

## Ep #105: High and Low Energy



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Kori Linn**

## Ep #105: High and Low Energy

This week we're talking about high energy and low energy.

You are listening to Love Your Job Before You Leave It, the podcast for ambitious, high-achieving women 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, happy Wednesday. I hope you're having a glorious day. And if you're not having a glorious day, that's okay too. They're not all glorious, but I do hope this is one of the glorious ones for you. And if it's not, we're talking about high energy and low energy today, so maybe it's the perfect day for that as well.

So I just got back from a little visit to Seattle. Alex went up for a work trip and then I joined her at the end of the week and so we were there for the weekend. Super short turnaround, I think I was only there for like 36 hours.

I got to go country dancing at my favorite LGBTQ country dancing group. I got to have the Indian food that I love up there so much, it's my favorite. I got to take a walk in Seward Park, which is one of my favorite places for a nice, wooded walk. I got to have a massage with my favorite massage person. I packed a lot into those 36 hours. And I got to see some really amazing friends I adore who live in Seattle.

And, of course, there's a lot of food I love up there that I didn't get to eat, many other parks I would also like to go do that I didn't get to do, and many wonderful friends I didn't get to see this time because it was a short little trip. And it was a really fun little trip, and also Alex and I both came home feeling kind of exhausted.

So I had been in Sacramento for almost a full week without her while she was on her work trip, taking care of the dog and staying in our house by myself, which is not my favorite. I get kind of scared staying in our house by myself. And poor Ranger has been having digestive issues, so I was

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dealing with those all week on my own. Which is fine and handleable, but also just brings up a lot of emotional feelings.

He's aging and it's always hard to watch someone you love suffer. Especially an animal who doesn't understand why they're having digestive issues. Frankly, we also don't understand why he's having digestive issues, but he's going to the vet tomorrow so hopefully we'll get that sorted out.

And then Alex was kind of exhausted too, because when you work remotely and you're not used to seeing people all day, every day in person, that can be kind of intense. And of course she was staying in an unfamiliar place, which I think can be a little hard on the body. Even if it's a luxurious hotel or something part of the animal body is just like, "Where am I?"

And as Alex and I have been together we've just gotten very attached to our own bed, like our mattress and our pillows. We really like it. I personally often have a hard time sleeping in other locations. So we came home, we'd had a lot of fun, we were tired. And I feel pretty okay today because I got like 10 solid hours of sleep. And also, you know, I'm probably not at my highest energy. So it's still a really relevant topic today to talk about high energy versus low energy.

So this is something I'd actually mentioned on another podcast, I don't remember which one. And a few of y'all wrote in and were like, "Oh, please talk about that." And we've kind of touched on some of that, we had the episode recently about how you're not supposed to feel motivated all the time, so that's related.

But I wanted to also dedicate a full episode to the idea of high energy versus low energy and what to do when you find yourself in either situation. Because I think a lot of us are like, "Oh, high energy is great, I should be in that all the time. But when I have low energy, then I have to deal with that." But the reality is, deciding how you want to use your high energy times, I think, is just as important as deciding how you want to handle it when you're in a low energy time.

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And this may surprise you, but my idea about what to do when you feel low energy is actually the same as my idea about what to do when you feel high energy. So that might be kind of confusing at first, like wait, Kori, shouldn't we have different approaches to these two distinctly different experiences?

But I was thinking about it on my walk this morning when I was thinking about what I wanted to say on this podcast. And what I came to was like no, I actually think, for me at least, the approach is the same. And for me, the key is prioritization, right? And not just prioritizing whatever, we've been socialized to prioritize, but figuring out what you actually want to prioritize and prioritizing that.

Okay, so let me explain. To me, the key whether you're in a moment of high energy or a moment of low energy, the key is prioritization. And not just prioritizing what you've been socialized to do, which is what most of us try to do if we are not paying attention. But actually figuring out what you want to prioritize and then prioritizing that.

And, of course, part of prioritization is also deprioritizing things. So figuring out what you want to deprioritize and either delegate, do a worse job on, or not do at all and just leave undone. I think what many people are more concerned with is the low energy time.

So when we're feeling low energy, how do we handle that? How do we still get the important things done, et cetera, et cetera? So when you're feeling low energy, whether that's for an hour, a couple of days, a week, a month, could even be years of your life. I know that's not what most of us would prefer, but there are life circumstances where we are in a low energy or lower energy place sometimes for an extended period of time. Sometimes due to health stuff, sometimes due to other stuff.

So if you are in a low energy time, the prioritization piece is like what matters most to you? And the to you, again, really matters because all of us have been socialized. And if you were socialized as a woman, like you've

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been socialized kind of to care for everyone's needs, to put everyone before you, to keep your house really put together, to keep your significant other pleased, to keep your family pleased. To keep everyone pleased and to put yourself last.

And as you know, we're not about that here at the Love Your Job Before You Leave It podcast, that's like not what the fuck we're doing. But in order to not do that, you have to be aware that that may be your socialization. And then you have to be able to make choices on purpose about what you want to prioritize, versus what your brain will just automatically say should be prioritized.

And when I say your brain is doing it automatically, I mean automatically from your socialization, not automatically from the brain's own functionality. It'll feel automatic to you, but really it's just learned, and reinforced, and practiced.

So if you're having a low energy moment, or week, or whatever, and there's part of you saying like, "Okay, I realize we're low energy, but we can't let anything fall by the wayside." I'm just going to tell you right now, that's probably not going to work. And I realize that it can be really uncomfortable to leave things undone if you have been socialized to believe that they have to be done. But sometimes in life, we have to make choices and some things have to be the things that get cut.

If nothing gets cut, then nothing gets protected. If nothing can get cut, then nothing is the number one priority. Does that make sense? I hope that makes sense. I'm asking, does that make sense, and y'all aren't here to tell me if it does. But you can write in and tell me because I care, I want the things I'm saying to make sense to you. And I realize a podcast is a little bit like me just sitting over here talking out and I want it to be a conversation, so write in and let me know.

Okay, circling back. I don't know if this is true, but one time someone told me that in certain kinds of school, the teachers on purpose assign way too

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much work. And part of what they're teaching the students to do is to ascertain which work actually matters the most and then prioritize that work.

Now, I do think like that's a little bit rude. But I also think that's a little bit what life is like. And especially that's a little bit what life is like if you have all that socialization that we've been talking about. It's like you have more things to do than you can do. And I think that's actually true whether you're in the high energy or the low energy.

I think even when I'm in super high energy, I'm leaving some things undone. I'm making strategic decisions about what I care the most about and what matters the most to me, and I am choosing to leave some things undone always, because there are just so many more things I could do than there are hours I have in the day and energy I have to get them done. And because I'm a person who deeply values rest and pleasure, I'm always going to be making space for that too.

And so it's like, all the hours that I could work, I'm not going to work all of those hours because some of those hours are going to be dedicated to rest. And some of them are going to be dedicated to pleasure. And some of them are going to be dedicated to the mundane details of living in a human body, like brushing my teeth and feeding myself and things like that. And then some of its going to be dedicated to work.

And so that, a little bit, is my breakdown of prioritization. It's not that there has to be one thing that's higher than everything else, I do think you can kind of be like me and that you're like okay, rest, pleasure, and work, these three all matter a lot. So they need to kind of be prioritized in balance with one another.

And then if I have a low energy day, it's like they may all get dropped lower except for probably not. Because actually if I'm having low energy, rest, and pleasure, I might be prioritizing more of than work because those may

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be helping me kind of care for myself and then be able to bounce back and have more energy later. Rest especially.

Okay, so let's look at an example. And I'm just going to do an example from my life because I think it's easiest. Okay, so some things that I tend to do pretty much every day are like I get up, I have a little set of PT exercises that I got from when I was working on my knee in the spring.

And I've kept a lot of them, and they're sort of just one of my little movement practices now to keep my knee in good shape. I like to take really long walks most days. And so I think these PT exercises kind of help me and my knees stay in a good place to do that. And I do them almost every day.

But if I'm having a low energy day, that's something I might cut or I might cut it short. So I have, let's see, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 little exercises I do every day. And they rotate day by day, so they're not the same ones every day, but there's about five. So if I'm having a low energy day, I may do one, I may do two, I may do three, I may do four, and I may skip the last one.

And how many I skip is probably going to depend on how low energy I'm feeling, right? So it's like when I'm low energy I'm just ratcheting everything down to what matters the most. And what matters the most is going to vary based on how low energy I am and what needs to get done in my life according to my own prioritizations. Again, not according to the socialized prioritizations.

And some of this is about responsibility. But even when it is about responsibility, it's about chosen responsibility. So like brushing my teeth is something I do out of chosen responsibility. I was socialized to do that as a child, and I know that it's really good for my tooth health. And I do it because it's really good for my tooth health. And that's also why it was socialized into me.

But if I were to kind of dig into that and discover, oh, I'm only doing this because it was socialized into me and it doesn't actually align with my

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priorities and values and what I'm trying to create my life, then it could be something that I would drop, right?

So let's see, my little physical therapy exercises, those are something that could be reduced or ditched altogether. I take a long walk most mornings, that is something that if I was having a low energy day I would weigh like, is this going to take energy to do or is this going to give energy back? So it might be something that stays because I find my walks add a lot of like delight and energy.

And also, if I'm feeling very low energy in my physical body versus like sort of emotional, then that may be something that I reduce or skip altogether. Like when I'm sick I don't take a long morning walk or usually a morning walk at all. Maybe I take a little afternoon walk just to get some fresh air.

Okay, breakfast is one that I almost never skip. The only time I skip breakfast is if I'm literally sick and sleeping or nauseous and can't eat. So food is very high on my prioritization, so it's not going to get skipped.

Now, the kind of food I eat could shift with my low energy. Or like when I was doing something where I had to be online at five in the morning every day for three days in a row, I made a frittata ahead of time. So that wasn't about low energy, but it was just like a choice that was going to enable me to need less time in the morning before I had to be somewhere.

Okay, so we didn't even make it through a full day in the life of Kori Linn, but this is kind of a good example, is I take everything piece by piece and it's kind of like, does this matter? And why does it matter? And then I just have to look at all the things that matter. And usually there's more things that matter than there is time I'm going to spend. And so then it's just a question of making choices.

And I think this is really important because I know that there are people out there listening who are feeling so much pressure all of the time because there are so many things that they are expecting themselves to do, or maybe they're expected to do by other people. And it just feels impossible,



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right, to kind of be able to ratchet them down in the way that I'm talking about.

And what I want to offer is that I agree. It probably would be impossible to ratchet them down and still keep everything. So that's where we get into the place of making tough choices about what we're going to choose over what we're not going to choose, and what we're willing to have the consequences of not doing and what we're not willing to have the consequences of not doing.

And if you do that and there's still more than you can personally do, then I guess you either need more help, right? So maybe there are people in your life you can ask for help. Or you've got to keep making tough decisions. And I know that's not fun to hear, and listen, it's not fun to say it.

And if we're being really frank, I think part of what doesn't work about the current way our society is set up is that a lot of people are doing stuff individually or doing stuff in a small nuclear family and we have lost a lot of the community element of the community members helping each other and being helped by each other.

And I don't think there's anything wrong with you if you are overwhelmed and feel like it's impossible to do everything you're trying to do on your own. I think you're correct about that probably. Now, I personally have set my life up in a way where I don't have that as much anymore. But I have a lot of privilege in doing that and I also have different circumstances than a lot of other people.

So in choosing to leave corporate and start my own business, that was something I was able to do because I was already very privileged and I already had, you know, I had a savings account. I'd worked in corporate for several years, had made a lot of money there and I'd been able to pay off my student loans. My overhead was quite low even though I was living in Seattle, which is a very expensive city. My personal overhead was not that high.

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And I don't have children. So like, I don't have any dependents. And Alex and I were together at that time, but she was not depending on me. And in fact, I was able to have her to depend on if I needed to. And for a while, when I was building my business, I was depending on her, right? She was helping me financially.

Which it's interesting to note I didn't enjoy that. That didn't feel good to me, but it's still real and true that it was something that was available to me to depend on, and a privilege that I know not everyone has. So I want to be really clear about all of that because I am living a life over here now where I don't work 40 hours a week, I'm able to get a lot of sleep, I have a lot of free time. And I realize that's not everyone else's reality.

And, again, some of why I have that is because I have an enormous amount of privilege. And some of why I have that is because I have made choices to not engage in certain things or engage in life in certain ways that I thought would limit me.

And there are downsides to that too. So I have a lot more free time than most people. And there are things that other people have sometimes that I don't have, that they have gotten in their life by putting in the effort and by being willing to make commitments and be accountable in certain situations where I have not done that.

And all of that I'm going on about because I want you to know that I'm aware of and have respect for the fact that your life circumstances are different than mine. And this may sound extremely difficult to you, and it may be extremely difficult for you to do. And that can be true even if it's just socialization that you're working against. Because socialization is incredibly strong, it's incredibly pervasive, and it is wildly and massively uncomfortable sometimes to get out from under that socialization.

So if this feels really, really hard for you, you're not alone. You're not doing it wrong. Getting the support of a coach, whether it's me or someone else,

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may be incredibly helpful. And also, you can still do it. And you can do it in really tiny, incremental ways.

So we talk about incrementality a lot on the podcast. And this applies here as much as anything else. So if you're having like a low energy time and you know you need to ratchet down and it's feeling really uncomfortable, you can just begin with like little, tiny ratchets, right? Like what one single thing could I maybe just do a 5% less good job on?

And you can ease into it. And you'll do a little bit less good of a job on something and it won't feel great. But you'll also be like, "Well, the world didn't end." And what I find is that when I try to do things perfectly and when I try to do things pretty well, I usually wind up with the same outcome, which is like I kind of like what I did. And part of me kind of has some criticisms, and other people maybe have some criticisms.

And when I really understood that I was like, "Oh, well, there's very little in life I actually care to be doing my very best job at because most things I don't actually have to do my very best job at in order for it to be good. And even when I do do my very best job, it's not perfect anyways. So maybe I can just like cut some time out and stop perfecting everything to death."

And that's been really helpful for me. And I think it can be really helpful for you too. Again, even if your life circumstances are really different than mine, I still think like making these like little, teeny tiny shifts and looking around to see what happens. And then realizing like, generally it's pretty okay.

There are some exceptions to this, like if you're doing surgery on other people or something. But let's be honest, even surgeons are human beings and human beings are not perfect. So just like when you have a low energy day, you get to decide what matters most to you, in your whole life as a human you're mostly not going to do things perfectly.

So if there's something you really care about doing perfectly or as perfectly as you can, be choosy with what gets that energy and attention because

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it's limited, right? Your time is limited. I'm so sorry that it is but that's what we're working with, at least in the way that we understand science at this time, it's limited in our current experience of it.

So when you have the low energy, figure out what matters most to you. You may have to write down a list of what you think matters and then go through it and think, okay, but what actually matters to me and what I care about? And some of what matters to you, it's also a question of like, okay, but could this get punted, right?

So like when I'm really sick, I don't even brush my teeth. I care deeply about brushing my teeth. I care deeply about my dental health. I have dentist anxiety, and also sometimes even that gets pushed off because I do not have the energy for it. It's rare, but it happens, right? So that's the first thing.

The second thing, which I'm talking about all the time is praise the fucking shit out of yourself. If you're having a low energy day, you probably feel fucking terrible, even if it's like mildly terrible. You probably don't feel great. And then if you're doing less than you would normally do your initial urge may be to criticize yourself for that or to judge yourself for it.

And instead, I want you to put that down, flip it and reverse it, and praise yourself and be like, "Wow, you did such a good job prioritizing and picking some things to focus on. And I know, self, that that was really hard and uncomfortable. And you did it and I'm so fucking proud of you." Right?

And in that moment, what we're doing is we're teaching our brain that like, yes this was uncomfortable, and I didn't like it, and I would prefer to not do it this way. And also, it's something that's worth being praised. And when we decide something's worth being praised and we praise it, then it also gets easier to do and keep doing. And it can help us sort of get out from under that part of ourselves that just like wants to criticize us when we're having a low energy time.

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Okay, now let's also talk about high energy, right? A lot of us are like, "High energy, it's so great. It's amazing, I get everything done, it feels so good. I wish I could have more of it." And I don't disagree with that, it is so fun to have high energy times. I've had some really fun high energy times in my own life, I hope that you have as well.

And also, I think the same thing applies, if you have a lot of energy, and you could do a lot of things, I don't know about you but sometimes I just start doing a bunch of shit. And then I'm like, "Wait, did I use my high energy the way I wanted to?" And that's why I think the key to both of these kind of states of being is prioritization and prioritizing what actually matters to you versus what you've been socialized to prioritize or to care about.

So if you're having a high energy hour, day, week, month, year, what do you want to get out of it? What do you want to do with it? Because again, we're socialized to put all these other people before us, and to put all this other stuff before us, and to work all the time, and to be proving ourselves constantly.

And we're socialized that like the amount of things we should be doing is like more than the amount of time we have. So even when you're in a high energy space, you may still be like, "Fuck, there's still too much to do." So I kind of like this idea that if we just assume there's always going to be more to do than we actually can do, then we always have to make choices.

And then we get into the habit of making choices and prioritizing and deciding what really matters to us and how much it really matters to us and how much of our time and energy it gets. And then we can kind of get the most out of our energy, whether it's high or low.

When I say get the most out of, I don't mean like in an exploitative capitalist way. I mean the most for what matters to us. Because getting the most out of your low energy day may mean like doing one thing you actually care about getting done, like brushing your teeth or feeding your body. And then

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the rest of it may be like getting the most out of it may mean having a nap. It may mean resting. It may mean like reading a really juicy, delicious book.

So I'm not talking about doing the most, or creating the most productivity or output. I'm talking about how do you want to use the time and energy you have? Whether you have a lot of it today or you only have a little bit of it today, how do you want to use the time and energy you have? And what do you want to create with it? And what do you want to prioritize and like what aligns to your values, what aligns to your vision for what you want your life to be like?

I think so many people have so much stuff in their life that like looks good, but they're kind of miserable living their life because they're living their life according to what they've been socialized to want, to do, to think, to be, to feel like. And then they do that, they work for years and years to create the life that matches the socialization and then they don't fucking like that shit.

And so what I'm actually talking about in this podcast is doing the opposite of that. It's thinking deeply if you want to, or just for three minutes if you don't want to think deeply or you don't have time to think deeply. It's like figuring out what you actually care about and then prioritizing that. And taking the energy you do have and using it strategically, according to your priorities. According to what actually matters most to you, not what you've been told should matter the most.

And like I said earlier, this can feel fucking wildly uncomfortable. This is like not for the faint of heart. And that is why I have a group coaching program and why I have a one-on-one coaching program because it's so much easier in life to just keep following your socialization. But it's not satisfying and delightful because usually your socialization doesn't match what you want to actually create. It doesn't match what you want your life to feel like and to look like.

And I don't think there's anything wrong with wanting to come untangle that socialization, either one-on-one with a coach who thinks you're amazing

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and is so excited to talk to you every week, that's me. It could also be another coach but in this example it's me. Or with a group of like-minded women and non-binary people who are interested in doing the same work.

And of course their lives won't look the same way because what they actually want and what their true prioritizations are, are going to be different than yours. But it's so fun to have a group of people who are doing the same work, and you're watching them unpack and untangle that socialization and build something that matches their vision and values and priorities instead. It's fucking wonderful, y'all.

And again, I think you can do this work on your own, find some other Love Your Job Before You Leave It podcast listeners, make a little club, y'all can support each other in this. And if you want a coach in your corner, I'm here to be that coach. And if it's not me, I'm here to help connect you with the coach who is the right fit.

So if you want to work with me about it so you can get the most for you out of your high and low energy time, come sign up for a consult call at [korilinn.com](http://korilinn.com). I've got one-on-one consults, I've got Satisfied As fuck consults. Let's figure out how to create your satisfying as fuck life and career, and how you can use your high and low energy moments to do that.

All right, that's what I have for y'all this week. Have a lovely week, and I will talk to you next time. 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 [korilinn.com](http://korilinn.com) for more guidance and resources.