

## Ep #106: Perfecting Vs. Enjoying



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Kori Linn**

## Ep #106: Perfecting Vs. Enjoying

This week we're talking about perfecting versus enjoying.

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, hey, hey, happy Wednesday. It's my favorite humans, the Love Your Job Before You Leave It podcast listeners. I just love y'all. I just feel so much like cherishing, joyful energy for y'all always, but especially today. And it's one of the first days in Sacramento where the weather has kind of dropped into like a cooler fall feeling and I'm like just feeling very cozy.

So how's the weather where you are? I bet it's chilly unless you're somewhere that stays pretty warm because it's October, and by the time this comes out it actually is maybe going to be November. Anyways, here it was like 90 degrees, like I don't know, maybe last week.

And then suddenly it was like yesterday the sun went down and we went out to take our walk and it was like coat weather. And I was like, okay. So it's chilly here, I think Alex even has the heat on in her office. So just chilly, cozy fall vibes here.

All right, so what we're going to talk about today is a pretty basic idea, but I think it's so important that I'm going to dedicate an entire podcast to it. So I was coaching one of my Satisfied As Fuck group coaching clients and we were coaching about something that's going on in their life. And some of the coaching I gave them was about the idea that there's a difference between perfecting and enjoying.

And often when we are trying to perfect something, what we're actually trying to do is to be able to enjoy that thing, but for some reason we think it has to be perfect first. And I want to be clear that this is not an argument against effort. I do know that sometimes when we're working on something,

## Ep #106: Perfecting Vs. Enjoying

we may want to make it better. And I think that is a fine and beautiful impulse.

And things can kind of like get to a place where what we've made, or what we're doing, or what we've been working on is like actually really wonderful. But our brain is like blocking us from enjoying it by focusing on these like teeny tiny ways that it "could be better."

And it actually reminds me of some coaching I gave a client like a million years ago, like this was a long, long time ago. And the client wanted to be good at something and I remember them posting like, I want to be really good at this thing because then I can enjoy it. Or maybe what they said was more like, all I actually care about is enjoying myself, but I know that in order to enjoy myself, I just need to practice and do my best.

And I was kind of like, "Wait, why do you need to do your best?" Do your best is like kind of this like, do your best. And we kind of see it as this great advice, and I think sometimes it's a good idea. But a lot of times you don't really need to do your best and trying to do your best may be blocking you from the experience you actually want, especially if the experience you actually want is to have fun and enjoy something.

So the thing that that long time ago client was talking about was like a hobby, right? Like an extracurricular activity that they literally just did for enjoyment. But what their brain had set up for them was that the way to enjoy it was to be the best. And I was like, that's backwards. If the whole point of it is to enjoy it, then just enjoy it, right?

Stop adding this extra step in the middle where you have to be the best. Especially stop adding an extra step that's super hard. Like you're probably never going to be the best in the world at your hobby, and maybe that's okay. And what is the point even have a hobby? What if you could just enjoy it?

## Ep #106: Perfecting Vs. Enjoying

Now, this is a career podcast so sometimes we're not talking about a hobby, we are talking about something we're doing for work. But even then, like do you actually have to do your best?

Remember that podcast we had recently about high energy versus low energy and like prioritization and understanding what we need to do really well and what just needs to get done and what actually doesn't need to get done? I think do your best is sometimes good advice that can just fucking backfire terribly. So just something to be mindful of.

Now, again, there may be certain things in your life that you really want to improve up to a certain level. This is a silly non-work example, but sometimes when I make salads, like yes salads that we eat like for dinner. I can get very involved with like, this salad is missing something, and I really want this kind of flavor or mouthfeel, right? I'm like, "Ah, I need like spicy arugula." And then I need, you know, I always want like a nut, and then I want a fruit, and then avocado.

And I want the dressing to be have enough olive oil, but have enough vinegar and I don't know, maybe a little kick of something. And I have definitely like made a salad and we're eating dinner, me, and Alex, and I like get up from the table to go get things to add to the salad because it's like not quite the textures I want.

To me though, that's enjoyment oriented. It's not like I'm like, "Oh, this salad won't get an A plus or pass the test." And I'm not like trying to perfect it in any way about like someone else's standards. I'm just trying to make it exactly what I want. And I'm doing that for my enjoyment, right?

But then there are other times when I may focus on something longer than I need or want to and longer than is enjoyable because I'm trying to create something to some imaginary standard of excellence. Or maybe some learned standard of excellence, sometimes it's not imaginary. Sometimes it's something we learned from our socialization.

## Ep #106: Perfecting Vs. Enjoying

So perfecting and enjoying are both important skills. Actually, since nothing really can be perfect let me just say improving and enjoying are both important skills. But I want y'all to be mindful of when you're choosing which one. And if you're choosing improving, make sure to choose improving versus perfecting. Very, very, very, very few things in life need to be perfect. A few, you probably want to be, even then it's like can you really guarantee it? No. But sometimes you can bring in other people.

Like if you have something and you really, really want to make sure there's no typos you can get like three different people to copy edit it. But you know what? There's probably still going to be some typos somewhere in there. Like in the publishing industry I'm sure they're trying to get all the typos out of books, but I have definitely found some typos in books, right?

Again, still work to improve things if that's what you want to do. But just be thoughtful with yourself of like, what am I actually trying to get to here? Like what is the end game? What is the point?

I think I've talked about this before, I'm a person who can get really competitive with like board games and card games. And I remember having this thought with myself of like, wait, what's the point of these? My brain is like, "Well, the point is to win." And I'm like, "But why do we even want to win?" And my brain is like, "Because that's fun." And I'm like, "Listen, if what you want is fun, stop adding this additional extra step in the middle, right?"

So this is just like that person I coached all those years ago. Like we all do this where we add an extra step in the middle, and the extra step is like this really hard thing. And then we get so frustrated trying to achieve it when it's like completely not required for the outcome we actually want, which is enjoyment.

Okay, again, this is a career podcast, even though everything we teach is applicable to everything. And sometimes in your career it is important to perform work at a certain level. I agree with that. I also think though, if we

## Ep #106: Perfecting Vs. Enjoying

want to have careers we actually like, that don't create a bunch of burnout and make us feel miserable all the time, it's also important to enjoy those careers.

So even then it's like how much time are you spending in your work trying to perfect or improve it? And how much time are you spending enjoying it? And it might feel really alien and weird to be like, "How could I enjoy this more?" But enjoyment is fun, that's like a duh statement, and enjoyment is great fuel.

And I think when we can get our brains into the space of like, how can I enjoy this? There's a lot of times really good and compelling answers. And then when we do enjoy them, we often have more energy to do a good job, right?

So even if your goal is to improve something, you don't have to do it in this way that's like, you know, running yourself across the hot coals. Enjoyment can be a way you improve things.

And then there's the question of how much do I want to improve it? And I think even if you are looking at something and you're like, "I do want to improve this." Again, can we do that through the fuel of like enjoying it? And where does it stack in the prioritization, right?

So there are so many things in my life that I probably would like to do a better job on if time and energy were infinite. But in this incarnation, at the level of my understanding, time and energy are not infinite, they are extremely finite. And as I said recently, I think in a different podcast, I don't remember because everything I talk about kind of blends together in my brain.

But I think I talked about this, the idea that there are so many things we could be doing. We just live in a world of such possibility and such a large amount of information, like with our access to things like the internet, that there are so many possibilities always for things we could be doing with our time and with our energy.

## Ep #106: Perfecting Vs. Enjoying

And so if you feel tempted to keep improving something, I want you to check in with yourself and see if that aligns with the prioritizations you have, and with the limited amount of time and energy and space you have in this life on Earth.

As an example from my own life and career, when I was new to recording the podcast I used to write the entire thing out ahead of time. Like it was a blog post and then I would just read it. And if you go and listen to my early podcasts, you can probably tell.

So the funny thing about that is like I was preparing, and improving, and attempting to perfect way more than I am now. I don't think that the outcome was necessarily better though. You, obviously, get to make your own opinion on that for your experience.

But from my experience, what I want the podcast to be is the closest thing to what you would experience on an actual coaching call with me. And on an actual coaching call I'm just like listening and responding with the information that I have and the ideas in my head.

It's not rehearsed, it's not a script, right? I'm just engaging with you as a person. And in group coaching, I'm just engaging with the group as a person with all the little various tidbits my brain has all the time and all the little ideas and the tangents and everything, right? So it's not my most organized self, but I also don't want it to be.

And if time were infinite, and if energy were infinite, it's possible that maybe I would record more versions of podcasts or like record a podcast and think about it and rerecord it. But most of the time, I don't rerecord, even if I know I could do something better.

Now, there is a time when I do. I recorded a podcast episode recently that didn't quite sit well with me and then I thought about it and then I asked my podcast team to review it and I got some feedback on it. And I did ultimately decide, okay, this is an example where I actually am going to go in and improve it, right?

## Ep #106: Perfecting Vs. Enjoying

And it could be fun. There were things about that original podcast that worked really well that I wanted to include and keep. And it's also okay if I'm just like, all right, we're just going to do it again this time.

So when I say that things can be fun, it's not like you have to like shove fun down your own throat or anything. It's just like the idea of like, what if this could be fun? I mean, it's just about creating more delight and freedom and enjoyment in your life, not because you have to, but just because you can and, I don't know, why not?

But if the fun starts to feel like pressure, don't do it that way. Take yourself off the hook of having to have fun. I just kind of want to like shift your brain's perspective a little bit to the idea that things could be fun. Just that that's an available option, not that it's like a requirement. And not that if you're not having fun it means you're doing it wrong.

Life is hard sometimes, I think that's more of a reason to have fun. We're not doing some like bypass, false like, "Oh, we always have to be high fives and positive." That's not what the fuck we're doing here, okay?

Here's something else, I think, when we're not going to perfect everything to death it also gives us room to kind of have more creativity and let things be interesting as they are, and kind of have more variety.

I think sometimes, especially in the age of things like all the social media we have and we're getting these like very glossy, very filtered views of other people's lives, we get this sort of like one single idea of what a good life looks like. And then we're like comparing everything to that all the time. Versus like living your life like a field of wildflowers, where every wildflower is a little bit different. And like some of them do like kind of cattywampus is this phrase that this lady I used to work for used.

So it means like kind of weird looking, right? Like lopsided a little. I'm like what if that is beautiful and perfect? What if I perfected my podcast to death and they were less interesting? What if I perfected my podcast to death, and they were less useful to you?



## Ep #106: Perfecting Vs. Enjoying

So I do think sometimes, like when we get into this like perfecting kind of framework, what we're actually doing is taking away everything that's interesting, and everything that makes things unique, and lovable, and memorable, and like absurd and silly and delightful. So what if we just leave all of that in and enjoy it?

Here's another thing, when you get really clear on your prioritizations and you get really clear on what needs improvement for you and your values and your vision, and what actually could just be enjoyed, it also opens up a lot of time for you to work a lot fucking less, right? And that might be working a lot fucking less at your job slash in your career.

It might also be working a lot fucking less like doing stuff for your kids, or doing stuff for your parents, or doing stuff for your significant other, or like the way you show up in your friendships. Or even like how you get dressed or how you brush your teeth. I mean, you know, don't take too much time away, maybe, from how you brush your teeth, I've heard it's a pretty important thing to do.

But the point is, I think sometimes the reason we all feel so busy and overwhelmed is because we're trying to perfect everything and do it to like, again, doing our best, doing it to the top level of our capability versus prioritizing like I can do it this way and that's good enough. And this other thing, actually, okay, I'm going to spend more time on that.

And like prioritizing and making our own decisions about what matters to us because, again, we have so much socialization that's always telling us how we should live. And as we talk about all the time, the socialization is often indicating we should be doing things to like a standard that if you actually look at the time breakdown is impossible, or would require you to never give any time to yourself and I'm just not here for that shit.

So stop doing your best, start prioritizing, stop perfecting, choose on purpose what needs to be improved for reasons that matter to you. Stop just improving shit because you can. Stop just improving shit because

## Ep #106: Perfecting Vs. Enjoying

someone else thinks it's a good idea. Let them fucking deal with their life, you deal with yours and create your life according to your standards.

Because you can make your life what everyone else says it should be, and that is not going to be satisfying as fuck or satisfying at all to you if it doesn't line up with what you actually want and what you actually want to choose.

All right, so again, pretty simple concept. Do you want to enjoy it? Or do you want to perfect it? And if you want to perfect it, why? And do you really, really, really, really, actually truly want that? Or is that just what you think you should do? And what choices and changes do you want to make in your life to start letting like a less good version be enough? And what things do you actually, actually care about improving?

And again, prioritization, you cannot prioritize everything, y'all. You have to pick some things, or you prioritize nothing. And I just don't think prioritizing nothing is going to help you create what you want. And that's what I want to help you do. I want to help you create a life and career that is just like toe-curlingly satisfying for you, whatever that looks like for you.

And I really truly think doing that work in community is an incredible way to do it. And if you want to do that work in community, come sign up for a Satisfied As Fuck consult. I am currently doing those for the program that launches in the new year, in 2023, and it's going to be amazing, and I want you to be part of it. All right y'all, that's what I have for you. Have a great week. 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.