

Overwhelmed and Educated – Scott Anthony Barlow

JOSH MUNSON: Hey, everyone, and welcome to tonight's live webinar, Overwhelmed and Educated-- How to Be Less Busy in Getting the Most Important Things Done without You Giving Up Your Life. I'm Josh Munson, the program coordinator with WSU Global Connections. If you're joining us tonight, and you feel too busy in any area of your life, let me tell you, you're in for a treat.

Before I introduce our guest speaker, I want to let you know that you can play along at home or wherever you happen to be. If you look to the right of the video feed, you'll see a checkbox. Go ahead and let us know where you're from, if you can hear my voice, by typing that into the chat box.

Now let me introduce to you our guest speaker for the night. He used to be in HR leadership doing thousands of interviews with candidates looking for jobs and hiring hundreds of people over the span of 10 years. You should ask him about the time when he received a signed 8x10 glossy photo along with the resume and application for a mechanic position.

Now he helps others make big career changes with his company, Happen to Your Career. He's been featured on places like Monster, Careerbuilder, the Huffington Post, and Yahoo Education as an expert in helping others finding and doing work they love. Now without any further ado, here's Scott Anthony Barlow.

SCOTT ANTHONY BARLOW: Thanks, Josh. Really, really appreciate it. And I'm looking here in the chat, and we've got people from all over the place. We've got-- I see Hope from Seattle. I see Carrie from Gresham, Oregon. I used to live in Oregon, by the way. Casey from Pullman, Washington. Nolan from Vancouver. Actually lived in Vancouver on the other side of the river too, but let's see.

Olivia, who's moderating here, by the way. You can give it up for Olivia at home. And then we've got Sky from Battleground. Tacoma, Carrie. Hi, Carrie from Tacoma. Victoria from Yakima. So we've got Washington state and even Oregon covered here. Priscilla from Philadelphia, if I could even say it right, and then Megan, also from Pullman.

Thank you so much for joining. Really, really, really appreciate it. And this is absolutely fantastic, and I've got to tell you, yesterday, actually, I sent out the reminder email for this webinar, and I sent it to people that had already registered at the time, and I titled it Webinar-- How to Be Less Busy. That's what it said in the subject headline. And as soon as I sent it out,

immediately afterwards, I got this flood of auto replies and out of office replies, and those came back automatically.

And the first one, the first one that I opened said, RE Webinar-- How to Be Less Busy in the title. And then in the body of the email it said, hey, we're in my busy season, so I won't be able to reply back right away. So I thought that was both hilarious, and it's like, oh, great. We're going to hit the right group of people. So that's absolutely fantastic.

But what I want to know is, what are you all so busy with? And I'd love to hear from everybody here. So go ahead and use the chat box. We're going to use this throughout the night. Tell me right now what has you so busy right now in your life. Is it work? Is it school? Is it a particular project? Is it volunteering, or maybe it's the opposite end of the spectrum, and it's *Dancing with the Stars* and watching that. Whatever it is, go ahead, and be as specific as possible. Put it in there. Get it into that chat box.

Now while you're all typing away, I've got to tell you, I want to take a moment to recognize Joshua, and I've been working with Harmony and the whole rest of the Global Connections team. And we've been working for months actually now to bring this to you. And I don't know if you all know this, but you guys definitely have a world class team over there at Global Connections, and they provide a pretty world class service, and this isn't at every other university. So I want you to know that as well.

Now a couple of the things here, let's see. Megan's busy with school and full time work, and Tammy-- oh, Tammy can see in here. So we've got people that are busy with all sorts of different things and people from all over the world. I want you to think about what has you so busy as we're going along here.

Priscilla says work and school too, by the way. And carry that in your mind. Tammy says work projects. So again, we're going to end up using this. Shelby says she's got a big project at work, buying and selling homes, kids, all of the above. I've got the same stuff going on here.

Carrie says work and recovering from medical issues. Oh, yeah. That's definitely going to keep you busy dealing with major life changes, absolutely. Anna says, when free, deciding how to organize all that I want to do. Yeah, absolutely. Full time work, part time school, treasury Aviation Club, president of another Aviation Club. Victoria's got a lot going on too. Now Sky says college, starting my MPA application.

So we've got lots of stuff going on. Everybody's definitely qualified as busy. Nicole says work and school and kids. I've got the same thing going on too. I've got three little kids-- five, six, and eight-- and their ages keep changing, so I can't always remember them. But yeah, five, six, and eight, and it goes back and forth. Harmony even says running minute to minute.

OK. Well, keep that in mind, and I want to queue up the slides here. But as we're going into it, we're going to talk about what has us so busy and how to be, as we said at the beginning, less busy, because that's important, because we want to have you be able to enjoy life and get the most important things done at the exact same time. So on that note, here we go. Let's dive right into it.

Let me ask you, what is busy anyway? Let's say you're in the store or on your way to class or work, and you see someone you know. You might ask, how are you, or how have you been? They might answer, good or fine or great, or if they have any amount of ambition at all, they answer, I've been busy, or man, it's crazy, I've been so busy, or jeez, you know, just busy.

We might laugh, and we might congratulate them for their busyness saying something like great, or that's better than being not busy, or for those of us that are also particularly ambitious too, we actually join in. Say, yeah, I've been busy too. Man, I've been busy. Oh, it's been crazy busy.

So what is busy? We've actually turned busyness into a pastime. Honestly, I don't think we would really know what to do with ourselves if we weren't so busy all the time. Sometimes busy is this badge of honor that, especially ambitious people, bestow upon themselves to make them feel better about a bunch of stuff that they don't really want to be doing anyways. It's a distraction and a bit of an avocation to avoid what's really actually important.

Now I can show you techniques to become less busy, and don't worry. I'm actually going to give you a few very effective ones before we end here tonight. But first, you have to understand what's really important in your own life first for it to work well.

Now if you would've asked me five years ago what was most important in my life, I absolutely would've told you it's my wife and kids. But then something happened that made me realize I was fooling myself quite a bit. I woke up one morning just like every other day. Well, I did hit the snooze button once. But other than that, it was a normal morning. I went out to the kitchen, and I made some coffee on the Keurig, of course.

I began brewing my cup of coffee. I sat down and got lost in work for a bit. Then a couple of hours passed by, and I actually heard my name coming from someplace in our house. Then I heard it again. And I realized it was my wife, Alyssa.

Only you know how when you hang around somebody for a long time, you can tell almost anything and everything from the tone of their voice? Well, this was one of those tones that I've only heard a few times in the 16 years that we've been together, and I knew that it meant that something was seriously wrong.

It took me an additional half a second for my brain to click and realize that on this morning, which I thought I was like every other morning, something was really, really not right. So I shut my computer off my lap, and I sprinted to the opposite side of the house toward the bedroom, and I could hear the shower running as I dodged coaches and LEGOs and everything else that was in the way, and I came into view of Alyssa crying and not really moving but clearly in pain. And a split second later, I was trying to ask her what was wrong, and she told me that she couldn't really see and couldn't really hear.

ALYSSA:

So I walked in the bathroom and turned on the shower and turned around to go get myself out and ready for the shower, and all of a sudden, the pain increased in my back, and I kind of stood still for a second. I looked in the mirror, and my face was totally white. And the pain was increasing. I felt more sick to my stomach than I had, and I kind of stood there for a couple of seconds thinking that I was going to pass out and trying to decide what was the best maneuver to make before I hit the floor.

And I finally-- I don't know how but decided it was best just to get on the floor before I fell on the floor. So I slowly made my way to my knees, and that's about the point where my vision started to go blurry. And then I could feel the pressure in my head. I couldn't really hear anymore, and the pain in my back was-- I don't even know how to describe it-- like searing is the best way I can describe it. I was sweating, and it hurt a lot.

SCOTT ANTHONY After I got her back into bed, I canceled everything I had, my morning appointments, and by **BARLOW:** 9:00 AM, we were at physical therapy, and Alyssa was getting seen. She came out, and they determined that the combination of teaching a bunch more fitness classes than usual, starting to do some longer runs again, and taking a beginner's yoga all will-- ignoring some really major pain for about three weeks-- have led to her having some severely compressed nerves.

The important part though out of all of this was that she was going to be OK, and everything

was going to be OK, except that it wasn't, because even though I just got done congratulating myself on how well I'd supported my wife, it really took me less than 48 hours to realize that I wasn't really actually putting her first after all that. Because right now, she couldn't do dishes, and she couldn't do laundry, and she couldn't pick up one of the billion Pokemon cards that our kids have left all over the house. What was the problem with that?

Well, I didn't feel like I could do them either. Now I want to ask you a question before I move on. Let me ask you, do your priorities really match your actions? See, I'd been building this company on the side of my day job in HR leadership for several years now, and I was working full time in nearly both of them. And it was a struggle. It was a struggle.

And you might say, well, just take some time out of both of those, and take care your family already. Your wife needs it. And you would be right. Absolutely. That's where the problem comes in. I didn't feel like I could. My boss was already bending over backwards to allow me the flexibility to build this business, and I had somehow unintentionally molded the business to where it needed me to be available for it.

I had absolutely forgotten my original intention in the first place, which was to put my family first and be there for them. In the process, I had lost control. I'd lost control to the point where I couldn't do the dishes, and I couldn't do the laundry for Alyssa for just a couple of weeks when she needed me the very most.

And the funny thing is that's part of how this stuff happens. That's how we get so busy that it's beyond our control, and for me, this had to change, because this really wasn't how I thought life should be, and it definitely wasn't what I was teaching people through my business, through Happen Your Career. I didn't want to be a hypocrite. Really, absolutely didn't want to be.

So I decided I need to make some major changes, and it started immediately. Right after I had this conversation, just a couple of days after this incident, with my friend Jodie. Now Jodie told me the story about a guy named Lee Cockerel. He was an executive at Disney, and he was the guy who was responsible for creating Disney Paris. And at one point, he was over all of the theme parks every place in the world.

And when Lee was at Disney, he used to tell his assistant that if his wife ever called, to get him out of whatever he was doing. It didn't matter what it was. It didn't matter if he was with the president of the company. It really just didn't matter. If his wife called, his wife Priscilla knew

that he was busy, and if she was going to take the time to call him, it meant that it was important. He was also very upfront with people at his office that his wife and his family were the most important thing, period. And then when it happened, it wasn't really a surprise to them too.

So now to some people, this might sound either unrealistic or crazy. I mean, how could you do this in your job? that's They're paying you to be available, right? Now to me, this actually sounded like making the things you say are the most important actually the most important.

And since then, I've started trying this. I've started trying to put it into my life, because I've realized that many of the things that we tell ourselves we have to do cause us to change our priorities. So for me, and it could be different for you, and that's 100% OK. You've got to figure it out for yourself, but for me, my family is the most important thing, and I'm going to act like it.

So here's what I want you to do. I want you to take out a piece of paper, or you can take out your phone or Evernote or One Note or any place you can take some notes. Just go ahead and get that out. I'll give you a few seconds here. I want you to get it out, get it ready, get it available. Again, doesn't really matter what it is. Now as soon as you get that out, here's what I want you to do.

I want you to write down all the things you already know, because most people already know some of these-- a lot of these, in fact. Not all of them, but most people already know some of these off the top of their head-- that are the most important you. I want you to be declarative. Go ahead and do this. Don't worry. I'm going to wait for you for a second. Let me give you a few seconds here. Write some of those down. Write a few of them down.

Don't worry. We're not going to cue the Jeopardy music or anything else. But here's some other questions I want you to consider as you're doing this. What are the things in your life right now that you say are a priority, but when you look closer, you really aren't acting like it?

Or what are the areas of your life that you want to make a higher priority and most important? Is it your family? Is it your mom or dad? Your spouse? Your girlfriend, boyfriend? Your pursuit of something that you love to do? Your side project? Maybe it's your health or your fitness. God. It could be a number of different things for you. What is it for you?

And part of the reason I want you to do this is I want you to be thinking about, what is your why? What is your why to not be so busy? What are those most important things? Because

when I show you some of those techniques and tactics a little bit later on, this stuff doesn't work without your why and without already having identified clearly and declaring, what are some of those most important things? What's that thing in your life? Again, write it down.

So why is this so important to consider right now? Why is this such an issue? Why is this pressing? Here's why. Imagine five years from now. I want you to think about that. And let's assume that in five years from now, you're going to layer in more stuff. You're going to add more to it. What is going to drop out the bottom?

For most people, it's going to be the stuff that they say really matters to me. That's what happened to me. I mean, I just told you a little bit about one of those stories. I wish I could say that was the only time, but that's what happens. And look around, and it's easy to see this happening all over the place, because we aren't really living our priorities.

So I work with lots of coaching clients, and I help them really identify some of those most important things and the way that they want to spend their time, and on average, it usually takes me a month to several months to help them work through this type of process and really get clear on what it is that they want. So I don't expect to go through that entire process in the short time that we have here.

But here's what I want to do. I want to give you a resource so that you can go through even more of it on your own, aside from what we've already listed down on paper for you right now, some of the things that you already know. Because there's other things that you're not thinking of that are also important to you in your life, your work, your career, and everything else.

So if you want some help figuring out your priorities and some of those most important ways to spend your time and how that relates to your career and your life, you can visit FigureItOut.co, and we've got a free eight-day course set up there for you. That'll help you with exactly that.

So that's another resource. You can have that. We'll do that for you for free. But what now? Let's say that you're fired up. You're saying, well, I don't want to do that. I don't want to be busy just because that's what everybody else is doing. That sounds silly. So what should I do differently? What should I do differently?

Now that I've already figured out some of the stuff that's important to me, what is it that I should do differently? Hold on there, bucko. Here's the only problem with that. Problem number one is everybody else has different priorities than you. This is a major issue. If you

look around, your professor's going to have different priorities.

Your boss is going to have different priorities than you. Everyone has different priorities than you, and once you start being declarative, you're probably going to make a few people angry, and that's actually OK. Everybody will have different priorities, and that's important to know. So that's one of the problems that you're going to face. And again, I'm going to give you some things to help out with these problems.

Problem number two, also very important to understand. You've got infinite choices and distractions that can take you away from what is really important. This is a major issue. Just look around at everything from technology to opportunities to things to do that's available to-- I mean, we live in an entire world of infinite choices and distractions. Is it a first world problem? Yeah, sometimes, but it's also realistically a problem. So this is problem number two. You've got these infinite choices and distractions that can take you away. OK?

So here's what I want to do. I want to give you these three tricks and hacks to be able to help you. So trick number one, this is one of my favorite things. By the way, as I look back on the last 10 years, and at one point in time when I was going to college, I was running a business on the side and just recently got married and all these other things along those lines, and then ended up building a business on the side of my regular job too.

So as I look back on all these different things where fitting in business and family and another job and everything else that's happened for me over the last 10 years, these are some of the most effective things. And on first glance, they're not going to sound like that big of a deal. But I want to help you understand why they are ridiculously effective for me.

Trick number one, I call this the 1/2 Notecard. I've heard variations of it over the years, and I've seen it in a lot of different forms, but I actually didn't start using it until I read Tim Ferris's book, *The Four-Hour Workweek*. Don't know if you've ever read that. Great book. Worth a read. It'll challenge you quite a bit.

Now one of the things that he suggests in there take a piece of paper, and fold it over, and fold it over again, and fold it over again, and then what you're going to do is you're actually going to identify the one to two most important things you need to get done that day. I suggest the notecard, simply because it's already small. You can only fit so many things on that anyway. You don't want three or four or five or 10. You absolutely don't want that.

Instead, I want you to give a little bit of consideration for that particular day when-- this is best done either actually the night before or even when you wake up in the morning. I want you to identify, what are those one to two things that if you do nothing else or you get nothing else done that particular day, these are the most important?

And then I want you to keep this with you throughout the day, and as you find yourself tempted to do the other things, I want you to look at this and dive into these first, and remind yourself that these are the most important. This is what's going to move you forward. Really, really simple trick, but I want you to focus on doing those before anything else that you do. Again, very simple, but it works partially because you've got it ever present with you throughout the day.

Literally, put it in your pocket so that you feel it there, and it reminds you throughout the day what those two most important things are. You're going to pull it out, just look at it really, really quick, and again, doesn't sound like a big deal. But if you've already done that five minutes of hard work in a given day to understand, what are those most important things, then you're going to get less distracted throughout the rest of the day. So the 1/2 notecard trick-- this does absolute wonders. And again, resist the urge to put three or four or 10 or 15, 400 things on there. Got to be one to two. Limit that down to one to two.

Trick number two, this is a good one. This is one of my favorite ones. There is a word that actually helps you stay less busy. It is that powerful. The problem is it seems to have fallen out of use in our society. What is it? Well, it's no. It is N-O, no. It's something that is often hard to say, because we say yes to everything. We have a tendency to want to say yes to opportunities. We have a tendency to want to say yes to friends, to family.

There's only so much time in a day. If you say yes to too many things, your time is going to be taken up. And then guess what. You're going to wake up the next day wondering why you didn't get anything done or didn't get to spend any time doing some of those most important things. And that's what happens to almost everybody. This is part of what causes people to feel overwhelmed.

They take on too many commitments. They get to that point where I was talking about where you lose control that I've experienced a number of times in my life, and it's unintentional. It's from a good place. So it's coming with good intention, but I want you to get used to this word. Here's how it works. You put your tongue to the back of your teeth, and you go nnnn. OK. I'm

just kidding. But here's how it actually works. I want you to practice saying no gracefully.

This is an art, because this is something that actually when you say no, most people that really value what is most important in their life-- for example, millionaires. Millionaires are good at this. I've seen a number of studies again and again and again. They have a number of things in common besides net worth that have zeros on the end.

But one of those biggest things that they have in common is they say no to the things that aren't the most important. That's not to say that if you say no and start saying no, you're instantly going to add more to your bank account. My lawyer says that I can't tell you that. But I do see that people with this skill get to do things that are most important to them much more consistently.

So I want to give you just a couple of quick ways to be able to do that. So your friend comes over, or maybe your professor. We can pick a situation. You're going to get the opportunity to say yes or no hundreds of times a day sometimes. So let's go with the friend situation.

They say, hey, can you help with this? Here's how it works. Get ready. It's a little bit difficult. You say, you know what? I would absolutely love to. I am really, really sorry. I can't. If I come help with that, then that's going to cause me to not be able to do this.

And you can insert that other thing that you-- you've already done your work, so you already understand what is this bigger priority today. And it allows you to be blatantly honest with them, because we have a tendency to say, well, you know, here's my excuse for why I can't come up with that. But just be blatantly honest with them. Say no. They'll appreciate your honesty, and it's much, much more graceful than trying to find an excuse out of it. This is something that takes a little bit of practice. It doesn't sound like it should, but it does take a little bit of practice in order to be able to say no gracefully.

So here's what I want you to do. I want you to try saying no sometime this week. You're going to have an opportunity. You might have an opportunity later today. You might have an opportunity later tonight. I want you to try saying no to someone sometime this week. Remember this.

Let me give you trick number three. It's called Removing the Junk. Now if you simply choose to do less stuff that doesn't contribute to what you want, that's intentionality, and that's removing the junk. Sounds logical, right? So how does that actually work? For example here, let me give

you an example. I used to get the mail every single day, every day. Our mailboxes-- well, except for the days it wasn't deliver, but every other day.

But our mailbox is probably about 150 feet from our house, and I would walk over there daily, and I'd fiddle with the key, which never really works quite right. And then I'd open the box, and I'd discover five pieces of mail overall. And probably out of that five, three are probably junk mail, maybe a credit card application offering me the latest color and type of metal credit card, platinum or silver, whatever it happens to be, and then one is probably a statement from someplace. And the other one might actually be an interesting piece of mail. But it's usually not.

So this ritual might take less than 10 minutes a day. I mean it's 150 feet. It just takes a little walk, and then I open the mail, and whatever else. So less than 10 minutes, and you think, what's the big deal? So cumulatively, this might be just slightly less than 50 to 60 minutes a week that's really not adding anything to my life other than maybe I get the 150 feet of walking exercise. But when you add that all up, 50 to 60 minutes a week for something that's really not adding any kind of value into my life? That's a major deal.

How many of these five to 10 minute tasks do you have during the day that aren't adding value to your life? Think about that. How many do you have in your life throughout your week inside of work and outside, a college class, or whatever it happens to be, that really just aren't adding anything, or they're taking you further away from what you really want. Now almost embarrassingly so, I found way more of these things in my everyday life than I care to share with you. And I'm willing to bet that you have some of these too.

Now if you're saying no way, Scott. My life is so busy, I don't even have time to get the mail, because my life is so busy, then I'm going to ask you how many times you've already checked Facebook or your social media of choice, because those little numbers next to your app icon on your phone? Yeah. Yeah. I'm talking to you. Or maybe you've already disabled those notifications, you say, because you've already realized that, hey, that's probably not adding that much value to your life, whatever it is. And you're being really intentional.

You're only checking Facebook or social media or whatever, and this is not a hack on you for checking social media or anything like that. But what about another example? What about your email at work and every time it dings or pops up a little thing on the screen? And then you go into it, and then you end up losing seconds which add up a lot over the course of the day. Or

phone messages from your co-worker that you had to check. You couldn't stand the red light, so you had to check it. Whatever it is.

So I actually started experimenting with this in my HR job a couple of years ago. I actually changed my message, my phone message to say that I would call them back when I could, and I just couldn't answer right now, and then I actually stopped checking my messages for a day at a time.

Then I went to a couple of days. Then several days. And then I went to a week at a time. So miraculously, because I thought it was going to be crazy, nothing blew up. Surprise, surprise. Nothing blew up, and people that truly had urgent needs actually found other ways to get in touch with me.

But what I did do is I found out that hey, most stuff really isn't urgent. Most stuff is taking me away from what is most important, and best of all, I must've avoided at least 500 calls of people trying to sell me stuff. So I ended up saving a ridiculous amount of time that just didn't matter. But that's a faux pas, right? You have to check your phone messages, right?

You have to. It's part of my job. You have to. And the reality was I realized that it was my fault. This was my fault that I had unintentionally conditioned people to expect that I would return their messages immediately. That was not their fault. That was not their thing. I'm the one who did that. I'm the one who set that tone. I'm the one who set that example.

So as we think about that here, I hope, and my hope, I guess I should say, in delivering this talk is I want you to, as you think about this, and as you think about your life and your work and your education, I want you to figure out what is absolutely most important to you. And then I want you to have the courage to act on it more often, and I promise you, if you do that, you will be less busy.

Now after that, I want you to take just one of these tricks, just one of them, any one of them, and act on it sometime in the next week here. I want to say thank you very, very much. I really appreciate you spending time with me, and I want to hang around just a little bit, just in case anybody has any questions.

And by the way, you can go ahead and tap those into the chat box on your right hand side. We might already have some questions that got asked earlier in the session here, but as you're doing that, anything that you need or wanted to ask later on too, I want to make myself

available. You can email me as well, Scott@happentoyourcareer.com.

All right. Like I said, I had to break into the slides here, but for any questions that you have, go ahead and type them into the chat session, the chat box, and I'll be thrilled to pieces to hang around here for a few minutes and answer anything that I possibly can. Other than that, I think the one of the things that we didn't get to talk as much about during this time, and where all of those tips, those tricks, those hacks come from is really the what is really not just adding value into your life, but what is most effective?

And we can talk as much about the 80-20 rule, but that is critical, so really that comes from, if you've heard of Pareto's law and Pareto's raising peas, and noticed that 20% of them were producing 80% of the peas. So that ended up, over time, noticing almost every aspect of life had something similar. 20% of the results or 80% of the results come from 20% of the inputs.

And that's what I would encourage you to do in your own life as well, but if you've got any questions, go ahead and last opportunity. Type them in here, and I'd be thrilled to, like I said, try and answer a few. And otherwise, thank you so much. Really appreciate it, and got to put thanks out to Harmony and Joshua and Olivia and everybody else on that team. You guys have been awesome.

Thanks, Carrie. Really appreciate it. Glad you enjoyed it. And glad we gave you a bunch to think about. That was part of the intention here. All right. So we are going once, going twice, and by the way, if you have other questions, like I said, I put my email up here and intend to be able to get back with you if you've got any questions.

Shelby does have one. She says, so what is your employer's expectation that you're immediately responsive to emails and voicemails from clients? But doing so is distracting to your work priorities.

So I've had that type of job, Shelby, and that is a hard place, because quite frankly, a lot of times it's unrealistic. A lot of times it is unrealistic, especially if you have additional duties, additional responsibilities, additional authorities, whatever it happens to be. Everybody's heard of the challenge and multitasking and all the research and everything around that, because on average, it takes somebody 17 minutes to be able to refocus.

So we all know the issues with it, so here's what I would do and what I have done in your particular case. I would go and have an honest conversation with your boss. And in this honest

conversation, I think there's a couple of things that you need to consider. What it can be is, hey, look, this is a pain in my behind, and I don't really like it all that much. And I would much prefer to be able to get back to people within this time frame. It can't be about you. Instead, it has to be about how you're going to be able to add value in a different way.

So just like you said, you've already noticed that it's distracting to your work priorities, right? So here's the way that I approached that in the past. I went to my boss and said, hey, I would love it if we could try something. One of things that I've noticed is I'm getting less done than what I think I could be. The reason I'm getting less done is because we have this expectation that I need to be fairly quickly responsive.

Now if I could be a little bit less quick responsive, I could actually be more productive in these other areas. List off whatever those other areas are. And then here's the critical part. Ask for a trial. Don't say, hey, what I'd really love to do is just never do this again. Instead say, would you be willing to try this out? Could we try this out for two weeks? And then if it works, then we can keep it or talk about how to modify it, or if it doesn't work, then we can go back to the original way.

And then here's the other thing I would do in your case at that point is make sure that it works really, really, really well. Make sure it's one of the most productive weeks possible, so you can go back to them and say, hey, look, this is much more effective, and it probably is just off the get-go anyways. But then on top of that, man, look at these differences. Here's what I was able to do during this time frame, and here's what I was able to do in this other time frame.

So make it about your employer, and make it about how you're going to add a difference in value as opposed to anything else. So hopefully that helps, Shelby. Let me know if it doesn't. Victoria has said to Shelby, I ran into the same problem at work. I spoke with my supervisor and now have a meeting every week where I get all the [INAUDIBLE] in sending my help that week. It's really helpful. And that's a great suggestion too, but I think that you have to absolutely go and try and partner with whoever you're working with, if that's your supervisor or your boss or wherever that expectation is coming from.

And the reality is it's absolutely not going to change if you don't do that. Sometimes those conversations are hard, but I find they are much, much easier if you can help them understand what's in it for them. So Josh, you said, hey, somebody who's 22 and the whole world ahead of you, I'm still struggling to find my why. Any tips on that process? Yeah, I mean that's the

core of what we do. The challenge is it is not easy. It is not easy.

We typically use a process that's a little bit like putting together a puzzle to help people understand both their why and the things that they enjoy and their strengths and try and combine all that stuff together, because we spend a lot of our time helping people focus on what type of work and career pursuits that they should be doing or should have that really fit them so they could spend the majority of their time doing things that they love to do.

So through that process, through that process, typically, we're going in and understanding a couple of different areas. Area number one, and if you're going along with the puzzle methodology, then when you're putting together a puzzle, there's an efficient way and a not so efficient way. The efficient way is you're going to take the corner pieces, and you got those, and you separate those out, and you identify those really quickly. And then you've got the edge pieces, and then you build together the frame. And once you build together that frame, then you can actually start to fill in what the rest of the picture looks like.

So very often, that picture, which sometimes can be your why, sometimes can be other things, is the hardest to fill out, unless you have that framework built out first. So within that framework, we would consider those corner pieces to really be your strengths, and what we call specifically your signature strengths. Now signature strengths are really the combination of what you're great at and also what you love, because often people have things that they're great at, but they may not enjoy it so much. So when those combine together, then that's what we start to consider that signature strength area.

And once you've got those signature strengths, then that framework is some of the other things that you really want in your life and in your work and in the different areas of your life. So everything from the environment you spend time in to the people you hang out with to wellness and health and financial and all of these other pieces, and that framework, once you have that built out, believe it or not, it becomes markedly easier to not only identify some of the why, but also at the same time, to really figure out what that picture looks like, that, in this case, the puzzle analogy, what that full puzzle when it's put together actually looks like.

And that's the process that I would encourage you to go through. That FigureItOut.co actually helps ask some of those right questions to be able to really start figuring it out. But some of the questions that happen to be on there are some of those polarizing questions like if you were to die tomorrow, what would you regret not doing or not being able to spend your time in a

particular way? So that's a polarizing question.

Another piece of that why, sometimes people are very excited or very passionate about particular problems that they get to work on. And one way to think about that is what have you been personally impacted or affected by in your life? And for me, part of the reason I started building Happen To Your Career way back when is I got fired from a job, and it was a job that I was particularly terrible at, and they should've fired me, because I was horrible at it.

And I didn't know how to make career changes at that point in time, so I dug in, read, and soaked up anything that I possibly could, and ended up getting a whole bunch of interviews and a couple of job offers and everything like that over about a three month period. Then I made another career change after that and did it again, and then I made another one, and did it again.

And I'd run a couple of businesses over that time, and I realized that that came from my initial problem and having to solve that problem was part of the reason I was pretty passionate around it and pretty excited about helping other people really solve and connect with that problem in a different way too.

So what are those things for you? What are some of those problems that you've experienced in your life that you've either been able to overcome or that have impacted you? And that's another type of thing that you can look for. And again, that FigureItOut.co, it has a whole bunch of those types of questions. So hopefully, that helps a little bit, Joshua.

That was the roundabout overview to be able to center in on it, but it is not an easy process, and it's typically not a one and done type thing. The other challenging aspect is it continually changes for people. When I had the first of our three kids, like all of a sudden, my life changed, and the same things that I wanted before kids are not the same things that I want after kids or even now.

And so it ends up being a moving target as well. And that why can change over the years. So hopefully that helps quite a bit, and again, if there's anything else that you need, do feel free to email me. I get a lot of emails, but I try and get back to as many as I possibly can. Thank you very, very much for having me.

I obviously just spent a whole bunch of time talking about how time is valuable, so I very, very much appreciate on a high degree that you've chosen to spend your time with me. So thank

you very, very much. I will see you all maybe next time, if we do another one of these. And I think, by the way, Josh has a survey. Go ahead and take a second to fill that out, if you don't mind. I know that they love the feedback. All right. Have a wonderful night.