

Ep #108: Yeah, Buts



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Kori Linn

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This week we're talking about yeah, buts.

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. Doing a little celebratory wiggle over here about getting to have this conversation with you today. I hope that you're doing very well, whatever is happening in your life. It's Halloween here today. I know that by the time you listen to this it'll be sometime in November, maybe all the way into mid-November. I'm not sure, I'm never good at the math of like how many episodes I've already recorded versus when this one is coming out.

But it's definitely a season of change and a season of transition. And I think I've been talking on the last several episodes about how the weather is getting colder. There's some stuff I love about that, there's some stuff I don't love, like my hands are just always cold now. Which somehow I get like season amnesia and then forget that that's going to happen when the colder weather comes around again. So I've had to bust out all my little fingerless gloves.

Anyways, whatever is happening with you, I hope it's a lovely day. And if it's not, we have some tools that will maybe help you turn that shit around. Or be kind to yourself while you're having a less than lovely day because let's be honest, while I do think there are lovely moments in most days, some days are fucking hard, y'all.

Okay, so this week, we're talking about the concept of "yeah, but." And I remember learning about this concept like a million years ago in some personal growth book. And I was trying to look it up on Google, but I can't figure out which one it is that I learned it from. It seems like it's actually a

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pretty common topic. And it came up into my realm of thinking as something to talk to y'all about because I was coaching one of my lovely Satisfied As Fuck clients and we were coaching about the idea of worthiness, right?

And so something we've talked about on the podcast before here is that a lot of people who overwork are overworking because they are trying to create a sense of worthiness and a sense of validation through their work output, right? They're confusing their personal worth as a human being with their deliverables that they create, with the value that they create as an employee for a business, or as a business owner in a business.

And people do this in a lot of areas, that's not just work, right? So people do this in, you know, parenting. They try to create their sense of worthiness in how they parent their kids or in like being always available to their children. People do this in relationships, right? Like romantic relationships, friendships, we also do it sometimes as children to our own parents. We're like trying to earn our sense of worthiness through the behaviors that we're doing, and specifically through generally adding value for other people.

It's interesting that very, very rarely, if ever, is someone trying to create worthiness by adding value for themselves, although I have seen that. And I've seen it in myself sometimes too with things like, I know we talked recently about like physical therapy.

And there have been times in my life when I was trying to basically force myself to do all these things that actually were really good for me. But I was doing it from this place of trying to earn my worthiness as a person and to kind of like prove, I don't know, to myself, to the university, to whoever that I was a good person by how I was caring for myself.

Again, generally, especially with the socialization that women and girls receive, we're adding value for other people. And even when I was doing that and trying to like sort of prove it to myself, I was doing a lot of other behaviors that were oriented towards other people as well. But the main

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idea with those kinds of behaviors is that we're trying to earn worthiness versus worthiness being something that we just have that's inherent about us.

And so what that has to do with the “yeah, butts” is that like, you know, so my client had identified that they were, like they already knew before I even coached them that they were trying to earn worthiness. And that that was making it very hard for them to stop working when it was time to stop working and for them to not obsess about these metrics of success.

Which actually ties into another thing that's really interesting, right? It's like we'll want so badly to get this external metric of success and then we'll get it. And then we'll think like, okay, now I have to keep getting it over and over again and I can't lose it.

And something I was saying to this client in this call was like, okay, but you've already gotten that external metric of success over and over again, like probably more times than anyone else who works in your office. And yet that's not doing what it's promised it will do. It's not creating satisfaction. And instead then we're just obsessed about keeping it.

So I think that's like a little side lesson that's really important, is that a lot of times there's things that we're fantasizing about or saying like, well, if I could only just get X, then I would feel good for forever. When we do get x, that's not what happens. We do not feel good forever. And then either we're like, well, X doesn't matter anymore and then we move on to a bigger, different X. Or we're like, oh, I have to keep getting X.

And I remember when I worked in corporate having this moment where I had this really great reputation for being a high achiever and all this stuff. There was like this one extra thing I had taken on and I needed to pull myself back from it. It wasn't even part of my main job. And I remember having this conversation with my boss where I was like, “I can't co-lead this thing anymore.”

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And he was kind of like, “It kind of doesn't look good if you back out now.” Because this event was coming up. And I basically had this moment in my head where I was like, “I have such a good reputation here. And if my good reputation here can't bear the weight of me stepping down from one thing one time, then it's worth fucking nothing. Like, what's the point of a good reputation if it can't carry me through this?”

And I kind of said something like that to him, which is surprising because back then I kind of was not saying a lot of the things, right? I was just like, yeah, agreeing with other people and stuff. But I felt really strongly like well, then that thing, that reputation then is not helpful if it cannot bear the ebb and flow of being human.

Okay, so that was like all a little side thing. Let's circle back to the point of the podcast, which is this idea of “yeah, buts,” right? So the client knew that it was about worthiness. And the client could tell themselves a thought like, “I'm worthy.” And that thought would feel good to them. So if they thought that thought “I'm worthy,” that felt nice in their body, which is how we know that they believed it, that was accessible to them.

So we talk a lot about storytelling on this podcast. So that was like a story that they would be able to shift into based on the feeling sensation in their body. But then what would happen immediately after is their brain would issue a bunch of “yeah, buts.” Like they'd be like, “I'm worthy.” And their brain would be like, “Yeah, but remember this thing you did four years ago?” Or like, “Yeah, but you could like lose that external validation,” or like, yeah, duh, duh, duh, duh.

And yeah, buts are really common, like the brain has a negativity bias, we have also been socialized to focus on all the ways we're failing and not doing good enough. But the thing in life is like there's always going to be some of that. And I want to be clear that I'm not suggesting we don't work on the things that aren't working. But when you know you're going to have an unending pile of objections, then sometimes it's really good to know

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when to address them and when to just not get like kind of caught in the weeds with them.

And so for some people in this scenario, what I might have them do is just continue to practice the thought anyways. But for this client, like this client is not new to thought work. They have a lot of thought work skills already and so for this client I was like, yeah, what if we just include that? What if we just include all those yeah, butts?

And so basically, it's this idea of including into the definition of worthiness, the idea that we're not perfect. So it's like when the brain is like, "Yeah, but this," you're like, "Yeah, that, and I'm still worthy." Right? So I'm not going to give any examples from the client's life. And I did ask the client if I could share this, and they said yes. But I could give examples of my life, right?

Like I've fucked a lot of things up. So if I had black and white thinking I could just look at myself and be like, "Well, you've fucked a lot of things up, so you're just not worthy." But what I have found over and over again with myself, and my clients is that that doesn't help. It makes me feel like shit and it doesn't help me live by the values that I want to live by.

And I don't know any people who haven't fucked something up at least a little bit one time. So instead, I choose to believe that we can just include that. We can just include those "yeah, butts," we can include the ways in which we're imperfect because we fucking all are.

Oh, here's a good example, this is one from my personal life, right? So as you all know I have a partner, Alex. She's amazing, we all agree here, she's like wonderful. And we have a great relationship. And I'm not always perfect in that relationship.

And the people we have our relationship with that we're like the closest to, like Alex and I live together, right, this is like a primary partner thing. They often see us at our least filtered, right? Because they're seeing us first thing in the morning, and last thing at night, and when we're hungry, and when we're tired, and when we're sick.

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And so sometimes I don't behave according to my values with her. Sometimes I get snarky, sometimes I roll my eyes, sometimes I'm grumpy with her. Sometimes I say things that I don't mean, et cetera, et cetera.

So that's something like if I was like, wanted to think a thought, like, I'm worthy or I'm a good partner, my brain could come in with like the “yeah, but” of like, but are you, because sometimes you do this? And are you, because sometimes you do that? Or like, yeah, you're saying you're a good girlfriend, but like blah, blah, blah.

So that's an example where what we want to do is learn how to include those “yeah, but.” We want to learn how to include the imperfections in the definition of what is good and wonderful, and worthy, and valuable.

So an example would be like if I was falling for the “yeah but,” I would be thinking like, “I'm a good partner.” And then my brain would be going like, “Yeah, but like three weeks ago you said this thing. And yeah, but two years ago you did this. And yeah, but remember the time when you blah, blah, blah?”

This actually happens to a lot of people when we're trying to go to sleep at night, our brain brings up many of our “yeah, but,” like across many categories. And my example of this is always my brain being like, “Remember this thing you did in 1996?” And to be clear, I don't remember a specific thing from 1996, I just like to give specific dates. But I do have specific things my brain brings up when I'm trying to sleep.

Anyways, we can argue with those “yeah, but.” And I think when we argue with them it's not generally helpful because we kind of like just get stuck in this battle. And then it becomes about this like measurement, right? Like, are there so many “yeah, but” that they outweigh this new narrative I'm trying to think about myself? Versus I just think it's so much more useful to just include them, just bring them along.

The definition of worthiness has nothing to do with perfection, or none of us would be worthy, right? Like that just wouldn't work. And an example I used

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with this client that landed really well for them was, like they have children, right? This client has children. And so I was like, “Have your children ever done anything that was incorrect or didn't line up to your values or whatever?”

And the client was like, “Yeah, of course. Like duh, there are no children who haven't.” And I was like, “Okay, but are the children still worthy?” And the client was like, “Yeah, of course.” And I was like, “Yeah, you know that. With that certainty in your body that's what you can bring to thinking about yourself as someone who's worthy even though they've made mistakes and done things that don't line up to their values, or whatever else the “yeah, but” are saying.”

The “yeah, but” can focus on all kinds of different stuff. So whatever your yeah but is focusing on, we can just roll them in to our definition of goodness, of worthiness, of value instead of it becoming some kind of giant calculation about are we good enough to be good enough?

Okay, so what are other ways that you can use this in your career and life to create more joy, satisfaction, delight, progress, et cetera, whatever you want to work on? Okay, so what are your goals right now, right?

If you want a promotion but you fucked up a project last quarter maybe your thought could be something like, “I can get that promotion.” And then your brain will be like, “Yeah, but you fucked up that project last quarter.” And then you can be like, “Yeah, I fucked up that project last quarter and I'm still capable of getting the promotion.” Right?

So what we're talking about here is a “yes, and” thing. And it's about including the habits and letting them exist and still believing that the wonderful thing that we want is possible, right?

So if you are looking for a significant other and you've been on a 100 first dates in the last 12 months and you don't have a partner, you could be wanting to have a thought like, “I believe I can find a wonderful partner for me.” And your brain might come in with like a yeah, but of like, “Yeah, but

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you've been on 100 dates in the last year and none of those worked out.” Right? And that thought makes us feel like shit, right? Which has the chance to shut us down if we don't learn how to roll it into our vision, right?

So then that can become like, “Yeah, I went on 100 dates last year. I'm fucking awesome at going on dates. I didn't find the person yet and I have gone on 100 dates and still believe that I can keep going and find that person.” And even in that example it's like, yeah, maybe having gone on 100 dates is actually helping me find that person. Like my brain thinks it's this “yeah, but” but what if the opposite is true? What if it's useful?

And I would argue it is, right? You've probably learned a lot about yourself by going on 100 dates. Or to go to the other example, it's like whatever project you fucked up last quarter, maybe you did fuck it up real bad but maybe you learned something really valuable and it's going to help you have a better chance, actually, of getting that promotion. And it's like defining for you more of like who you want to be in your career and how you want to do things.

So I want to be clear that incorporating the “yeah, but” doesn't mean I'm saying that negative things that you've done or negative things that have happened in your life don't matter. And this isn't about bright siding or always having to assert that things happen for a reason or that it's all wonderful. That's not what I'm saying here.

What I'm saying here is what I want for you is for you to be willing to believe that you're worthy, just as a human being, just for existing. And that you can go on to create the life and career you want even if you're not perfect. And that actually being imperfect is you being in the exact right position, if there is an exact right position, because that's what being a human is, right? It's being imperfect, and you can still create a lot of amazing things.

And sometimes we can find strength from the things that we've gone through that we didn't prefer. And sometimes, like listen, I would love to be

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able to live a life where all of my actions line up to my values. I haven't figured out a way to do that yet.

So I think for me, and maybe for you, part of it's just accepting that sometimes I get to learn by doing something that lines up with my values, and that's a super fun way to learn. And sometimes I learn what my values are by doing something that doesn't line up with my values and then feeling that feeling in my body of like, "I don't think I want to have done that."

And if I get tripped up by that, that's okay, because I'm a human. But it's also like if it's tripping me up forever, then I think I'm doing the learning wrong. It's like that thing I said, in a different podcast, or maybe I just said it on Instagram of like, if your high standards are making you feel like shit and keeping you stuck, in my opinion you're using those wrong because high standards are something that should help us create wonderful things. But I think for a lot of us, we use them in that other less helpful way.

And so I guess another thing I could say here is your "yeah, butts" are a way for you to love yourself more and be more inclusive with yourself and design and live a really glorious vision, and design and live a really glorious, satisfying vision and life for yourself that includes all the little parts of you, who are imperfect, and are flawed, and fuck things up, and are learning. Because that's part of you, so you can't really leave it behind, so you may as well include it, in my opinion.

Okay, some of this may be a little easier said than done. And if you would like some focused real time support on incorporating your "yeah, butts" into your satisfying as fuck life and career, you should come sign up for a Satisfied As Fuck consult call if you want to do that work in a group and learn from lots of other amazing humans.

If you'd rather do that work privately just with me and explore on your own, then you can sign up for a one-on-one consult. And I would love to coach you on it because I really just do think life can be so much more satisfying, so much more enjoyable, so much more fun and you can do so many cool

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things and hit so many amazing, interesting goals for yourself when you're willing to include your “yeah, buts” and love yourself even though you're imperfect.

All right y'all, that's what I have for you. Have a great week. I'll 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 for more guidance and resources.