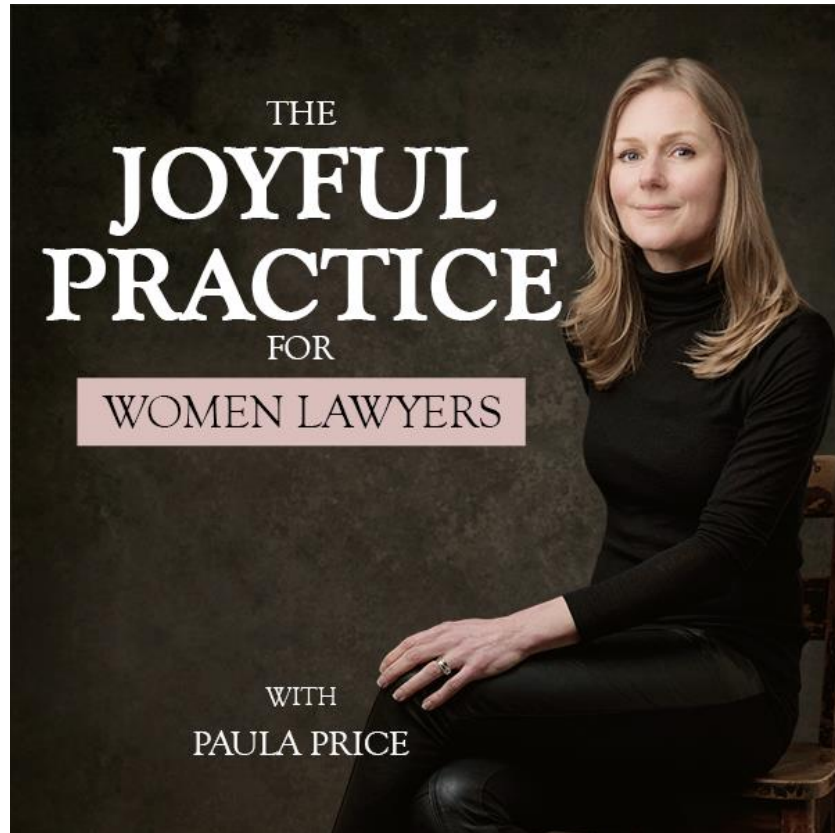


Ep #56: What to Do When Your Job Doesn't Fit



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Paula Price

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You're listening to *The Joyful Practice for Women Lawyers* Podcast episode number 56.

Welcome to *The Joyful Practice for Women Lawyers* Podcast. I'm your host Paula Price, lawyer turned certified executive coach. This podcast was created to empower women lawyers just like you to create a life and practice you love. Join me every week for a break from the hustle so we can focus on you, what you truly want, and how you can create it.

If you're over the overwhelm, done with putting out fires, and ready to create a life and practice that brings you more joy, you're in the right place. Ready for today's episode? Let's dive in.

Hello, my friend. Welcome back to the podcast. It's Paula here. I'm so excited to have you back. This week's episode is a topic that is near and dear to my heart. It's a question that I hear often from lawyers who reach out to me, and I'm delighted to be able to share what I've learned. I share some ideas that will help you if this is a question that is on your mind.

So the topic, of course, today is what to do when your job doesn't fit. This may be something that you're struggling with right now. It may be something that you've struggled with in the past. For any of you who find yourself asking yourself this question then I fully invite you to reach out to me, and hopefully I can help you out further.

So the question here is do you ever feel like you're not in the right job? You may feel like you've been doing everything that you should be doing. You have the job that you thought you always wanted. You've been there long enough to have gotten past that initial awkward phase where you're trying to figure out how to send an email or who you give your mail to when it needs to be sent out ASAP. You've kind of gotten over those initial awkward hurdles. So you know it's not just growing pains.

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Your confidence is building. You've gotten more familiar with the work. You're familiar with the relationships that you are building. Yet somehow things don't just feel right. Instead of feeling accomplished or satisfied, you may feel increasingly out of place.

This is a stage at which a lot of lawyers will come to me and they have questions. Often they want to know what else is out there for them. What can they do about this? It's rare that somebody comes to me and they haven't already given some thought to what might not be working for them. When I ask lawyers what it is that they want, and maybe some of these resonate with you, they kind of go through some of similar checklist items.

Number one is lifestyle, right. Sometimes you may think that the lifestyle is what is bothering you. Maybe it's the hours that you're expected to work. Maybe it's the timing. Maybe the emails are coming in late or really early and you're feeling like you can't disconnect. You know that you enjoy working hard. I mean this might be part of who you are. It's not so much that you want to slow down. So you don't think it's necessarily lifestyle, but it could be. That could be one of the driving factors.

Another thing that you may want is to be engaged, right. You might feel like you're in an environment where everybody else around you seems so happy whereas you feel like you're just going through the motions. Some indications of that might be you're standing with a group of colleagues, and they're all talking about their cases. You just can't get into it the same way they seem to be able to get into it. You start to wonder like is there something wrong with you because you're not engaged in the conversation because you don't find it really interesting?

You may also find that you start putting things off at work. So maybe in previous years or at a previous job or in other areas of your life, you may find that you're so keen to get started you just can't wait to open into that new project and create a plan for it and get involved with the people who

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are in that project. But then when it comes to certain elements of your work, you just find it feels heavy and you feel a sense of dread.

So you're looking at different options and what else is out there. But as you look around, you start to feel like whatever else is out there may be a step down. This is really concerning for lawyers, especially because you've worked so hard to get to where you are. Chances are you're in a position that is a coveted position. It's a high profile job, and you're doing work that is incredible work.

You may start to feel like anything else just wouldn't quite be enough. You might start to feel judged. You might be judging yourself. You might feel ashamed because you feel like you should be grateful to be where you are. Instead you find yourself scrolling through job boards, job listings, seeing what else is out there. You might find yourself going online and Googling the names of your former law school classmates to see what they are all doing things. You're just not satisfied where you are.

Another thing that comes up often, and this might be something that you relate to, is wanting to have a vision of where you're going. This one's really tough because you may be in an organization that loves you and supports you. You feel like this is such a great opportunity for you. You may admire the professionals around you, but you may really struggle because you do not see yourself in the shoes of any of the lawyers who are around you.

You may look at their work, for example, and think I can see how they love this work, but I don't see myself loving that work in the future. Or you may look at their lifestyle and say I get it that they want to be working at a certain pace or in a certain capacity, but I do not see that for myself.

So when you come to me, you have a pretty clear sense often of what you want, what you don't want. Ultimately, when push comes to shove, it's fulfillment. It's excitement. It's being challenged. It's validation. It's

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appreciation. It's recognition. Ultimately, I think what we all want is to create an impact and to make a difference and to get back to the reason that you became a lawyer in the first place, which often is to help people and to affect change.

So when lawyers reach out to me, often they have done a couple of things beforehand. Number one is you may try to fit in. You may decide that you are where you are, and you're going to make it work. You're going to hold on longer to see if things change, and you might give yourself deadlines. Maybe it's okay well, when I'm finished with this trial, or when the bonuses have been distributed, or when some event happens then you're going to revisit. That's one strategy that I often see.

Another strategy that I see is trying to find the perfect job. So that may be you out there looking at the job board, talking to your friends. Maybe you've engaged a recruiter. What you're ultimately looking for there is what is going to be that perfect next step for me?

What I have observed is that neither of these strategies is ultimately successful. I mean it can be, but more often than not, that's the reason why lawyers have reached out to me because they haven't had success with either of these strategies.

The fitting in strategy. If we start with that one, it rarely works. The reason for that is that there are jobs out there that are beautiful fits for the right person. If you look around your organization, if you look around your firm, or if you're working in government, or if you're working in-house, you have probably seen these individuals who are just so excited by their job. They are the right fit for that particular job. So it makes perfect sense that they are in it and that they love it.

Yet you, as an individual in that same job, do not necessarily thrive in the same way. That's totally normal. Yet, you may find that you're in an

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organization where you do not fit. So you start kind of, like I said before, you start kind of wondering is there something wrong with me?

I don't know that we are all designed to fit in. The reason that I say that is because one of the elements that I think is really compelling in terms of career success is being able to distinguish yourself. So rather than trying to be like everybody else, rather than trying to fit the mold, what if you were looking at it from a different perspective, which is how do I set myself apart?

I think that part of the impact that we create is based on our ability to tap into the elements that make us unique, the elements that can make for an impact that is outstanding. None of us can be outstanding if we're focusing our energy on trying to fit in and be like everybody else, by trying to change yourself to fit into your surroundings.

What ultimately you end up doing is, it sounds really harsh, but you're kind of lying to yourself, right? You're kind of continually trying to fit yourself into something that doesn't quite fit. I mean if this was a pair of shoes, you would have given them to the Goodwill long ago. You wouldn't sit there and suffer through blister after blister thinking that if only that shoe fit me, if only I was a size smaller then this would be okay. You would never do that to yourself.

Yet sometimes you will do that to yourself in the context of your professional work because everybody else is doing that work. Everybody else seems happy. It's what you trained for. It's what you've committed to. So you put a lot of pressure to yourself. As you do that and force yourself to continue to show up, you may find you start really chipping away at the relationship that you have with yourself and undermining your own sense of integrity that you have with yourself.

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This is a concept I've talked about in a previous episode, all about the integrity that you have with yourself. It's episode number nine. We'll link to it in the show notes. That is something that I think is so impactful. It's so important for each of us to feel that sense of alignment, to have that integrity. When you're continually forcing yourself to show up and do stuff that you do not feel right about, that doesn't resonate with you, you chip away at that.

What that results in then is that you almost leave yourself open and needing that external validation. If you're not getting that sense of fulfillment from within, then you're going to start looking more to others to give you that validation. So maybe you're working on a certain type of court application that really doesn't excite you, but other people get excited by it. So you keep doing it because you get that external validation.

So now you're practicing getting really good at looking to others to make you feel good. Of course, when you do that, you lose out on that opportunity to do it for yourself, and you get more hooked on it. That, of course, leaves you a little bit more vulnerable because now you're depending on others to give you that sense of validation.

That can also lead to a somewhat unfortunate snowball effect, right? The more you do the work that other people want you to do and the more you're relying on their external validation, the more you're going to do that. Of course, then the more you're pulling yourself out of alignment with what it is that you truly want. So the result of trying to fit in sometimes you may find that able to fit in. I'll talk a little bit more about that in a later section. But if you try to maintain the status quo and simply fit in, it rarely works. What you may find is that you feel increasingly unhappy and disconnected, both from your job and from yourself.

Now there's this other strategy that we talked about, which is looking for the perfect job. That strategy I find doesn't really work either. Now, I want to

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give a special shout out to all my perfectionists out there. Perfectionists, I love you. But when you approach your job search with a perfectionist mindset, you are making it very difficult for yourself. If perfectionism is something that resonates with you, I did a podcast episode. It's episode number four. I would invite you to go back and listen to it.

I can tell that the perfectionist mindset may be at play when a lawyer comes to me asking me to help them find the right job. They put a lot of pressure on themselves to find the right, the correct, the perfect next job.

An analogy that might resonate with you is when you're doing legal research. Now I used to do a ton of legal research. I loved doing legal research. One of the things that I loved the most was when I had a legal problem and I went out into the land of research and I was able to find a case that was on all fours. Right, that perfect case. Sometimes it even came from the Supreme Court of Canada, in which case, there it was. There was the answer.

Often I think that's what we are looking for in terms of that next job. What is that perfect case, the one that is going to answer all of the problems. The one I don't even need to give it any more thought. But when you think about how often legal research results in you finding that perfect case that is on all fours, especially those cases where they start becoming more complex and more nuanced and more interesting, frankly, which I think we are all nuanced. I think we're all complex. I think all of you are very interesting.

When you are not a one size fits all and you have your unique strengths and capacities and skills and desires and passions, then it becomes harder and harder to find that one job description that is going to answer all of those things. So I don't think any of you is a one and done situation where this is an easy fix. There is a case on all fours.

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It reminds me of a case that I was part of as a more junior lawyer. We were asking a very novel question of law. Does the rule in Foss and Harbottle applied to a Maryland Real Estate Investment Trust? This was not a question that had been tried in the courts where I live. So it required research into the all the dusty, archaic, legal texts to boil this down to first principles. This is what I invite you to do for yourself.

What's fascinating about this is that when you go through that exercise, it is so much more time consuming. It is so much more complicated. It is not an easy fix. But the result, of course, is so much better because now you've got that deep understanding. You've done the work.

So if you are looking for that perfect job description, that perfect fit, you're really looking for what almost is a unicorn. What can happen there is when you don't find it, you might find yourself getting really discouraged. You give up. You don't do anything. You may find yourself frozen. You are waiting for that perfect job. Ultimately, you then are spending more time in that ill-fitting job than you might like.

So I have some ideas in terms of what you can do if you find yourself in this position, the position where, of course, your job just does not feel like the right fit to you. They fall into two different categories. The first category is the letting go category. Then the second category is the introduce or reintroduce category. So you can almost think about this as cleaning out your closet. Like we're going to take out all the things that no longer work for you, and we're going to replace those things with what does work for you.

So first, we're going to let go of the idea that there is a right answer and that there is a wrong answer. So time and again I see lawyers who develop the most successful legal careers. The path that they take to get there is not at all linear. I've said this before on the podcast and I'm sure I'll say it again.

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But when airplanes are flying from destination A to destination B, they go on a zig zag, right? Like a sailboat that is tacking through the water. So you can be going the wrong way 90% of the time. But as long as you continue to course correct, you're going to end up where it is that you want to be.

This, if you look at all the lawyers around you, the ones ahead of you, and not just lawyers, successful professionals in all industries. If you look at them, the path is rarely linear. So your next right move isn't necessarily the one that is going to be your next right move and final move. It just has to be your next rate move.

The second thing that I am going to suggest that you let go of is all of the judgment. For lawyers, I love all of you. I have always resonated with the legal community from the moment that I entered law school to now, the work that I do with lawyers. I love the personalities. I find lawyers are people.

It's not just lawyers. I find there are many professionals, many individuals out there who have these qualities. But, for me, some of the qualities that resonate are that sense of integrity, the high emphasis on ethics and truth and justice, and the use of language and wanting to help people and be of service and make a difference and do work that is interesting and find other people's work interesting. These are all characteristics.

So with law there's this community, and it's such a wonderful community. You can feel instantly connected with your peers because you have this common sense of values. But it also means that you have a community of high achieving professionals who are really easy to compare yourself to and sort of enter into the zone of thinking well, they are doing all these amazing things. Am I really living up to that? So you may find yourself comparing yourself to others.

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Judgment itself is a huge part of the legal profession. So, judgment being something that we go to court for, right? Judgments issued by courts are a key part of law. I mean, that's really the basis for, at least in common law jurisdictions, the way that the law develops. You use your judgment professionally. So your clients come to you, other lawyers come to you because they want you to exercise your judgment in relation to a legal question.

You may start judging yourself. So you might start judging yourself against the standards that other people have for themselves. You may start thinking that their version of success ought to be your version of success. You may find this in particular if you're working within an organization where there are certain values that are reflected by those who are there. Sometimes those values align perfectly with yours, but sometimes they don't.

So you may start to judge yourself because you're not part of them, or you're not holding those same values in the same light. You may also start judging yourself for judging yourself. That's always a fairly painful additional judgment that we often put ourselves through without even realizing it.

Judgment can be particularly difficult if you leave a community. So I mentioned before that the legal profession really as a strong community profession. There's a certain camaraderie that exists among lawyers. So if you decide to leave a community, you might feel the pain of doing that. If you've left a job before and had members of that organization kind of reach out to you and question whether or not you should be doing that.

Sometimes it's even just taking a different role. Some people go from lawyer to non-lawyer, and then they have people reach out to them saying, "Well, why are you doing that? Why are you giving up on this opportunity?" So you may find that you're leaving a community. That can be really challenging. What I'm inviting you to do here is to let go of the judgment.

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Now, it may be difficult. You may find it really challenging. But I'm inviting you to let go of the judgment that you have of yourself at the very least, when it comes to leaving if that's ultimately what you decide to do.

It's interesting because—This is sort of a little side note for any of you who are thinking of leaving law. Now, I think making a transition from one job to another may come in any event with leaving a community. If you're leaving organization A or firm A to go to organization B or firm B, you're kind of opting out of one culture into another. So you are making a transition. You are leaving one group for another. You can feel a sense of loss attached to that.

For lawyers who are really contemplating what it might be like to not be a practicing lawyer, that comes with a lot of extra questions and soul searching because it can be really intimidating, and we can really judge ourselves. So I just wanted to sort of acknowledge that. That's the transition that I have been through. I can tell you that every now and again, even though I'm so happy doing the work that I do now. I love the work that I do now, for many reasons. Some of them similar reasons to why I loved practicing law.

But there are times where I will second guess myself and think well, look at that lawyer who just tried that amazing case. How amazing is that? Maybe I should have stuck down that road. Then I have to remind myself that it's not the choice that I made. If I wanted to, I could requalify. I could go back and do that. The answer so far has been I do not want to do that. But I just want to acknowledge that leaving a profession where you've trained for that, that can be really challenging. It's a tough one. Much of the judgment comes from within.

So point two of the things that we're letting go. So number one, we're letting go of the concept of a right or wrong answer. We are letting go of the judgment, particularly the self-judgment. Another thing that we need to let

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go of is certainty. As lawyers, we love certainty. We love to be able to say just like that Supreme Court of Canada case that has all the answers right there that that is your black and white answer. The truth is, and we all know it, there are rarely black and white, yes/no, success/fail outcomes.

So what we need to let go of when looking at the situation. We're in a situation where the job doesn't fit. We're looking at our choices, we need to let go of that idea of certainty. That something is going to work out exactly the way that we want it to or think it should.

Then finally, the last thing that I would invite you to let go of is the idea that the process itself will be easy. Chances are you're not thinking that it will be particularly easy, but when you accept an embrace that, it makes it a little bit less challenging, a little bit less painful to process. What are some of the things that might come along with letting that concept go?

Number one is to be really honest with yourself. If you have been bending yourself into a pretzel trying to fit in, trying to convince yourself that one day things will be different, you may have a lot to unpack there in terms of what you actually want. So that's number one is be honest with yourself. Number two is to explore the feelings. I've got four items here on my notes of things that aren't supporting the idea that it's not an easy process.

So number one, being honest with yourself. Number two, explore the feelings of failure, shame, grief, all the negative feeling emotions that might come up when you decide to make a difficult decision. Because they will come up. I don't think we can just ignore them. I think we want to give them a little bit of airtime and explore them. Again, because becoming more familiar with them, not trying to run from them or hide them, I think will allow us to, again, get to know ourselves better and result in us making better decisions moving forward.

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The third is to get real about the practical implications. This is for anybody who is considering leaving one job for another. Sometimes you're moving into a position where you're actually going to experience a salary bump. You're going to increase your capacity to earn. That will be one set of equations. In that case, you don't really need to be necessarily considering it from a financial perspective.

You may have other practical implications. Maybe the job that you move into has higher expectations in terms of how many hours you're going to be there. So you may need to organize more support for other elements of your life. That's some of the practical implications.

Sometimes if you are thinking about leaving your job for one that maybe pays less, or if you're thinking of retraining in some way and need to go back and get your education topped up, then you might be looking at financial considerations. So you might need to sit down and have a really honest conversation with yourself about what that looks like and what you're going to do about that, right? Where are you going to focus your energy? Are you going to move forward knowing that this may involve a period of time where there's less coming in? So you want to have that conversation, You want to be clear about that.

Then finally, when you let go of the idea that the process will be easy, I would invite you to think about what we were talking about with those cases, right? If you have that winning case and it's easy, and you have your answer right there, that's one way of looking at it. That might work out for you.

But if you find yourself digging through the archives of old case law, like really going back and figuring out what motivates you, what your values are, what's driving you right now, what drew you to law school in the first place. When you find yourself digging through those dusty old archives, it may feel really painful in the moment. But, again, what you get out of that

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process is such great information. The more you're going to dig, the more you're going to find out about yourself, and the more likely you are to find that next job, to find that next career move that is fulfilling to you.

So now that you've let go of the idea that there's a right or a wrong answer, you've let go of the judgment, you've let go of the need for certainty, and you've let go of the idea that the process is going to be easy. It really does feel like we're setting ourselves up for a leap of faith, which if you've listened to the Annette Choti podcast, she's wonderful. She talks about leaping, a leap of faith that she took when she transitioned out of her legal practice into the digital marketing work that she does now.

So it really does sound like we're shoring ourselves up. We're getting ourselves ready to take that leap of faith, to jump off a cliff. Before we do that, we're also going to start reintroducing or introducing elements that are going to support us in making this decision going forward.

So number one, and this is I think such a key thing to do for yourself, is to give yourself permission. I know for myself when I ultimately left the practice of law, it was a decision that took me a long time to get to. Initially, I know what was holding me back, at least one of the things, which was permission. Like feeling like I needed somebody else to tell me that it was okay to do what I wanted to do, which was to become a coach. It wasn't easy.

So you might find yourself in that position where you are in a job and you think this is amazing. This is an excellent job. There are thousands of people who wish they had my job, and it's just not working for me. You may be looking outside yourself for somebody to tell you that that's okay. If you need permission to come from somebody first before you can give it to yourself, maybe I'm that person. Here I am. I'm giving you permission to do that.

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For you, I would invite you to make that the first thing that you introduce is to give yourself permission to ask yourself questions, to explore the possibilities, to really do that deep work of what else is out there for you and what else you might like.

The second thing that I would invite you to do is to build new relationships that follow on your interests. When you listen to various successful lawyers and other professionals talk about the way that their careers unfold, often relationships are a huge part of that. You're invited to pursue an opportunity by somebody who knows you, who knows what your interests are, who knows your strengths.

So what I invite you to do now is to start building your relationships with individuals who you are interested in. Something about their work delights you. Something about what they said in a seminar really lit up some part of your brain. Whether it's because of the substantive work they're doing or who they are as a person, I would encourage you to just build those relationships.

Reach out to them on LinkedIn, send them an email, have a virtual chat, have a real chat, take them out to lunch, whatever it is. I just would encourage you to start really developing those relationships. They are so valuable on so many levels. Partly in a professional context, but also from a fulfillment context.

One thing that I find very interesting, and you've probably already found this in your legal career, but the more I develop in my work, and this is true both as a lawyer and as a coach, that my professional and my personal worlds really are blending. I found as a lawyer most of my really close friends ultimately they were also lawyers just by virtue of us being together and spending our time together. I still have amazing friends who are not lawyers, but I found that's where my professional and personal connections seemed to develop.

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The same is true now. I just find there's such a breadth of human ingenuity and relationships and connection that you can find when you're intentional about building and cultivating relationships professionally. So, I invite you to do that. That's step two. So you're reintroducing—Number one, you're giving yourself permission to explore. Number two, you are out there building relationships with people whose interests and whose personalities resonate with you.

Number three is I'm going to invite you to get to know yourself and what sets you apart. So, again, going back to this notion of fitting in, you may find that there are reasons why you don't fit in at the job that you're in right now. Rather than judging yourself and thinking I wish I was so much more like that person next door who seems to love doing this work. Instead of judging yourself and berating yourself, what about asking yourself what it is that you think is different about you that is preventing you from fitting in?

Then asking yourself questions like how is that a good thing? How could this particular trait or skill or quirk potentially be a platform for my success? That exercise, I think, will really help you see yourself in a new way. I think it will help you explore your distinctiveness as a strength.

You might be thinking okay well, what are some examples of how this might apply in a legal context? So a couple examples that come to mind for me are in a family law context, for example. If you're in an environment where it's very adversarial and what you really want is a much more collaborative approach, maybe you are much more drawn to that type of work and maybe that's not the culture of your firm or organization. That can be a strength, right? You go out and find a practice or you create a practice that is built on that collaborative approach.

Another example might be that you're in a big firm where you've got the blue chip clients and the billing rates are really high and the work is sophisticated. You may love all of those things or not. You may find that

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that doesn't resonate with you. That what you really want is to be providing legal services to individuals who wouldn't be able to afford the services that you're offering.

So you may decide that you want to go and build a practice or build a firm, build an organization that supports the ability to be able to deliver legal services to those people. That may require you to become innovative. It might require you to go out on your own. It might require you to do things quite differently.

But these are examples where something that sets you apart, something that is unique to you, or something even that you find prevents you from fitting in at your organization that's taking that piece of it and turning it into almost like the grain of sand. I don't know why this image is coming to mind but it is. The grain of sand in an oyster, for example, that ultimately you're going to build your pearl around. So I invite you to think of it that way instead of all that judgment and the limiting thoughts that surround you because of your belief that you should be fitting in.

So I've got a few more ideas on what I'd encourage you to reintroduce or introduce. The next one is your willingness to fight for what you believe in. Sounds a little bit odd, but what I'm trying to get at here is when lawyers come to me and they feel like they're not engaged. The work isn't exciting to them anymore. They feel kind of like really what else is out there? The opposite of that, to me, is when you're so motivated, you're so driven, you care so much that you're willing to fight for it.

So I would invite you to figure out how you're going to reintroduce that vigor into your professional work. If you need some ideas, one of the fights that I would invite you to take on is the belief in yourself, right? You are your own best investment. So what I invite you to fight for is to fight for your belief in yourself that you are going to find the work that resonates with you, and

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that you are going to do that work and that you are going to make a difference.

So find it. Find it for yourself. Because once you can reignite that desire to really work hard, to fight hard, all of a sudden, the rest of it kind of falls away. Right? The hard work is exciting to you. The challenges are just obstacles in your way that you're going to overcome. So that's what I would invite you to reintroduce is that passion, that willingness to fight.

A couple more ideas is to let the path be uncertain and to welcome it. So one of the things I invited you to let go is of course that need for certainty. Well, the flip side of that is let's let it be unclear. Let's be certain on what we're wanting, what we want to create, what our next move is going to be. Maybe you're certain about where you're going. But allow yourself to have a path that maybe is exact. It may not be a straight line.

Then finally what you're going to have to introduce, and this will be challenging for some of you, is taking action. So if you're in an organization, for example, and you really don't fit. I mean maybe it's the job that you don't fit with, but you love the organization. You could see yourself actually really enjoying being there, but in a different capacity. Then I would invite you to go for it. Put together a proposal, start asking questions, see if there's a need for that particular role. Maybe there is. Maybe there's not, but at least you'll then have a decision. You'll have some certainty in your mind as to whether or not you can stay where you are. But make a move.

You may start looking for jobs. So I see nothing wrong with applying for jobs and looking for other opportunities that might resonate more strongly with you. It's certainly an excellent way to get more information about what you may or may not like. I would encourage you as you go out and explore those different job opportunities to bring yourself to the table with your ideas.

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So as you're learning more about yourself, because you're doing that. You're doing that deep work. You're exploring your strengths, your interests, your skills, you may see a job description that has bullet points that align with you and you gravitate toward. And what else can you offer in that position that they haven't even thought to ask? How is that relevant to the work that they're wanting to do?

Create jobs. It may be that you're speaking with people. You're doing your networking. You may find that there are opportunities out there that people don't even know about. That they wouldn't even think to ask. So maybe there's a way of doing that. I would also encourage you to accept nonlinear jobs. So maybe there's a job that doesn't quite get you to where you want to be going, but it's going to help you develop a skill that is so useful to you. Then maybe that's your job.

I heard a lot about this the other day. A very well-known litigator who started out with cases where the substantive issues weren't necessarily the substantive issues that were the ones she ultimately wanted to practice. But all the skills that come along, learning how to run a file, learning how to appear in court, learning how to break bad news to your client, these are all skills that are going to help you.

So be open to those nonlinear jobs. Don't put the pressure on yourself to have that next perfect job that's going to be your one and only job forever. You can change jobs. So the idea here is to really help you move forward, not necessarily make that final step. Then finally keep going, right. Don't give up on yourself.

So again, just to summarize, what I would invite you to introduce or reintroduce is number one, give yourself permission to ask questions, to explore. Build relationships with individuals who have common interests. Get to know yourself and what sets you apart and ask yourself how that's a strength and how you're going to make that a strength going forward. Be

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willing to fight for what you believe in and to fight for yourself. Let the path be uncertain. Welcome an uncertain path. Finally take action.

So why will this approach work? Well, it will work because you will find a way to make it work. You are going to take 100% responsibility for finding something that fits for you. The skills you're going to need to do this number one, you are going to have to stop putting your head in the sand.

If this is something that you may feel that you're doing, I have a podcast episode. It's episode 20. It's for when you need a pep talk. I talk about this may be one of those times where you might just need a few words of encouragement. So they are there, right? So let's take our head out of the sand. We're not going to put this decision off longer. We're just going to start taking some action. We're going to start dealing with it.

Number two is a willingness to distinguish yourself and step away from the crowds. So I said earlier that one of the things I'd love for you to explore is what sets you apart, what makes you unique. It may not be all sunshine and rainbows when you go to do that. Because having differences, having strengths, ultimately we can turn those into strengths that serve us. Sometimes the road to get there is bumpy because it's not staying on the beaten path, right?

If you can imagine walking a trail in a forest and it's that beaten path. Everyone's doing it. Then you're kind of veering off to the side and you're having to bushwhack your way through all these trees and branches and twigs and nobody's ever been there before. That might be what it feels like. But who knows when you're going to then find a clearing the meadow, the lake, the beautiful unexplored paradise that people didn't even think to venture off that path to even find.

So you're going to need to be willing to go through that bushwhacking exercise. It may not be pretty, but when you're able to use that, where

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you're able to use your strengths in a new way, use what's distinct in a new way, that's where you're really going to get that magic.

Another skill you're going to need is the willingness to give up on what you like or what is comfortable in exchange for the promise of finding something that you love. That will be scary because you've got something right. It's there. It's steady. Maybe it feels sometimes like it's good enough. To give that up for something that you don't actually know is going to work out or that's going to be better, that truly is taking that leap of faith. That's something that you're going to have to do.

Then finally, the skill that you're going to need is to never give up on yourself. So, once again, I just encourage you to take that look within and to know that you have everything that you need. If you don't already have it, you can go out and get it. This is your career. This is your life. Let's take ownership of that. Let's take your power back. Create that life on purpose, create your work on purpose.

So when you do these things, you may have no idea right now what it is that you're going to create. You may not be able to identify a multiple choice list of options, and you get to check a box and become that thing. Maybe the job that you're in right now was a job that you managed to find or to get through a very linear process. Yet, it's not a good fit for you. So what you'll create is potentially something that doesn't even exist today. You wouldn't be able to describe it today because we don't even know what it looks like.

The results that you're going to create is when you're no longer bound by precedents or checkboxes, you get to create a bespoke practice. Something that is unique to you. When you find that, what you'll discover is that your confidence is going to grow because now you're in an environment where you're leveraging your strengths. You're not trying to hide what makes you different. You're actually leveraging that you're feeling

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more fulfilled because you've been intentional about finding work that you truly want to do, where you're making an impact, where you're enjoying your work.

Of course, that third element, joy. You're creating more joy in your practice. If you go back to episode number three, this podcast, this whole series, is all about finding joy in your work. A part of that is learning how to love the process.

Finally when you do all these things, over time, what you might find is that your career develops in this really unique way, and you find yourself really becoming that woman of distinction in your practice. Next thing you know, you're going to be the one who is invited to speak on panels to tell other lawyers about how it is that you got to where you are today.

So, my friends, that is my episode for you today all about what to do. If you find yourself in a job where it just doesn't feel like a right fit. Here are some steps and actions you can take. I would invite you to think about what it is in today's episode that you're going to take away and put action on in the next few days, in the next few weeks.

For any of you who are struggling with that issue, whether you're not feeling like this is right fit for you or it's okay but you want something better, something different. I would encourage you to reach out. You can find me on LinkedIn. You can send me an email. I'm always delighted to hear from you. I would just love to help you if that's where you are and help you navigate that transition. So thank you again for joining me. As always, it's a pleasure. I look forward to reconnecting with you again very soon. Bye for now.

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