

#105: Valley of Despair vs. Mountain of Prayer



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With Your Host

Debbie Sassen

#105: Valley of Despair vs. Mountain of Prayer

You're listening to *The Jewish Entrepreneur Podcast* with Debbie Sassen, Episode 105.

Welcome to *The Jewish Entrepreneur Podcast*. I'm your host, Debbie Sassen. I went from being a financial adviser, author and chronic underearner to building my business to six figures as a financial planner and money mindset coach. And then, on to multiple six figures as a full-time money and business coach.

I help entrepreneurs create money making businesses and build wealth, using sales and money mindset strategies in alignment with authentic Jewish values. Now, let's dive in to today's show.

Hello, my friends, and welcome back to the podcast. I have an exciting episode for you today. Today, we are going to be focusing mostly on our mindset, and exactly what happens in your business and my business, because we're pretty much all the same, as an entrepreneur.

So, I want to preface this podcast episode today. We're going to be talking about the 'valley of despair' versus the 'mountain of prayer.' I just want to preface it by saying that if you are running a business, your business is your job. What I mean by that is, it's not always a walk in the park to have a job.

There are oftentimes things, tasks, that we have to do in our jobs that we don't love to do. It could be the finances, the administration. It could be hiring people, firing people. But most of us got into our businesses because we do something that we enjoy doing.

I love being a coach. My clients who are coaches love being coaches. My copywriting clients love writing; they're writers, it's just in their blood. If you're an artist, a creative, a photographer, a website designer. I know you get what I mean. You're someone who just loves, has such a passion for what you do. Your business is mission driven. You really, really know in your bones that this is what you are being called to do in the world.

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Now, other people are running businesses. It might be a plumbing supply business, right? I don't think anybody grew up thinking, "Oh, I just want to have a plumbing supply business." It just doesn't have that sexy ring to it. But those of us who really enjoy what we do, we want to spend all of our time doing the things that we do.

Having to plan or strategize, having to take care of all of our accounting and things like that, it's just maybe not so joyful. And then, there's the part where we have to attract clients, we have to go out and do the marketing. So many of my clients are like, "I don't want to do the marketing. If only somebody could do this for me. Can't I just hire a copywriter who's going to write all of my copy, all of my emails?"

Yes, of course you can. There are people who can support you. It really depends on your budget, and where you're going to get the best return on your investment. But for those of my clients and my listeners who are in the sort of \$0 - \$100,000 income with your business, a lot of times you're doing everything yourself, and it can be very frustrating.

Then there's the part that you have to go out into the world and do your marketing and attract new clients. It's just what we do as business owners. We always have to be marketing. We always have to be bringing people in to our orbit, having sales conversations and signing them up as clients.

And there can be a period of time, it could be a week, it could be two weeks... For some of my clients, they can have what I call a "client drought," where you haven't attracted a new client, signed somebody up. It could even be a few months.

Or something else, maybe a client asked for a refund or you were working with someone and they quit in the middle, or you got some bad feedback, negative feedback, and you're just feeling like 'ugh.' Right?

When these events happen in our business, oftentimes our brain will get the better of us, and we will go into what I call the "valley of despair." There's something that happens, it sort of knocks you out of orbit, and you go down this very low cycle into, "Woe is me. I don't know what's wrong.

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Maybe there's something wrong with me. Maybe I should just close up shop. Maybe I should go get a job." Another one, "Maybe I need another certification. Maybe I need another training."

But what happens is, when you're in this valley, you sort of tumble down the hill and you're feeling disappointed or discouraged, or you're just feeling that despair, you can end up staying in that place for a while. It's a valley. It's not a V that you go down and pop right back up. A valley will have some width to it.

The question really is, what do you do when you are in the valley of despair? I really want to be quite frank, that most of us are going to meet that valley of despair many times in our business. Because there's no such thing as a business having a straight line, upward moving trend in their business.

There will be hills and valleys. There will be ups and downs in your business. Some of that will just be what's going on in your business. You might be trying something new. You might have tweaked your messaging a little bit and something's not resonating. It could be that there's an economic contraction.

As I record this, we're at the end of 2023, and there has been an economic contraction this year. Many people I know, including some of my clients, they're feeling it in their business. They're bringing less money, less clients, into their business this year, relative to what they earned last year or the year before.

Economies do go in cycles, especially depending on what kind of business you are in. So really, the question is, when you are in despair, discouraged, disappointed, whatever you want to call it for you and how you feel, what are you going to do?

So many times, what keeps that valley quite wide, rather than going down and up again in more of a V shape, is when we're not feeling particularly motivated about our business. Right? We're in despair. We do things that

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keep us in despair. It could be scrolling. It could be stalking your competitors, trying to see what they're doing.

Trying to figure out what they're doing that's maybe better than you're doing. It could be just not doing anything and procrastinating, going through emails, just kind of hanging out not being very productive. Maybe you'll spend more time at home, or more time at friends, go to coffee shops.

But I think you kind of get the idea, when you're just feeling like 'ugh' about your business. Everything feels heavy, your body feels heavy, your energy feels heavy, and you don't have that same drive and motivation and get up and go. Oftentimes, we also create these stories for ourselves about 'oh, it's so hard, and things aren't working,' and that really makes this downward spiral feel so much deeper and heavier and uglier.

That is what will keep you in the valley of despair. It's just really feeling that nothing is working and believing the stories that you're telling yourself. A client asks for refunding, and you're thinking, "Oh, what did I do wrong?" Making it all about me, and thinking that there's something wrong with you. Maybe it's going to have an impact. There's going to be a domino effect on other clients, who have other relationships you have with other people, right?

We can really shoot ourselves in the foot almost, because of the way we're thinking. So, I am encouraging you, if you're feeling down, low, discouraged, despairing about your business, that is an invitation for you to stop and really pay attention to what's going on.

If you don't do daily journaling work... I work with my clients and I teach them a framework for how to really notice what's going on in their brain... I recommend highly that you do a brain dump. All the thoughts that are going on your mind, just give yourself a 20-minute or half hour writing session, where you write and write and write and write, and just let all of the garbled mess that's in your mind end up on a piece of paper.

Where then you have the opportunity to be a witness and observer to what's going on in your brain. You'll probably really notice that you're pretty

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horrible to yourself, in the way you're talking to yourself. "Nothing's working. I'm sunk. Nobody wants to work with me. I can't believe it's been so long. What am I doing wrong? Who do I think I am?"

When you notice what's going on in your mind and put it down on paper, you might even stand back and laugh at yourself a little bit about how dramatic you get. Sometimes when I'm journaling, I really do notice how I can get very dramatic.

And, that's great, because nobody has to look at your journal. If you want, you can take the pages out, rip them up, throw them away. Burn them in a fire, if you really want to be sure that they're not going to end up in a trash heap somewhere and somebody's going to see your words flying around.

But really, when you get that gunk out of your brain, you can decide if you want to keep these thoughts. Right? It could be that you haven't signed a new client for two months, who cares? I mean, I know that you do. You have your bills to pay, and you want to feel like you're doing that work in the world that you love.

But when we stretch out our timeline, and you think about your business over a year, two years, five years, okay, you had a blip down where there was less clients and less cash coming in. But when you stay committed to your business, you don't give up, and you notice that you haven't been taking action, and then not taking action is what's keeping you in this valley of despair, that is when you can decide to do something different.

Rather than staying in the valley, you get to start climbing up the mountain. I call it the "mountain of prayer," because of course, it rhymes with despair, and so it works. But also, because prayer helps, right? We also hear from King David, in the Tehillim, that even if you're walking in the valley of the shadow of death, that you don't need to fear because God is with you.

We have so many beautiful phrases from King David, that he gives us in Psalms, that can really bolster you and can build you up when you bring prayer into your business. And, when you remember that there is a God above and God is running the show.

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It's your job here, down on earth, to take the necessary steps for your business. You're going to pray and move your feet. You're going to ask God to help you, and then you're going to get going.

You're going to look at your business and notice, "What have I been doing? Oh, I see. I've just been being 'woe is me' and procrastinating and not getting into action for my business. Now, I understand why, even if I had a week or two without a client, now I understand why that stretched out to a month or two. Because I haven't been in action."

Then you get to take responsibility for what is or isn't happening in your business. And you can remember the things that you did in the past that attracted clients. Did you run a webinar or a masterclass where you can actually go out into the world and help people, and share your skill set with them and add value to the world?

Do you need to do a collaboration with someone? What about emails? I have some clients who don't have an email system set up, and they're not regularly connecting with people in their audience and giving them useful information to help them, whether it's in life or in business.

Everybody who's in business these days needs an email service. I have email services for various businesses that I run and people that I follow. But if I bought some clothing online, I also get emails from online clothing stores.

As I'm recording this, it's just about to be the Black Friday weekend, and everybody and their brother and sister, whoever I was in contact with by email seems to have come out of the woodwork. They're all sending me now, emails for whatever promotions they're having.

But if you don't have an email service, this is just my little hot tip for today, go and get yourself an email service. Make sure that you're building an email list and connecting with your clients. But that's the way that you connect with people.

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All of a sudden, when you switch your mind to doing the thing that you love to do anyway, you want to be in service to your clients. And when you write them an email and say, "Hey, here's a tip, or here's three tips to get you through the next month and help you to improve your life, to improve your business," all of a sudden, the chain reaction starts happening.

Where you've gone out, you've been in service, you have helped people, and putting that positive energy into the world doing what you are supposed to be doing as a business owner, which is marketing, which is selling, which is lead generation, calling people in to work with you. Which happens when you show up in the world into your work. That is going to be the exact thing that turns things around in your business.

I have this beautiful quote from James Clear; I happen to be on his email list. James Clear, who is the author of *Atomic Habits*. I have such atomic habits that I rarely read his emails; I just delete them. He also happens to come in on an email that I don't use very often. So, I go in there about once a week or something like that, mostly to clear it out, so by that time, I just hit delete.

But this was so perfect. I noticed in the subject line of the email that I received it had the word "fail." And you know that last week, for the podcast, my episode was how to fail. So, I said, "Hm, I wonder what he has to say about failure because I just recorded a podcast."

James Clear is so much more eloquent than I am. He had such short, wonderful phrases that I could have brought in if I had only been there a week earlier. But anyway, this is what he wrote about disappointment, and it was so perfect for this week's podcast I wrote it down so that I could bring it. "Disappointment is a hot burning fuel."

Are you with me on that? When you're in that valley of despair are you feeling that hot burning fuel? Here's what James Clear says, "Let it light your fire to become better." That's exactly what you need to do.

When you are feeling that burning fire of despair turn it around, use it as fuel, light your fire, have it propel your engine forward in your business, and

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take it with you to take the next step. If you can't get that next step by yourself, reach inside of you where that burning despair and disappointment is living and flip a switch on it.

Have it move over into the action. Every single little step of action that you take in your business matters. It makes a little movement forward. It's like a little baby step, step by step by step. Every action you take is creating movement to your next client, to the next revenue stream, and it's also growing you as the CEO of your business.

So, if you notice, again, that you are in that valley of despair, you've got to turn it around. You have to pray. Pray to the One above that He should help you, and get into action. Don't let yourself stay down for very long. The moment you notice it, get going. Take those steps up the mountain, because that is how you are going to stay a business, a profitable business, a sustainable business, going forward.

If you keep going, you really don't ever fail. We're either learning something new because of what happened in the past. Or of course, we're winning when we sign new clients, and we have money coming in the door. But you really can't fail. You just learn and keep moving forward.

And that, my friends, is the message that I have for you today. As we close up 2023, wherever your business is... And of course, by the time this comes out we're almost at the end of the calendar year. But wherever your business is, just know that there's going to be a whole new month, a whole new year, a whole new horizon for you to go out into the world.

Serve your people, make money, and go to the next level. I just wish you a beautiful week with those lessons, and I hope to see you at the top of the mountain of prayer.

Have a great week. I will see you next week. Bye for now.

Thanks for listening to *The Jewish Entrepreneur Podcast*. If you want to stop underselling and underearning and close more sales, you need to clear the limiting money beliefs that are sabotaging your business growth.

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Head on over to DebbieSassen.com/mindset and download my free Money Mindset Workbook. Uncover and dissolve money blocks, like hundreds of other entrepreneurs who are now building six-, multi-six-, and seven-figure businesses and creating true financial freedom.