

Ep #12: Thinking Your Way to Success with Kim Ades



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Crystal Cooper

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Welcome to Net Worthwhile, Do More with Your Wealth, a podcast designed to explore financial topics from a broader perspective than just the numbers. We'll look at the emotional impact of financial decisions and how you can use your wealth to live a great life. Thank you for tuning in.

Crystal Cooper: And welcome back, everyone, to Net Worthwhile. I am here today with Kim Ades. She is the founder of Frame of Mind Coaching and JournalEngine Software. Thanks for joining us, Kim.

Kim Ades: I am super excited to be here. Thank you.

Crystal Cooper: Thank you. So tell us a little bit actually about Frame of Mind Coaching, because we are talking about mental health today.

Kim Ades: Yes. So basically it's a coaching company, and we tend to work with leaders, people who are very, very highly driven, and they tend to have a few things in common. Number one is that they have big goals they want to achieve. Number two is they're essentially really good people who want to make the world a better place and have a positive impact. Number three is that they want to live a great life: they want to be wealthy, they want to have great health, they want to have great relationships, they want to experience all that life has to offer. And number four, they're extremely frustrated because they are not yet where they want to be. And they ask themselves, "What's wrong? What's taking so long? What's wrong with me? What's wrong with my team? What's wrong with the people I'm around? What's wrong?" And those are the people we work with.

Crystal Cooper: Yeah. So actually, you touched on something, you made this point of these four key buckets, right?

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Kim Ades: Yeah.

Crystal Cooper: And I would offer that I'm definitely one of these people who fall into all four of those. And there's a feeling sometimes that you're never, ever going to be happy. And so the question I'm going to ask is, is there a situation where you should always be growing but be happy? Or how do you balance both of those if you're someone who's just always driven for more?

Kim Ades: Okay, so here's the key. It's good to be driven for more. I mean, being driven for something is like a source of energy, right? It creates excitement, anticipation, creativity, it fuels your energy. It's a good thing. The problem happens when you're excited for more or you're looking forward to more because you're disappointed with where you are and you're frustrated with where you are. So really in an ideal situation, we want to be okay with where we are and eagerly anticipating what will be. And that's the ideal state, to say, "Okay, so I am here and this is okay. And I look forward to the journey and the destination of getting to this other place."

Where people get really tripped up is the frustration, anger, disappointment, agony of being where they are right now. And that's the place that we want to work on, to say: you can't get to a place from anger, frustration, and disappointment. It's impossible, but you got to figure out how to improve your state right now in order to get to where you want to be.

Crystal Cooper: So right now, we're dealing with this crazy COVID and this pandemic and there's just so much going on. I think that a lot of people, if they weren't frustrated before, are definitely; there's a lot more time to evaluate where you are in life. Somebody that's home and maybe they're in this sort of frustrated state, how do you come out of that, especially now?

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Kim Ades: Yeah, for me, I mean, it's so interesting. I had this conversation with a group of people yesterday. They said, "The world's going crazy. It's imploding, everybody's against each other. They're picking sides. What do you do?" And the truth of the matter is that what I have seen in my lifetime of coaching leaders is that there's always unrest before transformation. There's always resistance before transformation. And so we see what's happening in the world and this could cause us to feel uncomfortable, a sense of disturbance. And what I want to say to everybody is that this is what typically precedes transformation. And so now if you're listening to it, you say, "Well, what do I do with that?"

Well, what you've been given in COVID is what we call contrast, this thing that, if we're smart, helps us get really, really clear about what we want in our lives. I think before COVID, for me for sure, I was just going along. I was out there traveling, speaking, going from one place to the other. I was just on this high-speed track. And one of the things I realized is I was tired. This is not a good lifestyle, and I was eating poorly. And at the end of the day, this wasn't contributing to health and wealth for me on a personal level. And so COVID hit and I'm like, "Wow, I don't have to travel anymore. Is that good or bad?"

At first, I'm like, "Wow, this could be terrible. This could seriously impact me in a negative way." But then I went, "Hey, what is the opportunity here? What does this afford me? What can I do with this? How do I turn this into an advantage?" And that's the question that everybody needs to ask themselves is, okay, so here are the cards we've all been dealt. How do we take them and run with them? How do we turn this into an advantage? How do we use this opportunity to get clear on our values, on our priorities, on what it is that we truly, deeply want?

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Crystal Cooper: I've read a little about what you do, and is that what you mean when you talk about emotional resilience?

Kim Ades: Okay. So I've done years and years and years of work studying leaders, particularly extraordinary leaders. So what differentiates an extraordinary leader from other people is their degree of emotional resilience. But what is emotional resilience? Everybody gets knocked down. Everybody has adversity. Nobody gets away scot-free. We all experience some kind of adversity in our lives. But those people who are emotionally resilient, they fall and they have a strength inside of them to get back up quickly and leverage the adversity, turn it into an advantage somehow.

So when we talk about COVID, there are some people who got knocked down and they're still down. There are some people who got knocked down and said, "Wow, the whole world has just opened up to me. I can run in this direction." And they're actually thriving right now.

Crystal Cooper: Yeah, yeah. So I wonder, the way you described that ... And I will say it's self-proclaimed, but I think I'm a very resilient person naturally. Is it something that can be learned or is it truly something you have to be born with in some way?

Kim Ades: So I will say to you this, that some people have higher tendency or a more natural state of emotional resilience, like some people are born with a higher metabolism. But does that mean that we can't learn to have a higher degree of emotional resilience? Absolutely not. That is something we train. That is something we coach for. That is something we teach. And really, what is emotional resilience? Emotional resilience comes from the practice of interpreting events in a way that serves, rather than interpreting those events in a way that harms.

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Crystal Cooper: That's really key. I'm pausing because I'm writing that down. That actually really resonates with me because it sounds very similar to, "Hey, I always look at the glass half full," but what I like about this is the glass half full theory, in my opinion, it always sounds so abstract. It's like, "Oh, just be positive, put on a smiley face." What I'm hearing from you is it's a more pragmatic way of approaching it. It's like find the opportunity. There is an opportunity always there.

Kim Ades: Yes, and you know what? When people say just be positive, honestly, I'm cringing on the inside. That's not what I'm after. So actually, let's take that glass half full analogy. So what do these extraordinary performers do? Are they glass half full people? No, actually. They look at the glass, they say, "Okay, so there's water in it. It's halfway. What opportunity is there here? Oh, I can fill it the rest of the way. I can drink the water that's there. I can use the empty glass for something." And so what they do is they look at what is, and they say, "What can I do with this?" So it's not about being positive or negative. It's really about looking at what's in front of them and say, "What does this do for me? What can it do for me? How do I take this and turn it into something good?"

Crystal Cooper: And really what you're describing is an innovator. I mean, you work a lot with business owners and that's truly what they are. I mean, that's what you're describing.

Kim Ades: I'm describing an innovative ... This whole idea of having a knee-jerk reaction. So we want to really examine our knee-jerk reactions to things. So when things happen to us, what's our knee-jerk reaction? Do we go to the state of, "Oh, it figures. Bad things always happen to me, or I'm never going to achieve what I want to achieve, or that guy always gets ahead of me"? What's our knee-jerk reaction? And what we want to do is we want to rewire the knee-jerk reaction. So you call it being an

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innovator. That's an interesting term. And I love it, actually. So let's call it learning to react and respond in a way where you're not at the mercy of events, where you're not a victim, where you're not powerless. So, that's what it's about.

Crystal Cooper: I love that. So this is keying me into a place where I think there are certain people who are home alone, but then there are other leaders, business owners, high performers who are home with children. And I think that children are struggling a lot with the fact that they can't go out and play with their friends. How do you talk about this kind of stuff with a child and put it in their frame of mind to help them adjust to sort of this new way of the world?

Kim Ades: Yeah. Again, what's the opportunity here? What can we create? What can we learn? What can we study? What can we experiment with? Where can we go? So it's not: what can't we do? You know what I mean? Take away COVID for a minute. Let's just talk about parenting for a minute. What do parents do all day and all night? They give their kids instruction: "Don't do this, do this." All day long, there's this barrage of, "Go brush your teeth. Go do your homework," all this constant instruction. And what I want to encourage parents and leaders to do is if you're going to give instruction, tell them what you want, not what you don't want. So don't say, "Stop jumping, stop making a mess, stop yelling." Tell them what you want: "Come, come sit down. Let's read a book." That's sounds totally different. "Come, let's go outside. Let's look for butterflies," whatever it is, whatever it is.

And so in parenting, too, requires a little bit of innovation. But in parenting specifically, and here's really what I'm talking about when we talk about leadership parenting and everything else, is when you look at your kids, kids come to the table with all kinds of traits, some of which aren't always appealing for parents. I

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implore parents to focus on what's good and right about your kids and turn them towards what you want rather than identifying and constantly beating them down for those traits that you have trouble dealing with.

Crystal Cooper: And I think if you're doing that, then they start to learn those tactics too, and what you're now doing is creating another generation of people who are going to be leaders and can look at things advantageously.

Kim Ades: That's correct. That's correct.

Crystal Cooper: Yeah. So I want to shift gears just slightly. Again, people are home and already, there's been always this talk of how do you make work/life balance? And you are actually known for saying, "I don't believe that's a thing. Don't think you should strive for that." And talk a little bit about that, because that's really interesting to me.

Kim Ades: Well, so balance, this whole idea of balance, is I think misunderstood. And it's a goal that people are going for. And I don't think that's really a good goal. So, you ever go to a park where two kids are on a seesaw and they're in perfect balance? You ever see that?

Crystal Cooper: That's true.

Kim Ades: So what happens when they're in perfect balance?

Crystal Cooper: They are not moving.

Kim Ades: Nothing happens.

Crystal Cooper: Nothing is happening.

Kim Ades: Right. So sure, we want moments where nothing's happening, but we don't want a life of nothing. We just don't. What creates

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a full, enriched life is the ups and downs. It's the experience. It's the highs, the lows. It's being deep in it. It's experiencing the emotions. It's experiencing the wins and the falls. It's all of it. It's not balance. Sure, sometimes we need to catch our breath, moments of balance, but it's not a lifetime of balance. What I want for my clients is engagement, excitement, passion. I don't want people to walk through life asleep. And that's what I'm trying to do. I'm trying to ignite and help people live deliberately instead of passively.

Crystal Cooper: Yes. That ignite thing. Oh, I love that. I actually am a big fan of quotes, and I have a quote on my wall. It's really long, so I don't remember it fully, but it's this idea of life is filled with these really great moments and these really tragic moments and everything in between, but it's just what makes life so beautiful.

Kim Ades: Exactly. That's exactly it.

Crystal Cooper: Yeah. Yeah, I love that. So I've heard some really great things around you want to look at the opportunities and situations. Okay, let's give a scenario. I'm big on what ifs. If we are in a situation where the chips just look really, really down, COVID is happening, you've lost your job, there's no other job in sight, your kids are running wild, how do you start to bring out the opportunities in that situation? Do you ask yourself questions? What do you do?

Kim Ades: Yes. So I'm a big fan of journaling, and we use journaling in our coaching process. And what I recommend for anybody who's listening is grab a piece of paper and a pen right now and write these two questions down. Question number one, what do I really, really want more than anything? Now there are two reallys there on purpose. Why? Think about what you truly, deeply want for yourself, not what is expected of you, what your spouse wants, what your parents want, what your kids want,

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what your colleagues want, none of that, not even what you think you should want. What do you truly, deeply want? The second question is, so what's stopping me from having it?

And what I will suggest to you is what's stopping you from having it is what's really at play here. And underneath the answers to what's stopping you is a set of beliefs, and those beliefs are causing a bottleneck for you. That's what is causing the frustration, the anguish, that feeling of defeat. And if you're okay with it, Crystal, if anybody takes this on, if anyone out there is bold enough to spend some time with these questions, send them to me and I will personally respond and set up some time to coach you with these questions.

Crystal Cooper: I love that.

Kim Ades: You can email me, kim@frameofmindcoaching.com.

Crystal Cooper: I love it. I actually might personally take you up on that because-

Kim Ades: Take me up on it.

Crystal Cooper: ... because I think you're so spot on. It's really what generally stops most people, all people, is the idea of what you're supposed to do.

Kim Ades: Yes.

Crystal Cooper: And not what you want to do.

Kim Ades: Yes.

Crystal Cooper: And that's why those two questions are so critical. That's awesome.

Kim Ades: Yes, yes.

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Crystal Cooper: Yeah. Well, I really hope our listeners take us up on that. One more time for that email, just in case. Can you give it to us one more time?

Kim Ades: Yeah. It's kim@frameofmindcoaching.com. And again, the question is what do you really, really want? And what's stopping you from having what you really, really want?

Crystal Cooper: Love it. I love it. I think that's great. I hope all of our listeners take you up on that. Thank you so much for your time today. This has been just really eye-opening, even just for myself personally. So I appreciate it.

Kim Ades: Crystal, call me. Thank you so much for the opportunity to be on your show and talk to you and everyone else who's listening. It's been an honor and a pleasure.

Crystal Cooper: Love it. Thank you.

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