong.

A long time ago, I read this book by Marcus Buckingham, and honestly, I can't remember the name of the book, but I will link to it in the show notes. What he talks about are your true strengths. Not the traditional definition of strengths, but really what your true strengths are, and the way he talks about it is that your true strengths are the things that make you feel strong when you're doing them.

So when you're doing them, you really enjoy it. You feel powerful, energized, and excited. By being really into it, maybe you lose time because you really like doing it. And it can be anything. It doesn't need to be that one all-consuming thing. It can be anything from organizing a meeting to writing a presentation. Maybe you like negotiating deals or selling things to clients or to senior management. It doesn't have to just be work stuff.

It can be personal stuff, too – gardening, journaling, holding dinner parties, volunteering, and a bunch of things. Anything that goes on in your work or your life that makes you feel strong.

The important thing to understand here that's very different from how we traditionally look at strengths is you don't necessarily have to be good at these things. It can be something that you're good at and makes you feel strong. But it can also be something that you're not so skilled at yet, but still makes you feel strong. Being good at something is not a prerequisite for something making you feel strong.

For instance, I really love biking. I do it a lot where I live. We have a lot of really beautiful trails around here. We're out in nature all the time, except in the winter when it's freezing. But in the summer, I'd rather bike the six kilometers to the grocery store versus take my car. That's 12 kilometers return. I do it because I love doing it. It energizes me. I feel great being out in nature.

Am I a great cyclist? Not so much. I don't quite get the gears on my bike. I just found out that there's a front gear and a back gear. I'm not the person who puts on cycling shoes and shorts and the top. I'm not a professional. I'm not good enough to race. I just like to get out and ride. It makes me feel strong. So I would say that cycling or biking, for me, is a strength. What are the things that you do every day, work or personal that make you feel strong, whether you're good at them or not?

I want to give you one heads-up on this and it's important because I don't want you to confuse being on a learning curve with something not making you feel strong. And here's what I mean by that. Sometimes when

you're on a learning curve, you will struggle and it's not quite as enjoyable as you would like it to be. You're struggling. It's taking up a bit more of your energy. But that's because you're on a learning curve, not because you're not enjoying what you're doing.

It's important to make that distinction. I'll give you my own example of this. Writing is a big part of my job and I love doing it, but I struggle with it. Even though I'm getting better and better all the time, it's not easy yet. I'm not mastering it. I still struggle with it mostly because my perfectionism kicks in and my brain starts to tell me stories that I'm not a very good writer and why am I even trying to do this and what makes me think I can do this right — full on imposter syndrome.

I started to struggle with that imposter syndrome. Because that's difficult, struggling with that impostor mindset, I distract myself. I procrastinate. I do all the kinds of stuff that you do when something is hard to do so it'd be easy for me to think that writing doesn't make me feel strong. But it's not because I don't love writing, it's because I'm not great at it yet. And I'm judging myself too much because I'm on this learning curve, because I'm struggling and it's not as easy as I would like it to be.

I wanted to give you that heads-up when you're thinking about the things that make you feel strong. Make sure that you're thinking about the things you're good at, as well as the things that you may not quite be skilled at yet. And make the distinction in your own mind between things that you really just don't love doing and things that you're just on a learning curve. It's not so easy yet, but you still love doing it.

Next, I want you to explore what's important to you. This is the biggie. This is a big part of what you want, and what's important to you starts with what you value. What are your values? Your values are guideposts for how you live your life. But most people don't really know what their values are or the role their values play in how they live their lives or how they show up in their careers.

In fact, when I ask people what their values are, they often just get stumped. It's because it's a stumper. People normally would just stop and think about what a value is first and then they think for a second. And usually, the first thing everyone says is, *"I value family."* After that, some random thoughts come up. Most people don't really think about what their values are, even though your values are guideposts and drive what you believe and how you think about your life.

A lot of the time, people have been holding onto certain values since they were little kids or they're letting certain values take over their life, and they don't even know that they're doing it. Thinking it's not going to have a big impact on how you show up every day and how you think and feel about your career. When a situation isn't working for you in your life, say you're not connecting with your career quite often, it's because you're not living in a way or you're not showing up in a way that's aligned with your values.

If you don't know what your values are, you have a problem because you don't really know what you're out of alignment with. The first thing to understanding what's important to you is getting underneath what your values are, what your top values are, why you value them, what role they play in your life, what role you want them to play in your life, and how do they serve as guideposts for how you make decisions.

You could say that you value family, but how do you define family? Because family is going to be different for you than it is for me. You might define your family as your immediate family. I might define family as the people who

count on me in my life. It could extend to my friends, the people I work with, the people whom I mentor, or the people who report to me. Everyone will define their family differently.

How do you define family and why do you value it? What role does family play in your life and how do you use your value of family as a guidepost for how you make decisions? You really want to give that some thought. Sit down and think about what an ideal day in life is for you and how your values frame your ideal life. What role do they play? That's definitely something you want to sit down and journal out.

Once you have a sense of your strengths, which we said is what makes you feel strong and what you love doing. Once you have you have a good understanding of what you value, then you can really dig into what all of that means for your career.

That's what I recommend, that everyone needs to do the *want-to-career self-assessment*. I go through this in a lot of detail in episode one of this podcast because it's so foundational. But just in case you're here with me now and you're a *do-it-yourselfer*, let me walk you through what I'm talking about so that you can really start to absorb the information and start thinking about it for yourself.

Oftentimes, when people start to think about what they want for their careers, and what they want to do, they go right to the job role. What is the job role that I want? I get that because the role is a big part of the job and it's a thing you do every day. It's the thing that you have to prove that you can do when you go out interviewing for a job. But there's a lot more to career happiness and the role itself.

If you want to start understanding what's really important to you, a good exercise is exploring all the boxes that your next career move needs to tick before you make the decision. And I compare this to buying a new house or looking for a place to live.

When you're looking to buy a new house, you generally have a long list of boxes that you need to have ticked. The house itself is important to a point. How many bedrooms does it have? How much square footage? How big is the kitchen? Does it have a garage? All that stuff. But when you're looking to buy a house, the requirements go way beyond the house itself.

In fact, you probably would be willing to trade bedrooms or a garage or square footage for some of the other things that might be on your list. Things like, where is this house? What's the commute to work? What's the commute to school? What's the light? How many windows are there? How much does it cost? Is there a space for the kids to play? Is there a space for dogs to play or dogs to walk? What neighborhood is it in? What school district is it in? How close is it to the family or friends? How does that align with your lifestyle? And on and on and on.

There are so many things that you think about and as you're thinking about everything on your list, you know that you have to make compromises when you're looking for this house. You have to decide things like, would you trade a bedroom for a school district or would you trade a garage or a trendy neighborhood or a walk to a coffee shop or something like that. It all depends on what's right for you and the people who count on you. And it's the same for your career.

In episode one, I talk about the eight cornerstone categories of your career — the role, the people, the location, the environment, the lifestyle, the culture, the pay, and the alignment. All of those will be in the show notes

because I know that I went fast through that. Each of these categories represents an important element of what drives job satisfaction and happiness. And your ultimate job is to find the balance that best suits you.

If you dig into each of these cornerstone categories and really start to articulate what you want and what you don't want, you're going to start to get a really good sense of what your deal breakers are. And the deal breakers are things that you can absolutely not live without. These are your non-negotiables.

It's like saying that you will not buy a house without a backyard or a garage or that you will absolutely not buy a house that's not within walking distance of a beach, a coffee shop, or your kid's school. You have to decide what your deal breakers are, then you can prioritize them and that's going to give you a really good scope on your next career move.

You might be saying all that sounds great, but it's not going to tell you exactly what you need to do next for your next career move. You're right. There are a few more steps that you can take if you really need to, but this is an excellent starting place.

You'll be surprised how many people get super clear by just doing these three things, just asking themselves the three questions that we've covered in this podcast because once you open up the floodgates and you get your brain working on what you really want, your brain is going to start to do the work for you in the background and you're going to be more open to the opportunities that come into your path.

Those are the fundamentals of stage two of taking back control of your career, which is essentially knowing what you want. One is to start with you and really do the background work on you, spending the time getting underneath what you love doing, what's important to you, and what all of that means for your career.

Don't forget to go back to episode three if you haven't listened to it yet. Listen to stage one of taking back control of your career, which is all about rediscovering your best self, and what you look like when you're showing up at your best.

Honestly, after these two stages alone, stage one and stage two, you are going to be in a completely different mindset. You're going to be excited. You're going to be open. You're already going to have a lot more clarity than you do right now about your next career move. And you're going to be mentally ready to go out there and be motivated to kick butt going after what you want. You're going to have some momentum. You're going to have some clarity, and you're going to have a determination that you need to go and find your next career move.

I want to thank you so much for tuning in today because I know you have a lot of podcasts out there to choose from. If you're finding this information useful to you, then go ahead and subscribe to this podcast by going to [thecareerreset.com/podcast](https://thecareerreset.com/podcast). Just choose the app that you want to subscribe with and if you like what you're hearing, leave me a review because that's so helpful to me in making sure this podcast gets to people.

I will talk to you next week. In the meantime, have a great one.

