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CREATE A TRACK RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT

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Welcome back, my friends. It's great to have you here. Like I said last week, over the course of the next few weeks, eight-ish, seven-ish, or something like that, we're going to be talking about topics that can aid you in your job search.

Today's topic around creating a track record of achievement goes beyond just the job search piece. It's actually something you can do for overall self-confidence. However, self-confidence and self-esteem are a big part of the job search process. So I wanted to bring this topic into the context of talking about resumes and interviewing, because self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-belief, are all things that are going to help you make your job search journey so much more successful.

Last week, we talked with Sara Wing Lima, who is the Director of Talent Acquisition at the University of Guelph, and she gave us so much good information, and so many good tips on how to build a resume that gets you noticed. So if you're in the market for a resume, I really recommend you go back and listen to last week's podcast episode number 39.

Today, we are talking about the whole idea of creating a track record of achievement. And when I say achievement, in the context of resume building, I think our brains automatically go to things like, all our accomplishments that we're going to be putting on a resume. And that's relevant. Obviously, that's very relevant to resume building. So you could definitely use the process we're going to talk about today to create a track record of achievement as it pertains to the accomplishments, etc., that you want to share on your resume.

But really, why I want to talk about this today is to help you get a consistent sightline into what makes you really special, what makes you great, and why you should believe in yourself. I know that's something that a lot of people struggle with; the idea of imposter syndrome, the idea of not believing you're good enough, and being competitive with the people in your office. All of those things come from a place of scarcity, meaning you don't necessarily think you're good enough.

When really, objectively, if you're able to step back and look at everything that you do, you are good enough. When I ask most people to tell me about their strengths, tell me about their accomplishments, and some good stuff

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about them; they don't really know. They get stumped, but they really have to stop and think about it and start accessing things in their brain. They get really small. Not just small with the things that they're sharing with me, but physically small.

It's like people shrink when they start thinking about what makes them special or great, or what their strengths are, or whatever. The reason is, that we just don't really pay attention to what we do well and we don't give it the credit it deserves. We don't pay attention to what we accomplished. Maybe just the big things, but not the everyday things. We don't watch. But when it comes to what we don't do well, what's missing in our behavior, what's missing in our skill set; when it comes to what we don't do, the mistakes we make, the failures we have, we're great. We're great at listing the big things, and all the little things.

Like it's just a wealth. You don't really have to do a lot of accessing, because it's right there on the tip of your tongue. It's right there at the front of your mind, all the things that we don't do well. And that's normal because that's how our brain works. Our primitive brains are built for us to notice all of the negative things. We're meant to look for what's missing because that's what keeps us safe. What's missing is an indication of danger, and our primitive brains are there to keep us safe. That's why they're programmed that way naturally.

But you can program your brain to also notice what's working. You can program your brain to notice all the little accomplishments, instead of noticing what's missing all the time. So if you're someone who's struggling with self-esteem or self-worth, it's usually because you're focused on all the past evidence of why you can't do something. And if you're someone who's trying to reach a goal, and you're finding it hard to do; because to reach that goal, let's say because you're struggling with a certain aspect or a certain task or certain behavior that you need to accomplish to be able to achieve that goal.

If you're really finding yourself stuck, it's because you're getting caught up in your own mistakes because you don't believe in yourself, you're creating a lot of drama around it. You're really focused on what's missing. So the goal here is to train your brain to focus on what's working, instead of what's missing. I have to tell you, this is work that I am still doing myself. It totally works when you're working on it.

When I used to work in corporate, my team, my bosses, and my peers would always say to me, *you're so hard on yourself,* which was also code for, *you're hard on yourself*, *you have really high expectations, and you're hard on everybody else, too.* And I am. I absolutely, not only was that way, but I still am that way. I am my worst critic. And I recognize that about myself. So one of my big journeys this year is learning to appreciate myself and all of the things that I accomplish every day.

And the way that I'm doing that, the thing that's really working for me, is the idea that I want to offer you today, which is starting to create a track record of your success. It's really about having a consistent habit of noticing what you're accomplishing, how you're growing, and what you're achieving. It could be big things, it could be small things, it could be everything from I made this phone call that was making me nervous to make or I took a walk today, or I took the time out of my day to play with my dogs or whatever you think is an accomplishment for you, big or small. It's about really taking the time to focus on what's working, and what you are really accomplishing.

When I say this, it makes people uncomfortable, and I know that because I see it in their body language when I'm coaching them. And I know it makes me uncomfortable. As a coach, we're not like already completely

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self-realized and sitting on top of the mountain and all those things. It's work that we're constantly doing to manage ourselves and get aware of our own thinking and how it's impacting us. So I'm always doing that work. And I do that work, not just for myself, although that's really a big part of it. But it's also to help my clients.

If I understand the challenges that they're going through, if I understand the difficulties, and if I can see what works for me, maybe it'll work for someone else. So that's really why I want to bring you this idea. Actually, it was my coach who brought to me this idea of creating a track record of success. If it makes you feel uncomfortable, the question you want to ask yourself is *why*. Why is it making you feel uncomfortable? It's not like you're going to brag and tell everybody else all the things you've achieved.

What if you just wrote it down for yourself? Why is it making you uncomfortable? And usually, I find that there are two reasons that make people uncomfortable when we explore it. The first one is, that it doesn't feel safe. If our brains are wired to notice what's missing, in order to keep us safe, because what's missing equals danger. If that's the way our brains are wired to work, then just focusing on what's working doesn't feel so safe at first. And that's why there's a sense of discomfort with it.

But what I want to offer you is discomfort equals growth. So allow yourself to feel uncomfortable. It's okay. It's just a feeling, it's not going to kill you to feel uncomfortable while you're doing this. Just because you feel uncomfortable, doesn't mean you shouldn't do it. Because the discomfort doesn't last. It's just something you have to recognize. Try not to resist, just allow it to be there. Don't fight against it, but do it anyway. Make this ongoing list of your accomplishments and allow your brain to feel uncomfortable with it.

Because discomfort is actually one of the emotions for me. I have three emotions that I focus on trying to get comfortable with, all the time. The first one is love getting comfortable with loving myself. The second one is always being curious. Curiosity is one that I work on. And it's part of what I do for a living, obviously, is staying curious. But it also helps me be open-minded to anything that's going on around me. And the third emotion that I really practice feeling and allowing is discomfort. Because discomfort is where growth comes from.

If you're always comfortable, you don't grow. So in this case, if you're serious about wanting to improve your self-confidence, or improve your self-esteem, there's going to be some discomfort involved. But I'm telling you that it doesn't last. It's just a feeling it can't hurt you. And the more you consistently are recording, making a record a track record of your achievements, the less uncomfortable it becomes. So this feeling of not being safe is one of the first reasons that people don't love doing this work of tracking their accomplishments.

The second one is judgment, fear of judgment from themselves, and fear of judgment from others. A lot of the time, people will say, *My accomplishment today was getting up and going for a run.* Whatever your accomplishment is, let's say it's going for a run. Immediately, your brain wants to judge that. You went for a run, but you didn't run as far and you didn't run as fast. It wasn't so pretty and *yada, yada, yada*. There's all this judgment that comes along with it so it's not fun to hear that judgment from yourself.

A lot of the time, we avoid making these track records of accomplishment because the judgment that comes with it is overwhelming. It actually makes us feel worse. And so we don't want to go through that. But I want you

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to recognize that when that happens, it's just your brain doing its job. It's doing its job to try to keep you safe by trying to notice things that aren't working.

All you need to do when that happens is take a deep breath and say, *Thanks, brain. Got it. But guess what, I'm going to focus on the run. I don't need you to tell me all the other stuff right now.* It might sound crazy, but I actually literally do that. I say it out loud. I'm like, *Okay, brain. I got you. Thank you. I don't need that right now.* That's it, shut it down. Shut it down like you would shut down anything else that you don't want to hear with compassion, thoughtfulness, and understanding. It doesn't mean you have to listen to it just because it's your own brain trying to shut you down.

The other thing, sometimes is we're worried about judgment from others. Nobody needs to know that you're doing this if you don't want them to. But a lot of the times, too, we think, what if I get like too confident? What if people think I'm conceited or vain or love myself too much? I'm arrogant. These are not things that you need to worry about at the beginning. We don't know what's going to happen in the future. Everything is day-to-day.

You're not going to start making a track record of accomplishments today and then tomorrow morning, wake up like you're the most narcissistic person in the world. These things happen slowly. You're going to be aware of what's going on with you. If you feel at some point, you've gone too far, you can deal with it at that point. But in the meantime, I suggest you don't worry a lot about what is because you're just borrowing trouble from the future. What if people think of too big for my britches? What if I become too arrogant? You can deal with that when the time comes.

Frankly, what people think about you has nothing to do with you and everything to do with them. So there's no reason why you can't spend the time really focusing on just noticing what you do well. Any reason that you don't want to do that is because of some sense of discomfort that you have with this exercise. What I can tell you is if you took, say, 25% of the same energy that you invest into beating the crap out of yourself, and noticing all your missteps and errors and mistakes; if you took 25% of the same energy, and actually invested it into creating a track record of your achievements, you would create more in your career and your life and go beyond any goal that you've ever dreamed of because you're so focused on what's working for you.

I want to bring this back to the resume for a second, too, because this is important work to do, as you're building your resume. So yes, creating a track record of achievement, specifically, as it pertains to achievements in your career is good because it feeds your resume. It's good to do this over a long period of time because you have this huge repository of things that are at your disposal.

You're not necessarily going to include all of that stuff in your LinkedIn profile, or all of that stuff in your resume. But it's top of mind for you because you've written it down and because you've explored it so that at some point in the job search process, whether it's conversations that you're having, networking, or interviewing or small talk, or whatever it's going to be, you're going to have these other examples of your achievements and qualifications that you're able to talk about, and you're able to draw on.

So it's never a bad idea to start creating this repository of all the things you've actually achieved in your job. When I talk about creating a track record of achievement, I'm not just talking about your job, I'm not just talking about

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the big things, but it also does include your job, and it also includes those big things that you're achieving that you would want to include in your resume. So I would integrate that into this process.

Here's really how this process works. I'm going to give you some questions that you can answer every day to help you build this track record of achievement. But let's say, you're doing it, and you're journaling every day; I don't ever hesitate to call it journaling, if that's a turnoff word for you, call it writing it down on a piece of paper, whatever works.

But when you're doing it, what happens is, yes, at first, it's uncomfortable. Yes, your brain wants you to stop doing it. You're going to do it for a couple of days, and then you're going to make 20 excuses why you can't do it on the third day. So you need to really be anticipating this reaction from your brain and make sure that you have a strategy to get past that obstacle.

Because your brain is going to tell you all the things. It's going to tell you that this is stupid, weak, lame, only for losers, and that you don't need it, that you can deal with all of this in your head, and you don't need to write things down. But I just want to remind you, if you haven't heard me say this before, that your head is where the problem is. So trying to work things out in there is never useful. Like if you could do it, you would have done it by now. I really recommend getting it out on paper and anticipating that your brain is going to fight against you at first and it's going to feel uncomfortable.

But if you stick with it, what happens is it starts getting easier. And you notice more things even when you're not sitting down and thinking about it. You notice it is more ongoing. You appreciate yourself more. All the mistakes that you might make in a day, which we're going to make, anyway; no matter what we think about ourselves, we're going to make some mistakes. But those mistakes seem less important. They're less personal. We take them less personally because we have a pretty good opinion of ourselves.

We know that it's human to make mistakes. And we actually believe that that is human to make mistakes. So it creates much less drama in your brain. And because you're creating less drama around all the mistakes and missteps and things that are missing in your life, *blah, blah, blah*; because you have all this less drama, you have so much more energy to focus on your work, to focus on yourself, to help you get closer to your goals, to stay productive, and to stay moving forward.

When you're investing that energy in your work, getting closer to your goals, and living your best life, it feeds for accomplishments. You end up having this longer list of accomplishments, and more confidence in yourself, because you can see all the things you're doing. The list just keeps getting longer and longer and longer. It's like the opposite of a vicious circle. I call this a Success Circle because it's going the opposite way.

You start noticing what's awesome about you, which creates less drama in your life, and less self-judgment, more support of yourself, more belief in yourself, which gives you more energy to focus on doing more and getting closer to your goals and achieving more, which feeds more accomplishments, which gives you more confidence. It's cyclical. It's this Success Circle. At some point, as you're going through this, you're going to look back and say, these self-esteem issues that I used to deal with that was so silly, why did I waste my time on that?

It almost happens naturally in life. Like me, a woman of 50, I just turned 52 weeks ago; and I look fabulous, by the way. But as a woman of 50, I look back at the things I worried about when I was 20. I think, why did I waste my

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time thinking about those things? Or when I was a teenager? Or two years ago? Why did I waste my time worrying about that stuff? We all know what that feels like. As you go through that process, this process I'm talking about of creating a track record of your achievements, you're going to be able to look at what you were worried about today. And it's going to seem silly because you're going to have moved past it.

So I say, let go of the drama, let go of this stress and all about emotional self-flagellation, and track your progress. That's all you need to do. Track your progress and work through how uncomfortable it is at first.

Because a lot of the time, what happens is, we wait until we have proof. So we say to ourselves, *I'll know I'm worthy of x, y, zed when I achieve x, y, zed.* It's almost like we're saying to ourselves, *I'll know that I'm worth something. I'll know that I'm good at my job when I get promoted.* But in order to get promoted, you actually need to think that you're good at your job. It doesn't work the other way around. Thoughts drive results. So, getting promoted will create new thoughts about yourself. But you can't get promoted with that result of getting promoted until you think like a person who would get promoted. And a person who would get promoted believes in their ability to do the job now, not after they get promoted. Makes sense.

So if you're open to trying this, what I want to offer you are some questions. You don't need to use these questions, you can just sit down and make a list. But here are some things you can ask yourself. You can do this on a weekly basis or a daily basis. You can say, What have I accomplished today? Or what have I accomplished this week? And just start making a list. You can say, What have I done? And where have I grown? You can say, Where have I learned? What have I learned? You can do any of those things, whatever language works for you.

What have I accomplished today or this week? What have I done and where have I grown? Then the next question is, what's different now for me than it was two years ago, two months ago, two weeks ago, and two days ago? I love this one. What's different now than it was two years ago, two months ago, two weeks ago, two days ago? Because it's not just about looking at what you did today, which is great, but it's also looking at your progress.

I love this one because it makes such a huge difference in your mind and the way your mind is going to work to answer this question. It's really going to quickly demonstrate to you how far you've come. And that's an amazing thing. It's an amazing thing to appreciate about yourself. Because when you see how far you've come, it makes it so much easier to believe how far you're going to go in the future. Because you have successes every day. Every day you have successes, it's just training your brain to notice them.

The other thing I want to highlight to you so that you're prepared for it is when you're moving towards a goal of any kind, whether it's getting a job, getting promoted, or achieving something on your performance evaluation that you want to improve on or developing a skill set, whatever it is. When you're moving towards a goal, it's not always a straight line. Sometimes, to move forward, we take side steps or steps back, or we see obstacles, and it takes us a while to get over that obstacle. Those are all still successes.

Noticing the obstacle is a success. Trying different ways to get past the obstacle, even if you keep falling down a few times, is still a success. It's all perspective. This was really interesting to me because I see this so much clearer now, as an entrepreneur than I ever saw when I was in corporate. Because in corporate, for whatever

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reason, I had this thought error that I needed to be perfect to be successful. And when I say thought error, what I mean is I have a thought that I need to think something to be able to drive a certain result.

When really, the thing that I'm going to be thinking is driving the opposite result that I want. So I think that I need to be perfect in order to be successful. But in fact, the thought error is that by thinking I need to be perfect, I'm actually working against my own success. That's why it's a thought error. It doesn't drive the result. I think it's going to drive that thought, but I had this thought that I needed to be perfect and never make a mistake. And it was partially manufactured by me, and partially by the culture of the organization I worked with.

I made the choice to buy into that culture. So I was always striving for this false perfectionism, which is impossible for anybody to have. And every time I make a mistake in the corporate world, I see it as a huge failure. Other people would see it as a failure, too. We're all judging each other on the mistakes that we make. But really, as an entrepreneur, I see it so differently now. My job is to really put myself out there and be vulnerable to mistakes.

Honestly, it's taken me a couple of years to get comfortable with that. If I'm honest, I'm still not 100% comfortable with it. This is why I'm doing this work on my self-esteem. But it's so interesting because I see it in every element of my business. Breakdown to social media. The more I share my missteps, the more I share pictures of myself, and talk about my life; I'm honest about where I struggle, and how that struggle can be applied to other people's struggles.

The more I'm human, the more people want to connect with me. The more they appreciate what I'm doing, the more they can hear what I'm saying to them. But the more I stand on high, and say, *Look at me, I'm 25 years in corporate and I'm a coach, and I know all the things. So take my advice whenever I go from that place or operate from that place.* People are like, *Thanks, but no thanks.*

So for me, I realized that not only do I have to make a lot of mistakes to actually learn how to build an online business, but because I didn't know how to build a website, I didn't know how to do a podcast, I didn't know how to record videos on my computer, and all the things that you do or what the heck was Zoom and all the stuff; I didn't know all about it first so I made a ton of mistakes in putting together the right tools for myself and learning how to use those tools.

But the biggest challenge has been allowing myself to be vulnerable and teaching myself that it's okay to be vulnerable. Because vulnerability is strength and courage, as Brené Brown says. Vulnerability is not a weakness, it's actually a strength. I know that that's not always how corporations and offices manage things and treat vulnerability. But just because vulnerability is not always appreciated, and just because there are people out there who may jump on you for being vulnerable, that doesn't mean it's not a strength.

That doesn't mean that it's not the right thing to do for you. Allow yourself to be vulnerable, allow yourself to grow, allow yourself to appreciate yourself for who you are, and all of your accomplishments, and track those accomplishments and feel great about it. Whether your accomplishments are in the form of learning from mistakes or accomplishing goals, they're all still successes. It's just you deciding how you want to look at it.

What I can say to you today is, that the more I keep this track record of my accomplishments, the more it's changed my perspective on what my missteps look like, why they're there, and what purpose they serve. For me,

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the more energy I have and the more risk I take, the more aware I am, the closer I am to reaching goals, the more productive I am. It's all good. It's just this super successful cycle that is so worthy of the initial discomfort it takes to start it. That is what I have today for you, my friends.

Create a track record of your success, and it's going to help you be the very best version of yourself. Ask yourself these questions every day. What have I accomplished? What have I done and how have I grown? What's different now than it was two years ago, two months ago, two weeks ago, or two days ago? I actually have one more question that you can add to this journaling. I love this question, too. How is right now the most successful you've ever been?

I love this question, too because I know it feels like maybe you're not. But maybe you are, or maybe some aspect of you is the most successful you've ever been. It's just really reinforcing to yourself that today is the most successful you've ever been. There are aspects of today that reflect the most successful you've ever been. How powerful is that? What a wonderful gift that is to give yourself every single day.

So if you're working on your self-confidence, or you're working towards a goal, or you're doing a job search, or you want to get promoted, or you want to go for a raise, or anything that you're doing; my recommendation to you, my friends, my offer to you is to start this track record of accomplishment. That's all I have for you today.

Thank you so much for joining me. I'll talk to you next week. Bye for now.

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