

Podcast Episode #008

How To Be Happy When You Are At Your Lowest Moment

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Announcer: Welcome to the Lift Your Life Project with Coach Pamela.

Pamela: Welcome to the Lift Your Life Project. I'm Pamela Mitchell, also known as Coach Pamela, and this is the podcast devoted to helping you meld your personal self and your professional self into an enhanced version of your best self. My goal is to help you take control of your work and your life, feel more relaxed and confident, and experience the satisfaction and fulfillment of a sustainable, successful life. All right. Good stuff, and good stuff for you today.

In Tales from the Coaching Front, I talk about how to be happy when you are at your lowest moment, and that is just such a valuable topic because this is about real life. It's not all happy, happy, happy. How can you find happiness in the midst of your lowest moment? I give you some practical tools for doing that and some really useful insights. In today's Ask Coach Pamela, I answer a question from someone who has actually accomplished her reinvention and is wondering how to plan for the next step. My answer may surprise you. That and more in today's episode, so let's get this show started.

Announcer: And now it's Tales from the Coaching Front.

Pamela: I had a call recently with a client who is struggling with a really difficult challenge. She recently created a fabulous reinvention for herself that unfolded in kind of a miraculous fashion. The issue is that after creating this really amazing life that was everything that she had dreamed of, she now has a situation that is stopping her from stepping fully into this reinvention and really relaxing and enjoying it. Obviously, because it's client privilege, I cannot go into the details of it, but suffice it to say that it is a situation that she doesn't have a lot of control over. In fact, she has no control over it in terms of how it blocks her from being able to fully experience the happiness that this



creation that she's managed to basically launch for herself should provide. She can't actually step into it fully and experience it.

This is really difficult and she's been struggling emotionally and we've been talking a lot about this. In our last call, I said to her, "You know, even though this is very difficult and, let's make no mistake that there's not a lot you can do, you kind of have to go along and deal with this situation. But it's still possible to be happy even though this is a really tough thing that you're facing." She said to me, "What do you mean? I just don't see how I can be happy about this."

What I said to her is, "You know, there's a difference between being happy about something and being happy." She stopped for a moment and she said, "What do you mean about that?" I said, "Let me give you an example. Today I am taking this call from a cancer clinic in Skokie, Illinois and I'm here with my mother, who is going through her first round of chemotherapy. Now, I am not happy about this situation. Would I rather that she not have to go through this? Absolutely. However, what happened today is that we have this special eating plan that we have to do because my mom and I have both lost a significant amount of weight and we eat in a very particular way to manage it, so we got a recommendation for a place to order lunch.

'We ordered lunch and it was delivered, brought to us right in the area where she's having her chemotherapy and we opened this lunch and it was the most gorgeous lunch, these beautiful grilled vegetables, grilled pieces of salmon all laid out on this fresh bed of lettuce. Just all pretty colors. We don't eat sugar, and they actually sent two kinds of non-sugar dressing, which is amazing, because that's really difficult to find. Somehow we laid out this lunch and we took a step back and we looked at it and we said, "You know, this is really beautiful. This is amazing that here we got this great lunch," and it was fabulous. It tasted just as good as it looked, here in the midst of all of this. We realized as we sat and we looked at each other and we smiled that we were happy, we were so happy that we had gotten that great lunch. In that moment I woke up and I realized even though I am not happy about being here, I am still happy here and I recognize there's a difference."

I said to my client, "You know, in these very tough situations, it can be very, very challenging to connect to our happiness until we separate these two things and we look for the little things that can bring the happiness to us. We can't look to the overall situation to bring the happiness, but just because the overall situation doesn't deliver the happiness doesn't mean that there aren't small, little things that can still bring happiness. When we're facing these really tough situations, it's very, very important to look for those small, little things and then be open to the happiness that they bring." She's like, "Wow, that really brings it to a whole other level."



Then we started talking about those kinds of things that you could look for. I said, "Maybe at work there's a coworker that you really enjoy and you guys are having fun talking about a project and you're intellectually engaged in that. Can that make you happy?" She said, "Yeah." I said, "Are there moments when, hey, somebody says something funny and you find yourself laughing?" She said, "Yeah, that happens too." I said, "Okay, so there's another moment. In those moments, feel the happiness, and that way you can bring the happiness in in the midst of a tough situation." That insight, that thing, I wanted to share with you to let you know that there is a way to find that kind of happiness, and that even in the toughest of situations, it's still possible to find joy.

That's it for Tales from the Coaching Front. Now on to our next segment.

Announcer: Got a question? She's got your answer. It's time for Ask Coach Pamela.

Pamela: Recently I gave a talk for The Harvard Business School Club of South Florida, a very driven group of people, as you might imagine. While I was there, I got a question from one of the audience members. She was in a really enviable position in that she had worked to accomplish a reinvention and had actually made it happen. It was really nice to be able to talk and have somebody say, "You know, I had this dream and I actually made it happen." It was really great, but here was her conundrum. She had accomplished her reinvention, she was enjoying it, but then she wanted to know how she should plan for the next step. Now that she had her reinvention, how should she be planning for her next goal?

That made me think for a moment and I realized so often we are so focused on our goal that we forget to enjoy the present moment. What I said to her is, "Look, here's the thing. I know, especially given that particular school and even in society as a whole, we have this focus on the next thing. We must always be focused on what our next accomplishment is going to be, what are we doing next. It's kind of a disease almost in our society, where we are always focusing on the horizon. The thing about that is no matter how far we sail on the sea, the horizon always moves. We never actually reach that point on the horizon, so we're always in motion and we're always reaching for the next thing. What happens when we're always looking at the horizon is that we miss the joy of the journey. We are always living in the future and not the present."

This is what I pointed out to her. By thinking about what her next step should be and how she should be planning for her goal, she was actually taking herself out of the present moment and putting herself in a future horizon. The sad thing about this, not about her in particular, but what happens when we do this, is that the present moment is where there's a lot of joy sitting. Here's the thing, she had worked really, really hard to get this reinvention, to accomplish her goal. She was enjoying it, but she was missing out on most of the enjoyment because she was so focused on what she needed to do next.



That's the thing. We don't want to miss out on that joy of the moment. We really want to be able to experience all that we've built and all that we've really earned.

What I suggested to her is that she should just take a break actually from trying to accomplish the next thing and that she should really carve out some time and some space to enjoy what she had already created and give herself permission to relax for a bit, which, as I said, is kind of radical in today's society. Just relax and enjoy your life. You've earned it.

This is the step that I would recommend for you, dear listener, if you are also one of those people, and I put myself in that camp, who is always focusing on "What's the next step I need to accomplish? What's the next thing?" There is nothing wrong with being driven. That is how we make things happen. However, are we missing out on the joy of the moment? Is it that as soon as we accomplish something, now we're on to the next thing, and so we're always in search? We never actually get to feel the lovely sense of joy and celebration that comes when we reach a goal that we've worked so hard for.

I recommended to her, and you may also want to think about this: goal-free living. That just means stepping into the present moment and tapping into your feelings. Just look around and say, "What have I built in my life? Let me feel the feelings that come from these good things that already exist in my life." Here's the little secret behind this technique. Even though it feels scary to put your goals aside for a while, when you're actually looking at the things you've already built and taking time to enjoy those things, then you can actually build on them. You are not always in deficit like we are when we're always pursuing a goal but we're never taking time to enjoy it. We're actually creating from the fullness of what we've already built and we're looking to amplify those feelings that we're already experiencing. It's a really great way to create in the world. It's a really great way to move in a very intuitive way towards our next goal.

This is what I say to you. Don't miss out on the joy that you've created in your life. Take a step back, sit back, enjoy it, and then from there let those feelings guide you to the next step in your life.

That's it for today's segment of the Lift Your Life Project. Be sure to visit our website at liftyourlifeproject.com/podcast, where you can download a transcript of today's episode. If you have questions for Ask Coach Pamela, visit liftyourlifeproject.com/question and you can leave me a voice mail. If I answer your question on an upcoming episode, I will send you a free deck of reinvention cards, so yeah, get over there and leave me a voice mail! You can also connect with me on social media, on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram @thecoachpamela. If you enjoyed today's episode, please leave a review for the show on iTunes. Your feedback really, truly does make a difference.





Today's Liftoff Inspiration comes from Ralph Marston, who says, "Choose to keep your focus on that which is truly magnificent, beautiful, uplifting, and joyful." Such important words, even at our lowest moment. Thank you for listening today. Remember, why settle for good when great is waiting? Take one small step this week to lift your life. Bye for now.

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