

## Ep #8: Ditch Perfectionism and Get to the Next Level



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Kori Linn

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This week, we're talking about how to get to the next level and why you need to ditch your internalized perfectionism in order to do it. And spoiler alert, this applies even if you don't think you have internalized perfectionism or don't identify as a perfectionist.

You are listening to Love Your Job (Before You Leave It), the podcast for ambitious, high-achieving womxn who are ready to stop feeling stressed about work and kiss burnout goodbye forever. Whether you're starting a business or staying in your day job, this show will give you the coaching and guidance you need to start loving your work today. Here's your host, Career Coach, Kori Linn.

Hey, y'all. Can you believe that it is December? This year is almost over and that feels wild. 2020 has been one of the weirdest years of my life. Probably one of the weirdest of yours also. And in some ways, it's been the longest. Like, it just felt like it was taking forever. And I think probably because of all the stuff that was happening, but also now the fall has felt like it's flown by. So, it's very confusing over here for me. This year is just – it's unlike anything else and it's coming to a close and I'm ready for it to come to a close. I'm ready to start a new year.

But it's not over yet. Let us not throw away the last few days of this year because it's almost over. I think sometimes, people get into December and then they're like, "Well, it's basically done." But I'm a firm believer in ending the year on a high note and really going all out on the year, right up until it's over.

And that doesn't have to mean overworking, y'all, to do a throwback to last week. It can be going all out on having a restful, wonderful Christmas or holiday vacation. It can be anything you want it to be. But it's just no giving up on the year before it's done. Because the year is not over right up until it is. Anyways, that's how I feel about that.

Before we dig into this week's topic, I just want to read a review to y'all as a reminder, I'm really trying to get up to 50 reviews. I think right now we're at

## Ep #8: Ditch Perfectionism and Get to the Next Level

like 43. And this week, I want to read a review from MarissaASan. So, thank you so much for writing in and giving me a review, MarissaASan.

The review is titled Looking Forward to More. And it says, “I’m always looking for ways to improve in my career and be more passionate about what I do. This has been a great listen so far and I’m looking forward to more.”

Thank you so much, MarissaASan for that review. I’m delighted you’re loving it. And yes, you can count on there being more. Every week, I’m here to help you make your career awesome, to have more fun at work, to have more meaning, all the good things, whether you want to stay in this current job or leave to launch your dream business, I am here for you.

Without further ado, let’s dig into this week’s topic. This week, we’re talking about perfectionism. But I want you to listen even if you do not identify as a perfectionist. Because perfectionism is sneaky and many people who have perfectionistic thought patterns don’t necessarily see themselves as perfectionists.

Instead, they think that the way they do things is actually just the way things should be. Or they think they’re just following the rules and doing what they said they’d do. Or they just think they have really high standards and they like that about themselves. They actually also often, not so secretly, wish everyone else had these high standards too.

They think this work just has to get done. They think, “I’m not going to let this slip through the cracks.” And sometimes, when I point out that I see perfectionism in their behavior patterns, if they happen to be my clients, they will even laugh and say, “Obviously I’m not a perfectionist because I do lots of things every day that aren’t perfect.”

And I think it’s interesting because all these thought patterns, they maybe sound harmless, or they maybe even sound helpful. Like, yeah, having high standards sounds super-useful. But these thought patterns aren’t harmless because here’s what’s happens; these people, these womxn, they work their ass off and they fuel themselves with anxiety and fear, and then

## Ep #8: Ditch Perfectionism and Get to the Next Level

they're unhappy with their result is a 98 out of 100 because they're still thinking about those two points they didn't get versus the 98 points they did get.

They work late. They go above and beyond. But then they're resentful when other people don't do the same. They expect so much of themselves that they don't even try many of the things that they would love to be able to do because they aren't willing to tolerate being less than stellar at anything.

They say they want to rest, but they can't rest because their brain doesn't think it's the best use of their time. Or they do rest, but then they spend the whole time analyzing if they're doing it right, thus disrupting the rest they're trying to create. They fixate on perfectionist goals for the future so they can imagine being super-happy later. But they're never happy in the now because the now is always the actual human experience.

So, what I want y'all to gather from this list of things is the basic belief at the core of perfectionism isn't exactly that everything has to be perfect. And this is why so many perfectionists don't see themselves as perfectionists. They're smart; too smart to think that life should be perfect.

But just because it can't be perfect, doesn't mean it can't be better. Now, the belief that things could be better isn't a problem. A lot of progress comes from looking at something and seeing potential improvements.

But when we take, "Could be better," and add a layer of, "And it's not okay to celebrate or rest until it is," then we have a problematic thought pattern. Why? Because believing that it's not okay to rest or celebrate until things are perfect or until things are better is a recipe for burnout.

Also, that perfect time when it's all handled and everything is great, that time's never coming, y'all. Because this is the human experience. And while we can do incredible things, and I'm such a proponent of that, we can always find more things to work on.

## Ep #8: Ditch Perfectionism and Get to the Next Level

So, waiting until it's done to rest or to celebrate pretty much means we will never rest or celebrate. On top of that, your ability to be happy in the future is directly correlated to your ability to be happy now, no matter what's happening.

And I want to be clear, I'm not saying we should always be happy. I'm just saying that when you tell yourself you'll be happy once you're promoted, it's not true. Because being promoted won't change your feelings if you keep thinking that you need to be just a little bit further ahead to be happy.

Here's the real truth. Your thoughts will go with you when you hit your goals. So, if you want your goal to feel amazing, you need to practice cultivating that feeling while you're working on the goal.

Don't wait until you get there and expect satisfaction to show up like magic. It will not do that. Everything you want from any achievement, from any leveling up is available to you along the way. It's available to you now. Even if right now you're at the grocery store and you pick the wrong line and you're going to be late again and your vegan ice cream bars are melting all over the place, even if your kid just drew on the freshly repainted wall with a Sharpie your partner left out. Even if you just found out that there was a big mistake in the report you presented to the CEO last week and now you have to go tell her about it.

Even in those scenarios, the things that you want from leveling up are available to you. And the more you practice creating those thoughts and feelings you want on purpose in the imperfect now, imperfections and all, the more those feelings will be available to you later, whether you hit your goals or not.

But guess what? You're actually much more likely to hit those big goals if you practice creating the thoughts and feelings you want ahead of time. And this is why.

When we let go of perfectionism, when we let go of the need to be amazing at everything all the time, even before we've learned to do it, then we can

## Ep #8: Ditch Perfectionism and Get to the Next Level

actually try. Does this sound unglamorous? Probably. But I think that's even more evidence of how attuned we all are to perfectionist ideals.

Why is trying so unsexy? What if we chose to think it was amazing instead? What might you create or do if you were willing to suck at it full out for as long as it took to get better? I know so many people with big, beautiful dreams that they are not working on because they are afraid that maybe they can't do it.

But being afraid, like, "Maybe I can't do it," is always about, like, "Do I have the ability right now, yes or no?" What if the question was never, "Am I good enough to pull this off right now?" What if, instead, we were willing to do whatever it takes to bring our dreams to fruition, whether we can do it tomorrow or in 10 years?

When we let go of the perfectionist idea that we need to be excellent at everything right off the bat, including shit we've never even tried before, then we have room to learn. When we have room to learn, then we're truly unstoppable.

It doesn't even matter if we already, like, have what it takes because we can learn what it takes along the way. But if we're not willing to try, we're never going to learn what it takes. It's essential to let go of perfectionism when we want to get to the next level because, often, getting to the next level requires trying things we've never done before, things we will not necessarily be good at right away.

And on top of that, in order to get to the next level, we also have to stop trying to be perfect at the level we're currently on. I'm going to say that again. In order to get to the next level, we have to stop trying to perfect the level we're on now.

Many of us learned that the way we move up in life is to do really well at what we're doing now. And that can be useful. But sometimes, when we want to get to the next level, we actually need to stop trying to perfect something we're already really good at so that we can instead work on the skills we don't yet have that we need for that next level.

## Ep #8: Ditch Perfectionism and Get to the Next Level

To go back to that 98 out of 100 example, if you're already getting 98 out of 100, you do not need to keep trying and keep perfecting until you get 100 out of 100. 98 is enough. You're well beyond proficient at 98. You're really fucking good.

Instead, you need to start working on the next thing, whatever that may be. A lot of times, we don't move forward in this way. We keep working on the thing that we're already getting the 98 in. We are already good at that thing and it can feel good and even safe to keep focusing on it, to keep perfecting it.

And it can feel really fucking scary to let that thing be good enough and to move onto the next thing, whatever the next thing is, the thing that we don't know anything about, except that it's definitely required in order to get to the next level.

When we engage with that thing, whether it's an app or a skill or a person we need to forge a relationship with, we're no longer in our area of expertise. We feel awkward and slow and we second-guess ourselves and maybe even say mean shit to ourselves inside our own heads.

That part is not fun. I'm not going to tell you that it is. It feels uncomfortable. But discomfort isn't a problem. And learning how to handle it and how to move toward it is key to leveling up. Because you cannot become amazing at the new thing until you're willing to try it, and yeah, maybe suck at it for a while and keep going and get better.

And besides, you're going to be uncomfortable either way. You can either be uncomfortable with your 98 out of 100 in the same spot you've been in for years, fighting to perfect shit just a little bit more. Or you can be uncomfortable and trying new things and paving the way to get the thing you want. Whether it's a raise or a promotion or a deep working knowledge in a new area or a new kind of software that you haven't been able to figure out yet.

The bottom line is this. Perfectionism keeps you stuck and it keeps you dissatisfied. It keeps you in thought patterns that do not help you move

## Ep #8: Ditch Perfectionism and Get to the Next Level

forward and keep you stuck trying to perfect and improve something that's already really good.

Perfectionism demands you always be better, but it never says, "Good job," no matter how much better you get. And that's the bullshit, y'all. It's like living your whole life inside of a race that's rigged so you'll never win. And, of course, it leads to burnout every time.

So, let's talk about the antidote. Here's the antidote to perfectionism. Celebrate what is working. See where the work you're doing is a 98 out of 100 and celebrate the shit out of that. Sidenote, people often ask me how exactly to celebrate. And my answer to you is however you want to.

But here are some ideas that you can consider when you're thinking about how to celebrate. Because if you're anything like my clients, when I say celebrate the shit out of your success, you're just going to look at me blankly.

So, here are some ideas. Write yourself a thank you note. Does that sound cheesy? It is. Do it anyways. It's amazing. Write down your successes in a notebook, not once they're perfect, but anytime they're going well at all. Give yourself stickers for work achieved. I like gold stars. You can do whatever you want to do with your stickers.

Get a glass jar and put beautiful marbles inside it every time you complete a task or hit a goal. When the jar is full, buy yourself something fun and delightful. These are just a few ideas. You can tap into your own imagination to see what celebration feels like to you.

But if your brain tries to tell you, "I don't know how to celebrate," just don't take that shit for an answer. Ask your brain what kind of celebration you can do and just keep asking until you get some ideas and then do them.

The ideas in this podcast are revolutionary, but you actually have to do them in order to get results. So, do it. And once you've done it, once you've celebrated, pick something that you want to be able to do that you cannot



## Ep #8: Ditch Perfectionism and Get to the Next Level

do well yet, and work on doing it. Even if it's just for 20 minutes once a week.

This is how you actually get to the next level. Not by perfecting the level you're at now. But instead by picking things you cannot do well yet that you want to be able to do and working on them anyways, working on them in small doses. Because yes, it is going to feel uncomfortable, so just pick a short amount of time, pick a thing, and work on it.

And if you can enjoy this process, that's great. And if you can't and you feel uncomfortable the whole time, that's okay too. This is what learning feels like. Sometimes, with adults, we just stop learning shit because it does feel uncomfortable. But if you want to get to a level that you are not at yet, learning is the way to get there. and we learn by trying. And we try when we're willing to be bad at things and we're willing to suck at them and we're willing to let them be imperfect for a little bit while we get better.

And if you want some personalized help implementing this, I've got good news for you. To celebrate the launch of the show, I'm going to be giving away a few deep dive strategy sessions with yours truly. And one of the things we can do on these calls is to work on your internalized perfectionism, which you maybe didn't even know about until this podcast.

I want to be very clear that these are not consult calls. They're not even coaching calls. They're 90-minute sessions where we are going to unpack exactly what's going on with you and your career, and then we come up with a point-by-point plan for how to get you to where you want to go. But if you know from this podcast that you have internalized perfectionism and it's blocking you, that's part of what we can talk about in your particular plan.

And I just want to remind you, I know exactly what it's like to have an amazing corporate job. I also know exactly what it's like to kiss that job goodbye and launch a business that I got up and running into six figures. And I can walk you through whatever you want your career to look like,

## **Ep #8: Ditch Perfectionism and Get to the Next Level**

whether you want to stay in a corporate role, launch a business, or anything in between.

I'm going to be giving away just three of these sessions. In order to be eligible, all you need to do is subscribe, rate, and review the show on Apple Podcasts.

It doesn't even have to be a five-star review, although I hope it will be and I hope you love the show. But any review is great and works for me because what I really want is your honest feedback so that I can create a show that blows your mind and changes your life every week.

So, you can visit [korilinn.com/podcastlaunch](http://korilinn.com/podcastlaunch) to learn more about the contest and how to enter. And I'll be announcing the winners really soon, as soon as we get to 50 reviews. Alright, y'all, that's it for this week. I will talk to you soon. Bye.

Thank you for listening to Love Your Job Before You Leave It. We'll have another episode for you next week. And in the meantime, if you're feeling super fired up, head on over to [korilynn.com](http://korilynn.com) for more guidance and resources.