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IS IT TIME TO CHANGE CAREERS?

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Hello, my friends. It's great to have you here. Mel Savage from The Career Reset, and I'm here, as always, to help you achieve your career goals faster, with a lot less drama. So the question that I really want to talk about today is something that I have always asked about in emails, career planning calls, and coaching sessions. And it actually came up again this week and an email that I got from someone who listens to the podcast. And it was all about, *I need to figure out if it's time for me to make a career change*. Is it the time for a career change?

Actually, I was going to talk about something else for this week. Another topic that's kind of related to this is called Career Impotence. I love that terminology. It's so provocative – career impotence, which is another term that I made up. I love making up some terms, but I'm going to put that out next week instead because that topic is kind of an extension of what I really want to talk about with you today.

So today, we're going to talk about answering that question, *is it time to change my career?* And I would say that this presents if you're in this situation, what's happening right now with you is, first of all, you're thinking, *You know what, I'm tired of this. I cannot take this anymore.* And usually, that comes from a lot of pent-up frustration. It comes from anger, it comes from things not going the way that you thought they were going to go in your career. And you're just tired of this. And you're thinking, *You know what, I don't want to do this anymore.* And so you're thinking, maybe it's time for a career change.

Not even time to work somewhere else, but time for a wholesale career change. Another way this question ends up presenting itself is when you're thinking, *You know what, maybe I'm not cut out for this anymore. Maybe I'm not performing as well as I used to. Maybe things aren't really going well for me at work like they used to. Maybe I got a bad review, or I have a bad boss who doesn't quite get me and I'm sort of stuck. I'm not getting anywhere. I've hit my ceiling. Maybe I'm too old.* All of that kind of stuff feeds into *I'm not cut out for this anymore*.

Then we think about it like it's a fact. *I'm not cut out for this anymore*. And then we think, *Maybe it's time for a career change.* And then there's this other way that it presents sometimes, which is, *There's got to be more out there for me.* Which is what happens sometimes, in certain life stages. I don't want to say midlife crisis, although it does present in around the 35 to 45 range where you're like, *Really? Is this all there is? Is this what I'm going to be doing for the rest of my life*? And you're like, *There's got to be more out there than just doing this.* And you think, *I need to figure out what the more out there is.*

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It's like a mentality shift that you're trying to make. And so all of these situations, whether you're just tired of what you're doing, and you can't take it anymore, because you're a bad situation, or you think you're not cut out for it, or you think that there's got to be more to life. All of those things are ways that people start thinking about and asking themselves, *is it time for a career change?* A wholesale career change. Quite often, people are struggling with the answer to that question. And that's when they reach out and try to see how have other people figured this out.

Before I get into all of that today, I really wanted to say to you, if you're in the situation, then why not make 2021 the year where you really start to figure it out, like you start to sort it out? It's just around the corner. It's always great to start the new year with a fresh start. And if we've learned anything from 2020, it's that we need to really be in control of our careers, be in the driver's seat of what's happening with us, and have a plan because life is uncertain and so we need to be able to manage it and shift and bob and weave when crap comes up in the world.

So why not book a planning session with me for next year? So if you really want to book a session with me, do it now. Go to the show notes for this podcast, which is thecareerreset.com/51. Or you can just go right to the careerreset.com/planningsession. Book, your planning session with me. So make sure you take take time to do that.

All that being said, how do you know it's time to change your career versus it just being some phase that you're going through? Because that's really why people stay stuck. They're like, *Do I really want to change my career? Or is this like some kind of phase?* So I want to start with, what are the signs that you're in a phase? What is going on with you when you're in a phase? I've seen this so many times. One sign is we say to ourselves, *I'm not fulfilled. But I don't know what I actually want. I know I don't want this, but I don't know what's going to actually fulfill me.*

That is a sign that you are in a phase when you're saying, *This isn't working, but I don't know what will work.* That means you don't have your answer yet. And when that happens, what happens is that people will be ready to jump at the first shiny object that shows itself. Someone says, *Oh, I heard about a job over here, or why don't you come work for me and do this?* And you're like, *Yeah, okay. I'm going to try that. I don't even care. I just want to get out of here.*

I don't recommend obviously, that you jump at the first neat idea that falls in your lap. Because that's not going to solve your problem. You're still going to have your problem. It's just that you're going to be distracted for a while. And it may be worse when you don't know what you want. Now, you're just grasping at straws. It's like when you have a stressful day, and you think eating a box of ice cream is going to help you. But it doesn't. It actually just feels worse after. That's what jumping at the first shiny object is like. So don't do that.

People think, *Well, I'm just going to wait it out. I'll know when it comes. I'll know when the right thing comes along.* No, you won't. You're going to go with your gut, in that moment of emotion, whatever you feel like that day, and you're going to think, *Oh, maybe this is the answer.* Your career is so important. It's such a huge cog in how your life works. Whether you're a super career-minded person or not, what you do for work is a big deal. It actually feeds so much of your life that you really need to get more pragmatic with it than *I'll know when it comes along.* Because that is just leaving it to chance a lot of the time. You need to get more pragmatic with it than that.

The other sign that you are in a phase is you're at a breaking point of some kind like I talked about. Or you see a breaking point on the horizon and you think, *I better change before I break something.* Generally speaking here,

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you're making a move, or you're thinking about making a move from a place of exhaustion, anger, or negative emotions. And that is not a good place to decide from.

So if you're in a situation at work where you're feeling negative, and exhausted and angry, and just all around, like, *I got to get away from this*, you need to put some space between you and the situation that you're facing at work. That is not a good reason to make a career change. Maybe you need to make a job change. But even still, I recommend you do what I'm going to talk about later before you even make the job change.

Sometimes, it's like when you're in a fight with your spouse or your partner and you say things and that you make decisions in a minute when you're angry that you know are not the best decisions. And usually, when it's your partner, you can figure that out. You can talk about it, you can apologize, you can you can mend fences, hopefully. But don't do that with your career. It's a big deal and not like your relationship with your partner isn't, but it's much harder to fix.

Quitting your job and trying to go down a path of a new career change is much harder to fix than just saying the wrong thing and a fight with your spouse. So don't make a big decision like this because you're trying to avoid something bad in your life. I did that, by the way. I totally did that. And I don't recommend it. It's a much longer road, a much longer road to success if you're still struggling with negative emotions when you leave a job.

The other thing that people will say when they're at a breaking point of some kind is they'll say, *Look, I'm just going to quit. I need to quit this, and then I'm going to figure out what I'm going to do next.* Because they think that their mind is like they can't think clearly at the job they have now. So they think that, *Oh, I'm just going to quit, and then I'm going to figure it out.* It's much harder to do it that way. Again, because that was a combination. I did that. I was running away from something and I thought, I'm going to quit, and then I'm going to figure it out.

You haven't really dealt with all the shit that you're trying to run away from. And it's still there, whether you quit your job or not. It clouds your thinking. It's not a very clear way to do it. And I made sure I had a financial runway. But if you're not someone who has a long financial runway ahead of you, then you're also going to be in a position of feeling a lot of stress around money. So that is not good mojo for you to start making career decisions.

People say, *Oh, I need that. I need the fear that always reminds me of Chandler being from Friends. I need the fear.* No, you don't need the fear. You need pragmatism and call to be able to make this kind of decision. So basically, if you feel like you're at a breaking point, or if you don't know what you want to do, and you think, *I'm waiting for the nice next shiny, good thing to come along*, you're in a phase. You're not ready to make the change.

But here's how you know that you are ready to make the change. Are you ready? You already know what you want to do. You're totally calm about it. You know what boxes you need to tick to be able to do what you want to do. You know why you want to do it, why it's important to you, why it aligns with you, and why it's the right thing for you. You have peace about it, and you don't feel like you're running away from something. You feel like you're running towards something.

And you can lie to yourself all you want when you're telling yourself a lie. We all know we're lying to ourselves most of the time. So you have to feel like you're running towards something versus running away from something. That's a really big one. And knowing what it is, why it's perfect for you, and why it aligns with you, and

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knowing what boxes you need to tick before you make the move, or that you need to tick to be able to have what it takes to get to that new career, all the very important things.

That's how you know that it's not a phase and that you are sure that it's time to leave. But how do you get from that emotional place where a lot of people are that emotional? *I got to get away from this. I don't align with this. I can't believe this is my life place, too. I know what boxes I need to tick. I know exactly what I want to do I know how to get there. I'm very pragmatic. I don't have any negative emotions about it.* How do you get from one place to the other? Let's work up to that. When it comes back to that, I'm going to give you some thoughts about what you can do.

I just want to say, first of all, that I kind of look at managing the situation. I would look at relationship counseling. You have a relationship with your career. You're in a relationship with your career, and it's a long one. And all of a sudden, you want to break up with this relationship. So when I coach on this, I coach on it a lot like I would coach any relationship. Be it a working relationship, a family relationship, or a personal relationship. A lot of time, those also come up when you're thinking about your work, how your family fits in, how your spouse fits in, how your career, etc.

Or it could be a specific relationship that you have at work that you need to resolve – a peer, a boss, whatever. And so that's all relationship counseling, as far as I'm concerned, and so is your relationship with your career. A lot of the time people think relationships are a two-way street. *It's about what I do. It's about what they do.* I just want to reset that thinking for you because your relationship with anything is entirely based on how you think about that relationship. The health of your relationship absolutely comes from your thinking and if you have a problem with your relationship, in this case, your relationship with your job, and your career, it is a thinking problem.

Every problem you have is a thinking problem. Your relationship with a person or your career is basically based on three things. Any relationship really is based on three things – what you think about that other person, what you think they think about you, and what you think about yourself in the context of them. I'm going to do that again, and I'm going to talk about it in the context of your career.

All relationships, how you feel about a relationship, and how you show up in a relationship are based on three things – what you think about the other person, what you think they think about you, and what you think about yourself in the context of them. Because sometimes, what we think about ourselves is one thing. But all of a sudden, when we're in a room with a different person, say, your boss, or the president of the company, or direct report, we think about ourselves differently in that relationship. So those three things are really what drive any relationship.

If we put that in the context of your career, what you think about the other person is really about what you think about your career in general, or what you think about your career in general, how long it's been, the success you've had, the work that you do, your thoughts about it. So that's what you think about the other person, or in this case, what you think about your career.

Number two, I said was what you think they think about you. Now, obviously, your career doesn't think about you. But maybe this is where you think about how your career aligns with you. How does your career align with your strengths? For instance, what you are actually good at, what you're naturally good at, what you think you're good

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at, what you really enjoy doing, and what you're interested in. How does your career currently align with your strengths? And I always say your strengths are a combination of what you're naturally good at, and what you really enjoy doing. So how does that align with that? And also, how does it align with your values?

A lot of the time, people don't even know what values they have. Everyone goes family, health, that sort of thing. But what really are your values that drive you to do the things that you do? And does your career align with it? So when I say what you think they think about you, I want you to think about it in the context of how you think your career aligns with who you are.

The first one is, what do you think about your career in general? The second one is, how do you think your career aligns with who you are? And then the third thing is what I said about relationships is, what do you think about yourself and in the context of the other person? And so in this case, it's what do you believe about yourself in the context of your career? Your ability? What do you think? Are you good at it? Why are you good at it? Why are you not good at it? What do you like about it? What don't you like about it? I want you to think about yourself, your abilities, who you are, in the context of your career, and what you think the answers to those things are going to help you define what kind of relationship you are in with your career.

I want you to think. You can list the things that are not working for you. But listen, things that are working for you, too. I go through this exact stuff when I work with people when it comes to their goals. It's kind of a situation analysis. First and foremost, we talk about where are we at. This is the relationship I currently have with my career, what I believe about myself, my abilities, who I am in that situation, my career in general, how it aligns with me, my strengths, my values, and all that kind of stuff.

Then we do the same exercise for what do I want it to be? So it's just a really good tool to help assess where you are and where you want to be. I really recommend sitting down and doing this work first. So many people try to do it in their heads. Don't do it in your head. It doesn't work well that way. Things get all jumbled up. I really recommend that you sit down and go through it. Write it down. Make sure you look at both the positives and the negatives. We all like to see all the bullshit drama our minds gravitate to the negative all the time, but I challenge you to be really even-handed with your analysis.

Sometimes it takes a bit longer to find the things that are working for us and that aren't working for us. But take the time to do that. Really sit down and pretend you are like a researcher. I want you to be an objective watcher. I want you to try and stay dispassionate about what you're doing with your analysis. And that's often what a good coach is for, too. Listening, helping pull it out of you, making sure that there are some dispassionate and objective conclusions that come from this.

So really assess your current relationship with your career, and what you want your future relationship to be. And from that place, you can actually start to assess. *Now that I have this information, what do I want to do with it?* You think about it like writing. You're writing a business plan or a strategic plan. You're basically doing your situation analysis, and then you're assessing the opportunity for growth.

But a lot of the time, what happens is luck. People say, *I don't know what I want. All I know is it's not this.* Whenever I hear that, I'm like, are you sure? Because it's kind of bullshit if you don't know what you want. Then I would challenge you to say, how do you know that there isn't something in your current situation that you could

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leverage better? Because you don't even know what you want. So how do you know that you can't make where you are now work for you?

Sometimes people think we live in this disposable society. *I'm just going to throw out this career, and I'm just going to go get the new career.* But I want to challenge you to say, are you throwing the baby out with the bathwater? There might be a purpose for where you are now that will serve you if you know where you're going.

I have a client right now and she really wants to eventually run her own business. Actually, I have a few clients like that right now that they want to run their own business. They're currently in nine-to-five jobs, nine-to-five jobs that actually aren't nine-to-five. You get me, right? And in all of the cases, what we've been able to glean is that, if they want to run their jobs in the future, who are they going to become? What are they going to need to be able to know how to do to be able to run that business?

Then based on that, what can they actually take from their current job? What can they learn in terms of managing their boss, managing their peers, managing a team, or learning to manage a business? Depending on where they're we're working now and what their role is, in their current job? How many jobs would they need to have between now, and when they launched their business to be able to learn the things that they need to learn to be able to run a successful business?

You don't have to just turn one tap off and turn one tap on, there can be a transition phase. And it's about knowing what you need to leverage during the transition phase to maximize your success in the future. In some cases, though, you might realize when you go through this exercise that there are actually a lot of great things in this job that you have right now or even in this career field that you have right now. So you might realize, *Maybe it's not the field, maybe it's just the place I work, or maybe even at the place I work. I could think about it differently.*

So one of the things I always say to everybody who is itching to leave a company, for all the wrong reasons, the emotional reasons, and the running away reasons, everything I talked about before, is I always encourage them to leave from a place of strength and purpose. What I mean by that is you need to get to a happy place first before you leave. And people say, *If I was happy, why would I leave?*

No, I'm saying you need to feel comfortable. You need to feel neutral about the job. You can't be running away from a boss. Figure out how to make the boss work for you first. Make that situation work for you. Learn to deal with it. From a mindset standpoint, learn to deal with the culture. Learn to be able to thrive, wherever you are now before you leave. Get to a happy place. Because you're proving to yourself that you can manage the challenges that you have in front of you.

Then you can make the decision well. Even though I am able to handle the situation I'm in right now, it's actually not what I want for the long term so I am going to look for another place or another job, or another career that fits x y zed boxes, or that takes x y zed boxes. That's fine. But you're running from a place of strength. Not even running, you're leaving from a place of strength and purpose. You're making a decision from a place of strength and purpose versus running away from something.

Because if you run because you're unhappy, and you haven't learned to manage how you feel about things and how you think about things when there's a challenge, you're going to be unhappy with the next thing, too. If you don't think you're good enough for the job you have right now, then you're going to believe that in the next job, too.

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Because you haven't learned to find value in yourself in any situation. Learn to find the value in yourself first. Learn to feel good about who you are and what you do before you leave so you're not taking that stuff with you.

If you're running from a bad boss, then what are you going to do when the next bad boss comes along? If you haven't learned to manage this one, how are you going to learn to manage the next one? If you're not in alignment with your values, and you're not really clear on what your values are, trying to find a job or a career change that suits you better without knowing what your values are, and what's important to you, is like closing your eyes and throwing a dart and hoping it hits the bullseye. It's freaking impossible to do it.

You need to do the work on yourself first to make sure you're writing your strategy before you come back with the solution. You need to write yourself a strategy first. It's hard enough to hit the bullseye in your career with your eyes open. Why would you want to do it with your eyes closed? Don't do it. Do the work. I want to say it takes no time. It takes some time, maybe it takes about a month. Usually when I'm working with people on just this part of the goal setting and assessment of the situation, it takes about a good month to get it going. But once you're clear on it, everything becomes easier. It's hard mental work to do, for sure. But it gets easier as you go along.

So let me just summarize what I'm saying here. But before I do, I just want to say this. This is really an important decision. Don't avoid doing the work because it's hard. It is hard, so get help. Just like you hire people to build a house because you don't know how to build your house. Or you maybe you hire people to clean your house because you need the help. Or maybe you hire people to help you with your fitness or whatever. Why don't you help people figure out your next career move?

Your career is so important in your life. Not only does it feed you and your family financially, but it also feeds your sense of purpose. It feeds your sense of meaning. It feeds your enjoyment going into this job every day where you spend at least a third of your adult life. And when you're happy in your job, it opens up so much stuff in your non-work life. So your career is so important.

If you don't know how to get past the situation that you're in right now, it's really worth it to find a coach who's going to help you figure this out and specializes in figuring this out. And like I said, it helps you get to a place of calm and peace and helps you leverage the job you have right now to get to a long-term goal before you make a move. If that sounds like something that's worth the investment of your time and resources, why not come to have a free planning session with me? That's what I'm doing right now with people. It's just helping them get their thoughts focused, like getting them really thinking about what it is that they need to do next.

Come have and set a planning session with me. We'll talk about where you are now, where you want to go, and what you think is getting in your way. I'm going to share my observations with you, I'm going to share my insights with you, I'm going to share how I work with people with you. And if it's a good fit, maybe we take it to the next level, or maybe we won't. Either way, you're going to leave with some insights about what you should do next. It's a step forward, which is what everyone needs to do when they're thinking about making a career shift.

So let me get clear on my overall advice. You need to figure out your overall goals. In your ideal situation, what would make you happy and why? Why is it going to make you happy? How does it align with your strengths, with

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your values, with what you want your life to look like in the future? And then you can start figuring out how to leverage every single opportunity in front of you to be able to get to your next step.

My background is in marketing. In marketing, we say that every sentence should sell the next sentence. Every sentence in marketing should sell the next sentence so that when you're trying to encourage people to buy stuff, you're keeping them engaged every step of the way. And so if I apply that philosophy to your career, it's every opportunity leads to the next opportunity.

Maybe you don't have a great boss, maybe your boss is not a leader. But that's an opportunity for you to learn how to manage someone like that and how to figure out what they're actually good at. They can help you get to your goal. What can you do in that situation? I have a whole bunch of podcasts on bosses that you should check out that specifically talk about how to leverage and manage a difficult boss to your advantage. That's a big opportunity for you.

How can you focus on what's working in your current role versus what's missing? Can you shift your responsibilities to align more with what you want? I have worked with people who, once they figure out what they want, realize that they could just shift their responsibilities in the job or in the company they have right now to get more of what they like. So many people think, *Oh, no, that would never work for me. My company would never allow me to do that. There's nothing like that here for me.* But that is also bullshit. You don't even know that for sure because you haven't figured out what you want.

When you're really clear, you can leverage all of the assets that you have in front of you. And then you're not afraid to ask for what you want when you're really clear. And that's another thing that I help people do. It's really important to know what you want before you just assume that you can't get it or you assume that you should make a change. I guess my bottom line through all of this is do not throw the baby out with the bathwater. There is good in your job right now. Do the hard work on yourself first to figure out what's really getting in your way.

Are you running from something? Has your value shifted? What is it that you really want? And when you know that, then you can come back and make an informed decision about where you are now. Once you get to a place where you are feeling almost neutral with the job that you have now, where you're feeling like, *Yeah, I can handle this. It's just not exactly the right thing for me*, then leave. Of course, leave. Find the other job. Like I said before, you're moving towards something not running away from something. So this huge stuff, this is really big stuff. Please take the time to give yourself the opportunity to figure this out.

And if you need any help, you know where to reach me. So that is what I have for you today, my friends. Yes, I'm very excited and passionate about this. But that's because that's what I do. I love seeing the shift in people who go from sad, suffering, trapped, and stuck to empowered, happy, and moving towards their goals. And I want that for you so much. So this week, book your planning session with me or do the work yourself. Make sure you do that before you make any shifts, and I'll talk to you next week. Bye for now.

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