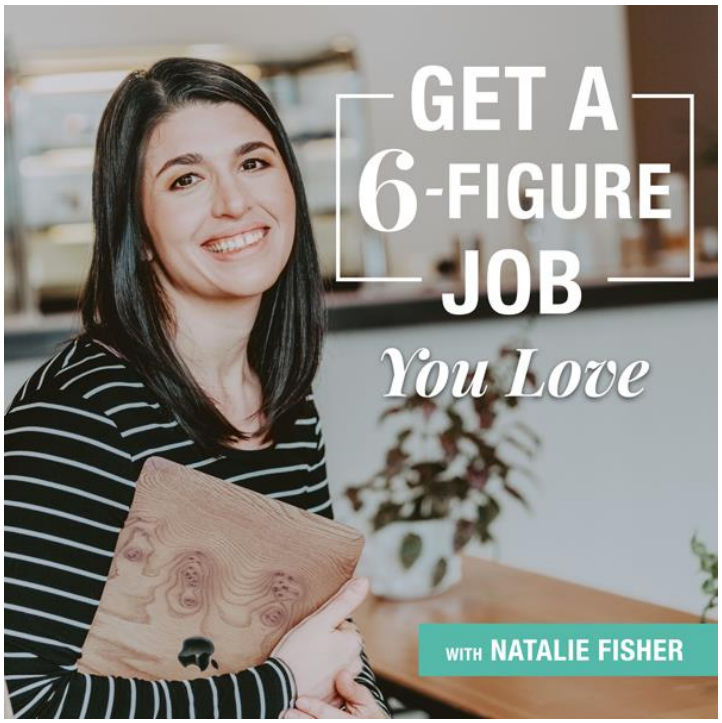
Ep #40: Cognitive Pressure



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Natalie Fisher

Get a 6-Figure Job You Love with Natalie Fisher

You're listening to the Get a Six-Figure Job You Love podcast. This is episode 40, Cognitive Pressure. Hey there. Welcome to the Get a Six-Figure Job You Love podcast. I'm your host, Natalie Fisher. I'm a certified career mindset coach who also happens to want to skip all the BS and get to what it really takes to create real results for you and your career. On this podcast, you will create real mindset shifts that will lead to big results and big changes in your career and your income. No fluff here. If you want to get a six-figure job you love and create real concrete results in your industry and make a real impact, you're in the right place. Are you ready? Let's go.

Hello. Hello. Welcome to the podcast today. So today, I want to talk about something that so many people go through and it's actually a bigger problem than we think because we don't really pay attention to it. We're not really aware of it, we don't really dig into it. And so, that's what I want to do today, is just to show you how much your brain power and the amount of time that you spend thinking about something, what that is actually worth to you and what it costs you when you're not focusing it in the right direction for you. So this is mostly for you if you are somebody who can relate to the fact that you've wanted to do something for a long time but you haven't done it yet.

So you want to achieve something different than you have, and you're not really taking the action but you're thinking about it all the time. That's what's called cognitive pressure, is that time that you spend thinking about the thing you want to do but aren't taking clear, focused daily, weekly action towards that thing. It's pressure that you're only putting on yourself most of the time. Sometimes we have external pressure, but it's mostly ourselves that's putting this pressure on ourselves because we don't have what we want. We really know we want something. I'm talking about the example of my clients who are in jobs where they don't want to be. They have decided that eventually they want to change the situation, but they haven't really gotten themselves into a focused, productive way to do it. And that's what we do when we start working together.

When you hire me or you make a commitment or you sign up for something, if you're ever going to do it, that's when you're going to do it because you're going to decide to put that work in. That's why it's so powerful when you make decisions, which you can also check out my podcast on decision score. So not having taken action towards the thing that you want to do but pressuring yourself daily thinking about it, right? So if you're saying things like, "I really should do that. One day, I want to do that," or maybe having taken some action but not gotten there yet and then stopped, and then that cognitive pressure comes in and out because you're like, "Yeah, I did some stuff but that didn't work," and then your thoughts come in and cloud you from really going in all-in to something because you have all these thoughts about why you can't or why that didn't work and what it means about you. So this holds you back even though you don't really know, you're not really focused on the fact of all the time you're wasting thinking about it, right?

I know people who will be like, "I daydream at work all the time because I'm bored," or, "I don't know why I'm here anymore. It's just easy and it's secure and it pays me well but I don't want to be here anymore, but I haven't left," right? And sometimes it's going to be a limiting belief that you have that you don't even know you have, right? And this is why we need support from others to show us our blind spots, to show us, "Okay, well, why haven't you?"

And so, with one of my examples, so I'll use an example of one of my clients, is she really thought she needed a bachelor's degree first. So that's why she wasn't really going all in and taking the action on making this change because she's like, "Well, I don't have a bachelor's degree or a master's degree. All the job descriptions say that I need that." So she was being blocked by this belief but really, she could have totally gone all-in and made that happen, right? She's well on her way now. But while that belief was holding her back, she wasn't going to do it because she was unconsciously running the program of, "Oh, I need a bachelor's degree so I'm probably not going to be able to do it."

And then, every day thinking, "I need a bachelor's degree. I wish I could do something different. I want to do something different. I'm bored. I want to work on something more interesting," all those thoughts that she was having on a day-to-day basis because she didn't really need to pay super close attention to what she was doing at work because she was pretty bored and she knew her job really well. She was getting her job done. She was working, right? Her mind wasn't super occupied by that because it wasn't challenging her.

So when our mind is not being challenged, then what we do is we either decide we're going to go all-in and make a change and do what we want and make a space for us to be challenged. We're going to go and find the environment where we're challenged. Or the alternative is to stay comfortable, stay in the environment where you're not challenged, and then your brain is just going to be entertaining all these other thoughts about what you could be doing, how you could be challenged. But then, if you don't act on those thoughts consistently in a focused manner, then you're just putting a lot of cognitive pressure on yourself and not moving very quickly, or at all.

And so, it's some limitation in your head that you have, right? So that was an example of one of my clients. But you might have a limitation that you don't even know you have because it's like, "Why aren't you taking action?" You want to know, and it's because of a limitation that you have. And if you don't know what it is, then it's something to be explored, right, because we are either willing to go through the discomfort of moving forward into the unknown or we stay in the discomfort of being bored with what we do know but don't really want.

So if you're listening to this podcast, you're somebody who wants to grow. You're somebody who wants to achieve and evolve and you want to be challenged. You want to have a level of discomfort in your life, you want that, but you're settling for the wrong type of discomfort. We are here on the planet to evolve. And so, that's why it feels so uncomfortable when you're not, right?

So often, I will hear people saying, "I'm not challenged. I'm so bored. There's no room for growth here," and that is the reason why they know that they need to leave. So when you're not leaving or when you're not taking steps every day towards getting the environment and the challenge and the pay and everything that you want, because that's totally normal thing to want, then you're just putting cognitive pressure on yourself to wish you had it. And then, all that time spent is time that you could be spending going all-in and problem solving to get what you want.

And not everyone is someone like you. A lot of people will just stay in the comfort. They'll just decide that they're happy in the comfort, right? So they'll just be like, "Yeah, there's people who have been to the same job every day for years and they've never really done anything different, and they're happy with that." I feel like they are just a different breed of people, right? I feel like we all have some desire to grow, but I've seen it where some people just don't and they're just comfortable there. So you're the kind of person who has that desire, and that means that it's the road that you're meant to take. You're meant to go there because your desires are your roadmap. They're your compass for where you need to go.

You're human, but then you're scared to actually move towards it because you don't want to fail or you think you have something in the way that's blocking you. You're afraid of something, like something is there that needs to be uncovered as to see why you're not going there, right? And it's not because you're not capable or you're not worthy or you're not good enough or you're not smart enough. Those are just stories that we all have in our head. So if you're thinking it's one of those things, it's not that. You just have a mental limitation that you haven't looked at.

So what we do is we deal with this in one of a few ways. We'll put it off, say, "We're going to do it later," postpone our goals, say, "If and when this happens, then I will do it," or we stay in confusion. We indulge in these emotions that don't produce any action and we indulge in like, "I don't really know what

I want to do. I'm so confused. I don't know which way I should go," right? And then, the confusing part or the time you spend in confusion is what creates the cognitive pressure for you.

So it'll either be like daydreaming about something you wish you could do, having an idea but being too scared to go to it, or being confused about what you want to do but knowing you want to grow and do more. And either one of those looks like not doing, right? It looks like maybe half-assing something, maybe applying for some stuff, maybe going for some interviews, maybe talking to some people, but your alignment isn't there. Your thoughts are not aligned with what you want. They're not completely in line. And so, that doesn't give you the ability to keep going no matter what because you're not 100% in. You're kind of like, "Well, maybe I'll see in this land of wishy-washy." So it's going to be very difficult for you to go there quickly and purposefully, right?

It's kind of like the equivalent of taking a stroll. You decide you're going to go out on a walk and you're like, "Yeah, I don't really know where I'm going to go. I'm just going to wander around. I just want to go for a walk and explore," versus saying, "I'm going to go to this destination. I'm going to walk to the grocery store so that I can buy these ingredients to make this meal. And I'm going to take a backpack and I'm going to take my wallet and I'm going to go there," and you just decide, and then you start taking the steps there. And you might have to stop at a light. You might have to take a detour if there's traffic or whatever. Or if you're walking a certain way, there might be construction but you know where you're going.

And so, those detours are not a problem because you're just like, "Yeah, I know where I'm going and I'm ready. I'm going," versus, "Yeah. I'm just going to go take a stroll. Maybe I'll walk over here. Maybe I'll walk over there. Maybe I'll get to a grocery store." Eventually, you don't know which one, right? So that's the difference between the cognitive pressure that you have every day versus just a focused, committed action wave being with a map and a purpose, right?

And so, that's what the cognitive pressure will do to you every day. You'll just be in this perpetual land of exploring every day, but never really getting to the grocery store to get the stuff to accomplish what you want to accomplish, right? And so, it looks like you might apply for something and then it doesn't require a bachelor's degree, but then you don't get an interview and you're like, "Oh. Well, I thought it required a bachelor's, but that one didn't even. And I didn't get the interview." So then, you're like, "Okay," and you just wander a little bit some more.

Or it could look like asking for a promotion when your boss is back or when the timing is better, and then you keep putting it off. You're like, "Oh, when she's in a good mood, maybe next year," or, "I'll start applying when it's better for me. The market's not very good right now so maybe I shouldn't. I need to figure out what I really want first. I need to, insert blank, first." So it'll always be something that you've got that is a reason. And that is all just avoidance in cognitive pressure because every time the thought comes into your head, it's like a calling. It's like saying to you, "Hey, we need to do something about this. This isn't where we're supposed to be," right? But you just keep ignoring it and putting it off because you don't know what's ahead.

At least with where you are, it's safe. You know exactly what to expect so you're not as scared, but it's still uncomfortable. And the reason we know this is because you keep thinking about wanting something different. Because if you were totally content where you were, then you wouldn't be listening to this podcast, you wouldn't be looking for anything else. You'd just be like, "Yeah, this is my job. I'm resigned to it, and I liked it. That's it. I'm happy. I love the security. I'm so glad I have it. I wouldn't give it up for anything." That would be your mindset. You would not be listening to me.

So the cost of it is the fear that we spend in the thinking about something new and then not doing the something new. That's the cognitive pressure. And so, why it doesn't work for us is because we're ultimately staying safe, and that is ultimately a bigger risk for our life than venturing out into something

unknown that could be something amazing when you figure out how to get there. But the journey is scary. But honestly, we think that being safe, it's safer, it's more comfortable. We think that's a better decision, but it's actually a bigger risk not to venture out because life is short. We don't live forever, right? We only have a certain amount of time and we get to do whatever we want. We get to do so much more. We just have to be a little bit uncomfortable in a way that we're not used to, right?

And then once we start doing that, we're like, "Oh, I guess I can do this. I can see how this is going to work. Oh, okay. So you start taking steps." And then, you get to grow. And just the process to get you there is what's going to evolve you and grow you. And then, when you get there, you're going to be like, "Oh, this is great," and then, you're going to want to go do another thing because that's how we're wired.

And then, if we end up not doing it yet, we spend so much time in your mind thinking about it, and it's wasted time. You're spending time thinking about it, and not doing. And the reason why you keep thinking about it is because you eventually want to do it. But every time we think about it eventually or postpone it into the future, it's kind of an indicator of saying, "I don't want to be uncomfortable so I'm going to put it off." And because we have unconscious mental-limiting beliefs that we have that are holding us back, those things also come into play and they keep us back as well, so then we don't do it.

So what I want to suggest is it actually creates more time spent working harder mentally thinking about what you want to be doing, thinking about how much you'd like to change something, thinking about how much you'd like your life to be different, how much you'd like to explore having new projects, different feelings, a different environment, how you'd like to explore that. You're wasting so much time thinking so hard about that when you could be using all that energy and channeling all of that energy into actually making it happen, if you were open to feeling some things that you might not be feeling now because you're comfortable, right?

So think about all the time you spend thinking about it, thinking about making a change or doing something different, the time you spend daydreaming, wishing you were solving more interesting problems, being more useful, finding solutions, feeling satisfied and fulfilled as opposed to working on a plan to get there. When we get into that mind frame of working on a plan to get there, then we start to feel excited. And I think what happens is a lot of us don't want to let ourselves feel excited because we don't want to get our hopes up because we don't really believe in our hearts that it's happening. And that's really sad because the belief is available to you, right? And I always say if one other person has done what you want to do, of course, you can do it.

So what's ultimately created is a culture of stagnation. We end up stagnating, we end up feeling frustrated. That's why most people don't like their current jobs, but they're just like, "Oh, I got to do the grind. I got to do it. Another day, another dollar." This attitude just gets created and it's stagnation, frustration, it compounds. We end up in this perpetual state. We end up in overworking ourselves and we just end up bored. One of my clients have said, "It's like Groundhog Day. My work is like Groundhog Day. I feel like I'm in that movie." You guys heard of that movie where you feel like you're living the same day over and over and over again? And then, you start thinking that that's just the way that your life is and you're like, "Yeah, one day, it'll be different."

So I want to encourage you to make a change right now, so just consider these two ways of thinking. The solution to the cure to your cognitive pressure can be put to rest in two ways. You've probably guessed the one, but you can be really honest with yourself and be like, "How badly do I actually want a change? Do I really want a change," and you can decide that you don't, right? You can be like, "It's not worth the work. I'm not willing to go through all that. I'm not willing to potentially fail, be rejected, and go through whatever I might have to go through. I just don't want it that bad so I'm going to stop pretending like I do." That is an option.

And I would encourage you that that's a more powerful option than wasting your time, wasting your brain power, your brain juice on thinking about things that you haven't done. And it's an indicator if you think to yourself when is the time when you start to feel bored and you want to do something, and then how long is it before you actually do something about it, and is that a pattern that's showing up for you in your life because then, at least, the pressure is gone. If you admit to yourself, "Okay, I'm going to be honest. I don't want it that bad," then you don't have the pressure of thinking about it every day. You can just think about how you want to proceed now in your current circumstance, or you can take action towards it. You can be like, "I'm committing."

You can take a step that commits you to doing it, like investing in hiring a coach, for example. When you can hire a coach, you put skin in the game. You invest yourself in a way that shows you and the universe, if you're into that, that you're serious about getting this result and you're going to do it. I would refer to the podcast on radical self-responsibility and your decision score if you want more information around how you can know if that's right for you. Take a step that commits you. Put yourself in a container that doesn't allow you to quit, that gives you what you need to get everything out of yourself possible that you have to give, right?

And then you're moving towards it, then you are on the path you were meant to take and you get to feel uncomfortable but you get to feel proud of the fact that you're in the arena. You're doing it, versus sitting on the sidelines being like, "Yeah, yeah, one day when this happens or that happens," right? And if you do want to be there, then decide, "That's just where I want to stay. I'm not going to think about this anymore. I'm just going to make the decision that I don't want it that bad." And that's okay. No judgment at all.

And so, why does this going to work so well for you and why it's going to free your mental space, right? Because whichever you choose, your cognitive pressure either way is either channeled in the right direction. It's being used as fuel for what you need and want to get what you want done. So then, it's not going to feel like pressure anymore, it's going to feel like fuel because now you've actually committed yourself and you're actually going to do something. Or you're going to decide, "No, I don't want it that bad," say, as a job or whatever. And then you can focus on something else, right? So say, if you want to take up a hobby or something. You want to learn how to paint or you want to do something else. You can be like, "I'm going to put my energy into something else, but I don't want to go through the discomfort of finding a better job that pays me more."

It's kind of like sometimes if my clients get frustrated and they've gone through a time when they've had a few nos in a row and they're getting frustrated, I will say to them, I'm like, "Well, why don't you just quit then?" And immediately, they're like, "Oh, no. I don't want to quit." They're immediately woken up and brought back to like, "Oh my God, no. Of course, I don't want to quit." So then, they can see what the productive action is they need to get back into, and they can see that super clearly after that, right?

So this is what I want to present to you is, do you want to just give up on your dream, for lack of a better word, or do you want to give up on your goal or your next step? And that's fine. It's actually fine. There's no pressure to do it. It's just, don't waste time in a place that really gets you nowhere, right?

So if this is something that is resonating with you, you know you need to make a decision, then you're going to need to have a little bit of tolerance for some discomfort in the beginning. In the beginning, right? And yes, it's always going to be a little uncomfortable, but you're going to want to raise yourself up to that discomfort because that's what we're made for. We're supposed to be uncomfortable. And I've gotten to the point where I really actually can enjoy the discomfort. It's not a problem. We're not super experienced at feeling our discomfort so we think it's a big problem, but you're not going to die from it. We're not going to die from any feeling. And if that's the worst that can happen and you've

decided that you want to do something really extraordinary, then you just need to get out there and do it. Make a commitment and a decision and go for it.

So you're going to need to commit. You're going to need to have the confidence in yourself to follow through. And you're going to need to have courage, right? Because where you are right now, it probably doesn't take a lot from you, other than probably spinning and cycling and what you might want or you don't have now, and all the reasons why you can't, the unconscious blockers or the conscious blockers that you might think are true that you need to open up and evaluate, right?

And then, once you get this, once you'd make this decision, you're going to end up spending all your time in the commitment to the decision, to land that new role, to get that promotion, and to make the money that you want to be making. Then, you'll do it because all your energy is channeled there. It's no longer being wasted on what may or may not be right for you, or if you're going to fail, or what's going to happen, or what they're going to think of you. You're not even going to be there anymore. You're just going to be like, "What do I need to do to get there?"

It actually really blows my mind sometimes. I've just been doing this work for a long time, but I'll see my clients, they're so good at their job. So if their boss gives them a challenge and they're like, "Okay, we need to get this done," it might seem even impossible in the beginning, but they're so resourceful and they're so good at getting the stuff done for their boss or for someone else, right? But if it's something that you want, there's no real thing that holds you accountable to do it because that's why most people are not doing it, right?

And that's why coaching is so powerful because when you hire a coach, you're committed and you're doing it. So you become the person who decides you want to do something and you make it happen. There's no price that can be put on that because most of us are not like that. And it's not because we can't be like that, it's just because we don't have the tools to do so and our minds haven't been expanded to the point where we have the information and the thought processes to be able to do it, right? And we haven't committed normally because of everything I've talked about on this podcast.

So you create the type of brain that is valuable beyond belief, because not only can you then create the results that you want for your own career, but then you can create the results you want in any job. And you know how to take total control of what it is you want to do because you get really good at problem solving on the way, you get really good at feeling whatever you need to feel to get there, and you just get really focused. And that's just becomes the new way that you think and that becomes a new way of being for you, which also makes you more valuable, makes your brain more valuable. It means you make more money, it means you show up differently with a totally new sense of self-confidence. And you know for sure that you're going to be able to create results that you want because you're committed and you've done it already, right? And you went after them and that builds the confidence to do it again and again and create bigger and bigger and bigger results.

So there you have it, my friend. That is essentially one of the biggest problems I see in the workforce today, is people not being aware of this problem of cognitive pressure and what it's actually costing them in their day-to-day lives. And so, this podcast is basically to show you, you can't just decide you don't want it that bad and not do it. You can apply this to anything that's going on in your life, anything that you haven't done that you've been wanting to do forever. And how many times do you think about it in a day, in a week? How much time do you actually spend thinking about wanting it, wishing it, half-assing it maybe, but not actually going all-in and being committed? Because I promise you, if you were all-in and you were committed, you would have done it by now. Awesome, my friends. Thank you so much for listening and I will talk to you next week. Bye.

If you're resonating with what you're hearing on the podcast, I want to tell you something. If we ever talk or work together or interact in any way, I will not, even for a minute, buy into the story that you

can't get the job you want and the pay you want and deserve. I will not buy into the story that the recruiter said you needed to have more experience or that you were told that you needed to get another degree or certification before you could be considered, or that there are so many other great candidates out there that are more qualified who have already applied, or that you need to check with your accountant first or whatever the excuse you have that robs you from your power. I will not buy it. Because what I know, for sure, is that if you're not being valued and if you're not being paid at the level you know, you can, and deserve to be, there is a clear reason why, and it is a reason that is completely within your control.

If you want to learn what's really been holding you back so far and you're ready to get some help, head on over to www.nataliefisher.ca/apply. I will be able to help you identify why you've been stuck so far and exactly what you need to do to move forward. And I will help you do this by showing you how to take control of your career, how to set the frame for what you want instead of thinking that you have to be at the mercy of what you have. And as we all know, if you don't believe that the job you want is available and that you can have it, you will always settle for the jobs you don't want. If you are ready to move out of that space and into a better situation, I am here to help you. I'm going to teach you exactly what to do with lots of examples. Head on over to www.nataliefisher.ca/apply. I'll see you over there.

I had to really work through that negative self-talk and learn to embrace my curiosity and my resourcefulness because you kept bringing me back to, "Those are your strengths. You are resourceful. You can figure out anything. You had to figure out this. You had to figure out that." So the exercises where you had me write down my major achievements and helped me monetize or come up with a solid way of demonstrating how much of an impact that had.

In my head, I was sitting here. I was like, "If I'm going to get what I need to get a job based on just getting bad information for me to get where I'm going, I know for a fact the minute I get a job, I will be earning enough to basically pay it back within whatever time period." So for me, it was worth it because I'm like, "Okay, she know what she's talking about. She had gotten all these people to get a job. There is no reason why I cannot be one of them." And I know for a fact, if I just go on a payment plan, the minute I get a job, I'll be able to start making enough money to pay back this whole thing because it won't be an issue.

And you did [crosstalk 00:28:25].

So that's been exactly what I told myself.

If you're like me and you have a hard time focusing on your achievements and your strengths, the exercise you had me do where I wrote down my biggest achievements, I also added to that my strengths and affirmations, and I really tailored my affirmations to reinforce those strengths and achievements because it needed to ring true in my brain.

Yes. Very important.

And then, I not only used the Think Up app, but I printed those things out and I kept them where I could review them and go back to them when that doubt started to come up. So keep those things in mind. Keep them visible to you. Find your evidence and go to it.

Yeah. It's just where you focus your attention, right? Yeah.

Yeah. Your focus determines your reality because it's all about perspective. Thank you for all of your help, Natalie.

Absolutely.

You made a huge difference.

When you leave me an iTunes review and send me a screenshot of the review directly to my email at natalie@asknataliefisher.com, I will send you a free gift as a thank you. And this free gift, I usually sell it for $100, so it's $100 value, and it contains 50 examples of behavioral interview questions. So if you've ever stumbled, second guessed, rambled in an interview, not sure exactly what to say, I have this free guide that's going to give you so many examples that there's no way you'll be confused at the end. It's helped thousands of people land jobs just from understanding so clearly what needs to be included.

So if you don't know how to tell a good story, inside you'll find the exact words. If you don't know what stories to tell, you're going to see the components of a successful story in action, and 50 at that. You don't think you have any good stories to share? Don't worry. There's 25 questions in there to ask yourself to pull the stories from your own brain. To get your hands on this, all you have to do is leave me an iTunes review and send it to me to my email and I will respond with this guide. Thank you so much for listening and I will talk to you soon. Bye.