

Ep #77: Doing “Big” Things



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Olivia Vizachero

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You're listening to *The Less Stressed Lawyer* podcast, Episode 77. Today, we're talking all about doing “big” things. You ready? Let's go.

Welcome to *The Less Stressed Lawyer*, the only podcast that teaches you how to manage your mind so you can live a life with less stress and far more fulfillment. If you're a lawyer who's overwhelmed and tired of trying to hustle your way to happiness, you're in the right place. Now, here's your host, lawyer turned life coach Olivia Vizachero.

Hey, my friends, how are you today? This is the first time I'm recording a podcast in my new place, down in Charleston. I'm in a really old home, it was built in the early 1800s. The ceilings here are crazy high. So, my podcast producers will let me know if the audio sounds good or bad. But we're going to give it a try. It's a little echoey in here, but bear with me, as I figure out the best place, in my new place, to record this.

Okay, speaking of my move, that's what inspired this week's podcast topic, talking about doing “big” things. If you noticed, in the title, on the podcast app, wherever you're listening to this; maybe it's on Apple podcasts, maybe it's on Spotify, maybe it's on YouTube. But you'll notice that I put “big” in quotations.

That's really what I want to focus on today. Why I think about doing “big” things, and putting “big” in quotations, what my thought process is with that, and the impact of labeling something that way, and how it creates additional resistance.

Obviously, if you're listening to this, you know my “big” news. The “big” news is that I just moved out of Michigan. I have lived in Detroit my entire life, Metro Detroit, and then more recently, in Detroit proper. I have lived there my entire life.

I had been thinking about moving for a while. Candidly, I have a decent amount of resistance. I should say ‘had’ because I've worked through my resistance, which is obviously what enabled me to move. But I had a decent amount of resistance to it. It was something I kept telling myself that

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I really wanted to do, but I wasn't taking the steps to move forward to actually do it, to actually complete the moving process.

I had dinner with someone, I think it was last fall, probably about a year ago to be exact. We were having a discussion about what was preventing me from moving. When you think of something as being a “big” decision, you make the decision a harder one to make, you up your resistance to it.

So, I don't know that I would have specifically called moving a “big” decision, but the way that I was thinking about it, it was like I was subconsciously telling myself that it was a “big” decision. Because the story I was telling myself about moving was that it was going to be really hard and complicated and really involved.

That it was just going to require so much effort and time, be really annoying and tedious, and all of these limiting beliefs that I had about moving. That's what was going through my brain. So, of course, I was avoiding moving forward with the moving process.

The person that I was with, this is a former client of mine, she simply said to me, “You love to travel, don't you?” I was like, “I do love to travel. I absolutely travel all the time, at least once a month. Typically, more than that.” I think that I'm great at traveling.

All of my thoughts about traveling are so different than the thoughts that I had about moving. At this time, I hadn't moved out of my house. I had been in my house, that I own, for 12 years. I think I bought my house in 2009. So 2009, 13 years, I guess; 2009 to 2022 at this point, when the story is taking place.

I hadn't moved into either of the furnished condos that I've lived in, in Detroit, since December. So, I hadn't moved at all, and it was making it out to be this really huge thing in my head. She just pointed out to me, “What if moving is just like traveling, but you just stay a little longer?”

It kind of broke my brain, because I quickly got access to thinking of it the same way that I think about traveling. That it's easy, that it's easy to plan,

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it's easy to do, it's a lot of fun, it doesn't require that much effort, that it's figured out-able.

All of those thoughts are thoughts that I now had access to, because I was no longer thinking of moving as this “big” thing to do, as this “big” decision to make. So, I want to talk to you about what “big” decisions or “big” things you're avoiding doing, that you keep telling yourself that you want to do.

Because that's the thing, I really did want to move. I don't like being in Michigan in the winter, it's freezing there. If you don't live in the cold, you probably think that we get used to it. Maybe some people do, but that is not true for me. I think I get less and less used to it each year. The older I get; it just takes so much out of me.

I hate having to go out and schlep through the snow, deal with it being slushy and gray, and really had started to bother me. I've actually talked about that on the podcast before, just how dismal it is to live through so many months of gray weather. You really do miss the sunshine.

So, once I became aware of the fact that I was thinking about moving in this way, that I was making it out to be a much “bigger deal than it needed to be, I was able to embark on my moving journey. I started small, that's one suggestion that I recommend to a lot of people. Again, “small,” we'll put that in quotation marks too. Because, again, that is just our opinion. It's just a thought, a judgment that we're having.

But I started “small,” and I moved out of my house and moved into a furnished condo in Detroit. Then, once I saw that that was possible, and I started to learn what I like and what I don't like, I started working up to move out of the state. I decided on the city that I wanted to live in; I picked Charleston.

I started doing my research and I ultimately found a place to stay. Then I was able to embark on the process, figure out how am I going to get here. I'm going to drive down. I'm going to go scoop up my cat, she's still in Detroit staying with who I call her “main squeeze.” I have a boarder that she stays with sometimes when I travel.

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I'm going to go back and fly back so she doesn't have to do the long drive with me. We'll just get it over pretty quickly. It's a pretty short, direct flight from Detroit to Charleston.

So, I started working out all of the logistics. I packed up my place, got into my car and drove here. I made the move. I now no longer live in Michigan. Kind of crazy, huh?

I've had people reach out to me all throughout the week, because they know that I've moved, and they keep saying to me, “Wow, I can't believe you did that. That's crazy. It's so brave of you to move.” I wasn't really thinking about it as a “brave” thing to do, because I was no longer thinking of it as a “big” thing to do.

Which is so interesting that in a relatively short period of time, my thoughts could change so drastically. But they did change. And, when they changed, everything else shifted, right?

All of that negative emotion; the stress, the dread, the worry, the confusion; that I was feeling around figuring out this move, started to melt away. Then I was able to start taking intentional action because I changed my thoughts. Because I stopped thinking of it as a “big” thing, as a “big” decision, as a “big” move.

So, I want you to apply this same concept to your life. Is there a decision that you're not making? Is there a change that you're avoiding or resisting? Is there something that you want to do that you're just not moving forward with because you're thinking about it as a “big” thing.

Here's some examples of “big” things. We'll use moving obviously, because it's the thing that I just did. I also watch people feel this way, and think about things this way, when it comes to quitting their job, or starting a business, or buying a home, or getting divorced or getting married, for that matter.

Or having surgery. I've had a couple people throughout, I don't know, the past year, clients and friends embark on surgery. I think they thought about

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it for a really long time because they were thinking of it as a “big” decision. I just think that's such a fun thing to think about; it doesn't have to be a “big” decision. You can think about it that way or you can choose to not think about it that way.

Maybe you're also thinking about changing careers. Or, this might seem crazy to people, but what about having kids? What if that isn't a “big” decision? What if it's just a decision that you make? What changes if you stop thinking about the things that I just listed, or anything thing else that's coming up for you, anything else that you're considering doing?

Maybe living abroad for a year or six months, or something like that. Maybe going back to school, getting a doctorate, or writing a book. What would happen if you stop thinking about it as a “big” thing to do? What would change?

Remember, circumstances don't have any positive or negative energy to them, they're simply neutral. The things that we're labeling as “big,” those are merely circumstances. So, moving is a neutral circumstance, okay? Quitting your job is a neutral circumstance.

Then we think the thought that it's a “big” decision, or that it's a “big” thing to do. That thought is not a fact. It's a thought, it's an opinion, it's your judgment about the circumstance. Getting divorced is not a “big” decision. You can totally choose to think that it is a “big” decision, the question is, do you want to think of it that way?

The answer may be yes. Or the answer may be no. I had a client who is a lawyer turned coach, and she actually had a client of her own who was contemplating getting divorced. My client and I were talking through what thoughts my client was bringing to the coaching session. What judgments she had about the divorce process.

We were working on cleaning up her thinking about it, so she could better coach her client on making this decision, without adding any of her own judgment or her own opinion to the coaching session.

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One of the things that I offered her was, what if it's not a difficult process? What if it's not a “big” deal? What if it's not a “big” decision to make? What changes in your coaching if you think about it differently than you are? What if you offered that thought to your client? Now, the client can agree or the client can disagree, that's totally okay for them to choose what they want to think about making this decision.

But it turns out, my client did offer her client the thought, “This isn't a ‘big’ decision,” and the client was able to move forward really powerfully, in a really rapid manner. Not hastily, I don't want to put that judgment on it. But she made the decision, moved forward, and executed quickly because she was no longer thinking of it as a “big” thing. All right?

So, what changes for you when you stop thinking of the thing that you're telling yourself you want to do? What changes when you stop thinking about it as “big,” right?

Think about how you feel when you think something's a “big” deal. When you think it's a “big” decision, when you think it's a “big” change, “big” shift, “big” move. You're going to feel scared. You're going to feel overwhelmed. You're going to feel nervous and uncertain.

Then think about what you do when you feel those feelings. You definitely second guess yourself. You hem and you haw. You remake a decision that you've already made. You just keep going back over and over again thinking through something you've already decided.

What else do you do? You waste a lot of time because you don't move forward. You just stay stuck, so you don't make a change. You don't pursue what you want. You just keep tolerating the status quo. You end up living the exact same life that you're currently living; one that you don't particularly love, probably, if you're contemplating making this “big” change. Again, “big” is an air quotes here, you guys.

It really is just a judgment. It's one that is very protective. It keeps you conserving energy, seeking pleasure, and avoiding the temporary

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discomfort that comes from making a change. So, it makes sense why your brain wants to keep offering you up this thought. But it is optional.

As you're thinking about this... This is the main thought, doing “big” things... I also want you to be thinking about what other thoughts are holding you back when you think about the “big” thing that you want to do? Start to make a list. How are you thinking about it? Are you thinking that it will be hard? I've done a whole podcast episode on that, thinking about things being hard.

Same thing with “big,” right? Thinking about things being “big.” Do you think that it's going to take you too long? Do you think that you're not going to be able to figure it out?

One of the things, this is a smaller, “big” thing, but I am getting ready to fly my cat down here. Poor Snickies' probably not going to love that process. I was making it out to be a really “big” hassle in my head, and I was having all of this resistance to it because I was feeling really overwhelmed about the process. I wasn't sure where to start, that was another thought that I was thinking. I thought that it was going to be too difficult.

So, I was creating all of this resistance from my thinking, and then I was procrastinating doing the things that I would need to do, in order to make sure I can fly her down here. I was actually going to make my life way, way harder, because I was going to drive back to Michigan and then drive her back down.

But after I did the drive, it was about a 14-hour drive, all in, I realized, I really don't want to do that when the flight is like two hours long. So, I changed my thoughts. Instead of thinking that it's going to be a “big” deal, that it's going to be a “big” hassle to get her down here, I changed my thought to, “I can figure this out. Maybe it won't be that hard.”

Then my resistance started to melt away. I was able to feel capable, focused and determined, and I started to take intentional action. I reached out to Delta; I figured out what I have to do there. I reached out to the vet. I made sure I could get her in so she can get her little anti-anxiety

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medication. I did all of the things that I need to do in order to get her on the plane and get her down here.

So, that's another example of when you shift out of thinking something is going to be a “big” deal or a “big” hassle or a “big” decision or a “big” change. What shifts? Your resistance goes away, right? Think about what thoughts are holding you back. Are you thinking about something that you want to do as being a very “big” deal, as being a “big” decision?

From there, check in with yourself. When you think about it as “big,” what feelings come up for you? Do you feel overwhelmed? Do you feel scared? What other emotions might be making an appearance? You want to make sure you identify them. You're going to quickly see how you're avoiding those feelings with your inaction, with not moving forward.

Now, if you really do... and you have to check in with yourself here, do you really want to do the “big” thing? If you really do want to do it, we've got to make a change.

So, there's three changes that we're going to make. First and foremost, you've got to change your thoughts. I think this starts to happen naturally, as you become aware that thinking of the thing as “big” is just optional. It's not true that it's “big.” It's just an opinion, and you can choose to think it or you can choose to not think.

What would you need to think about your “big” thing instead, in order to feel better about doing it? You can also ask yourself; how do you want to feel? What's the positive emotion you would need to feel in order to move forward? Is it capable? Is it determined? Is it committed? Is it convicted? Is it compelled? I like all my “C” words.

What emotion do you need to feel? Maybe powerful or empowered. Motivated, perhaps? I don't love motivation as an emotion just because it tends to be so fleeting. However, if that's the one that really jumps out at you, pick it. I also have a lot of clients who love to feel confident when they're making a decision or making a change.

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So, what would you need to think to feel confident? Work this backwards, figure out how you want to feel, then ask yourself what would you need to think about the thing that you want to do? The neutral, not “big,” not small, thing that you want to do? What would you need to think about it in order to feel this feeling? Start to identify those thought and feeling combos.

That's the first step, we've got to change your thoughts. Figure out what you're thinking right now, that's holding you back, and then change those thoughts to thoughts that move you forward.

The second step you need to take, you've got to be willing to feel your feelings, the negative ones that are still going to be there, because when we're doing something new, that we've previously thought of as “big,” there's going to be lingering discomfort. You've got to be willing to feel that discomfort instead of doing what you're currently doing, which is avoiding it.

Okay? No more avoiding. We've got to gag-and-go through this discomfort and take you to step three, which is we need to take intentional actions. I want you to make a list. Write out all of the intentional actions that you would need to take in order to get from A-Z and do this “big” thing. All right?

Make a list. Create your ‘follow the yellow brick road’ roadmap. You've heard me talking about this on the podcast before. If you don't know all of the steps A-Z, write out as many of the steps that you do know. Start there, and then the subsequent steps will become illuminated eventually, in time. All right?

That's the process that you want to follow. If you're thinking about something as “big,” we've got to change your thoughts, we've got to feel your negative feelings on purpose, and we've got to take intentional action.

I just want to offer you one more thought. What if you trusted yourself to figure the “big” thing out? What if you trusted yourself to do that? I trusted myself to do it, and I ended up moving across the country, I guess you could say. I always think across the country as the two different coasts, from east coast to west coast. But technically, I did move across the country, because I moved from the north to the south.

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I trusted myself to figure out getting Snickies down to Charleston; and I did figure it out. I trusted myself to start my own business. I trusted myself to change careers. I trusted myself to quit jobs that weren't aligned with the life that I wanted to live. I've trusted myself to buy a house. I've trusted myself to have surgery.

I've trusted myself in doing so many things, that at one time I thought were “big.” But then, I stopped thinking of it that way. I trusted myself to do it and to figure it out. That's what you need to do in order to do your “big” thing. Trust yourself to figure it out, because you absolutely can.

It's a lot easier to figure it out when you stop telling yourself that the thing you want to do is a really “big” deal. All right? So, no more “big” thinking. Unless you're thinking about “big” thinking as being really open minded and dreaming really “big.” If that is the way that you're defining “big” thinking, by all means do more of that.

But if you're thinking about things as being “big” in a way that is a hindrance to you, let's cut that out. All right? Okay, my friends. That's what I've got for you this week. I hope you have a beautiful week, and I will talk to you in the next episode.

One more thing, just a friendly reminder, I've talked about this at the end of the last few podcasts, I am doing a podcast review giveaway. So, if you leave me a rating and review before the end of October 2023, depending on when you're listening to this, I'm going to be selecting five different reviewers and giving away five different prizes as a thank you for taking time out of your day to leave me a rating and review.

It means the world to me. I hope you're loving the podcast. If you ever have ideas for episodes... I've had a couple people reach out recently to give me inspiration for podcast episodes. So, DM me on social media. Do that if there's anything in particular you want to hear me talk about. All right? Have a beautiful week.

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