

AM I WASTING MY TIME HERE?

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Hey there, friends. Mel Savage, here. I hope you're having a fantastic day. I'm here to help you make sure all of your days at work are as fantastic as they can possibly be. And you're doing your best work as much as possible, you're getting to where you want to be, and you're having the success that you totally deserve.

To help you with that and to help you stay focused on being awesome and loving your job, I want to talk about a question that came up when I was talking to a friend a couple of weeks ago or a few weeks ago, I lose track of time now in COVID land. It's a question I get a lot and I certainly asked myself a lot when I was doing the corporate gig. That is, am I wasting my time here? Or it might be some variation of that. Am I wasting my time here? Would I be better served somewhere else? Has this job run its course? All these kinds of questions that come up when you're thinking about, am I in the right place right now?

You just try to assess what's going on. It usually doesn't come up when everything is awesome. For some people, it does, don't get me wrong, but it usually comes up when we are in some kind of work drama funk. So I was talking to my friend the other day. She's not a client, she's definitely a friend of mine. And she was just asking me this question about her career. We're just having girl talk, not so much coaching talk. I desperately want to coach her but you can't coach someone who doesn't want to be coached. And she's not ready for coaching.

I love her so much. She's so good at her job. Actually, I think right now her career is where she is. She's doing well, she's really happy, she's got a new boss, and everything's awesome. But she's often asking herself this question and like so many of us, myself included, not really taking the time to find the answer, to put this question to bed. It happens to all of us. There's always this barrage of conflicting thoughts that come in. We ask ourselves this question and we have all these follow-up questions or other concerns that come up on the back of this question. For my friend, she is worried if should she be getting experience in other places. That's the first thing she says, *I've been here a long time. I like it here and I get a lot of great experience here. But is this it? Should I get experience somewhere else?*

Another thing that I believe she's going through that I think a lot of people go through who have been somewhere for a while are your friends, your colleagues, your peers, maybe people that you grew up with or went to school with, maybe you are more senior than them at some point, and right now, they're more senior than you. They've got the big VP title or the chief title or whatever, and you don't. You're like, *What? How come? How did this*

happen? Like I thought everything was sticking along. My growth isn't going as quickly as I want it to go. That's what her issue is.

I think for a lot of other people who are asking themselves the same question, there are other things that come up too. What if the next place is worse? What if I'm jumping from the frying pan into the fire? That comes up a lot of the time, too, or *it's not totally broken where I am right now It's not totally broken so should I really be fixing it? Should I just let it lie? Maybe I shouldn't rock the boat. It'll just get better on its own. I'll just wait it out.* All that kind of stuff.

Even though I'm an advocate for loving what you're doing right now, and I speak more from my career standpoint, a lot of people come to me and they're like, *I want to change careers* and I'm like, Okay, what do you want to change to? *I don't know*, I think I've said this just recently in one of the podcasts, it's always assigned to me that it's not so much that they want to change careers that they're trying to get away from the crew they have and they're not really sure why.

A lot of the time, you don't need to change your career. Maybe you need to flip jobs. But a lot of it, I always say, in marketing, it was easier to get your clients to buy more than it is to get new clients. It costs less to inspire existing clients to buy more than it does to get new clients. It's the same here. It's easier for you to figure out how to make what you have work harder for you, which is your career work harder for you than it is to go out and start over and find a new career.

In some ways, it sounds like I'm advocating for staying where you are right now. I'm advocating for you to love the career you have right now. The job where you work right now, maybe you need to change it. Those are all different kinds of things. But the question is out there because you haven't really done the work to answer it. The reason I'm talking about this is a lot of people ask themselves this question, and then kind of employ what I call a *Fingers-crossed Strategy*. It's like, *Well, I have this question. And sooner or later, something's going to happen, and the answer comes to me. I'll know it when I see it. It'll just feel right. It'll just click. I'll just know. There's some sort of magic out there that comes with this.* And this isn't magic.

At worst, nothing is going to come and save you or some opportunity is going to present itself to you. In the meantime, with this fingers-crossed strategy, they're just spinning. And I have done this. Don't get me wrong when I say *'they'* like I'm some sort of superior. I've totally done this, too. You just stay spinning and worrying and you put up with stuff. Maybe when you have a bad week, you get reactive. You think about, *Oh, I'm going to take control of my career, I'm going to do something about it.* And then, the next week isn't so bad so you put it to the side again.

It's interesting because what ends up happening is you stay spinning in this confusion. And people say *I'm just confused. I don't know the right answer. I need to figure this out.* But the brain will feed you confusion when it's actually afraid of something else. It's not because you don't know the answer that you're confused. It's because you're afraid of answering the question. That's why you stay confused. You're afraid of doing the thing that you know you probably should do, or you want to do or you believe is the right thing strategically for you to do. You're afraid of actually doing that so your brain feeds you this confusion.

Threats are throwing up all these uncertainties and it tries to scare you into doing nothing. So you just stay confused until one day, the fear of staying confused is actually greater than the fear of doing something about it.

Meaning, *I have to do something because if I stay here, it's so bad now. Or it's so intolerable now that I actually have to do something.* The pain of staying, the pain of doing nothing is actually worse than the fear of doing something. That's sometimes what ends up having to happen. It's like basic procrastination. You procrastinate on something until you leave it to the very last minute, until the fear of not doing it, or the fear of failing, or the fear of your boss being mad at you is greater than the fear of actually doing the thing you're supposed to do.

Your brain is wired. It makes sense that that's happening to you. But it doesn't follow that that means that you have to just blindly go along with all the bullshit that your brain is trying to serve you. You can totally do something about it. You can decide. You can say, *No, I need to stop spinning. I need to focus. I need to make this decision.* Because it's not so much that you're wasting your time in the company that you're in right now. The truth is, you're wasting your time spinning in confusion, not having a purpose in your career instead of what you could totally have, which is someone who comes to work with purpose and doesn't get distracted by the bullshit and the bad days.

You know exactly where you're going. You know why you're in this job. That's a big thing. You know why you have this job. You have a list of boxes that this job is going to tick for you, to get you to where you want to go. And every little task you do becomes an opportunity for you to advance yourself towards your goal. Every little thing on your agenda becomes an opportunity for you to advance your goal. Even the meetings that maybe you don't really want to go to, or the tasks you don't really want to do, you're like, *Okay, how can I turn this into something that advances me towards one of the boxes that I need to be ticked while I'm here at this job?*

This is the ideal situation. You have a purpose, and you love what you're doing, not just because of the job that it is, but because there's a method to the madness that happens on the job. No job is going to be like perfect every day and happy sunshine. That's just not going to happen. You are going to totally have bad days, you're going to have bad bosses that are out of your control, you're going to have people who don't completely work the way that you do, and there are going to be little projects that you have to do or little tasks on your to-do lists that aren't your favorite things to do. Life at work is always going to be 50/50—50% awesome and 50% not so awesome.

But there's a method to it. You're looking at it like a method. There's a method to this madness. You're using your job as a way to advance you towards your career goal rather than spinning out of control. When you have this knowledge and purpose about what you want, how you want to get there, and how this current job is serving you toward your overall goal, then you stop asking the question of whether you're wasting time or not. You can because you have the answer. You totally know what the purpose of this job is for you. That's where you want to get to.

I want you to be in a position where you never have to waste another single moment asking yourself, *Why am I in this job? Am I wasting my time here? Is this job good for me?* I want you to go from coasting, confused, having no plan, complaining, spinning in your confusion, wasting time, and being reactive in your career to having total control with purpose and treating your career like this is business, not personal. I know it's hard because it's a relationship so you're emotionally connected to it.

But how can you look at your job more like, *I really liked doing this career. I'm connected to my career. This job is a means to an end for what I want in my career.* When I think about, for instance, one of the things I'm going to be starting to do more of is live communications, like going live on Instagram, or whatever. And I was like, that's not something I really want to do long term. But this right now, strategically, is the right thing for me to do for my

business. It's something I need to focus on right now to get me to where I want to go long-term. And I understand why it's there.

Rather than sitting there going, *I don't want to do this, this sucks, blah, blah, blah*, I need to go, *this is now something I'm going to do, how am I going to do it in the best way possible?* Then how will I assess when I don't need to do it anymore? What are my metrics for that? And put all that in place. Just because I put it in place ahead of time doesn't mean that I don't change my metrics as I go. But I changed them with purpose, not on whims.

So today, I really want to help you answer this question once and for all. Am I wasting my time here? Let's ask this question for the last time so that you can never have to ask yourself this question again, or spin in confusion or uncertainty around whether you are in the right place right now. I have some examples that I'm going to use to illustrate as we go through the steps. They're not always all career examples. They're just examples of assessing if I'm wasting my time with something.

The other example I'm going to use is actually my relationship with my husband. So it's improving, just so you know, in case you're wondering what the punch line is. But the problem was, it was kind of rocky. We didn't always talk about real stuff. We've been together like 21 years. We just want to talk about house management stuff versus real stuff. When we would argue, it was always one-upping each other. *You did this, and you did this*. It was like watching a political drama on CNN. When I would say, *Well, this bothered me*, and he'd go, *Yeah, well, you did this*.

It was kind of like a *whataboutism* type of conversation. And it was annoying. I was annoyed by the whole thing. So I was starting to really focus on what wasn't working in the relationship to the point where I was like, am I wasting my time here? Is it time to move on from this relationship? These were the questions that I was asking myself. And then, of course, from time to time, I'm also going to throw in a third example, which is just about work stuff that people, clients, or whatever, and even my friend's situation with her job.

The very first thing as we go through each of these problems or examples in terms of how am I wasting my time is really knowing what I want from these situations, like really grounding myself, and what exactly I want and then committing to it. For a lot of people out there, they're like, *I don't know what I want*. And I want to encourage you to pick something and describe it. Pick something and create a vision around it. What does it look like? What does this thing feel like? Create something, pick anything, and commit to it.

I think it's so important the *commit to it* part because we pick something and then we're so worried it's the wrong thing. What I want to offer you is, rather than spending your energy thinking that it's the wrong thing, why not put all your energy into believing in that decision? Believing it's the right thing versus the wrong thing because you get to choose whether it's the wrong thing or the right thing. It's not the world that gets to choose what's going to happen either way, even if you think it's perfect when you think something is the right decision.

When the world throws you crap and hurdles, you don't see them as hurdles, you don't see them as crap. You're just like, *Oh, yeah. I can I can deal with this. I'm on the right track. This is the right decision for me*. You just handle it and you move on. But when you're worried that the decision that you made is the wrong decision and hurdles are thrown in your way, you just start going, *Oh, yeah. See, this is evidence I made the wrong decision*. Then you

waste your time spinning and all that. So why not just decide that this is the decision and it is the total right decision?

I will review this decision on a quarterly basis, whatever you decide, and then whatever the cadence for reviewing the decision. But in the meantime, I'm going to put every single ounce of energy I have into believing that this is the right decision for me. Believe it or not, when you believe it's the right decision, it sort of becomes the right decision. Tricky how that works out. So decide what you want. I don't give a shit what it is. Put a stake in the ground and then commit to it.

For instance, with my husband, I decided I was going to make this relationship work. That's what I want. I want this relationship to work and I have my reasons for that. I'm going to commit to it. And I'm going to make sure that this is the right decision for me. That's what I decided to do. That's all I needed to do.

That's all you need to do. You just need to decide what you want. It could be that easy. It doesn't have to be this prolonged drawn-out, stressed-out process. Just pick something and then decide you're going to make it awesome. That's the first thing you need to do. The second thing is you need to decide, *what do I want to do to get it?* I want to underline this. What do I want to do?

Because so many people especially when it's your job, they're like, *I have to have a better boss, and I need to change my role. They have to give me different assignments. I can't be doing this shit that I hate to do. I don't want to work with this person anymore. This person has to change, or I can't be happy.* We start to think about what other people need to do for us to get to our goal. I want you to push that aside. I want you to say, *I get to be in control. I'm driving this friggin bus. What do I want to do?* Not what I need to do, not what I have to do.

It's a totally different energy when you say, *what do I want to do to reach this goal?* Because when you say, *what I want to do*, you are telling yourself this is your choice. When you're saying *what I should do, what I have to do, what I need to do*, then it's like, *I have to*. It's not a choice anymore. It's a necessity. And none of this is necessary. All of this is your choice. If you want to get along with your boss, your boss doesn't have to change. You need to think about things differently. I know that's like a mind-blower, but it's true.

If you want to talk about that, let me know. Do you have a skill set that's not working out, or do you have the same chronic feedback week in and week out about your skill? Every review, they bring up the same shit. Do you want to work on something? You can do it. What do you want to do? Do you want to build a career plan, which I highly recommend for everyone? You can do it. Decide what you want to do to get to your goal. And of course, it's just another decision. Everything is a decision. All of these things are decisions that you get to make. You get to make a long list of all the things that you want to do to be able to get to your goal.

When it comes to, for instance, the Love Your Job Again, a free course that I've got, what am I going to do? I'm going to start at the beginning. The first thing I'm going to do is I'm going to do some paid ads because I want to get more people into the course to see what's working and what's not working. And then I'm going to dissect it from the beginning of the experience to the end of the experience.

How are the ads delivering? Who am I targeting? Is it the right people? Who am I getting into this course? How many? Who clicks on which emails that I send them? What makes them click on those emails? How many people act from signing up to actually go into the course? Once they get into the course, how many people

actually get to the end of the course? Three days? It's a total of 45 minutes, maybe less. But how many people actually get to the end of it? Where do they stop? Am I good?

I have a little form that can give me feedback. How many people go from the course to having a free session with me? These are all things that I can measure over time. How many people land on the signup page and then don't sign up? I can measure all of these things and then decide the tweaks I want to make. And I'm going to keep tweaking it and tweaking it until I get to where I want to get to it. This is what I'm going to do. And if it takes me like, four or five months to do that, I'm going to let it take four or five months to do that. This is going to be easier than me constantly starting over and coming up with new free stuff and new free stuff and new free stuff. I'm just going to make my main free thing work.

When it comes to my husband, for instance, I decided what I wanted to do. I know what he wants me to do. I know a long list of things that he wants me to do to change, but I get to decide what I actually want to do. Some of them might overlap with what he wants me to do. But for me, I get to decide. And I've decided I'm going to love him no matter what. I want to give him the space to be, an a-hole when he wants to be, and not make it personal.

I'm going to try to be myself. I'm going to show up later. I'm going to be more curious, and more caring. I'm going to laugh more. I'm going to think that this relationship is easy and not hard. I'm going to practice letting it be easy and not hard. I'm going to ask him about himself. I'm going to make his stuff about him and my stuff about me. That's the other thing. I'm going to let him have the space to be an asshole and not make his stuff. Like not taking ownership of why he's being there. But I'm also not going to give him ownership of how I feel.

I will take accountability for my own feelings. These things are things I'm going to do. By the way, miraculously, I've been doing this for a while with my husband. And it's so much better. It's amazing. When you start to make changes, you don't have to wait for the other person to change for you to start making changes. The minute I said to myself, I'm going to focus on what's working in our relationship, I'm going to notice him, I'm going to laugh more, I'm going to let it be easy, I'm going to look for the things that I appreciate about him, and not all the stuff that I don't love about him; the minute I started doing that, I felt better. I started acting more myself. And he started reacting to that.

Same thing with your boss, by the way. Your boss can be an asshole. Your boss can be not as qualified as you'd like them to be. Your boss is getting to be a bunch of different things. You're focusing on things that you don't like. Or the same thing with your job. Your job is the thing. It's a neutral circumstance, and you get to decide what you think about it. So it's the same thing here. What do I want to do?

None of the things that I've been doing with my husband, and I'll continue doing with my husband are things that he is making me do. There are things he wants me to do, but I'm not doing them all. I've decided what I want to do to reach this goal of what I want.

I prefer when it comes to your career, you have a plan. And that's what I teach it advanced career planning is helping you get that plan going for your career. Regardless, you can even just make a list on your tablet, or I don't care where. Make a list of things that you want to do to achieve your goal. Then I suggest, the third thing I always say is just leverage that list wherever you can. A lot of people think, especially in their careers when it comes to career planning, crew development, and career management, and all those things are that they think it's

incremental to what they're already doing. And they're so tired already at their jobs, and they're already working way too hard. *I don't have time to manage my career and all this stuff.* But that's crap. It's crap.

First of all, it's like the most important relationship. It's so important to your life, your career. So why wouldn't you take 20 or 30 minutes a week to set yourself up for success? But for most of the work, like 90% of the work that you do, and your career, you can leverage what you already have going on. So you just look at your agenda and you're like, *Okay, how can I do the things on my list and integrate them into everything I have to do this week? How can I make these tasks I don't want to do work for me, for where I want to get to in my career? These meetings, these conversations with people, these presentations I'm doing, how can I make them work for me?*

It's the same thing with my husband. We got to talk about the dogs for a second or we got to talk about something around the house, or we decide what we're going to make for dinner or whatever. How can I integrate everything how I want to show up, and who I want to be into all of those things that we already have? I don't have to have special date nights and all this kind of stuff to make my relationship work. I just need to focus on how I want to show up in the things that we're already doing to make my relationship work.

And that's kind of what I'm doing with my free course as well. I'm just leveraging all the stuff that I'm already doing in my business in terms of measurement and talking to my clients, and what I learned from my clients, everything that I learned from my clients, every session I have with my clients, and integrate it back into the content that I put into this free course. It's constant. It's just a cycle that you continue to do. And you can do that. You never have to ask yourself, *am I wasting time at my job*, when you just know what you want, have a list of things that you're going to do to get it and then do those things.

That's kind of what this is, essentially, over and over and over again. You have a list of things you want to tick off, and you're using your job to get you there. I know, I keep saying these things over and over because that's all there is. We just have to keep coming at it from different ways. Know what you want, have a list of how you're going to get it that you want to do, and then go and do those things.

In this case, it's really about deciding what you're using your job for or against what your overall goal is. Once that job ticks all the boxes or isn't ticking enough boxes anymore in terms of the things that you need to be able to do and you know that you can tick some more of those boxes in another place, then you leave and you go to the other place. When you are interviewing and looking for that job at the other place, you have the boxes that you need to tick. You know what you need to learn next to be able to get you closer to your goal. That's what I want to leave you with today.

But you are in total control of this. If you're spinning in confusion and if you're asking yourself this question, *am I wasting my time here*, it's because you don't know what you want. You haven't been able to align your job against anything. There are no parameters for success. You would never run a project that way. You always have parameters for success. You need to create some parameters for success around your job.

Another thing is that you need to stop worrying if you're making the wrong decision. What if it's worse somewhere else? It's only worse somewhere else if you focus on what's worse somewhere else. Know that if you decide to go somewhere else, and the boxes that you needed to have ticked aren't being ticked, you can leave.

You can go to the next place. That's totally fine, too. You can do that. You can do all these things. You're in total control. It doesn't have to be emotional.

If that happens, you can be like, *Okay, well, I made this decision for all the right reasons. And I'm going to make it work. I see it's not really ticking as many boxes or I've ticked the boxes that I think I can tick here. Okay, bye. Onto the next thing.* Done until you get to the goal. If your goal is just getting to a certain level in the company that you're in right now, then you work toward that goal. It's totally fine.

If you need help, you can come to talk to me about booking a free session. We can talk about where you are right now and where you want to be and help you figure out what those steps are in between if you don't know. You can always come and do that. It's the melsavage.com/chat. Book your free session. Totally fine. Can't wait to talk to you about it.

That's all I have for you this week, my friends. I hope you're having a fantastic time and I'll talk to you next week. Bye for now.

