

## S1. Ep11: "I feel pressured to be more productive"



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With Your Host

**Lindsey Mango**

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## **S1. Ep11: "I feel pressured to be more productive"**

Lindsey: Hi, welcome to *The Life Coach Hotline*. This is Lindsey Mango, your life coach. How can I help you?

Dominique: Hi, Lindsey, my name is Dominique and what I would love some help and coaching on is how to feel, I would say, fulfilled and good at the end of the day with what I've created and accomplished, while also not feeling guilty about the amount of spaciousness and rest I have in my life. So yeah, I'd love to dig into that.

Lindsey: So good. Okay, tell me about what happens at the end of your day typically. Like what happens in your mind?

Dominique: I look at the long list of things that I still need/want to do. And I'm like, oh, there's so much more to do. And then I kind of feel guilty. And then rinse and repeat.

Lindsey: Okay, perfect. And tell me more about, like how does that look over time? Like every day if you're doing that, or most days if you're doing that, what ends up happening? I'm just curious.

Dominique: So there's usually a period of time where I will kind of go through my to-do list, I'll create it and I'll be good about keeping the space and boundaries. And then at a certain point, I'll just kind of throw my hands up in the air and be like, I never get anywhere close to what I want to do done. And then I kind of have a slump phase of a period of days where I'm like, it doesn't matter anyways. And then it's like, rinse and repeat.

Lindsey: Perfect. Okay, I just want to show you that and I was just curious about what it looked like because it can look so different for other people. So here's the thing, when you look at your list at the end of the day and you focus on all the things that you have left to do and that you didn't get done,

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it sounds to me, but you can tell me, like you feel guilt, you feel bad. Like what is the feeling in your body?

Dominique: I would say guilty, frustrated.

Lindsey: Okay.

Dominique: And then I would say more specifically, rather than at the end of the day, usually I actually block off my mornings, I don't like to do work in the mornings. And that's actually usually where I feel, I would say, the most guilty for not just kind of digging into things and just doing work. And then I'll feel guilty. And then I'll kind of get to this boiling point where finally I'm like, enough is enough. And then I'll just start work. So I would say that's actually the point, is more so in the morning.

Lindsey: Okay, perfect. Okay, so I have the solution to your problem. I think we're kind of painting a picture. But how does it feel to imagine being so proud of yourself and what you got done in the day and focusing on that?

Dominique: It feels like it would be a nice feeling. And I will occasionally have that. Like I think it was a couple days ago I had a really good day. And then I was like, oh, this was so nice. But it feels few and far between.

Lindsey: And what were you focused on on that day that went really well?

Dominique: I think, because I didn't have an expectation of what I was going to do, it felt like everything was a bonus. And so I was like, oh, look at everything I've done. So I think that's what I was focused on.

Lindsey: Okay. And you felt good?

Dominique: Yes.

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Lindsey: And then I'm curious, how productive are you when you feel good and accomplished?

Dominique: I would say very productive.

Lindsey: Okay, so do you see the pattern?

Dominique: I do.

Lindsey: Okay. So here's the thing, our brains can feel like they are not in our control, that they just do things. Which they're naturally wired to do things, right? I don't know how much you've listened to any of my work, but our brains are wired for survival. And survival doesn't always mean living happy and fulfilling lives, right? It means just living and surviving.

And so oftentimes our brain thinks that by telling us where we're falling short, or where it's not good enough, or where we didn't get enough done, it thinks, oh, we're going to apply pressure here, right? Guilt, this will get us into action. And really what it is, is it's like a survival emotion, which works temporarily.

I'm guessing you get, like you said, in the morning, you're maybe doing your morning routine and then you get this hit of pressure and guilt. And you're like, "Oh my god, I just got to start working," and you do it, which can work temporarily.

But over the long term, what happens is you get burnt out and exhausted by it. And it doesn't actually create fulfillment, happiness, joy, and also can put you on that kind of high, high, low, low cycle. And that's the point of our brains, it's that survival instinct. But again, that's not going to create a fulfilling life.

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I always like to think our brains are like untrained children. If we just let them do what they do, they will wreak havoc on our lives and they will mess things up. And they will make us unfulfilled and unhappy. They will keep us breathing, but we won't feel like we're thriving.

And so part of your work is going to be about shifting your brain from focusing on what you haven't gotten done, and what's not good enough, and where you've fallen short to focusing on what you have, no matter what the day looks like. What are your thoughts when I say that?

Dominique: I immediately dislike that.

Lindsey: Why?

Dominique: Because I have this, like the feeling I have is just like ugh feeling.

Lindsey: Okay.

Dominique: And the thought that I have is, but then I won't be able to create everything I want to create. I almost feel like it gives me a get out of school card.

Lindsey: Yes, this is our brain. It's playing a trick right now. I'm so glad we're recording this because I'm like, this is what our brains do. And this is why it's hard for us to let go of habitual thinking and pressure, because our brains keep things that it thinks are useful. So it's like it's literally telling us right now, "But wait a minute, if I let go of the pressure, then I'm never going to accomplish all the things that I want in my life or in my day."

But what happens when you put pressure and guilt and you focus on all the things that you haven't gotten done?

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Dominique: I eventually kind of get resentful. And then I also resist creating new goals because then I'm like, well, it's just going to feel annoying and kind of frustrating.

Lindsey: Okay, does that create all the things that you really want in your life?

Dominique: No.

Lindsey: Okay, so are you making a connection that your brain is trying to tell you, if we let go of the pressure then we're just going to be like we're ditching school. And ditching school means we're not going to accomplish all our dreams. But what actually is happening by keeping the pressure is you get resentful and then you resist creating new goals, which actually keeps you from your dreams.

Dominique: Hmm, okay.

Lindsey: What are your thoughts?

Dominique: Then I'm like, well, then what am I supposed to do? I'm like, I need the solution. What am I supposed to do now?

Lindsey: Yeah. Well, first of all, it's constantly like bringing your brain back to that truth that every time you feel pressure and force and like I have to get all this done, that that is not going to lead to your dreams. So it's like pausing and noticing that. And then it's refocusing on what you have accomplished, what you have gotten done. And connecting back to the desire of why you want to do things, not why you have to, or force, or pressure to get them done. What are your thoughts?

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Dominique: I could definitely see that being a different lived experience, which would be lovely. And then my brain is like, well, then do we just not create any to-do lists?

Lindsey: Well, if we had even more time, I don't know if you're in my life membership, but I would recommend being in there because I actually have gotten rid of pretty much most to-do lists altogether. I'm not saying that's the answer for everybody, which is mind blowing to me, because I was probably just like you were. I'm like, that is not physically possible.

But I'm not saying that's your answer, we don't need to take – I'm imagining the to-do list is kind of like your blankie. Like, we don't need to take it all like all together right now.

Dominique: Well it's funny because I actually don't like to-do lists.

Lindsey: Okay.

Dominique: I have this resistance to to-do lists, but it's kind of like what I feel like I need to have to actually create what I want to create. You know what I mean?

Lindsey: Yeah. So interesting. What do you think you would spend your time doing if you didn't have the to-do list?

Dominique: I don't know, I'd probably read and go for walks and then eventually get bored and stressed that I'm not creating what I want to create. And then it'll boil over and then I'll come back and create some stuff until I feel good about what I've done. And then it would like rinse and repeat. So I would say pretty haphazard.

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Lindsey: Okay. So let me ask you this, the things on your to-do list are they things that you actually want to do?

Dominique: It's a combination of want and what I feel like I should be doing.

Lindsey: Okay, so that's interesting too. So what if there were only two choices, you do things you want to do or the things that you must do, you find a way to want to do them. There's no should dos.

Dominique: That would be really nice.

Lindsey: Because here's the reality, most of us have this fear if we let go of the pressure, if we let go of all the to-dos, all the things then, like you said, your brain is like, well, surely we'll just go on walks and read books and do absolutely nothing. Or like my brain, this is actually something I have to consistently work through. My brain loves pressure, it loves like I've got to get it done, right? It thinks like I'll sit on the couch and do absolutely nothing.

But you're right in that I also know and you're aware that eventually that would be boring. I wouldn't want to do that. Eventually I would want to, for me, post on social media and show up and add value and help people and create content. And eventually I would want to wash the dishes, even in one moment if maybe I don't want to do it, because I want a clean house or whatever, right?

So when you create things that you want to do, then you don't need force and pressure to do them. What are your thoughts when I say that?

Dominique: It definitely resonates because I've had that experience for sure, and it felt really good. But then my brain goes, "But then you're not



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taking consistent action." And then it's like, one out of 10 days I'm like, "Oh yeah, that was so good." And then, yeah.

Lindsey: Well give me a specific example of this consistent action.

Dominique: For example, I have a marketing business. So for example, it would be Monday. So Monday, because I didn't have a lot of expectations about what needed to get done, I worked on the things that I wanted to work on and should work on, but it felt good to work on. So that felt good.

Lindsey: Okay.

Dominique: But then, for example, yesterday that was not the case. And I still took the action, but it was kind of like me doing it, kind of screaming and fighting inwardly, or feeling guilty about it.

Lindsey: Yeah.

Dominique: And then that would be a couple of days. And so if I didn't have that, it would be maybe one day it would be like, oh, this was good. And then the next week at some point being like, "Oh yeah, I should probably get up and do this thing."

Lindsey: What if that's not true? Like, I'm not sure it actually is. Is it possible that you take that long of a break because you put pressure and guilt and it feels really bad, and you do all these things you should do. And then you're like, "Oh, that's terrible. I need a break from that." So then you have to take however many days to recover, and then the desire comes back again.

Dominique: It's definitely possible. Yeah.

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Lindsey: What do you think would be different if yesterday you allowed yourself to do some of the things that you wanted to do? Or you eliminated some of the things that you felt like you should do or are supposed to do and you chose not to do them? What do you think would be different? I'm just curious.

Dominique: I think I would feel guilty for not doing it still.

Lindsey: Okay. And what if the guilt wasn't there? Let's get to a place, I'm just curious, if the guilt is optional and you could see that. Like what if you could see that time off, time having fun, time doing the things that you want to do is just as valuable as doing the stuff you need to do? And this is like, literally, for your marketing business, for everything. And you felt good about it, what do you think would happen?

Dominique: Well, I definitely wouldn't have this weight on my chest and in my stomach. So that would be good.

Lindsey: Yeah, that would be great.

Dominique: That would be great. And I think I would feel happier, I would say for no specific reason. Like I would just feel lighter.

Lindsey: Okay. And then what? What would you do?

Dominique: I don't know. I might just go sit in a park.

Lindsey: Okay.

Dominique: So I envision myself going and sitting in a park until at some point I'm like, "Oh yeah, I should go and send a couple of different emails to these different people." And then I'd do that.

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Lindsey: Okay. Does it feel like should? You said should, but does that feel like should or does it feel like want to?

Dominique: Well it's interesting now that I say this, I tend to actually do aligned actions that I "should" do.

Lindsey: Yeah.

Dominique: But if I'm out and about or if I'm sitting in a park and then it pops into my head, I'll say, "Oh yeah, I'll just go do that." Because there's this ease of doing it if I'm not at home feeling like I should be doing it.

Lindsey: Yes. Okay, I just got full body goosebumps because this is exactly what I'm talking about. What if all of it was like that? I know people are going to be listening to this like, "Okay, wait a minute." And you might be thinking this too. Like Lindsey is trying to argue that I just need to not do anything I don't want to do and only do stuff I want to do. It can be very complex for the brain, it's like that doesn't make any sense.

And that's not necessarily what I'm arguing. Do I want to spend an hour and a half trying to get my baby to bed some nights? No, but I do want to, right? Like there are moments or things like that, but there's a difference between doing it from like realigning and me being like, I want to do this. I love my baby. She's doing the best that she can. She's teething, blah, blah, blah, right? Like I want to do that, rather than internally being like, I hate this, I don't want to do this. And then forcing myself to do it over and over and over again.

And what's interesting is like with business, a lot of people do this because we're just wired to think, especially when you don't have a business and you go to a job you don't like and all of that, we're wired to think like this is just how it is. We just force ourselves, we bully ourselves into doing stuff.

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But I'm guessing your business is something you like, that you want to do, it's like your desire, it's your dream.

Dominique: Mm-hmm.

Lindsey: So it makes sense that the actions that would motivate it would come from that same desire. Like, oh, I'm going to send an email. Like, oh, that's a really good idea. And they come from want.

Dominique: Yeah, how I feel, for example, sitting in a park and taking those actions is kind of that feeling that I would want every day doing the actions that would be aligned and helpful.

Lindsey: Yes.

Dominique: Yeah, that's really good.

Lindsey: And how do those actions usually end up going versus when you're like – My friends and I used to send this gift back and forth, you know the cat gift that's like they're punching the computer. I'm like that's like me in my office, head down and I'm like, bam, bam, bam, trying to bang work out. It's like what's the difference between when you're sitting in your office and you're like, got to get all this shit done and forcing yourself, rather than when you're at a park and you're like, oh my gosh, I'm going to send this email or I have this idea. What is the outcome difference?

Dominique: I find it's a lot easier and faster. It doesn't take me 30 minutes to think about having to do something and then a five minute action. I'm like, oh, I just need to send this email. And I just send the email and then it's just done.

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Lindsey: That's what I'm talking about here. Like that's how it could always feel.

Dominique: Well, I already feel lighter already.

Lindsey: Now, here's what I'll offer you, your brain is going to kick and scream.

Dominique: Yeah.

Lindsey: Because it's going to be like, "But wait a minute, we need pressure and force, blah, blah, blah." I will tell you, this is something I have to consistently practice for myself. I'm like, oh, I'm doing it again, like forcing myself. And I'm not saying there's nothing wrong with your office either, but you and I both know the feeling of when you're like, got to go into my office, got to get stuff done.

Dominique: Yeah.

Lindsey: You know the difference between that versus like, oh, I've got a project or I want to get up there. Or I'm going to go on a walk, and then you have a million ideas and they're 10 times faster and way better ideas than they would be sitting at your desk for eight hours telling yourself that you have to get stuff done.

Dominique: Yeah.

Lindsey: And the way you do this is by focusing on what you are doing, like celebrating that. Seeing the time that you are in your joy and fun and walking to the park and reading books is just as valuable as the time you're spending at your desk sending emails. Do you see that? Like can you make that correlation in your mind?

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Dominique: Yeah.

Lindsey: And then the last piece of it is noticing when pressure, force, should, have to is driving your action and pausing. That doesn't necessarily mean like, do I want to get on every single thing I've ever had scheduled for my business? No, there are moments where I'm like, "Ugh, I would rather go on a walk than get on this call at one o'clock or whatever," right? That's not how I feel right now.

But I make it my job to get myself to the place of desire. So if it's truly something I committed to, I have to do it, like I'm a person of commitment and I want to honor that, I work on getting myself to desire. Like why do I want to show up for this? If I had the option to not do this, why would I want to do it?

And or I give myself the option to cancel things, move things, all of that if that's something that I want to honor too and work on noticing every time the pressure, every time the force, like pausing and being like, okay, why do I think I have to do this? Do I actually? And really challenging that.

Dominique: That's really good.

Lindsey: So I want you to see this is like an exercise. Start to do this as an experiment almost, right? Like, you're like, I'm going to try this out. Let's see how today goes. I'm going to celebrate everything that I did accomplish, what I did get done, I'm going to see the time that I didn't spend working as just as valuable. And then I'm going to follow what's fun and what I want to do and I'm going to see.

Like I would recommend even tracking it. Like, oh, I went to the park and I had an idea. I sent this bomb email, three people reached out to me to work with me. Okay, I'm showing my brain this works. And do that and do

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that a little bit each day or do that a couple days a week. The more you build that belief and trust that it works, the more you're going to lean into doing that. And then eventually your whole life will start to flow like that.

Dominique: That would be lovely.

Lindsey: So good. I love it, Dominique. Does that feel good?

Dominique: Yeah, that does. Thank you so much.

Lindsey: Thanks for calling in, such a good topic.

Dominique: Have a good one.

Lindsey: Thanks, you too, bye.

Dominique: Bye.

If you want to call in to *The Life Coach Hotline*, go to <https://lindseymango.coaching.com/lifecoachhotline>. Talk to you soon. Bye.