

Ep #281: Turning Fear into Fuel: The Self-Love Approach to Big Goals



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With Your Host

Amanda Hess

[How to Love Yourself No Matter What](#) with Amanda Hess

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We've been taught our whole lives to avoid failure. Get the A, pass the test, win the medal. But what if failure is actually the fastest path to success? What if the missing ingredient isn't discipline or grit, but self-love? Today I'm going to share the four steps to move through the fear of failure and launch yourself into success.

This show is for women who've been labeled, misdiagnosed, or misunderstood. Whether you have a diagnosis or just know deep down that you experience life differently, this is your space to stop fixing yourself and start trusting who you already are. My name is Amanda Hess. Let's go.

Hey, my friend. Welcome to the podcast. When this is launched, I'm pretty positive that this is going to be October. And that means that we're entering into the last quarter of the year. And goal setting isn't something that we talk a lot about in September. But it's something that I noticed even today, I was coaching with a colleague, and when I asked her what the date was for her to capture her goal, she said to me that she's just not a fan of setting goals because of the panic it creates for her.

And I just thought that was so fascinating that even as coaches, we can have that experience and believe that is true, that the panic is being created by setting the date. And I just thought this would be a perfect time entering into the fourth quarter of the year, entering into the last 3 months of the year, that we could just really have a conversation about how to use self-love to fail forward. How to use self-love to smash your goals. And how to really look at failure and approach failure from a loving perspective.

The first thing I want to start out with is just reiterating something that I'm pretty sure I said in the episode where I talked about chronic disappointment. But ultimately, as a culture, we have grown up with the idea that there are successes and there are failures. And we have really black and white thinking when it comes to that. We have a belief that in order to be successful, we must always experience success.

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And this comes at us at a very early age. If you really look at when we're children, once we enter school, what ends up happening? And what ends up happening when we go to school is we're evaluated. And because it's a public kind of domain, and because there's so many children all together, they have found ways to evaluate that ultimately create, I feel, a lot of problems for us when it comes to succeeding later in life.

We are taught that we are supposed to get an A, that the path to success is passing the test. We need to pass, we need to get an A, and if we don't have an A in the class, if we haven't passed the class, then we fail and thus are a failure. And then we should probably just give up. And there is just a flavor of it that lives in our society that when we fail, it means we are a failure. And that is socialized into us in so many different ways. Yes, it shows up in school because that's how school evaluates us. But sometimes I think we forget that school is just like a tool. And it's a pretty blunt, big, bulky, not great tool to measure success. And how do I know that? Well, because lots of people aren't successful in school and go on to be wildly successful adults. And also, a lot of people that are successful in school go on to really struggle with the rest of their lives. And that's just academically. That's just talking about going out in the world and making money.

But the reality is, is that we have to learn through failure, no matter what we do. So, in romantic relationships, we learn through failure. In how we deal with our families, we learn through failure. In how we do really friendship, we learn through failure. Who listening to this who's had a friendship experience where you effed up? You effed up and the relationship ended. Does that mean you're a terrible friend? No. It means that you made an error, that you went and tried something and were a certain way, and then it was reflected back to you that that wasn't received well, and then you learn. And that may or may not mean that you stop doing that thing. You don't know yet. It's still in the wind. But what it does is it informs how we show up next. And that's the part that I really want to address today.

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I really want to frame for you the truth, which is that failure is important because as human beings, the way we learn is through failure. And I would suggest that all animals do. We learn through failure. And if you really look at it from the standpoint of even when you're little, right? When you're little, when you're a baby, when you're learning how to walk, before you can walk, you have to be able to crawl or some semblance of crawling, right? Before we can crawl, we have to be able to move our arms and legs and roll onto our fronts and onto our backs. And before we can even do that, we have to be able to move our limbs in a way that we're in control of them. Because at the beginning, we don't have real control over our limbs and what we're doing.

So, from our basic, smallest self, we learn through failure. And if you think about a child walking, they're the perfect example, because when they start to walk, they will first use things to crawl on top of them, right? They'll pull themselves up and they will just stand and then they'll fall. And they'll stand and then they'll fall. And then what will happen is they'll stand and they're able to stand while they're holding something because they figured out their balance through all the times that they've fallen.

Then they start walking along the wall, walking along furniture. What happens? They fall. They fail. How do they learn? They learn that hey, when my balance is too far to the left or too far to the right, that I fall down. And so they start calibrating that and they start being able to understand what keeps them on their feet. And then, as time goes on, they're able to let go of the wall and they're able to walk short distances where, you know, spoiler alert, they fall, right?

And it's interesting that at our core, that is the way we learn, that is just a basic instinct that we have is to learn through failure. But then what happens is we start showing up in the world the way that it is now built. And because we're no longer fighting for our survival and because we are such intelligent animals and we have such access to our brain, our thoughts start showing up and they start getting in the way. And we start receiving the knowledge as we're moving through the world that there is a wrong way

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and a right way to do things. And therefore, if we do it wrong, we're a failure, and if we do it right, we're a success. But interestingly enough, some of the most innovative thinkers in the world did it the wrong way. And it's pretty interesting how they were willing to go through failure. So, what is the difference between somebody that is willing to fail and somebody that is afraid of failure? Let's really talk about that.

What I will start with is really exploring what you're really afraid of when you're afraid of failure. When you're afraid to fail, you're not afraid of the failing. You're afraid of what you're going to feel when you fail. So, when you fail, you will feel maybe embarrassed. When you fail, you might feel disappointed. When you fail, you might feel disgusted, worthless. There's so many feelings that we will feel when we fail. And we do have evidence of that because you probably have failed in your past and those feelings have shown up for you. And so, what happens is that we're not afraid of the failure, we're afraid of the feeling when we fail.

Today, I'm going to give you my four-step process to get through failure. to set a big goal and to be able to go through the failure and be able to go again and again and again until you get success so that you can actually get to the goal.

So, step one is going to be setting the goal. But I'm going to have the addition of setting the goal and sitting in fear. Okay? Which probably sounds awful, and you're probably listening to this going, "Why would I ever do that?" I hope that I can show you in this step why you want to set a high goal. The reason why you want to set a high goal is because you want to set a goal that feels uncomfortable. And the reason why this is step 1 is we want to be able to normalize and allow the feeling that is going to show up, the discomfort that is going to show up when you set a big goal.

Because the fear there is basically your mind saying, I can't do that. I don't know how to do that. I don't know what I would do to do that. I have no clue how to get that, and that's not going to be something that we're going to be able to do together. Okay? And ultimately, it is just your brain's fail-safe,

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right? It's your brain's fail-safe trying to keep you safe. It's just saying to you, stay in the cave.

If you think about your survival brain, your survival brain wants you to stay in the cave where you're safe so that you're not attacked by wild animals. It wants you to keep things that are very familiar. It wants you to be where you are, and it doesn't want you to go out and do anything other than that. because this is how it thinks you will stay safe. But the thing is, is that you don't want to stay in the cave. You want to grow. You want the thing that's on the other side. And if you're listening to this and you don't know what the big goal is, what I want you to know is that's probably because fear has been stopping you again and again and again. So, the first step of this process is for you to set the goal. And notice and allow for the fear that is going to show up. The fear is normal. If you have fear about the goal, it's probably the right goal.

Now, the goal could be financial. I want to make X amount of dollars. The goal could be, I want to be able to have a really wonderful, beautiful, intimate relationship with my partner. The goal could be, I want to have a new friend who I can do things with in my community. The goal might be, I want to start a new career. The goal might be that I want to go and start dating and create a new romantic partner. There's many different goals.

But pick one that scares you. Pick one that stretches you. Pick one that you think, oh my gosh, this sounds really, really scary and I don't know how I would do that. And then we allow for that fear. We allow for that discomfort. I believe in a previous episode, I've talked to you about when you're watching a horror movie in a dark theater. So if you're in a dark theater all by yourself watching a horror movie, and it is loud and immersive and surround sound, you're going to be afraid. It is going to scare the living shit out of you.

But if we turn on the lights, it becomes less scary. And if we turn off the sound, it becomes even less scary. And then if you open all the doors and you let people in, it gets less and less scary. And that's really what we want

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to do when it comes to fear. We want to be able to allow the feeling, but also poke holes in it. Actually, I'm safe. Actually, if I don't reach it, nobody's going to, you know, really care. Actually, what's going to happen is I'm going to feel the feeling of embarrassment, but I can allow that feeling. It's manageable. I can do that. We want to just start turning on the lights, regulating our nervous system, turning down the sound, allowing the emotion, giving yourself the opportunity to notice that fear is going to come in waves. It's going to come up, it's going to peak, and it's going to come down. and that if we can allow it, it'll just pass through.

When you are setting this goal, what I really recommend is using compassion. You want to remind yourself that fear isn't a stop sign. It's just your body reacting. Your body doesn't know the difference between the fear that it experiences when your life is genuinely in danger and when you're just setting a goal and you don't know how to create it yet.

Step two is creating belief. Now, belief is a feeling in this instance that you are going to generate on purpose. When we are talking about belief in something new, it can be tempting to think that the belief comes after you get it. But what I'm going to tell you is that in order to create something that you've never created before, you are going to need to believe first. You are going to need to learn the skill of believing before you get it. And there's two things that you want to believe in. You want to believe in the goal and that it's possible to achieve it. And then you want to be able to believe in yourself that you are the kind of person that can create the goal.

So let's say it's creating a loving relationship in your marriage, having more intimacy in your marriage. Then what you would want to do is first of all, believe that you can have vulnerable conversations, that you can be the leader here, that you can do uncomfortable things, that you can experience failure towards doing this date nights, maybe holding hands, like whatever it is, that you can do those things and that you can still feel safe and you can still feel comfortable with yourself from the standpoint of I have my own back. I take care of myself emotionally. I take care of my nervous system while this is all going on.

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We want to build our belief and our ability to do that, that I can do this in a way that feels in alignment with the way that I want to live my life. The other thing that we want to believe in is we want to believe that the goal is possible. And if we are trying to create something and we don't believe the goal is possible, it's going to f with us every time.

So creating the possibility of, well, if it's true for this person, it could be true for me. If I believe that it's possible, what happens is that my emotional experience shifts. So my emotional experience becomes one of maybe hopefulness or curiosity, and we can use that emotional fuel to go and take action. The one thing that I see that happens with people when they're using belief work is they think that they're doing belief work because they're thinking these really pretty thoughts, but it's so much more than that. It's creating belief that allows you to take action. If we don't take action, then we won't get the goal. And I think that this is the piece that's missed.

So if you've listened to things like The Secret and you think, oh, it's just, you know, all hocus pocus. No, this, it's not. But a lot of times we don't realize we're lying to ourselves about our belief. And so, because we are, we aren't taking the action and action is required to be able to move forward. We'll get into that more in step three. But learning how to create a belief is a skill. So, it's not something you have or you don't have. If you don't have the belief, you can learn the skill of creating belief. It's a skill. Everyone can learn it. It's not something you either have or you don't have.

What I would say to you from a starting place is number one, you might want to get familiar with what are my beliefs. And how you can uncover this is a process that I had a business coach give this to me. Her name is Samantha and I think it's a beautiful practice of figuring out where you're at with your goals.

So number one, on a scale from 1 to 10, one being low, 10 being high, how committed are you to this goal? And it's a sneaky question because what happens is you start to realize, why am I a 6? Because if my commitment to the goal is a 6, we need to fix that belief first, because there's a belief

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issue there. So what would I have to believe to make that a 10 for my commitment to be a 10? Then we can move on to on a scale from 1 to 10, one being low, 10 being high, how confident am I that I could create this goal? And once we have that number, we can ask ourselves, why is it that number? Why do I have it as a 4, a 7, a 9, a 10? And then, if it's not a 10, what would I need to believe to make it a 10? This is how we start getting to a place where we can start looking at the beliefs and creating new beliefs, that skill. Asking yourself solid questions, leaning into your thoughts and thinking on purpose.

Now, step three is going to be the practice of failure on purpose. And I need you to reframe how you think about failure because failure is not a problem. Failure is the building block of success. And what I know for sure is that the quicker and the bigger you fail, the quicker you succeed. Now, I say this and I want you to know that I know you because I also am a sensitive human being. I am sensitive to my nervous system. I even just was like researching the other day my fibromyalgia diagnosis and just, you know, having it confirmed that fibromyalgia is a dysregulation of our nervous system, right? So it can be both pain and emotion that work together.

But when you are going to fail big, you are going to need to be able to regulate your nervous system and you're going to need to be able to allow emotion. And the reason why is it is dysregulating when we go out and we experience failure because it's exposing us to emotion, to emotions that we would maybe not typically feel on our day-to-day life.

So we definitely create a lot more nervous system regulation and we get really zoned in on allowing emotions. And what I love about this process is it makes you into an expert on yourself. And that is like my number one goal for you. I want to help you become the expert of you. And the best way to become the expert of you is to expose yourself to massive failure, regulate the shit out of your nervous system, learn how to allow that emotion, and then repeat it.

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When you are able to do this, when you can grow your emotional capacity, which is what I'm really talking about here, growing your emotional capacity, your ability to process emotions like embarrassment, worthlessness, shame, frustration, overwhelm. When you grow your capacity for that, you are able to fail more often. You are able to fail bigger. And what I want to add is that I don't want you to use failure as a weapon against yourself. So even if you do fail from the standpoint of, I didn't actually do the thing, we don't use that against ourselves.

There is one caveat that I want to add in here. And that is we want to be cautious of when we're failing in advance. So, failure is one thing, right? Failure is an action-based thing. But sometimes what will happen is we'll set the goal and then we'll set out the action plan from the belief and then we won't do it. And we won't do it because we're afraid of the feeling, because we feel overwhelmed, because we feel afraid, you know, whatever emotion is coming up for you. And when we fail on purpose, it's when we stop taking action before we've actually done the thing to figure out whether or not it's going to succeed or fail. So failing in advance is the one thing that we want to be having our eye on. If you're failing in advance, it's noticing that you need to go back up all the way to step one. Okay?

So if you found that you failed in advance, you just got to notice, okay, what's the goal? What's happening here? Can I regulate my nervous system? Can I allow the emotion? And then also, how do I turn the lights on, right? How do I turn the sound down? How do I get myself to a space where I remember this is something that looks like it's scary, that feels the same way as if I was being actually physically at risk, but I'm not. And then we have the courage to act. And we do that through creating belief. So we go back up, we set the goal, we notice the fear, we see the discomfort, we create the belief, and then we set out the action plan and we do it on purpose. We do it on purpose. With the understanding that the purpose is to fail.

You know, back in the day, I used to do direct sales. So, I used to sell jewelry. I used to sell for a company called Lia Sophia. They closed down. I

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sold bags through 31 Gifts, and then after that, I went on and sold clothing. And thus, I became a style consultant, image consultant, fashion stylist, I was a style coach and now here we are, doing this.

But one thing they had us do when we did that was a sheet and it was called 50 fails. And we would basically be making phone calls asking people to book shows. And the goal wasn't to succeed, the goal was to fail. The goal was to have 50 people say no. 50 nos. And once we had 50 nos, we could stop. And what it would do is it would desensitize you to the nos and you would realize that for every no you hear, you're closer to a yes. And what I will say to you is for every failure you have, you are closer to success.

When you are failing, when you are putting yourself in this stream, right? Using self-love is the way that we want to do it. So self-love is warmth, right? So, the same way you'd sit with a friend after a hard day is how you want to be sitting with yourself through this process. warm, accepting, loving, but still holding the goal.

Now, step four is to evaluate and try again. And where I see people getting stuck is that they fail, they get through the feeling, and then they drop it like a hot potato. And I've seen this happen in so many different areas, but one of the biggest places that I see it happen, there's two is in dating and in money or jobs. Trying to get a job, trying to get a promotion, trying to make more money in your business, but then also going out in the world and dating and meeting people and experiencing all of the plethora of emotions that go with that.

So, if we have this go all the way through and we experience the failure, what I want to remind you is that you want to fail again. You want to try again. The more you fail, the quicker you fail, the sooner you'll get to the goal. So we try, and then we fail. And then we evaluate what worked, what didn't work, what am I going to do differently, and then we try again. all the while being loving with ourselves, being caring with ourselves, bringing that warmth to ourselves, noticing that that voice with the doubt, with the anger,

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with the frustration, she shows up, but we can be loving to her, like it's okay, we've got this, we can keep going.

I have seen this be true in my own life and I have seen this be true in so many of my clients' lives. I have clients that have gone on to get through infidelity, a divorce, and moving into a new relationship where they co-parent and have beautiful lives. How do they get there? Through this process. I have had clients where they have lost jobs and felt defeated and picked themselves back up and created whole new careers for themselves. What we want to do is we want to look at everything that we experience in life is just data. We want to look at it as data. instead of judging right, wrong, good, bad, fail, succeed. It's all just on a continuum. We want to just give ourselves gentle, steady encouragement.

This does require you to step into a different version of you. So what I will say to you is that self-love is not passive. It's warmth that you purposefully apply to you. And so a lot of times what we will do is we will fall back into our previous identity when all of this is going on. But what I need you to know is that that identity is made up. It's a made-up identity that creates the results that you're getting right now.

And then there's the identity of the human being that you're moving into that is going to get the results that you want to create. We want to start making decisions through that lens. Putting ourselves in the shoes of that person, using that person's perspective to create the life we want to have now. What would she think about failing? What would she think about this being hard? Use her as your guide in a loving, warm, gentle, steady way.

The truth is that I know that you have probably heard other trainings on goal setting and failure and getting through failure. But the difference that I want to share with you here is the application of self-love. because if we're not loving to ourselves when we're doing all of this, what ends up happening is we create a shame spiral. We go into it and we're hopeful, but we're nervous. We're afraid, but we're willing to give it a shot, and we go and we try. And it doesn't work. We go on a date, the guy's a jerk.

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We go on a few dates, we start seeing someone, they break up with us. We go to our husband and try to have a vulnerable conversation and he shuts you down. You go and you ask for that promotion at work and they don't give it to you. You interview for a new position and you don't get it. And that's when we have to be leaning hard into that self-love part. Because when we don't, then the thoughts are, I suck. I'm terrible. I'm never going to be able to do this. Why did I think I was good enough for that? I'm clearly not. See, nobody likes you. Nobody loves you.

And that is where we start falling into that spiral. And so self-love is how you're going to keep yourself out. If you are able to apply self-love directly, on purpose, often, the failure that you will experience will become data and that data is going to create the ability to change, evolve, and you will become more resilient. And the more resilient you are, the more willing you will be to go out and try again and the more success you will create. What I want you to know is that the last three months of the year are the perfect testing ground.

The perfect testing ground for you to set the goal, love yourself through the process and watch what happens. This is amazing news because we're right at the beginning and just as an aside, if you want my help with this, you should come to the self-trust shift because you can come and I will teach you everything that I'm talking about here and then I will coach you. And it's a free call. So you can just go to amandahas.ca/freecall and we can do that together. We're doing it on Saturday.

What I want to ask you and what I'd love you to even if you can't come to that training or even if you can, I'd love for you to email me. Just go to coach@amandahas.ca. That's my email. And I want you to email me where in your life are you failing in advance? What is the goal that you've been too scared to set? Write it down, send it to me, and I'll help you. This, my friend, is what I've got for you. I hope you love it. I hope that you can take this and re-listen to it and put it in your toolbox. And more than anything, I really do hope you send me that email or come to my free call. I'd love to be the person that helps you. Bye for now.

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Thanks so much for listening today. If this podcast is helping you, please follow wherever you listen and consider leaving a review. It truly helps this community grow and allows me to support more women like you. I'm excited to see you back here next week with a brand new episode. Until then, take care, friend.