

#17: Processing Emotions



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With Your Host

Debbie Sassen

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You're listening to the *Mastering Money in Midlife* podcast with Debbie Sassen, episode 17, Processing Emotions.

Welcome to *Mastering Money in Midlife*, a podcast for midlife women in business to overcome financial anxiety and make more money without burning out or sacrificing their families. Join certified life and money coach Debbie Sassen as she shares practical business strategies and mindset shifts that help you dissolve the money blocks that keep you stuck in a cycle of underearning and under-saving, sabotage the growth of your business, and prevent you from building the wealth that you desire.

Hello, my friends, and welcome back to the podcast. Today we're going to talk about the importance of processing emotions. I decided to choose this topic today because when I'm recording this podcast on March 1st, we are one week into the war in Ukraine. About a week ago, the Russians invaded Ukraine, and we've all been following the news; by the time this podcast actually drops, I don't know what the outcome of this Russian invasion of Ukraine will be. I don't know if the country Ukraine will still be in existence as I know it today. As we all knew it, a month ago and a year ago, and two years ago. We can't control the outcome of that.

What I do know is there are a lot of intense emotions that people are feeling. I'm feeling them sitting in my very safe home in Israel. At least I perceive it to be a safe home, we never really know what's going to happen, and for many of us, we've looked at the news reports and watched what's been happening on social media. We might know people in Ukraine. I personally don't, or you might know people who know people in Ukraine. I do know people who have relatives and family members and people who work within Ukraine or people who originally were born there and have moved out of Ukraine.

Whatever the situation is, it's a lot of intensity in the world, and you and I, most probably you and I sitting in our homes in safe places. We cannot control the outcome, and I wanted to give you and me an opportunity to allow whatever you're feeling to exist to be acknowledged and recognized.

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For many of us, allowing us to feel what we're feeling is the first step to progress. It also connects very deeply with money because money can be very emotionally triggering.

When we're thinking about wars that are outside of us, wars that are close to home, or anything to do with money and fights over money, arguments within a family, and if you have your business and you're worried about your income this month and how you're going to pay your bills, or you have a launch coming up. You feel a lot of stress and tension. Will you make your numbers? Will you enroll the number of people that you want? Will you be able to have that income, achieve that income goal that you were dreaming about?

It is really important, critical even to learn how to allow your emotions to be there and how to allow them to move through you to process through you so that they don't stop you in your tracks and so that you don't end up stuck. The first thing that I would like to share with you is what happened to me personally ten months ago. There was a different war at that time in May 2021 in Israel. There were missiles being aimed at Israel from the Gaza Strip, and it was a very stressful, tense time for all of us living in Israel.

Where my home is situated, I happen to be very fortunate in that most of the time; it is a pretty safe place. Still, we're a very teeny tiny country for those of you who are listening and don't know the map of Israel; we're about the size of New Jersey if you look at the map of the United States. We're all very, very close here, and there was a lot of intense emotions coming up from me, and also being very concerned and worried about all of my brothers and sisters here in Israel. We are, we live like one small family and feeling strongly about the unfairness of the situation and how could they and why are they and you know the people who were targeting us.

I found it very difficult to focus on my work, and if I was in a client session, I could mostly focus on the client session, but because emotions are what they are, we're not always well equipped to be able to process them. It was

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very important for me to process them, and I'm going to share with you what happened to me. I mean, I worked through my emotions with a coach and give you the opportunity to learn a technique that may work for you. I'm also going to let you know from the outset that oftentimes if you're not familiar with how to process emotions, especially in the beginning, your mind will wander.

It will want to finish it up quickly to want to like, get beyond the hard work. So, working through your emotions with a coach or a healer, someone who can hold space for you in all your emotional intensity, can be very useful. So, at that time, I brought my feelings and my deeply felt emotions to my coach, and she just let me talk about everything that I was feeling that I just shared with you, my worry, anger, frustration, really thinking it was unfair, and how could they, and why are they targeting us?

Then, we just found where all the emotions were in my body. Ten months later, I don't really remember where the emotions were starting, but she just held quiet space for me, and I invite you to do this for yourself with any emotions you're feeling. It can be anger at someone, yourself. It can be sadness, frustration, annoyance, or scared, right? If you're running a business, so much of what we do in our business from day-to-day to stretch beyond our comfort zone is going to feel scary.

We're worried about failure, judgment from other people, criticism, rejection, and you're going to resist doing that. It's the way your brain has been wired to protect you from outside attacks. It's very normal, and we want to normalize those intense emotions and give yourself the space to find where that emotion is in your body. For some people, it will be in their stomach, and they'll feel like a lot of tension in their stomach.

Sometimes people will feel the tension in their chest radiating up to their throat, or it could be in your neck you might feel a lot of pain. I invite you whenever you're feeling something really, deeply intense to just close your eyes, sit in a chair with your feet on the floor, or maybe you'll sit on the bed with your legs crossed and just breathe into the feeling. That's what my

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coach invited me to do, and it's something that I've done before with other people, but at that time, it was just so strong and do it for yourself or do it with someone else, a professional.

I was just breathing into the feeling and following it as it moved through my body. Just breathing in and breathing out, and it was quiet. I said nothing, and my coach said nothing. It was maybe five minutes or maybe ten minutes of just breathing and allowing myself to really focus on what I was feeling. Noticing the sensations in my body, and I don't remember anymore today if the sensations were vibrating or whether they were whirling around, or they felt like an electric intensity.

These are some words that you might feel or notice if you're focusing on what's happening inside your body. Sometimes the energy can be like, cold and stuck, that negative energy that you're feeling. What I did notice as I was breathing into this thing, that's almost the way that I would describe it. It was just like this emotion in my body that it moved up through my chest into my throat at one point, I felt my mouth opening, and I felt this like, really, this blob almost in the palette of my mouth was like forcing my mouth open.

Then, the emotions released themselves, you know, they just moved outside of me into the air, and that was how the negative emotion moved through me. It was fascinating because it was about two or three or four hours later; it wasn't a lot longer. I did just like sit after the coaching session, and I spent time with myself, and I drank a lot of water because whenever there's energy moving through your body, water does help to clear your energy system.

All of a sudden, a few hours later, I felt extremely energized. Where I couldn't focus before, I could be hyper-focused and hyper-vigilant. I was able to get a lot of work done because I had spent just a few short minutes really if you compare what I was able to get done and my productivity later on that day, the next day, with the amount of time that in previous days I had been like, caught up and entangled with all of these emotions. Then I

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sat, and I let them move through me, and really it released an incredible tidal wave almost of energetic emotions where I was able to focus and do things.

So, that's what I'm offering you is the opportunity to sit with yourself and not feel rushed, but really just focus on your emotions. Sometimes it's very helpful to imagine yourself taking like a marker or sharpie pen and outlining the emotions in your body because it helps you in your mind to focus on them and see where they are. Then, you can breathe into what you're feeling. Notice the color of what you're feeling. Notice if it's warm or it's cold, but allow yourself to be human and to feel your emotions.

I have a suspicion that today in our very industrialized way of working, we have become less capable of processing our emotions. Like, if we just turn our clocks back 100 or 200 years, we were physically very active. We have these days a lot of electric gadgets and machines and appliances in our homes like washing machines and dishwashers, right, that do so many of our household activities for us, but going down to the river to wash our clothes and scrub things, you know, on a washing stone and kneading bread by hand.

I actually do knead bread by hand once a week when I make Challah for Shabbat, but our lives were so much more physically active than they are today. In going out and farming, working the land, right, with the industrial revolution and movement to cars and machines and the emphasis on productivity and go, go, go, and work, work, work, and today many of us sit at our computers. We sit at desks. We don't move our bodies, and all of that energy that maybe once upon a time was able to move through us because we were naturally very, very, physical. It just gets stuck inside our bodies.

We have to give it space to get out. You know, physical activity, and I know people who do running, swimming, jogging, weightlifting, spinning on a bike, whatever it is. Still, when you are very physically active, it does give

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you an outlet for the stress. It helps you process and moves the stress through your body.

So, whatever you're feeling, you can also just get up from your desk, put on some dance music, and dance for 5, 10, 15 minutes. Again, to move some energy through you, but let me just come back to the idea of allowing whatever you're feeling to be there and process through you. I want you to notice what you're feeling. Like, don't push it under the carpet, don't resist it, don't suppress it because it will come back to nip you in the bud or in the butt because it's still going to be there.

So, let's get back to specific emotions that you might be feeling. Negative emotions that you might be feeling when it comes to money. Scarcity, right? You're not going to have enough to pay your bills? You are worried that you are not going to make enough in your business, and maybe you do have enough income from other sources, but this income goal that you have or the amount of money you want to make is symbolic of your success.

You may have had a successful month in January or a successful month in February, but one week into March, you might be thinking, oh no, I haven't signed any new clients. What's going to happen? Or, one of my clients was saying to me recently, right? They had a very successful month in February, but they were taking ten days off in March for a vacation and to go to a family celebration, and her monkey mind was starting to get worried, even though she knew that, yeah. This is one of the beautiful benefits of being an entrepreneur is that I can take ten days off whenever I want to fly overseas to participate in the family celebration.

Still, that monkey mind was worried. Oh no, even thinking February's income was a fluke, and it was never going to happen again, her mind started racing. These are the kinds of things that happen because we do need money, and we've talked about this on the podcast before. We need money to eat, a roof over our heads. We need to pay for clothing education for children. It's important to put away money for your retirement. If you

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want to take a summer holiday or winter holiday, go to family celebrations, whatever it is, we need money.

It's a core survival need that we have to have money at all different stages of our life. So, we can become very attached in the fine details of our income over one day, two days, three days, and it feels very much like death, right, starvation? Because that's the way, your brain interprets it. So, allow yourself to feel whatever you're feeling and not make that a problem. Right?

Problems will arise when you start adding judgment on top of whatever you're feeling. So, sometimes you might be feeling the anxiety and the stress and maybe nervous that you're not going to make your income goal or that you're not going to have enough money this month, and you might have to take a loan or go into debt. Then, your brain will start thinking, oh, maybe I'm not going to be successful. Maybe I shouldn't try to be a successful entrepreneur; maybe everybody else is made for success. I'm not made for success.

Who was I to think I could make it also? I must have it all wrong. Maybe I'll just go get a job, right? There are many entrepreneurs who, at some point, when things aren't going, think maybe I should go get a job. I'm not saying that you shouldn't get a job. A lot of times, having a steady income, even a part-time job depending on where you are in your business growth that, can actually relieve a lot of stress from you just to know that you have a foundation underneath you.

But, if you have been successful for any point in time, but things do take a dip because businesses do have cycles, your brain will naturally want to solve for the problem that your brain sees immediately. Your brain doesn't see that there's an entire year of income or that you're on a trajectory of a five-year growth plan, and you know hills and valleys are normal. We've talked about this in previous podcasts about your brain looking for data points and creating a story out of very few data points.

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So, just take a deep breath. Another very useful activity that you can do is to journal everything that's coming up in your mind. All of the garbage, all of the I'm worried, and I'm scared, and I'm frightened, and I'm feeling anxious, and maybe it's not going to work for me, and who do I think I am, and I'm not meant to be successful, right? That's just a lot of like pea soup in your brain, right?

So, just get it out on paper where it's no longer you or a part of you, but once it's on a piece of paper in black and white, you can now become a witness to your thoughts. You just notice what's going on. You'll be like, oh, that's why I'm feeling so scared. That's why I'm feeling so anxious. That's why I'm worried. Oh, okay. Just recognize it, allow it, and you now have awareness of what's going on.

Once that happens, you can decide if you agree with what's on the paper if you even like what's on the paper, and I'm just going to caution you to not quickly try to change the thoughts that are coming up in your brain. Sometimes we can get judgmental and be like, oh, but really I should be grateful. I have so much going on for me, and gratitude is beautiful.

It's a beautiful practice, but when we try to whitewash all of the negative thoughts and feelings and quickly move into gratitude and appreciation, like really, here I am living in a safe country. At the same time, there are wars going on outside, you know, thousands of miles from me; oh really, I have so much to be thankful for, right?

We're just dismissing the fact that we do have human brains and human emotions dealing with what we're dealing with today. Allow yourself to be you wherever you are, and then you can breathe through your emotions process your emotions as we talked about before. Another great exercise when you are feeling anxious is to just take breaths using the 444 technique. Meaning you breathe into a count of four. You hold your breath for a count of four. Then, you exhale for a count of four, and you just do that over and over again. Maybe for five minutes or ten minutes, and that's also a great breathing technique to help calm your nervous system.

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The last technique that I love to use, especially on myself and with my clients, is EFT tapping, an emotional freedom technique also known as tapping. If you go to my YouTube channel, there are several tapping videos on my YouTube channel, and there are even specific types of emotions I've worked through. Even in short six or ten-minute clips, also there are some even longer webinars that you'll find on my YouTube channel.

Once you have processed your emotions, wherever you're feeling, and allowed it, you might want to ask yourself, why is my brain even going to the negative, right? We just want to get to the place of curiosity and let's say, for example, your halfway through the month, and you haven't had any clients sign, or maybe you're usually halfway through the month. You've had \$5,000 worth of income, and your income goal is \$10,000, but for some reason, you've only had \$1,000 of income halfway through the month. Right?

You'd be like, oh, my brain is really feeling scared because I'm halfway through the month, and I'm not halfway to my goal. Oh, that could be why I'm feeling very nervous and very anxious and worried that I'm not going to make my income goal. So, then, let's go back to our data points and be a scientist about it. Depending on how long you've been in business, you can actually go and look over the history of your business, have there ever been times when you're halfway through the month, but you were not near halfway toward meeting your goal?

You know, I sometimes like to go back and look at my numbers, and it's fascinating how I can have huge income on the 28th, 29th, 30th of the month, and our income doesn't have to be steady-state the entire month, and you can still meet your goals. So, just help yourself find evidence for how your business is already working, how the money in your life is already working. Of course, we want to tweak it. Of course, we want to improve. Of course, you want to serve more people and make more money.

When you focus on what is already working, it also helps to calm your nervous system. Right? You know, it's very natural that your brain will want

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to avoid the pain, as we've talked about already. Like it feels like starvation. It feels like death, and your brain's not going to want to go there, but it will leave your body feeling very shaky, anxious, and panicky.

So, help yourself to calm your brain down. Once you have gone into that inquiry stage and become curious about why your brain might be doing it, you can start reframing the situation and noticing what's happening. Then, you can move into a more neutral or positive place with your thoughts. It's like, oh, even though I'm halfway through the month and I'm only 25% to meeting my income goal, it doesn't mean that anything's gone wrong, and there's still a lot of time.

Or, even though I haven't signed a new client in three months, right? And that sometimes happens, right? There's still plenty of time, and there are people out in the world who want to work with me. Then, you can just question what you can do today to show up and serve your people because I know that you're in business to serve people. You're here to make a difference. You're here to make an impact. You're here to make money for you and your family, and that money that you're earning and that you're bringing in is a reflection of the beautiful service you are providing the world.

So, whatever you're feeling, whether you're feeling down about the world that's happening outside of us if you're feeling down about something that's in your business, you're perfectly normal. We're allowed to feel our emotions and then just work on controlling what you can control today, which is processing what you're feeling. Feeling like a human with natural human emotions and then going back to work to serve your people, right?

Don't get stuck in fear. Don't get stuck in anxiety because there are people there who need you. You want to be able to look back in a year from now and see how far you've come. You don't want to get stuck and stomped out now because there is so much good and so much work for you to do in the world. So, go and do that. Alright, thanks for tuning in today. I hope you've

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had some insight into how you can process your emotions, and I look forward to seeing you next week on the podcast. Bye.

Thanks for listening to *Mastering Money in Midlife*. If you want more information on Debbie Sassen or the resources from the podcast, visit masteringmoneyinmidlife.com.