

Ep #69: How to Create Accountability to Hit your Goal



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DR. PRIYANKA VENUGOPAL

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Priyanka Venugopal

Ep #69: How to Create Accountability to Hit your Goal

Hey, this is Dr. Priyanka Venugopal, and you're listening to *The Unstoppable Mom Brain Podcast* all about accountability and hitting your dream body goals. Today's episode is a short and sweet walk and talk. As I'm out on my walk, you might hear some birds or cars in the background and the sound quality might be B minus, but I wanna tell you why this episode is so important.

I find for high achievers to hit their dream body goals, that accountability is absolutely a very, very necessary piece to do the work to hit your goal, and at the same time, it can be really used as a crutch and turned into a weapon. So today's podcast episode is going to talk to you about some of the biggest obstacles with accountability and how to turn that around so that you can use accountability to your advantage.

Let's get into today's episode. So this whole podcast episode, which is why I'm even on this walk and talk, cuz I feel so inspired to talk about this topic, is on a recent coaching call with my clients in the Unstoppable Group.

We were discussing vacation, especially over summer break as we are all in summer right now. We are taking trips, we're going on vacations. We're flying places. We're taking road trips and the biggest thing that I think working moms want is they want to know how to feel relaxed, have pleasure, rest, and relaxation while maintaining their weight without coming back from their vacations, five to 10 pounds heavier.

I think we've all experienced this, when we come back from our vacation. We had a lovely time, and we then regret some of the decisions we made the moment we stepped on the scale. So what we were discussing in the group, which is what's inspiring this whole conversation is one of my clients was going on a trip and we were coaching on what her strategy was going to be during her vacation, where she could play with this concept.

We were talking about what it would look like to go on your vacation, feel, rest, relaxation, and pleasure, and come back that day like you stepped back on the scale and you have maintained your weight. What would that even look like? How would we want to build in accountability so that we can create that in our result line?

Now, here's what somebody mentioned, and this is what's inspiring to this conversation. Somebody mentioned on that coaching call, they're like, you know, if we have to evaluate our vacation, if we have to evaluate our results when we come back from our vacation, like, won't that feel kind of threatening?

Like it won't, it feels kind of like you're forcing yourself to follow through in a way that you don't really want to simply because you're threatening yourself with evaluating your results after the vacation. And simply let me tell you my answer is yes, 100%. That's true. If you decide I'm going to evaluate my vacation after I come back, and it feels like that's what's forcing you to follow through on not overeating, not overindulging on your vacation.

Absolutely. That is where we have turned, you know, an experience of accountability into a weapon. Now let me kind of backtrack and tell you why this is so important to understand. So in the Unstoppable Group, I teach my clients a very specific auditing process that I recommend my clients do on a weekly basis.

Yes, it's tedious and also it gets results. So the way that I think about my Unstoppable audit process is if you do this audit process, week after week. If you do it every single week, you commit to doing it every week and you implement what you learned, you will be down 10% of your body weight in six months.

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So is it worth spending 15 to 20 minutes to audit your results? Hell yes, because you'll be down 10% of your body weight in six months. Now, here are the caveats. You have to be honest in your audit, you have to be really vulnerable in how your week went. And the key piece of why this audit is so important is really because it clears up any confusion.

It clears up what worked well, what didn't work well. We can hone in on what, what obstacles you ran into that week that created your results. And when you are clear on your obstacles, you can more clearly and more powerfully overcome them, which is why I strongly, strongly encourage my clients to do these weekly audit audits so that we can really powerfully overcome obstacles.

Now, here's what happens when you do audits again and again and again week after week after week, and you implement what you take away. Guess what happens? You hit your goal. It is crazy. Okay, so that was my tangent on why doing a weekly check-in or a weekly evaluation of your results is so important.

Here's the second side piece of why it is so important when you know, and it's on your calendar that you know what, I'm going to be evaluating my results every single week. It is just a promise and a commitment to myself because this dream goal really matters to me. Do you know what happens during the week? Very subtly during the week, your focus and your attention on your goal will be leveled up.

Let me tell you what I mean by that. You know when it's like Monday night, Tuesday afternoon, you have a stressful day at work. You're feeling annoyed with your kids. Maybe your partner said something, and maybe what you would typically do in that moment is you'd be like, you know what? Screw the goal. It doesn't even matter.

I just use it for breaks. And you would like to go for the pantry, the chips, the nachos, the glass of wine. In that moment, what you're doing is you're forgetting your long-term desires. You're forgetting your long-term gratification simply because in the moment you're feeling an emotion. What happens when you put your weekly audit on your calendar and you promise to yourself you're going to do it?

You just take a pause enough to think about, do I actually wanna do this? Like if I know I'm going to be auditing my week, I'm going to be evaluating what went, went out well and what didn't. Do I really wanna walk into the pantry right now? Is that really what I want? And just that question, just that question, just that pause gives our high achiever brain a moment to get out of its most primitive, reflexive thinking, which is like, we wanna avoid our stress and our overwhelm and our current boredom, and it lets us access our more profound frontal evolved thinking.

It's like, you know what? Let me just think about this. Let me just take one minute and ask myself, do I actually want to do this? Now, I want you to hear, even as I'm describing this process, the tone and tenor with which I'm saying this, right? Notice how loving it is. It's like, listen. We're going to be evaluating this.

How do we want to show up at this moment? How do I want to show up to this stress in my life? How do I want to show up to this conflict with my partner? How do I want to show up with this overwhelm or this pressure that I'm experiencing? Do I really want to go to the chips, the wine, the nachos, and just ask the question that way from that very loving and supportive place?

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Oftentimes our prefrontal cortex will be like, no. You know what? We don't actually want to show up to our stress, our pressure, and our overwhelm from that place. I wonder what else we could do, and all of a sudden, like we start having a lot more high quality solutions simply from that pause. Now here's what, here's the whole thing.

That pause was created simply because I had an audit, a weekly audit on my calendar, and I think about that as one way to stay accountable to your dream goals, right? This is why I'm saying that accountability is super important. Accountability matters, but what I'm, what I'm referring to in this, in this story and in this example, is an accountability to yourself, knowing I'm going to be evaluating my results.

My results matter. This accountability piece is simply something that is just for you. Now, I want you to hear the difference in the tone and tenor. If I said it this way, you would feel stressed. Your kids are annoying you. You've got into a fight with your partner. You're feeling like you have this mile long task of things that you have to do, and you find yourself about to walk to the pantry, pour a glass of wine, and you're like, listen, you better not do that because the scale's gonna be up a pound and you have to evaluate that.

Can you hear just how terrible that sounds. How terrible that feels. And that is turning something that is meant to be a tool, something that's meant to remind you about your deep desires into a weapon. Now I wanna tell you what I noticed happening. This used to happen for me a lot, and this is something that I see also with the clients that I work with is I remember when I weighed a little over 200 pounds.

I used to think that I just needed an accountability buddy. I just need an accountability buddy so that I can quote, unquote, stay on track. If I had the accountability buddy, then I would follow through. Then maybe I'll finally hit my dream goals. If I just had somebody to like, you know, meal plan with, if I had somebody to have like regular chats with, if I had somebody to go to the gym with, then I would be accountable.

And I want you to think about how that really feels when you think you need an accountability buddy to follow through. There's two things that are happening. Number one, you keep believing the story that you are not capable of following through on your own. And number two, I think the biggest, biggest problem with that belief is it takes you out of owning your responsibilities and your, your real actual, like ability to follow through without needing somebody else.

Let me tell you what I mean by that. Whenever I used to think I needed somebody else to follow through. I need an accountability buddy. I need an accountability partner. I would be so on it. I would find my, like my, my best friend, we would do our meal plans together. We'd prep, we'd have our goal set for the month.

And then some point along the way I just stopped feeling like it because I had not really created the feeling of inner accountability. I stopped showing up. So even though I had somebody built in, I had a friend, you can have a peer, you can listen, you can even have a coach and like to create an accountability system.

If you don't have something built in that is your own inner accountability, you will just stop showing up. So there is literally no such thing as being accountable unless you also have married to your outer accountability framework, a way where you are accountable to yourself. So I'm curious whether this resonates with all of you that are listening, because I know for how many years, like I cannot even tell you how many years I spent wanting an accountability buddy wanting like my friend's circle to really for me to like stay accountable to, and it just didn't work because I would just stop showing up.

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I stopped showing up simply because I had not really developed the muscle of inner accountability. So, lemme tell you, how do we create inner accountability? How do we not weaponize accountability? How do we turn it into something that can really help us spearhead results rather than hold us back, make us feel really heavy, make us feel like, you know, we're doing too much.

The way that we do it, in my opinion, is that we have on our calendar a process, a repeatable, a simple and repeatable process that really allows you to like it is a promise that you're going to actually, actually look at your results. Inner accountability is an opportunity to remind you about why your goals matter.

And it's an opportunity to ask yourself, why am I not following through? I think that it's such a different question to ask, like, why am I not following through to, I can't believe, I'm not following through. I want you to just feel the difference. If you start, if you stopped asking yourself, I can't believe I'm not following through.

I can't believe I'm not following through, and it just feels terrible, and instead turn that around too. I wonder why I'm not following through. Most of the time the reason is because there's a feeling of inner accountability that you haven't created. Okay. And this is normal. Why is this normal? If you feel like, oh yeah, that's me.

Why don't I follow through? What's the reason I don't follow through? It's because I don't feel inner accountability. The reason that high achievers, and again, working moms specifically, have not developed the muscle, and I think it's a, it's a trainable muscle of following through, is simply because we have prioritized everything and everyone in our life above us for so many years, right?

So you've prioritized the kids, school, camp, partner, laundry, meal prep, task lists, taxes, vacation planning, like you name it, and it's on your list of things. What has happened inadvertently in the way that we approach our life for women especially, is we've just lowered ourselves on our list of priorities.

And all that's happened for many decades as we've gotten very used to saying, you know what? It doesn't really matter. You know what? Like I'm okay. My goal doesn't really matter. It's okay if I just wait until tomorrow. You know what? Life's kind of crazy right now. Like this can wait. I can wait. My body goal can wait.

And because we have done that, that [00:14:00] muscle of delaying taking action right now has simply become very practiced and very strong. So the reason we haven't developed the muscle in our accountability is because we've been delaying taking our action right now. I want you to imagine what it would look like and just play, right?

This is just, and a chance to experiment and play with how this would feel if you imagined your life is busy. If you're a high achieving working mom, like that's just what we have signed up for. Life is busy. All these things are happening. Family, kids, school, life, tasks, laundry list of things, vacation planning.

It's one thing or another. There are many things coming at you, but what would it look like if you actually asked yourself, how can I prioritize myself at the very top of this list? Now, this is hard for working moms who are like, no, no, no, but I have to prioritize my kids first. I have to prioritize my work first.

That matters more. I hear you. But what I want to tell you is when you don't prioritize your body goal, your body at the very top of your list, everything else suffers. And the reason I'm saying that is because that has just

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been my lived experience. While I was putting my kids and my husband and my work at the top of my list, my personal body goals suffered.

I stayed in a body that I felt less comfortable in for longer and without realizing it, because I kept delaying my personal goals and my personal body goals, I had this underlying feeling of resentment. I felt incredible fatigue in just trying to push through my life. No wonder I wasn't able to follow through on my plans because I felt so tired all the time. I felt tired. Why did I feel tired?

Because I was prioritizing everyone else before myself. What happened when I started to prioritize my body goal at the very, very top of my list is a few things. Number one, it forced me by, by me prioritizing my body goal at the very top of my list forced me to really ask myself, how am I showing up with my kids, my husband, my partner, my work with my task list in a way that I could tweak, that I could make more powerful? What would I say no to? What have I been saying yes to that I don't need to say yes to? It actually was so crazy about this, and this is one of those things you have to experiment with and just try.

You have to just try this before you'll believe me, but when I prioritize my body goal, which again was small moments of time, it didn't take hours and hours every day. It was just short periods of time, small moments of attention to myself and what I, what I desired. I was forced to become more effective, more present, more engaged, more productive in the other parts of my life, which is why I will always say, I'll shout it from the rooftops.

When you prioritize your body goal as your number one goal. You'll show up more powerfully in other areas of your life. Why? Because you're forced to do so, and it's just like, I think of these as win-wins. So why am I talking? Why am I going on this ramble? Why am I talking about prioritizing your body goal?

What does that have to do with accountability? Is to prioritize your body goal to the top of your list. You also then side by side, have to learn inner accountability to hit that, to actually achieve that. And the way that I really like to recommend that you bring inner accountability to the forefront is to remind yourself on a routine basis, it's like, it's like, you know, your weekly meeting with the CEO of your life, which is you, the weekly meeting with the CEO of your life is like, Hey, we're gonna take a look.

We're gonna take a look and see what worked well, how did this week go? What's happening [00:18:00] with the company? Are we hitting our goals? Is this company doing well? Why not? What's, what's not working? What do we wanna tweak? What do we wanna change? Having a process where you commit to evaluating your results is how you create inner accountability.

It is a non-negotiable agreement. I am going to be evaluating my results on a, on a routine basis. Can you imagine like a multi-million dollar company not having a routine evaluation process? Like no way. They would just like, that's just first of all, nothing that would happen. Mostly because they would not be hitting their goals.

The way that we have to hit our goals as high achieving professional moms is with the same lens. We have to have ourselves on our own calendars, like we are meeting with the CEO of an important business, which is the business of our life. So I wanted to share this quick little walk. Walk and chat. A little walking ramble around how accountability can absolutely be turned [00:19:00] into a crutch.

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When you think you, when you, when you believe you need somebody else to be accountable, you need an accountability to be accountable. You need a group to be accountable. You don't, don't ever tell yourself that that's just a lie, and it's taking you out of ownership of you following through and learning the skill of following through when you don't feel like it.

Number two, accountability can be turned into a weapon. Absolutely. When you're like, listen, you better not go off track because remember, we're gonna be evaluating this. Like that's just not going to work. And it's just your perspective on how you engage with evaluations and auditing your weeks versus what I'm sharing with you on this podcast episode, which is what would it look like for you to put on your calendar a non-negotiable meeting with the CEO of your life, which is you, and asking yourself, Hey, have we been thinking about our goals?

Have we been prioritizing what really matters to us? What's been getting in the [00:20:00] way? I wonder what we could do better. I wonder what we could tweak. I wonder what we could improve. I'm telling you, when you start, and this is again, it's going, it might feel uncomfortable, especially if you're new to this, you might find yourself making these meetings with yourself and putting in air quotes.

You might find yourself making these meetings and then like not, not like delaying them. You might find yourself not showing up to them. That's okay. That has been you. It's not a problem. Just know it now, and anytime you notice yourself doing that, remind yourself that you can just start. Start now. Every day is a Monday morning.

Every week is a fresh start. For you to really incorporate having that meeting with the CEO of your life. I've, I mean, I just love the idea and the visual of that because I think that it reminds us that our goals matter too. Our dreams matter too. Our desired body goal matters because this is our one body that we get to live in forever.

And if we don't actually do the work of prioritizing creating that, it's just not going to happen. Now, the other thing, the other caveat that I want to place on this specific topic is that you might find yourself being accountable. You get excited. You feel like, oh yeah, I'm gonna do this every week. It's awesome.

And then after a few weeks it falls off. This is also normal. This is only happening because after a few weeks you might become complacent. You might think, oh, I don't know if this. If this weekly meeting is working with me, with the CEO of my life, is it working? Am I actually creating goals? Am I actually hitting them?

Am I able to evaluate and audit properly? That is absolutely a real thing, which is really why I think working with a coach who really helps you look at your evaluations, look at how you're auditing your results with a clean and clear lens can be so incredibly powerful. So having both sides is so, so, so important.

You have to have your inner accountability on your calendar knowing that this matters to you, and also having an objective lens of working with a coach, someone that has done the work that you're interested in, that is an expert in what you're talking about, can help you up level the quality of your evaluations, the quality of how you audit your life, the quality of how you're hitting your goals so much more powerfully.

It's not this or that, it's this and that. I just think that sometimes it's really important because I know high achievers, and this is me, often like very, all or nothing, thinking like, I have to do this completely by myself, or I need a whole group of accountability buddies.

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And I feel like both of them are not very valuable. I think that there is a marriage of both, of knowing that you hating your dream body goal requires you having inner accountability, remembering to prioritize the goal that matters to you, and at the same time, Having a framework in a system where you have support along the way when you hit big obstacles, when life gets really hard, when you feel confused in your evaluation, having someone be able to support you there powerfully is so, so, so priceless.

So I hope this conversation, this chit chat and walk was valuable. It plants the seed of how accountability can absolutely be used as a weapon. It can absolutely be used as a crutch, but I encourage you to put a meeting on your calendar every week for yourself as an act of inner accountability so you start hitting your dream body goals so much faster.

I hope you guys all enjoy today's episode, and I will see you next week. And also, if you're loving this podcast, if you're loving everything I'm sharing, I want to make sure that you know I've created a free resource for you. It is a short five day email course with simple, tangible, very easy to implement tools for the high achieving working mom who wants to start feeling better right now? You're done waiting to feel better. You wanna start feeling better? You want to start hitting your goals. I'm going to be sending you five days worth of quick tips to your email inbox. You can go and grab this course over at theunstoppablemombrain.com/email and I will meet you there.

Bye.