



Lauren: Welcome to "52 Weeks of Hope." This is where you get to hear how to feel happy, balanced, and worthwhile, how to make that lonely ache vanish and feel empowered, confident, and secure. I'm Lauren Abrams, and I get to help you feel that magic again since going through my own dark night of the soul by chatting with incredible leaders, healers, and elders who give us their messages of hope after overcoming challenges of their own. Today, we're talking to the amazing coach for perfectionists, recovering perfectionist herself, Deborah Hurwitz. Are you sick of doing what you're supposed to do? Hamster wheel of success? Overachiever Deborah Hurwitz was, too, and she broke free from the old masculine identity of work, work, work that defined her, which she'd been super successful at, by the way, and now owns her time and success and is here to tell you how you can own your success, too. She's gonna tell you how to live what lights you up, stop procrastinating and complete that dream. Welcome to "52 Weeks of Hope," Deborah Hurwitz.

Deborah: Hi, hi, hi. Thank you. So great to be here. What a fun intro.

Lauren: Oh, thanks. Yeah, it was so much fun learning about you, and I wanna know how did you break free from perfectionism, and how can listeners do that, too?

Deborah: Well, that is a big question. Yeah, I mean, the first thing I wanna say is, you know, I joke not joking that we don't recover from perfectionism. Perfectionism is a type of fear, really, at the end of the day. And while we can strive for excellence and desire to achieve perfection "in the sense that we're satisfied," it feels done. We have peace of mind, right? We can strive for excellence, and we can look for and achieve the peace of mind that we want. But perfectionism itself is a mechanism of safety. It is a fear-based set of operations that has us pushing, and pulling, and hoping, and pleasing, and controlling, and reaching for all sorts of things that don't actually bring the satisfaction and peace of mind we're looking for. So I identify as a recovering perfectionist, and I coach self-identifying perfectionists to actually do the thing they really want to do, which ultimately comes down to a form of liberated self-expression.



And the irony is that with all the, like, picking, and editing, and controlling, and pleasing, and worrying about what other people think, and trying to get it just exactly right, and doing that one...taking one more course, and doing one more edit, and all the things that we do as perfectionists, including not doing, procrastinating, "I'm not ready," "I need to feel better," "I need to do better," "I need to be better before I even start that thing," ironically, the perfectionism is the thing that has us not do what we really want to do, not achieve what we really want to achieve, and not feel how we really wanna feel. So when I'm working with perfectionists, and I founded Productivity for Perfectionists and then ultimately rolled out COBALT Coaching, where I run my Mission Accomplished programs and a bunch of other things, it's really about identifying what actually matters to you, which sometimes is really scary to even look at, much less claim, and to be able to take action on that thing, imperfectly, messily. Can we curse on this podcast?

Lauren: Oh, yeah, go for it. Yeah.

Deborah: Make a shitty first draft, right? Like, you know, throw crap at the wall, let it be absolutely disastrous as long as you're taking action that's aligned with what you truly desire. And so the work of breaking free from perfectionism is really the work of identifying what feels unsafe and then working with the ecology of your system to make it safe for you to create, to do, to write, to give yourself permission, to simply exist, really, which some of us don't even feel on the inside like we have a right to do.

Lauren: Oh, that was so amazing. I love the liberated self-expression. I don't think I ever thought about...I don't think of myself as a perfectionist. Maybe my first couple years of college. I had a 4.0, and people thought I was, but I was so scared of failing out because I thought it was stupid that I worked really, really hard. So I did well. I was like, "Oh, I'm not as dumb as I thought." That was more of [inaudible 00:04:08] to be a perfectionist. That was as close...that's the only time I ever think of that. So I'm always amazed, like, "Look what I'm doing." I was not the overachiever ever.

Deborah: [inaudible 00:04:17] diagnosis of perfectionism, right? It's something that I created as a niche for myself, just because it's [crosstalk 00:04:23].



Lauren: It's so great. No, it's so great. People don't try because they're scared of failing, but I never thought of the perfectionist, it's the same coin, the flip. That was so amazing. So, sorry, I did cut you off, but I just thought that was absolutely amazing.

Deborah: Yay, I'm glad that's useful.

Lauren: Thank you. Yeah. But how do people find what matters? Because a lot of people, they know they're missing something, and maybe they need to just slow down and stop, or, I mean, I have a lot of answers to that, but I would love to hear you say...you had said that they need to find what matters to them, but how do you help them find that?

Deborah: Yeah. So, you know, I'll give the example of my show business career since we didn't get a chance to mention that.

Lauren: Yeah, yeah, there's a whole...

Deborah: So I started my coaching business as, like, a second career. I got curious about online marketing, I wanted to own my work, I wanted to own my time and my life, and that's sort of the most recent chapter. And it has taken off like gangbusters. And I never thought that I would have a passion or an excitement or a calling that was even greater than my calling to go be a professional artist. And I was dead wrong. This is, like, way better. But for the first, you know, several decades of my life, I was a professional artist, starting from when I was 12 years old, playing cocktail hours at bar mitzvahs, and teaching voice performance at a conservatory. I was an associate professor at Berkeley College of Music. I've conducted many Broadway shows. I've written all metric shit ton of music for television and film, and that was my career for a really long time.

Lauren: She's performed at the White House. I mean, she is so accomplished, is amazing. I'll put all of it on the website.

Deborah: Pull all of it on the website. Yeah, so I was with the original companies of "Miss Saigon," and "Mamma Mia," and "Jersey Boys." And in fact, even though I'm well into my coaching businesses and have effectively retired from Broadway, they've just recently made a movie of "Jersey Boys."



Kind of same thing they did with "Hamilton," they've now done with "Jersey Boys" to make a movie of the show. And they brought back the original creative team and the original band, and I'm in both of those. So I was part of the team helping to make the movie, and I'm also in the movie. And that was this past summer.

Lauren: Congratulations.

Deborah: Thank you. So that was really fun. And it was really fun to go back. Like, how often do we get a do-over of, like, 18 years ago? You know, I've been with the production for 18 years, and I got to go back essentially to 2005 when we were the "Hamilton" of 2005 and revisit the role I played, not just the role on stage, but the role in my own life, right? Revisit the role of employee, revisit the role of cog in the machine, revisit the role of performer standing in the back, right? There were all of those things that I've really outgrown significantly, but it was fun to go back and perform that role, enjoying how free I was, right? Like, this wasn't the career maker or breaker, this wasn't every moment was so high stakes, this wasn't who I was working with was going to determine my future. The circumstances of this were it's a six-week one-off, it's super fun, it's a legacy gig, it's the definitive version of a show I've worked on for almost 20 years, and I get to just have a freaking blast.

And I have a business that I own that I love that's mad successful that I go back to. So I'm not worried about fucking anything on this project. And comparing that to the existence that I had for so many years when everything felt so high stakes, this is the perfectionist brain, everything is it's all or nothing. I have to do it perfectly, or I can't do it at all. I have to do everything, or I can't do anything. Every person's thought, the funniest little eyebrow twitch, "Oh my God, my career is dead," right? Like, there's so much drama and high stakes running in the standard showbiz industry, right? And part of why, like I said, I started my coaching career, my coaching business, because of a factor of ownership. It wasn't that I didn't love the work I did as a musician, as a producer, performer, writer, it was that I wanted to own what I was doing and have 100% creative congruency with what I desired and what I was manifesting out in the world.



And in show business, what I was navigating all the time, as the perfectionist, coming back to your original question, how do we see what matters to us, was I might have an idea, a thought, I might write a song that nobody hired me to write, nobody's paying me to perform, what I was being hired to do was making other people's stuff look and sound great, what I was being hired to do was conduct someone else's score, write according to someone else's specification, accompany someone else's star turn, right?

And so because I was chasing...so this is the thing I want your people to hear. Because I was chasing the metrics of success that I thought I had to have, I had to have a certain kind of resume, I had to have a certain kind of apartment in New York, I had to look a certain way, I had to have a certain kind of money in the bag, in order to say, "I'm successful," in order to have those metrics of success, I had to sell out a lot of shit that really did matter to me, like a quality of musical performance or production, a style that maybe I was told when I was 22 was a hard sell, and therefore, I veered off to the right and didn't stick with that. Things that were essential to me, congruent and aligned with me, my soul, my reason for being on the planet, I didn't pay a lot of attention to, or I gave short shrift to, or I was quick to trade off because they didn't necessarily line up or I told myself they didn't line up with the metrics of success I had to achieve.

And so I had it inside out. What became nonnegotiable was the external accomplishment stuff. And what was negotiable was the stuff that actually mattered to me. And it was a long process, several decades, for me to discover that it's actually flipped. If what you want is to feel good when you wake up and go to sleep, if what you want is to feel self-expressed and satisfied and have peace of mind, if what you want to feel is that you're making something of this life, and you're not having that, "Is this all there is?" existential crisis, all the fun in that, if what you want are those true metrics of success, the peace of mind, the satisfaction, the fulfillment, then what's nonnegotiable is what's inside. What you know to be true at a very deep level. And what's negotiable is the shit you think has to happen that actually doesn't.

Lauren: So how did you get there? What happened to you? Something has to have happened to make you get there.



Debora: [crosstalk 00:10:28].

Lauren: You have to have hit some kind of a bottom.

Deborah: I hit many, several bottoms. And, you know, let me say this, there are a number of bottoms I can choose from. Maybe I'll choose one scenario about [crosstalk 00:10:38].

Lauren: I mean, there has to have been a final catalyst. I mean, I had to, like...

Deborah: There were several. I will give you a couple of markers as highlights, and then I'll go deeper into whichever one you wanna go deeper into. But the reason that I want to say there wasn't just one bottom is that something I was frustrated by in my journey towards evolution, self-actualization, whatever you want to call it, was there was this picture-perfect fucking story for every successful entrepreneur, where it was like, "I thought everything was fine, or I didn't think everything was fine. And then I finally had this one day when I just couldn't stand it anymore, and I blew up my life, and then I was really in the pits. And then I found this thing, and now this is the answer, and this is what I'm selling to you." And I hated that it was so pat and so perfect and so, like...nobody's life is like that, right?

So anybody who's listening here, you're, like, kind of wondering, "Does this sort of resonate? Is this applicable to me? Is there something I should be doing here?" Maybe, maybe not. And there isn't necessarily, "Oh my God, this is the moment when I knew, right?" There isn't necessarily a bottom that says, "Now everything has to change." In fact, one of the things that I coach and teach on is that the big changes come from incremental tiny little adjustments, small steps, right? You do not need to blow up your life in one fell swoop to have enormous change. In fact, I don't recommend that you do.

Lauren: No, we pivot in life. We don't, like...

Deborah: Yeah, there are many small changes along the way. Big changes happen in small, consistent steps taken over time. So don't worry about there being, like, "Is this the moment to do the big thing?" No, probably not, but this is probably the moment...



Lauren: Yeah, sell your house, your business, and get a divorce. And now, do this...

Deborah: Yeah, exactly, exactly. But there is... Let me just complete the thought because this is important. It is always the moment to take 10 minutes to do something that you care about, 10 minutes to do the thing you love but you're worried you're not good at, 10 minutes to pay attention to what you think needs 3 hours of your time, 10 minutes to do something that you think no one will ever pay you for but you like it. Those are the things that actually make the big changes over time. So I had a number of big drops. So I was touring with Cyndi Lauper 20 years ago. It was kind of my big first bottom. I had been for the 10 years out of college...now I just dated myself completely.

So, you know, 10 years out of college, I was ramping up, I was composing for commercials, I was playing Broadway shows, I was, like, a 20-something really happening. And then I was in my early 30s, touring with Cyndi Lauper, thought this was finally my big break where I was gonna be discovered as a rock star. I had put out a first album. I had a guy that I thought I was gonna marry. I was on the sexy, glamorous rock tour. And it all went to shit in the space of a couple of months. The guy broke up with me, the agent that was supposed to be making me a star ran off to chase Yngwie Malmsteen for some money in Korea. And I was absolutely left high and dry because I had been on this tour, leaving all these other gigs behind. I was coming back to, like, a shredded career.

So I felt like that was a bottom in the sense that I didn't have income, I didn't have business. What was supposed to be a big launch point fizzled out to nothing. And I was lonely and jilted, dumped. And I had a period of time when I just desperately needed to cry and talk. And that was it. Like, I didn't know what I was gonna do. I didn't feel like I had the wherewithal to put my career back together. At that point, I was not trying to do anything else. I was very much committed to my career as a musical artist. There wasn't anything like an online business or an online existence or marketing. There were no online entrepreneurs. I mean, the internet was new, right? I mean, this was seven years before Facebook was even invented.



And what I want to say about that bottom is that it was kind of my first indication that some of the work of being happy was an inner game, some of the work of being happy was going to be up to me creating resourcefulness and resourcedness for myself, such that I wasn't so at effect of my circumstances, that I couldn't just be taken to absolutely nothing because of what some dude thought, or because of what some other dude did, right? Just, like, that was unacceptable. And so that began the work for me of really strengthening my interior life and having some sense of self-worth regardless of what laurels I was resting on at the time.

And then I would say, like, the big bottom that ultimately became me launching my coaching business five years ago was in 2011 when I did a big show with Cirque du Soleil. And this was, again, supposed to be, like, the next big thing for me. And I was on "Jersey Boys," Broadway, I was with the company, being music technical designer for the production worldwide, a very cushy stable gig. As far as being a musician, that's kind of top of the heap.

And I got this opportunity to be the music director of a brand-new Cirque du Soleil show. And it had all this glamour and all this excitement, I've always been a rabid Cirque fan. So this was just, like...it just pressed all my happy buttons. It was just something I was really excited about doing. I went after it with a vengeance, I got the gig. And even though it was a risk...like, "Jersey Boys" was a stable, long-running Broadway show. I knew I would have a job for another eight years or so. And Cirque was supposed to run for 10 years, but there were no guarantees, and they pride themselves on being the circus, with all sorts of chaos and mayhem, and it's not actually a circus, but the mentality is there.

And the show that was supposed to run for 10 years ran for 2 and then closed. And, again, because I had just been so immersed in this one project, I had kept no other irons in the fire hot. I came back to a completely dead cold career. And at this point, it being, you know, a good 15 years later than the first bottom, I wasn't willing to go back to doing what I was doing when I was 24. I wasn't willing to go back to pounding the pavements as a freelancer. Even if I had better quality contacts and better skills and better advantages and opportunities, I just wasn't willing to go backwards. I wasn't willing to go back to New York



with the East Coast winters that I was tired of. I wasn't willing to go back to, you know, subbing and taking little handfuls of freelance gigs while I had my neck...I just wasn't willing.

And that's another piece in terms of coaching perfectionists and having you get to a point where you're gonna really make those changes or take those actions, however small, is you want to ask yourself, "What am I unwilling to tolerate?" You know, Tony Robbins famously says, "You don't get the life you want, you to get the life you're willing to tolerate." What are you no longer willing to tolerate, really? And you'll have the answer in how your life actually looks. So if you're saying I'm not willing to tolerate that, but it's actually in your life, you're tolerating it. Actually, Morgana, who introduced us, a mutual friend, loves to work with tolerations as an area of focus for improving your life. What are you tolerating? You know, what are you telling yourself you won't tolerate, but, in fact, it's there? So, ipso facto, you are tolerating it.

And what are you no longer willing to tolerate, right? Like, I was unwilling...I'm 53 years old, just kind of come out with my age. I was unwilling to turn 50 with my life in the state it was in, with my financially precarious situation, with my marriage feeling as bad as it did, with all sorts of life situations just feeling like I was not ready to hit my halfway point in life. And yes, I say that 50 is my halfway point in life. I was unwilling.

Lauren: Sixty is mine, so okay.

Deborah: There you go. And we will in our lifetimes have people routinely living to 120, no question about it, right? That's another conversation. But anyway, I was unwilling to have my life continue that way. Now, this was 2011, so earlier, but when I had the Cirque breakdown, when I came off of that show and went into a really deep depression, I knew that I needed to rebuild the structures that are pretty deep level. Like, I remember actually being on my bed. My husband was visiting a friend, like, 3,000 miles away. And I was on my bed, unable to feel okay in my own skin. I was sitting on my knees. I remember feeling, like, my butt cheeks on my heels and just rocking, like, holding myself in fetal position, with my fists balled up and my arms protecting my chest,



rocking, and crying, and saying, "I need help." I didn't know how to keep breathing as the person that I was. It was that intense and dire.

And I sought help. I started working with coaches and mentors. For me, the clinical therapeutic route was not for me. I knew this was a more holistic, spiritual, physical, and emotional situation. I sought mentors, I sought guides. I invested heavily. And I do recommend that people do that in order to affect big change in their lives. And I first had to get right with my own body, honestly, my own being, like the house that I'm currently in, I needed to get right with that. And I needed to be able to be the person who was no longer 25, no longer the young, cute girl in the room, and still feel radiant and beautiful and vital and able to create whatever the fuck I wanted in my life. I wasn't there, but I knew that's where I wanted to be. So I first had to do that. Before there were any career decisions, before there was any business strategy, before any of that, I had to get right breathing in my own damn skin. And that helped.

Lauren: So how did you do that? Because that's the kind of thing that the listeners want to know how to do. How do you get to where you feel like you're the most beautiful person in the room, that you feel right in your own body, you know you're the shit?

Deborah: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Well, so many modalities. I did so many programs and worked with several different people, but there was...let's see if I can do a little bit of a montage. I would say the absolute number one top priority, the top priority piece, was for me to learn and engage practices that allowed me to get present and still. So, as perfectionists, we're always in the past or the future, we're ruminating on the past, we're having anxiety about the future. We're never right here right now. We're never actually accepting what is so untrue and present right now. More importantly, what is not true. And so in present right now, but that we're making it up because we're worried about it, or it happened before, or it's gonna be the end of us, or whatever the fuck, right?

And so to actually be in this moment and give permission for what's so to be so, which ultimately forms the basis of the P.A.C.T. System that I now teach, but to be present and still. So we can often get one or the other, but one shoves the other right out of the space, right? So we can be present, but in the moment that



we're present, we get so, like, lit up and excited, which sometimes can feel like terror and looking over the edge of the abyss, but lit up and excited are just interpretations of the same physiological experience, that we gotta move, we gotta go, we gotta do something, we gotta figure something out. Sometimes it's a positive, "I'm inspired, ooh, I'm gonna move," literally or metaphorically move. Or sometimes it's a terror, "I must go away from this, I can't be here," so that we are not able to be present and still.

Sometimes we're able to be still, but in the stillness, we crowd the space with the past and the future, we crowd the mental space with the thoughts that are creating a reality for us in that moment that's actually not part of the moment. It's part of what was or part of what will be or might be, but it's not part of what is. So, you know, we humans have a really funny relationship to time, and this is a very much bigger, longer, deeper conversation. But for this moment, to answer your question, how, many versions, meditation, dance, yoga, listening to binaural, theta wave-inducing audio, tapping, there are so many modalities. Tapping is EFT, emotional freedom technique. It's a way of touching points, kind of a combination of acupuncture and hypnotherapy that brings you into a state where your brain and body are receptive to shifting thought patterns, and then you introduce the shift in the thought patterns, and you go from feeling anxious about something to feeling calm about something, and that's a great modality.

I've worked with...I'll just call out some of my mentors, Katherine Woodward Thomas, LiYana Silver, Morgana Rae, Shanda Sumpter. I mean, there are so many people that I've worked with in a number of different ways, in a number of different things. But really, if I were going to drill down, being present and still, with a somatic awareness, somatic, meaning in the body, you know there is somatic in the body, to be present in what is the physiology here right now, not just in my brain, but below the neck, perfectionists have a really hard time getting below the neck, we're so in our heads, right? It's so left brain crunchy analyst, you know. And get into the right brain piece, get into the experience of the body. What does it feel, taste, smell, and sound like? Right? To be present and still at the same time.



To tolerate that, right? It's not just what are you unwilling to keep tolerating, what are you willing to do? What are you willing to try to accept? How uncomfortable are you willing to be with what's unfamiliar, unknown, and, therefore, often unsafe to our very scared nervous systems so that you can actually be in a different place, right? Of more common way of saying that, a very well known, in order to have something different, you got to do something different, right? But often the doing that needs to be different is not doing, it's just being. It's the being still and present. If you can tolerate being still and present at the same time in this moment, and now this moment, and now this moment, living in the body you're actually in, bringing your awareness down below the neck, belly breathing deeply, dropping the shoulders back, maybe wiggling your fingers and toes, and saying, "I am here too, I am here too," like, really bringing your awareness into a very tangible place in the body and breathe there for even 10 seconds, it can change your life. The rest is strategy.

Lauren: Yeah, let's talk about meditation a lot. Like, we're doing a breath work, a live breath work, in an hour and a half in our Facebook group.

Deborah: Excellent. Awesome.

Lauren: Now, you have mastered the art of single-tasking and you're always bragging about multitasking. Talk about not being distracted, please.

Deborah: Oh, this is one of my favorite topics. Thank you for asking. Yes, so we are, you know, as busy overachievers, we absolutely value, "I can do a million things at once," and there's nothing wrong with traditional masculine do it, do more, do it all the time productivity in the sense that the systems and structures that get things done can be very effective. I personally love to go into a realm of, like, super efficiency and getting lots of different things done. I personally get a great deal of exhilaration from coming off of a day where I did this, and I did this, and I did this, and I did this, "Oh my God, I am a rockstar goddess, yes," and celebrate with whatever I'm gonna celebrate with that night, a hot bath, a glass of wine, whatever.

However, sometimes, again, what I was talking about before, around what we think is nonnegotiable is actually the thing we need to let go of, and what we think is fine to trade off actually costs us our soul and our peace of mind.



Similarly, with productivity, with "multitasking," I'll get to the fallacy that that is in a moment, we sometimes sacrifice the thing that really wants and needs to get done to have us say, "Now, that was a day. That was significant. That was meaningful. I feel good about having gotten that done." The thing that would give us that feeling and experience, we don't do, we're too busy doing this, and this, and this, and this, and this because we're going for the, "I'm busy. I am breathlessly on the move every second," so that I can feel worthwhile, so that I can justify my place in the world, so that I can take that paycheck home, or whatever it is. And in fact, we're just exhausting ourselves doing a lot of truly unimportant shit.

But if we're a people pleaser, we're gonna do it to make sure we're buying everybody's love around us and earning our places, the person who does for others, who make sure others are okay. That's a one version of codependent perfectionist. There's a control freak that says, "If I want it done, I have to do it myself. I can't trust anyone." That comes from a deep level of missing self-trust. When we can't trust ourselves, we have a really hard time trusting others. It doesn't matter what's actually happening out there or how trustworthy those people actually are. What's happening is that we just have a problem with trust, period, starting with ourselves, and so we can't trust anybody to do anything because we have to have eyes and hands on everything all the time to make sure it's perfect and it's gonna get done exactly right, right?

And that creates another level of exhaustion and then hustle, and overwork, and busyness at the expense of doing the one thing you'll actually feel good about, like pressing Publish on that post, or writing that blog, or journaling for 10 minutes, or doing that yoga class, or whatever it was that you know on some level was the really important thing to do that day. Somehow you get to the end of the day and it didn't get done.

So multitasking is a way of moving from thing to thing with the breathless skipping over of being present and making a choice. And what we're really doing when we're multitasking is we're switch-tasking. And there is actually no such thing as multitasking in the sense of where we're consciously placing our attention. We can unconsciously place our attention all over the place, we can be listening to a podcast while we're vacuuming, we can be doing the dishes



while we're having a conversation, we can be doing more than one thing at once. But I promise you, check me out on this and fricking email me if you think I'm wrong. I will take the science to you. We can only consciously place our attention in one place at a time.

And so if you're doing the dishes and having the conversation, I promise you while your attention is on the conversation, your hands are on autopilot, and you're gonna skip some grease spot. While you're vacuuming and listening to the podcast, you're gonna notice a piece of dust on the floor, your attention is gonna move to the vacuuming, and you're gonna miss what happened on the podcast. I promise you...now, there's nothing wrong with doing those things at once, do them, but don't say you're multitasking. What you're doing is switch-tasking. You're moving your attention from thing to thing, sometimes very quickly.

But sometimes multitasking is actually a huge energy drain because the time that it takes to go into a space, really focus there, achieve some level of flow, achieve some level of mastery, achieve some level of pleasure, or peace of mind, or achievement requires that your attention goes deep. In order to pull your attention out of that, go to another task and drop your attention into a useful place there, that's a switch-task, and it takes energy and time. It costs you something. It is not just ding, ding, ding, ding. You are not hopping from lily pad to lily pad like fricking dragonfly. Just [inaudible 00:28:21].

Lauren: I hope people email you, or text you, or be like, "Okay, I noticed you're right, you're right."

Deborah: Please bring it. Bring it with your multitasking.

Lauren: "It is switch-tasking. I don't even remember my drive to work because I was doing this, you know, the autopilot, I was listening..."

Deborah: Right, you can direct your...yeah, you can be unconsciously physically doing all kinds of shit. You can be doing more than one thing at once, but you cannot be consciously placing your attention on more than one thing at a time.



Lauren: Do you have any moments when you just felt like giving up, and do you share those besides the two that you said? I mean, when you're coaching, I mean, who's your mentors now? What do you do? Who do you go to?

Deborah: Thank you. Thank you for asking. Yeah, yeah, I love giving credit to people. So Ariana Hall is someone that I've been working with recently. She actually, interestingly enough, works mostly with men. Her site is empoweredman.com. But because I have so much, like, masculine bleeding in my life, like, she's actually helping me to really embrace the feminine at a much deeper level. Katherine Woodward Thomas helped me to find and not kill off my husband. And that was my first introduction to feminine power, which at that point I thought was an oxymoron.

Lauren: I did have [crosstalk 00:29:25]...

Deborah: You can be feminine or you can have power. You can't have both.

Lauren: ...yeah, to clean up all that old stuff.

Deborah: Yeah, exactly.

Lauren: I mean, she's so good at cleaning out your old stuff.

Deborah: Exactly, exactly. So, yeah. So I worked with her on that. Ariana, for me, is a little bit next level in terms of that authentic self-expression and some of the things that are, for me, really breaking from my particular brand of perfectionism, which is a type of codependency, a type of controlling to feel safe and I did. You know, I invest in \$5,000 weekends and \$10,000 week long retreats. Like, I invest now more in my personal and professional development than I used to make in a year, right? And I do it gladly because the ROI is huge. It's a no-brainer. Like, why wouldn't you plunk down 5K on a weekend if that weekend is gonna make you 50, right? Like, why wouldn't you? And sometimes it's a financial ROI and sometimes it's other types of return on investment that are even more valuable. Like, how do you put a price on peace of mind,
right?



Lauren: Yeah. Oh, absolutely.

Deborah: But to come to your question because I think it's a really important one, do I have my own down days? Who do I go to for my support? So in addition to giving all the shout outs to all the people, which I'm happy to do, those down days, it's important to note...like I was saying before, I always hated that, like, perfect freaking story. Like, I hit rock bottom and then I found this solution and now everything's amazing all the time. No, it's not because I'm a human being. And sometimes I have really shitty days and really awful feelings, and I'm not a nice person, or whatever the fuck. Like, I am a human being living a full human experience.

And if you are not taking risks and getting out there, you are not going to have either the achievements and the successes or the down days or the failures. You get both. There's no such thing as just all unicorns and rainbows all the time. It does not happen. So if everything's super safe and comfy and nice all the time, you are not taking risks in your life, you are not growing. And we have to grow. It's actually in our nature. Like if you think you're a person who's like, "I just like to be sort of comfortable and fine and not really doing anything," you know, first of all, you're not listening to this podcast. And second of all, you know, like, I'm just looking at the sign, 52 Weeks of Hope, like, if you are listening to "52 Weeks of Hope," what are you hoping for? Why does it even matter to have hope? Because you want to grow, you want to be in another place, you want to go to that next level, whatever that looks like for you.

There's an itch, there's a thing. Like, crustaceans molds out of their shells because they experienced the pain, like the nerve endings of, "I'm too big for this. This shell is too small." And they break it out and they grow another one. And we have our own human version of that, that we will grow, we must necessarily grow. How we grow, whether we turn towards the sun, whether we expand, or whether we squeeze, those are the choices we make along the way. So I absolutely have down days. But what I do is I have an arsenal now of tools and skills and resources where, number one, I know I can get out. I am never trapped. It is never, "This hurts and it will always be this way." It's, "This hurts. Okay, what's next? This hurts. How am I going to acknowledge it, move it through my system, get clearer, have this teach me something, have this bring



me to an ever deeper place, a place of empathy, a place of compassion, a place of wisdom, right?"

I'm never stuck the way I used to be before I went on the path of, "I'm going. I'm gonna create something here, right?" And to finish the answer to your question, like, no, I'm not just telling stories from 10 or 20 or 30 years ago, I'm telling stories from last Tuesday. And I tell my clients that when I enroll them. When I enroll them into my program, I'm like, "I'm with you on the journey. We are all works in progress. I am not the person who used to procrastinate and never does. I'm the person that's gonna tell you the story of how I was procrastinating on that hard thing I'm doing now and what I did to move through that in 48 hours instead of three years, and that's valuable."

Lauren: Oh, absolutely. Do you have a message of hope you want to give?

Deborah: Let's see, a message of hope that I wanna give. Here's the message of hope. You are not broken, you are not alone, and you are not wrong. We are always, all of us, part of the human condition, no exceptions, making the best available choices on our menu in the moment. So if there's a choice that you wish you made or you want to make and it's somehow not happening, your system is doing the very best it can to make sure you keep breathing. And it's doing a brilliant job because here you are breathing. You got all the way here. So if there's something that you want different, there's a way to get there that doesn't involve you being anyone other than who you actually already are in this moment. Your desire for that thing is enough. There's a tiny little next step that you could take. Take it.

Lauren: That is so good. I'll start with just the action. That's what it is. It's always about action. Is there anything I should've asked you that I did not ask or you wish I had asked?

Deborah: I don't know. I feel like we really [crosstalk 00:34:03].

Lauren: Yeah, we did, we did. I know.

Deborah: I hope this was helpful. There's nothing burning right now, except just to, like, invite people to reach out for whatever help that they can. I will say this one last thing. Often as perfectionists, we are the lone wolves. We are the ones



who don't fit into any mold, we don't fit into a group, we don't fit...you know, nobody knows exactly what's going on. This is my head, it's different, it's weirder than anybody's. And I know I get you, I hear you, I see you. It's okay to reach out and tap someone on the shoulder like me, like Lauren, like whoever's showing up to you as a potential resource for help and say, "Hey, maybe we can give some insight on this," and reach out for that help. Yeah.

Lauren: And I will have all of Deborah's links and everything else available on the website. So thank you so much for being a guest today on "52 Weeks of Hope."

Deborah: My pleasure. Thank you so much for having me.

Lauren: I hope you enjoyed this week's episode and take with you Deborah's messages of empowerment, balance, and mindfulness, such great messages to take into our week ahead. Be sure to join us in the Facebook group, where we talk about gratitude and healing and reaching your biggest dreams. We're also having a monthly meetup at "52 Weeks of Hope" in the Facebook group with one of the guests from the podcast leading each month in a healing modality. If you missed September, we had a very cool breathwork session for you. So be sure to join the Facebook group that's available anytime you want to access it.

Also, if you wanna be in the know, get on the email list from the website over at 52weeksofhope.com and you'll always know what's happening. This month, we have an amazing treat with EFT tapping from Mary Sise. She's just so great. And next week, there's an amazing episode all about connection, how we're all truly connected in a lot more ways than we realize. This one's super dynamic, not to be missed. Thank you so much for listening. If you're enjoying the podcast, please tell two of your friends. I'm Lauren Abrams. Thanks for listening.