

## #88: How to Dream



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

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[Redefining Rest for Public Health Professionals Podcast  
with Marissa McKool, MPH](#)

## #88: How to Dream

Hey, you all, I'm Marissa McKool, and you're listening to the Redefining Rest Podcast for public health professionals. Here we believe rest is your right. You don't have to earn it, you just have to learn how to take it and I'm going to teach you. Ready? Come along.

Happy New Year, everyone. It is 2023, can you believe it? The past few years have been insane. I can't believe how fast they went. I'm sitting here at my desk, no makeup, in my workout clothes recording this and then I'm going to go work out. And then I'm going to make some pumpkin cheesecake. Doesn't that sound so good? I've been really getting more and more into baking lately. I used to bake a lot before I was vegan. And vegan baking is a whole other beast if you know you know. But I'm getting back into it. I am getting better at it, and I'm really excited about it.

I've also been cooking and baking a lot more Lebanese food which is really exciting. If you listened to my episode on belonging, you understand my struggle with my identity and being Arab. But I am really excited. I'm trying out different recipes. It's a little bit challenging because I never really ate any of the food, authentic food, Lebanese food before I became vegan. So not only am I learning how to cook these recipes without having any family, or anyone who has expertise who can guide me but I'm also trying to veganize them.

So I don't even know for sure if they taste authentic or traditional. If they taste good to me that's the signoff, that's what I'm going with. And I've had a lot of successes and failures. I mean failures where I cry. And then successes where I'm doing a happy dance. It's been an emotional rollercoaster, but I've been documenting all of it. And I'm really excited, I think I might write a cookbook. I think I might write a cookbook about this once I'm done of course.

Where I share all my trials, and my failures, and my emotions, and my coaching around this, and identity for other folks who whether you're Arab

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or Mexican, or Jewish, or Filipino, or whatever it is where you struggle with your identity and want to use food to connect and feel scared to give kind of hope and optimism to anyone struggling with identity issues, challenges around their race ethnicity. To be able to use food and figure it out.

So that's an idea I've been pondering on. If you all think that would be interesting and you would want to read a cookbook or get access to it, let me know. Because I'm pretty sure I'm going to do it at some point.

Anyways, that was a little bit of a tangent. That's what's new in my life. Hope you guys had a great New Year, whatever you did, hope you are safe. But let's talk about the past three years. Either you let the past three years be the excuse for not changing, not going after your goals, which I'm not doing that to shame you but let's be honest here. Or you didn't let it stop you. Which one are you? I really want you to be honest. I think New Year's is hard for some people because they feel lot of pressure around evaluating last year or setting goals for next year.

And then they assume they're going to fail ahead of time, so they don't even try. And then they feel terrible about last year. That's not what we're doing here. The only way for you to change, whether emotionally, your goals, your life, you have to be honest about what you have and haven't been doing and make changes. That's the only way you can move forward. There's no need to feel shame or judge yourself. So what is it for you?

For me, the past three years did not stop me. And that doesn't mean I didn't experience stress, or overwhelm, or uncertainty. The pandemic impacted me too. There is a lot of challenging things that happened in my life. My grandmother passed away. My partner's grandmother passed away. When I worked full-time in public health during the pandemic, was insane, so many things but I didn't let it stop me. In the past three years I went from being an assistant director to having an executive director role made for me in a different center, making \$90,000.

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I got coach certified, actually twice, two different certifications. I started this podcast from in my closet, editing everything myself, sweating my little titties off. I started my business. I started to make money. I left my full-time job to do my business full-time. I dated, I met my now fiancé. We've moved, put my house on the market and so much more. And this isn't the end. We're just ramping up. Next year so many exciting things. I'm going to Europe with my sister. I'm seeing Adele in concert.

I'm going to two business masterminds, planning a wedding, hopefully, knock on wood, I'm buying a house and so, so much more. I'm going to tell you the secret to me doing all this even in the midst of a pandemic, even in the midst of a lot of personal challenges. I went through so much. If you've listened to the podcast regularly, you know, a lot of shame, a lot of processing deep emotions. I've been going through a lot of stuff with my family.

Here's the secret to having all that normal life shit go on and still move towards these goals. I got the fuck out of burnout. For many of you, you are in burnout, and you don't even know it, because you think of burnout as, it's someone who goes to the hospital because they passed out from stress. Or it's for doctors, or nurses, or people on frontlines. No, you are in burnout, experiencing work stress and exhaustion and getting stuck there, stuck in your overwhelm, stuck in your overworking. And you have used the pandemic as an unintentional, unconscious reason to not get out and not move forward.

And now many of you are doing the same thing with the economy, with the recession, that ends today. There is no external circumstance that has to stop you from creating your dreams, from achieving them. No external circumstance, that has to stop you from getting the fuck out of burnout. I promise you because I did it and all my clients are doing it. You were meant, you are meant to live an extraordinary life, not a just good enough life, not a kind ish good life, not a burnt out life.

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I am recording this coming back from an amazing three day live coaching event. There were coaches there but actually I think there were more people there who were not coaches, who just wanted help changing their life. There was, I think in the room 1600 people and online virtually, 1700 or something. In person, people flew to be there in person, all the way from the UK, from Australia, from Singapore. It was insane. All of these people were taking action even if they felt insecure or, doubt, or beat down by their circumstances.

They were taking action to show up to this event to change their life because something inside of them knew they deserved better, there was more out there for them. And at this event, one of the things I started thinking about, really seeing everyone there, was dreaming. And I'm not talking about like in your sleep dreaming. I'm talking about dreaming about your goals, about the life you want to be living. And here is what I realized. As adults we don't know how to dream, we truly don't. As kids we're great at it.

The biggest imagination, you think about what you want to do with your life all the time. I remember before I had my driver's license, years, and years before I would dream all the time. I would think all the time, where would I go when I get my license? What would I do? How would I drive? How much fun would that be? You dreamt about where you want to go to school, when you wanted to get married, what job you wanted to have. And your life might look very different now than your dreams as a kid, but you knew how to dream.

As adults, we don't, we act like we don't. Having a dream and actively dreaming are two different things. Everyone, nearly everyone has a dream to win the Lotto, you do, secretly. Doesn't it sound nice, just to be like, you get \$500 million? But very few people actually dream about it, actively dream day in and day out, week in week out about it. They imagine it, they think it. They decide ahead of time what they'll do with the money. They

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have it on their mind. Those are the people who buy the Lotto tickets every week.

And listen, so many people tell them, “You'll never win. You're wasting your money, the chances are so low.” But you know what I think? Those people who buy Lotto tickets every week are fucking amazing because they believe so much in their dream, they're taking action when other people think they're crazy and that they shouldn't. That's courage, that's trust, that's confidence, that's believing in your dream. Right now you are not buying a ticket to your dream. You're not buying it monthly, let alone weekly and daily.

You have a dream, you have it, but you aren't dreaming. It's a dream you don't tell anyone. You think it, here and there but then you suppress it. You view it as a nice to have maybe, but deep down don't believe it will ever happen. And the only way to achieve your dreams is to take action towards them. And the only way to take action is to actively dream about your dreams. This is what actively dreaming is, you think about it all the time while you're washing your dishes. You imagine how it will feel when you're walking your dog, you picture it in your mind of what it will look like when you're in the shower.

You spend time in relationship with your dream. Just having a dream but never dreaming about it is like having a beautiful expensive dress that still has the tags on it in your closet, you never look at, you never put on. When you see it in your closet you turn away. Having the dream and dreaming about it is like taking that dress out, taking the tags off, putting it on every week in your room, imagining where you're going to wear it, trying it on with different jewelry. And even if you can't wear it out yet, you want to wear it to this restaurant.

You can't afford it, you still keep trying it on. You imagine what it will feel like when you go to that restaurant, who you will invite, what you will order,



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how good it will feel in that dress because you know one day you will make that happen. That's the difference between having a dream and actively dreaming about it. I used to dream actively so much as a kid I'd get in trouble. In the car my mom would be talking to me, and I'd turn around and say, "Don't talk to me, I'm thinking." Because I was in my head imagining the life I was going to create.

Now, does it look exactly like the life I have now? No, course not. Did I get here exactly the way I thought I would? No. But me dreaming was the only reason I took action to create the life I wanted and to have the life I have now. Right now you are not spending any time actively dreaming. And I know because you aren't taking action towards your dreams. You are so burnt out, exhausted, busy complaining and venting about work, waiting for other people to change first. That's not the way dreams work.

You have to choose to actively dream, to picture your dreams, to think about them in order for them to come true. Here is a past example from my adult life. Every single time I was in a job interview, when they asked me, "Where do you want to be in five years?" I always said, "An executive director." On my walks when I'd walk my dog, I would imagine, what kind of center would I be the executive director of?" When I was in my car driving to work I'd daydream about the work I would do as an executive director.

I would think about the problems I would solve. I would think about how I'd treat my staff. I would think about the policies I would implement. I thought about it all the time and I became an executive director in 2020 during a worldwide pandemic without a PhD, mind you. Was it the exact type of organization I had in those active dreams? No. Was I doing the exact work I thought I might? No, it was better because it was my reality that I created with my mind. My dreaming, my active dreaming was the only thing that got me there. It drove me to take actions.

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And I'm doing this now all the time in my life. Right now one of my dreams I'm working towards is an income goal. When I get that income goal, I'm going to be getting a house in mountains. And I think about it all the time. I have a picture in my mind of what the house will look like. I can see myself sitting on the deck looking out onto the forest. I can see myself enjoying my coffee in the morning there with a blanket, and the crisp fall, and seeing the colors change on the trees. I picture family and friends coming for the winter and going skiing and then coming back and having the fireplace on.

I picture having my family there, my future kids and making big meals, and playing board games, and getting snowed in. And even the electricity going out and having flashlights all over the place. I dream about it all the time. And when I dream about it, I believe in it. And when I believe in it I take actions to make it happen. And when I do that, when doubt comes up, when fear comes up I don't live in the doubt and fear. I live in the belief and in the dream. When you spend so much time actively dreaming, it's front of your mind.

Your decisions in life are made with your dream in mind. Asked to sit on a committee? Well, will this serve my dream of being an executive director? See a position job open for assistant director in a different field than you wanted? Well, will this serve my dream of eventually becoming an executive director? Hear a senior leader speak at a conference? Will going up and talking to them even if I feel nervous, or insecure, or shame, will that help my dream of becoming an executive director? Your choices, your decisions are informed by your dream. They're based on your dream, not if you have the dream, if you actively dream.

You get to say no to things that keep you away from achieving your dream. You get to say yes to things that take you one step closer to achieving your dream. If you only have a dream and don't actively dream about it, you don't do this. You don't have it in the front of your mind. You can't make choices based on your dream. You make choices based on other people or



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your emotions of doubt and fear. You never get to your dream. And the hard truth is you are choosing not to actively dream. You aren't letting yourself actively dream.

Actively dreaming is a choice, you're not making it. And here are some reasons why I think most of you aren't choosing actively dreaming. Number one, you believe it isn't possible so why even think about it? You've already decided you can't. You have a list of reasons you provide to the court to [inaudible], of why it's not possible, either, you justify this either because you haven't done in the past, which of course you haven't done in the past, that's why it's a dream. Or you tell yourself, "Well, other people like you haven't done it." So what? That doesn't mean you can't do it.

Every amazing milestone in the world, every creation, every earth shattering change happened because someone was the first person to do it. Why can't that be you? You tell yourself there's too many barriers, or it just seems too hard. So why are you choosing to let that stop you? Those are all thoughts, they're not facts, they're optional thoughts. It was impossible to be a woman in a university until it wasn't. It was impossible to be a Black man in the Oval Office until it wasn't. It was impossible to go to the moon until it wasn't.

It was impossible to work remotely full-time until it wasn't. Nothing is impossible. What makes it feel impossible is just your thought. I also think many of you have hidden belief blockers, a belief that is so deep and hidden, you won't discover it unless you get coaching or do self-coaching at a deep level. I truly, truly believe this.

I recently discovered one of mine, my dream for my business, my income goal, I realized my hidden dream blocker that was preventing me from dreaming more and more about it, preventing me from taking bigger action, scarier action because I have commitment. That is something in me. I have motivation, that is something I create. I have the skills, that's something I've

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developed. I've gotten all the tools. I can take action. I have no problem showing up to take action.

So I was wondering, okay, why am I not actively dreaming more? That's odd because I always actively dream. And I realized it's because of my belief blocker. I had this belief, I didn't even know was there till I got a lot of coaching, that if I make a lot of money it's bad. Now, this is not a fact. When it came up I was like, "Oh, that makes sense, that little thought. It's not a fact, it's a thought." It's optional. It's blocking me. And now I've been coaching on it and getting coached on it and changing it. And the only way I could do that was to find the belief blocker.

Your belief blocker is preventing you from being consistent, showing up and taking action, creating results, gaining the skills and tools you need, and anything else. Once you detach and change your belief blocker to belief opener the floodgates of whatever you want to create and live, open. The other thing that comes up so much with my clients, in my one-on-one program, you have to set a goal. So many of my clients, they set amazing, beautiful goals and then what comes up? Their fear of failing and disappointment.

You think well if I try and fail I'll feel terrible, and disappointed, and embarrassed. So let me just not try at all. Here's the thing, you're not avoiding failure and disappointment. You're just doing it ahead of time. You're guaranteeing it because you're doing it right now. You're failing ahead of time. You're feeling disappointed now. If your biggest fear is being disappointed and failing you are living your biggest fear right now by not doing anything. You're already doing that by not trying. So you can only go up from here.

Disappointment, rejection, embarrassment, are just emotions. They are physical sensations in your body, you can feel them. It might be a hot chest or a tight throat, that's not a problem. That's not something you have to

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avoid. You want to avoid it because of what you will make it mean about yourself. If I fail then I'm worthless. If I feel disappointed then I was wrong. If I'm embarrassed then I'm never going to be able to succeed. All those thoughts are not truths and they're optional. You don't have to make any emotion you feel mean anything at all.

Here's the ironic thing, while you are pretending you're avoiding disappointment and rejection, but really you're feeling those emotions now because you're rejecting yourself ahead of time from even starting. You are opting out and missing out on the opportunity to feel hope, and excitement, and joy, and optimism, and many other amazing feelings you would feel if you allowed yourself to actively dream. I love actively dreaming. I love going to my dream of being in my second home in the mountains being outside looking on the forest. It feels so good.

I love the way I feel when I'm there in my mind and it's going to feel even better when I get there in reality. But you're missing out on that. You're preventing yourself from having that experience. And the last piece is you don't have any mental or emotional bandwidth, capacity, space, or energy because you're burnt out. Actively dreaming takes mental and emotional space, not in a draining way, but it still takes space. You need to have some mental clarity and calm to picture it. You need to have the emotional space to feel what it would be like.

You cannot actively dream if all you think about all day is how terrible work is, how everyone else is making your life harder, how you have too much to do. You cannot actively dream if your emotional tank is full with resentment, stress, frustration. In order to actively dream you have to change your emotional and mental suffering. Now, if you've listened for a while, you know what I'm going to say. You do not do this by getting a new job, making everyone else change, because that doesn't work.

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You're going to get that new job and you're still going to feel like shit, because you take your brain with you. The only way to do this is by changing your thoughts, change your beliefs, changing that record player in your head. That's the only way to emotional freedom, to emotional space, to mental space. If you want a bigger more fulfilling, exciting life you can't just have a dream. You can't have a secret dream. You have to actively dream.

You can't just buy a dress and hide it in the back of your closet. You have to wear it and practice wearing it even before you can afford that fancy restaurant you're going to wear it in. I can't afford to buy a house in the mountains right now, not even close. I think about it all the time because one day I'm going to. Whatever you dream is for 2023 and I know you have one. I can't tell you how many people I coach who say, "I don't know."

And then I say, "Okay, well, let's say, let's just go to fantasy land for a second. Let's just say right now you can choose your new life, your new career, your new goal. And we're in fantasy land, what would it be?" Immediately they say it in detail. It's not just like, "I think maybe work at this organization." It's like, "I would like to be the director of a reproductive health organization that conducts research on abortion access and implements human design interventions based on the research." It's so specific. So I know you have one.

And yours might be to spend more time with family, start ceramics, build a side business, become an executive director, make 100,000, anything else, what is it? Don't lie to yourself, don't block yourself from being honest. You have to start actively dreaming about it. To do that, the first step is you have to clear out the mess in your mind, the noise in your mind. You have to eliminate your stress, and exhaustion, and overwhelm, your overworking, your resentment. You have to learn how to change your thoughts so you can get out of your emotions you're stuck in.

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You're stuck in overwhelm, and exhaustion, and those other emotions keeping you from actively dreaming. You have to get out of that first, that's step one. And this podcast is part of that, listening to this podcast is part of doing that work. But this is the theory, this is the teaching. We've got to level this up you all, you've got to implement it into practice, but this really matters. People ask me all the time, "What's the difference between the podcast and coaching?"

The podcast is like being in a lecture hall and you're not assigned homework. And you have to choose to go home and do your bio steps and practice it without homework, without guidance. None of you all are going to do that. Now, with the podcast I know a lot of you do. So I'm not putting you down, I'm just talking in the context of bio stats. But coaching is really helping you apply it, take it from theory to practice, implement it into your life.

So that is one of the reasons I created my new course, How the Patriarchy Robs You of Your Rest. Now, if this the first time you're hearing about it, you still have some time to sign up. This course is a semi-live course. So you're going to get workbooks to implement it. You're going to get lessons and you're going to get one-on-one coaching with me. This will help you eliminate the noise in your head, reduce your stress, create space to feel calm, empowered, excited, hopeful.

The reason you keep overworking and feeling overwhelmed, even those of you who have tried to find a new job is because you don't know how to undo it. This course teaches you how. We start where you are right now, whether you feel hopeless, or exhausted, or depleted, or on empty. And it will end with you feeling optimistic, confident, hopeful, motivated, energized. You will get to feel that way and have that change without quitting your job, without getting a new boss, without your partner or kids changing.

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You don't have to wait for anything outside of you to change. You can change right now. All you have to do is show up, I walk you through everything you have to learn, and implement, and practice. And we meet one-on-one, literally could not be easier, all you have to do is show up.

Recently I did a similar on a different topic, multiweek training with a similar structure I mean with an organization where they got the teaching and some workbooks and then they each only got one individual coaching session. One of the staff said in the kind of follow-up, "That one session was lifechanging." I got chills when they said that, just one session changed her life. And you get five whole weeks of lifechanging. You could start off the year in a completely different mind space, with more energy and excitement to ensure 2023 is the year that things change.

Where you don't use the pandemic, or the economy, or your job as an excuse. This can be the year where you look back and say, "That's when everything changed. That's when my life changed. That was the turning point. I never want to go back to before, the best decision I ever made." You'll leave this five week course and your whole life will be turned upside down in the best way possible. I'm not fucking kidding. If a one hour coaching session can change a person's life then this five week course can completely transform your life. You won't ever be the same.

Go to [mckoolcoaching.com/courses](https://mckoolcoaching.com/courses), grab your spot now. It starts next Monday, January 9<sup>th</sup>. Now, this is really important. Doors close this Friday January 6<sup>th</sup> at 5.00pm Mountain Standard Time. So that's 4.00pm Pacific Time, 7:00pm Eastern Time. So don't miss it, alright, you all, so you can clear that mind space and start fucking dreaming. Your dreams matter. The ability for you to live out your dreams matter. And it's a 100% possible. And the best part when you live out your dreams the world is a better place. So come on, let's go. Alright you all, talk to you next week.



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If you found this episode helpful then you have to check out my coaching program where I provide you individualized support to create a life centered around rest. Head on over to [mckoolcoaching.com](http://mckoolcoaching.com), that's M-C-K-O-O-L coaching.com to learn more.