

Small But Mighty Agency Podcast

Episode 83: 4 Habits for Thriving When Motivation Wavers

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Do you believe that motivation is key to success?

What if I said it's not?

Because, let's be real, motivation is fickle. It comes and it goes.

You won't get far if your actions depend on your feelings and you constantly wait for motivation.

Even the seven-figure business owners I work with don't always feel motivated.

Rather than waiting, it's all about setting up a system that works when motivation takes a backseat.

Let's get that system set up for you today.

In this episode, I share the four habits you can set up now so that when you don't feel motivated, you can take charge and keep moving forward. Tune in.

Audrey Joy Kwan

Welcome to the Small But Mighty Agency Podcast. If you're a marketer or consultant, or a creative on a journey of growth from solopreneur to agency owner, follow along because I pull back the curtains on the realities of growing and running a scalable, service-based business and building a lean team. I'm your host, Audrey Joy Kwan, I know what it takes to build an agency, whether it's from solo to three, five or twenty. I've done it, including supporting an agency owner to sell and exit. I've coached and consulted over 120 marketers, creatives, and consultants. And I've been behind the scenes of seven figure businesses. I also have a master's degree in communications specializing in organizational development. All this to say, I know what it takes to grow and operate a multiple six, and seven figure small but mighty agency. And here on this podcast is where we'll dive right in.

Audrey Joy Kwan

Hey friends! Welcome back to the podcast.

If you've been following this series, then you know we're in part three of how to make better decisions.

In part one, I shared a 12-step framework that I use to support seven-figure agencies to make better decisions.

In part two, I uncovered the top 5 Hidden Biases that sabotage the decision-making of agency owners I work with.

But once you make sound strategic decisions, it's time to implement.

That's why part three is about the one thing we wait for or want more of to take action. That thing is motivation.

I love setting new goals, and my motivation is at its highest when I begin a new goal. I get a surge of enthusiasm and excitement.

Over the years, I've realized reaching goals is a celebration, but who you become along the way is the win.

One of my goals this year is to publish long-form content (this LinkedIn newsletter) and an episode of my podcast every week.

I have strategic reasons and personal reasons.

Strategically, the goal is to increase my visibility; I've felt like a best-kept secret for the past two years, and I'm ready to break out of that shell.

Personally, I want to write and record content with more ease. Most people don't see how much time I spend overthinking my content.

By creating more consistently, I give myself less time to overthink and an opportunity to use my voice.

By sharing this goal with you, I keep myself accountable even when I'm not motivated because I know that at some point this year, the honeymoon phase of a new goal will end, and it will become all about the habit.

That's why I'm dedicating part three to motivation in our series on Making Better Decisions.

Motivation is fuel. It gets you up in the morning and ready to hit the pavement running, but what do you do when motivation isn't there?

When goals seem far away, and the first few actions don't turn out as expected, motivation wavers.

And you won't get far if your actions depend on your feelings and you constantly wait for motivation.

Can I be vulnerable with you? There are days I feel "meh" and "blah," and I don't want to work. And I know that I'm not the only one. My clients have goals and feel "meh" and "blah" sometimes.

So, how do I turn the "meh" and "blah" into progress? How do I help others stay focused and on course, even when they don't feel the same motivation?

Here are four things that make a difference to motivation. Motivation doesn't appear from sitting on your hands but from taking action.

Of the four habits, two are related to your thought life, and two are systems to create for yourself so you don't have to wait for motivation.

Let's start with thought-life.

Focus on your why.

Your why is the bigger picture. It's the greater purpose for taking action.

Sometimes, it might feel like you have to muster up all the energy to do one thing because it's hard to see at this moment the impact of many small actions combined for something bigger.

Don't focus on the action. Focus on the purpose and remind yourself why the goal is important and how every little action leads to your greater purpose, even if you don't see it now.

Reflect on past successes

There will be failures and negative feedback along the way. Sometimes, these can add up and deflate you.

Reflect on your past successes; this is not an ego trip. It's a reminder that even in past achievements, there were bumps along the way. You had the capabilities to get past the bumps and to do hard things.

Your past success is a testimony to what you are capable of today. Remember how you got here and know this goal is your next success.

Now, from thought-life, let's get to action.

Create a Routine

On low or no-motivation days, routine gives you the structure to stay on track.

Remember that my goal this year is to publish long-form content and a podcast weekly. To make that happen, I'm not relying on motivation. I'm relying on blocked-off and non-negotiable time in my calendar for content development.

There is a big green block of hours in my calendar weekly dedicated to writing newsletter and podcast episodes, its structure and routine. Instead of relying on motivation, I am committed to the structure and routine.

I know that when my motivation is low, I will find a reason and talk myself out of doing the action, but I remove the excuses by making it a habit to show up for the routine.

Like working out, I have a trainer, and I am accountable for attending my training session. The same goes for the commitments in my calendar.

Get a routine. Commit to the routine because waiting for motivation to strike isn't consistent.

Reward Yourself:

Don't wait for the big goal to reward yourself. You don't even need to wait for the outcome of the action. You can reward yourself for taking action.

My favourite reward is gifting myself the guilty pleasure of watching K-drama (Korean Drama). If you watch K-Drama, you know what I'm talking about; it's a different world of imagination, creativity and fun. Could I be doing something better with my time – absolutely, but that's why it's called a reward.

Reward yourself with something fun.

I'm looking at you, the business owner who tells me the reward is going for a walk with your favourite business podcast in your ear. Are you being honest with yourself? I was once you until I realized I was multi-tasking, and it wasn't a reward.

Rewarding yourself for actions and routines, not just outcomes, builds momentum. Momentum is what keeps leads to motivation.

Don't wait for motivation because motivation isn't the secret sauce to your goals. Doing the thing when you're not motivated gets you to the goalposts.

And here's how to move forward even when you're feeling "meh" or "blah":

1. Focus on your why
2. Reflect on past successes

3. Create a routine
4. Reward yourself

Moving forward isn't just about setting goals. It's about the transformation that happens in us as we chase them down.

This year, I'm all in with publishing my newsletter and podcast every week, and that's about more than just getting my voice out there. It's a personal journey to create more fluidly and break free from overthinking.

And let me tell you, it's also about setting up a system that works when motivation takes a backseat.

Because, let's be real, motivation is fickle.

It shows up all guns blazing and then vanishes when you need it the most. So, let's not sit around waiting for motivation to show up.

Nope, we're going to take charge and keep moving forward. Remember, it's the action that creates motivation, not the other way around.

As we move forward in this series on making better decisions, you're now armed with a solid framework for strategic decision-making, an understanding of hidden biases, and the know-how to keep going forward when you're feeling 'meh.'

Stay tuned for more, and let's keep slaying, one action at a time. See you in the next one.

Audrey Joy Kwan

Hey, there. Thanks for hanging out with me at the Small But Mighty Agency Podcast. If you enjoyed this episode, it would mean the world to me if you hit the follow or subscribe button in your podcast app and share it with a friend and I'll see you in the next one.