

PROTECTING YOUR ENERGY

EP #41

“Do I need a life coach?” You’re listening to Episode 41, with Rhiannon Bush

Welcome to the Do I need a life coach? Podcast. We’re here to discuss the ins-and outs- of the life coaching industry and give you tools to use, to see for yourself. I’m your host, Rhiannon Bush. Mother, management consultant and a passionate, certified life coach.

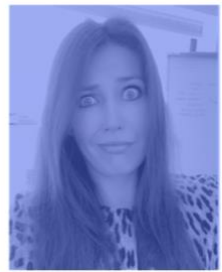
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I’ve been experiencing being rebutted what feels like a lot lately. And it’s teaching me great deal in the way of state management and communication. What I mean when I talk about state management, is essentially stoicism. It’s taking a minute to process your emotions before acting on them. As someone who has a lot of opinions and doesn’t tend to sit on the fence while keeping their feelings to themselves, I can give my opinion too readily, as I’ve done in the past, without really considering it through thoroughly. So, especially as a teenager, I would share an idea or an opinion based on my initial thoughts, without weighing all other points of view or considerations for the arguments. So my responses sometimes lacked consideration, sometimes even tact and weren’t thought through. They were from a place of emotion and how I felt about something, instead of how I thought about something.

The result of that was sometimes acting brashly, which often put a lot of people off because they either didn’t get a chance to share their own opinion, and sometimes they felt railroaded by me, or if in a strong group of independent thinkers, another would have a equally or stronger opposing opinion, and come back at me. And with equally or stronger opinionated people than myself, because I had shared my opinion so readily and at times without forethought, I would then be forced to consider what they had said which took time to think, and I wouldn’t often get that chance to rebut back. I always lacked a quick tongue in that regard because I needed to feel the information I was hearing and process it that way to determine whether I felt it was right or wrong, opposed to just thinking about it, weighing up the argument and speaking my thoughts – which is a lot faster than having to feel it before understanding your standpoint on it. But my need to feel my thoughts and process new information that way, often came back to bite me.

So, at the moment, I’m being rebutted from what feels like every angle. I’m also doing a lot of work that sits outside my wheelhouse. I’m not loving it and while it’s something I need to just get through, motivation is waning so I’m constantly having to set myself little goals to achieve, just to continue making progress. It’s not a long-term thing but it’s work I’m learning, developing, selling and advising on all at the same time which I’m finding challenging. I’m being told I’ve got it and am doing a great job, but adding





how I'm feeling about that, to the fact that I'm being rebutted by people in areas that I do consider my wheelhouse means there's not a whole lot of intrinsic satisfaction or fulfilment happening in my work life right now – and it's great in the way it's teaching me lots about how I deal with these things and when I can become disengaged and unresourceful.

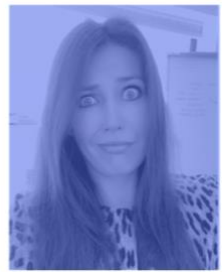
It's getting to the point where I'm starting to disengage and asking myself why I bother to share my opinions. I know from past experiences, that this is one of those signs from me, that I'm not happy and while I know logically that it is a very immature response, this is where my feelings come in and I need to be careful. This is when I typically start to be glass half-empty, I complain, I also become quite harsh to those around me. The expectations I have on myself heighten, ironically, and therefore my expectations of others do also. It's a bad cycle and it's only because of the years I've had coaching, that I started to recognise it and now I can recognise it, I can change it. When I start to take begin rebutted personally and I feel offended, I can't detach emotionally from the facts and logic of the situation, when my inner 16-year-old throws a bit of a tantrum and then asks the question "well, why bother?", I need to pay extra special attention. I need to protect my energy.

For those of you who have listened to episode 24 – Communication Enhancement with Behavioural Profiling, can you guess what profile I am? Behavioural profiling is what has enabled me to understand my triggers, understand what's going on around me and the people around me, and who I will build or break rapport with, in order to conserve or expel my energy. It's also highlighted what I personally do when I'm low in energy and when it's taking a toll on me. It's a beautiful thing to know that about myself, because otherwise my pattern would repeat and repeat and repeat, and it's a pattern that I don't want to continue. I want to be able to maintain healthy working relationships, and not bring how I feel emotionally into my workplace or into my relationships both at home and at work.

I also don't want to turn to chocolate or alcohol every time I feel pressured in life. Which sometimes even now I do, I'm a human too, but it's definitely something I did a lot in the past and it's something I've worked successfully to change. Drinking and eating my feelings is not a healthy habit and it's something that I personally really wanted to change in my life, so by being able to identify what's going on, why I'm behaving the way I'm behaving, and recognise it enough to do something about it, it means I can put measures in place to conserve energy when and if I need to, to avoid things blowing up, getting out of control, or me feeling resentment or frustrated at circumstances I feel I can't control.

I know I can always control my reaction, and I can always communicate, and I know my feelings often dictate my communication, especially when my energy levels are low, that very directly correlates to the level of grace or tact that I manage to have. So I can identify when my energy levels are low and I can choose not to communicate in that moment, or if I'm looking to





blow things up because I no longer care- not a healthy choice, ever by the way, then I can do that too. That, in my experience, always leads to regret.

Another part of what's happening at the moment is that is that I feel so exhausted. And while I like to think "exhausted" is a state of mind, i think we can all agree to some extent that when we've got a lot going on in life it is OK to feel tired or exhausted. And often I find exhaustion is emotional, not other things. I'm exhausted of feeling like I don't understand why things done certain ways, and so when I question things and I'm rebutted, I'm usually just wanting more understanding or context and sometimes it feels like the recipients of my questioning feel like it's an inconvenience that I'm asking. If I stop for a moment and consider whether the people I am giving opinions to or asking questions of maybe feeling insecure and under pressure, because actually it's them that should have the answers I'm asking the questions too, then I think there's an interesting angle to consider the circumstances from. I have no evidence to support that, but that would make sense to me. By giving an opinion, I'm actually highlighting the inconsistencies and gaps that they haven't filled which doesn't feel good for them either and it also change the power balance a little bit.

If you can think of a situation you've been in, where you've highlighted the truth by asking a question, and that question brings to light somebody's failings or insecurities and they rebut you, you can see why right?! It's unprocessed emotions and in that moment, their younger self appears. Weird but true.

In the situation talking about, it's a very safe space where people are encouraged to share their opinion and it's often advocated that opinions are valued and sought, as well as considered. But at the minute, it just seems like there are inconsistencies and gaps everywhere, which when I highlight, I get rebutted constantly, it's exhausting for me and not particularly engaging or fulfilling or any of the good feelings I usually like to have. This is important because I feel so many organisations I've worked with and for have an ethos of honesty and unity and leadership... and they're pretty words to have on a wall, they're pretty words when things are going well, and the true test of the validity, practice and genuineness of those words is when things are hard.

So, coming back to state management, is it something I think is so important and it's something I wish I had had a chance to share with so many businesses and organisations I worked with in Melbourne and when I was working for myself, because as an individual in these organisations, managing your state and stoicism is fundamentally a listening skill. When you hear things and are told things, if you react, you influence what that person tells you next. If you don't believe me, try it. Try when somebody tells you something reacting in a way that encourages them to speak more, your find a repeat themselves, and reinforce what they said by either giving you additional context or simply repeating it.





If you stay stoic, or you start to shut the conversation down and appear like you're not interested, or you don't want to hear what the other person has to say, they will start to either backpedal on what they've said, depending on what it is they've told you and been sharing, or they'll change their story to make it seem less of a deal or less intense, or... they'll stop talking altogether and won't share any more with you – about this and most likely future things as well. So you have to play it really carefully, depending on the outcome you want.

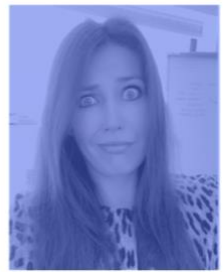
I remember consulting to an organisation and I got sucked into some drama. I fuelled the fire by listening intently and asking more questions which led to that person repeating their story, giving me additional context and information I actually didn't care to know. I knew once I left that situation that I shouldn't have engaged the way that I did. It actually didn't help her, I didn't help me, and it certainly didn't help the situation. And I think when it comes to caring and giving opinions you need to be careful with your energy and the lines that you draw around it. That's what I'm learning at the moment – how much do I engage, how much do I keep to myself, how much do I want to serve.

I know I can get a bit too invested and care a little bit too much, when I'm not sure that that care would be weighted the same way in the opposite direction. I have always cared a lot about what I do, and probably more specifically I feel intense loyalty to the people that I get to know well. And that's often what gets me in a lot of trouble, because I care about their wellbeing and my wellbeing, fairly equally, and I like to keep the sanctity of a group and everybody in it, comfortable and safe. But often, it can be me that it hurts because I become overly invested, the value I add exceeds my “pay-station” and therefore it's seen as though I have big, unwanted and unwarranted opinions.

So if you sound like me, somebody who really cares about what they do and wants to make a difference and have an impact, practise stoicism. Practise observing yourself from the angle outside of yourself to learn how you're being perceived. Pay attention to when you're rebutted, versus engaged with and sought for further context or more information, and be aware of when it leaves you feeling exhausted or drained versus exhilarated and alive.

I've always been an advocate of adding the most value in a role that you can possibly add. No matter what you're paid, no matter what you do, because you as an individual will always win and get lessons and then be able to contribute at a greater capacity in everything you do. But that has to be aligned with your energy investment and keeping yourself safe – avoiding chronic fatigue, burnout, etc. If giving so much drains you, you need to ask yourself whether it's worth it? Whether they are worth it. What are you willing to risk, what is worth feeling exhausted for, and what is not? Because without being able to put those kinds of boundaries around it, you can give and give and give, and get nothing back. Again, you will always receive intrinsically in the way you, as a human, learn and grow, and what





you can contribute within that role and elsewhere. But at some point, you need to take a step back and just cheque that you are getting what you need at the same time they are getting what they need. Enjoy your week and take steps to protect your energy.

See you soon, bye now.

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Hey! Before you go, I always find reviews really helpful when looking for new information or insights...

I you've found this podcast valuable, please take a minute to write a quick review about what you've found most beneficial for you, so other people can benefit from your insights, and listen in too. I would LOVE that! Also, if there are any topics you'd like me to cover specifically about life coaching or the life coaching industry, visit rhiannonbush.com to contact me. Thanks for joining and I'll see you in the next episode of Do I Need A Life Coach?!

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