

Dealing With Being in a Business Funk

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You're listening to business badassery, the audio advice column for your online business. I'm Kirsty Fenton.

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And I'm Amy Posner. We're talking bite sized episodes that solve real world problems with a no holds barred tell it like it is kind of approach. Sometimes you just get into a funk and you don't know how to crawl out of it. And these past couple of years have certainly served up a lot of funk. So let's dig into this person's challenge. Some of our thoughts about what you do when you find yourself in that space.

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All right, the question that we have this week is this. How do you deal with the end of year funk, the one that hits you around the start of September when you're tired and rundown and really can't wait till the holidays so you can recharge the batteries. But there's still a lot you have to get done before then. It's like my energy and motivation naturally dips around now and doesn't really come back into the new year When Everything Feels like a blank slate. If this is just a me thing, please ignore. Well, this is such an insightful question. And so interesting, I think for us to dive into because it's about all those sort of, you know, intangible things in business, which is I think, sometimes where you and I like to play Amy, here's what I'm

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thinking. And this is this is an interesting thing, because we are right now as we're recording this, it is about the end of August. And I have taken a very, very slow July in August. Because my battery's ran down earlier. And it for me it's not it was it's not a seasonal thing. I mean, I wonder where this where this person lives to me is that, you know, is that if you can just use an ad of winter or summer? Because that's a real thing, right? I mean, I mean, as you have less light and stuff that you can, you can start just feeling less, less motivated. But anyway, getting back to what my point, and I do have one is what I'm realizing is you know, and you'll laugh, Kirstie but you you can't hurry up and rest. Right, it doesn't, it doesn't work that way. And so, you know, the answer to this question is balance, I

think. I mean, there may be some other things in here. And we'll we'll we'll unpack it a little bit. But I think the thing is, is you've got to get to the point where you're not so tired and rundown that you're waiting for a break. That's like months out? Because that's that's a long time, right? I mean, if you're feeling rundown in September, and you're talking about holidays at the end of the year, you know, that's a full third of the year. Right?

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It is it's a whole quarter. Yeah. Or Thursday, right, four months?

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Yeah, it's a long time. So. And I wonder, too, I mean, it's interesting, because like, you know, my mind is, I mean, I have I guess I do have a dip and not an energy during the summer just an interest in being inside and working. But I think I think a lot of people have that sort of, I don't know, like back to school mentality in September 20, what do you think? I mean, I'm going all over the map here, but I'm not I'm not sure where to land? Yeah, no, that's

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okay, I have some thoughts. But I also just want to say, I have to wonder where this person lives. Because I have to say, living in the southern hemisphere, I am so jealous of you folks in the northern hemisphere, because I feel like you almost get to good holiday periods, because you have your summer in the middle of the year. And then you also have like, the festive period, you know, over sort of end of December, early January. Whereas for us in Australia, like our main holidays, it's like it is that December, January, the rest of the year is lucky, of course, you have like school grows on breaks, you know, three times throughout that period. But, you know, there's no summer break in the middle to sort of break the year up. So it often does feel like you know, in January, you've got the whole year ahead of you before you actually get a decent break. So I've always been jealous of that. And also because you guys get a cooler Christmas, which I feel is much better for the feasting, rather than in Australia, where it's really hot and sweaty, and you're like trying to have a roast dinner and you're like, Ah, this is not working. But I digress massively back to this question. The thing that's really interesting for me is in this last sentence, it's like my energy and motivation naturally dips around now and doesn't really come back into the new year When Everything Feels like a blank slate. And it's that last phrase in particular that I'm curious about because I want to know what is it about that blank slate feeling that's exciting. And is it that you find that? You know, in most January's you're actually changing something about the business, like what happens in that phase that makes things feel a bit lighter and a bit more motivating. And does that change or that shift? Have to wait until January? I guess that's sort of what I'm really intrigued about and what I'm sort of keen to focus in on. What are your thoughts about that little comment, Amy?

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Yeah, I was thinking the same thing. And actually, and wondering what? Yeah, what? What's actually happening in inside of this? Because, yeah, like you said, well, like what's what makes it feel like a blank slate, which I interpret is like exciting, right? It's new, it's different. And I'm thinking, Well, how

do you create that? More frequently? Because and what is it that that end of the year delivers? Is it? It's time off? Sure. But is it? Like, do you feel in that time, like a hiking just let go of everything? And other times, you can't quite let go? Or you can't quite let go for as long? So I'm just wondering, how do you and that's what you know, and I said, I think Forgive me if it was kind of glib, when I first started talking, you know, it's about balance. But I think, to some extent, it's about it is right, because you don't want to be waiting to end up to be able to take time or to be able to recharge

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Yes, yes, yes, yes. And I love that all those things you said there because I think it's important for this person to really interrogate like, what is it about the time off they have at the end of the year? And that blank slate feeling like what is it about that, that creates that shift in motivation, and that shift in the way they feel about being in their business, because if you can pinpoint that, my thought is that, then you can work out how to replicate or create space for that same sort of experience, at different points throughout the year, so that you don't get to the point where you're feeling really like a lack, you know, it's very effortful to keep the wheels turning for those last four months of the year. And it's also making

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me wonder, you know, it, can you dovetail that with something that's seasonal, right? I mean, is there a way that you, you know, you could work up until that period, and then not work for that period? If, if you really feel like you need a break? Or if you are having more frequent breaks, we did not feel so. So weighty, you know, come September, hard to say, I think that like expecting to be motivated all the time. And I'm not assuming that this person expects that. But I think I think even if we're not motivated often as business owners we push, right, it's like, doesn't really matter if you're motivated, doesn't really matter how you feel if you've got a deadline, you got to do the thing. I mean, so there's that. But I wonder how much how much you when you use that business ownership side of it to you know, to protect yourself to create a, a container where it's a safe space for you. Because if you own the business, I mean, really, you get to decide, and I know it doesn't it doesn't, you know, it's not like yes, you know, you wave the magic wand. I'm not suggesting that you have to work toward it, of course. But you know, it's like Christie you. We've talked about this before, I remember one episode we talked, I was saying, you know that people look down on you, like if you sleep late, you know, I think it's like the same kind of a thing. Right? It's like, you can you can work however you want to work, I think it's comes back to what you said, it's like, what gives you the motivation? You know, what is that blank slate feeling? And how can you create it? You know, even if it's in miniature? More often? And does that keep the energy and motivation from dipping? You know, it's the same question I'm asking myself, you know, because I feel really good having having done less. And my question to myself is, can I keep doing less, right? I mean, like, I'd have to zener because if I go back to doing too much, then I'll be where, where this person is where I'll be feeling like, you know, looking, you know, at the calendar toward the, you know, that, that light at the end of the tunnel that feels really far off, which is not a great way to feel.

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It's not because I think it's sort of on the path towards burnout, right. And it almost sounds like for this person, like, they'll get there to the end of the year, as they always do, but it won't feel good. The process of you know, getting through all the work that needs to get done, and getting to that point in

time where they can finally relax, or maybe collapse, whatever that looks like for them. And I think I love what you said, Amy, you know, when you own your business, you can and I think should get deliberate about how your business works for you. So, and I'm also not saying that you can just click your fingers and you know, have a business that allows you to be on holiday, like every, you know, four weeks, whatever it might be, but if you know what conditions you want to create, and you know that those conditions will allow you to do your best work. Because there's absolutely benefit to your clients or your customers to if you are motivated and you are showing up, you know fully and presently with energy and it'd be dizzying about, you know, there's absolutely no benefit for those people to. So I think that can be good motivation to take the time and take the care and shape your days in the way that you need to be able to show up like that pretty consistently. And again, I don't think it means that every day is going to be sunshine and roses, but hopefully it means that things are a little more even keel and while there will be some days and weeks that are harder than others, you know, there's no prolonged sort of Hill But you're sliding down towards the point of burnout.

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Yeah, I think that's a good point. And also, you know, when you were just saying there about, you know, shaping days the way that you that you want them to, and I was thinking how, you know, people often talk about feeling guilty, right? Oh, I'm gonna feel like, oh, I shouldn't, you know, do this in the middle of the day, or whatever, you know, because there's work to be done. And then there's still this has to get done. And, you know, the truth is stepping away from the thing often helps you get it done. I mean, literally, your brain needs to recharge. But I think, I think that's something to look at, too. It's like, what, what permissions do you give yourself? And what are your sort of ideas around work and what work looks like and what you, you know, you ought to be doing? Because I think, you know, a lot of us come from a, you know, a work ethic where, you know, working hard is good. And, and so we do we work hard, and then we don't work, you know, no one's taught us, rest is good. And rest is important. All right. And, you know, maybe if you're, if you're an employee, maybe it doesn't matter in quite the same way. But if you're a business owner, you really, really got and I maybe that's not fair to say, but I think you've got to got to conserve your resources. Because? Because that's what you got. Right? And so you have to you have to take care of it very carefully. Now, I feel like I'm lecturing, stepping off the soapbox. First, it saved me.

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No, I don't think it was a lecture, I think it's probably a good reminder, because it can be so easy to get caught up in, you know, other things you think you should be doing as a business owner. And I think particularly if you have come from a world or the world where you are working for someone else, I think you can pull across a lot of those same expectations and boundaries for no other reason, then that's what you know. So even if they are not ones that are going to serve you and not ones that you would choose, you know, if you realize that you did have the choice, which you do. So maybe that's a good little pep talk for us to end on. And I think you know, I think as well, the one thing that I'll probably want to highlight before we wrap up is that it's not only you, you lovely person who has submitted this question, who gets in funks, like this. So, you know, don't feel like you're strange or weird or alone in that energy dip. And you know, whether that happens at the end of the year or some other time, I think it's more about acknowledging that recognizing that and getting curious about what's causing it so that you can make some changes that prevent it from happening or happening to the same extent in future. Is that a pretty decent summary, Amy,

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I love it. And I'm just going to add one more thing before we wrap. And I'll just say like, as we're talking about exploring various things, another thing to explore is, you know, inside of all the projects you've done, you know, what's giving you energy, because I bet there's some things in there that really drain you and I bet there's some things that really, you know, enliven you. And so it might be interesting to look at what those are. And could you have more of those, you know, if whether it's clients like that, or projects like that, because that's another way to sort of shift shift the experience, you know, from the from the inside. So that's something else suggest and I'll flip it back to you first, because I really end on fishery.

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Okay, well, I'll put a little plug in here. So I've got a product called the mirror journal, which is really designed specifically for these kinds of situations. And there's a section in there called on project and that would help you identify that sort of stuff, and he was just talking about, and there are other sections to like the place of deep content, which might be helpful for you to dive into, you know, when you are in that phase that you've spoken about in the New Year, everything feels exciting and like it's a blank slate to just really help you pinpoint what exactly is going on, and therefore how you can replicate that moving forward. So if you want to check that out, just head on over to Kirsty fenton.com. And you'll find the mirror journal in a tab right at the top. All right, on that note, that's it from us this week. If you've got something out of this episode, we would love for you to leave us a review. It will just help this podcast reach more business owners like yourself. And if you have a question that you would like us to tackle in a future episode, head on over to business badass dot CEO slash podcast and you'll find the submission form waiting for you there.

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Thanks for listening. Catch you next time.