

Ep #1: Ambitious-ish: A Different Kind of Success



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Hosts

Kelle Cobble & Nina Lynch

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Burnout? Check. Daily overwhelm? Check. Resentment rash, stress, and a complete lack of well-being? Check, check, check! You're not alone. We're your hosts, Kelle & Nina, and we are here to help you feel calm, balanced, and empowered so you can redefine success, make choices that feel authentic, and ACTUALLY enjoy the life you work so hard to create. You ready? Let's go.

Kelle: Welcome, this is *Ambitious-Ish*, the podcast about smart moves for high achieving women who want to actually enjoy the life they work so hard to create. We're so excited to bring our very first episode to you. I'm Kelle.

Nina: And I'm Nina. We're coming to you from the Snow Globe of Park City, Utah right now. We're recording this over a long weekend and for the moment it feels like there's enough time, three full days. If we're being real, we're balancing the urge to be productive and the urge to climb right back into bed. And maybe there is a third urge to call it a powder day and head out into the snow. Know what we mean?

Kelle: Sounds good. First off, you may be wondering, who are these people? Why should I spend time with them right now? Who are Kelle and Nina? We're life coaches for smart, driven women who hustle bell to bell and want more calm and balance in their lives. They want to feel as good as their lives look and actually enjoy the life they work so hard to create. They're starting to notice how they're showing up in the world and questioning if maybe what they've been assuming was the cost of ambition is really worth it anymore. Because everything feels like a chore, a drill, and if I'm so smart, why is this so hard?

Nina: Yeah. The highway signs are all blinking burnout ahead, burnout ahead, and they're not sure if they can take the exit ramp. Where does it lead? The hustle highway is all they know. Success and striving requires grinding until it gets to the point where they need to take another look at how they're defining success and consider maybe a different kind of striving. They are ambitious-ish. We might need to trademark this Kelle. We are trademarking it.

Kelle: We're doing it. We've been coaches for about a little over 10 years now. And most of the women we work with have the life they've always wanted.

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They're executives or business women, business owners, and they've arrived, but they're not feeling it.

Nina: What they're feeling on the inside isn't matching what their life looks like on the outside.

Kelle: There's nothing else they need in life except taking time to actually enjoy living their life. They're balancing it all and feeling stuck in this trying energy to be who they'd actually like to be personally and professionally. And can we just say, we hate trying energy, it just makes you feel like you're never going to get there.

Nina: They don't exactly want to quit their jobs, but they kind of do. And they're also not sure if that VP promotion is something they can handle mentally and emotionally without more burnout and disconnection at home. Let's just say you're in the right place if you want to be superwoman, but you're showing up as super effing exhausted woman.

Kelle: We get this. We've spent a long time on the hamster wheel ourselves. We've been there and we're going to tell you a little bit more about us, especially for those of you who don't know us. And then we'll get into a little bit more of how we coach and what we want to share with you as the listener. So I'm Kelle, I am ambitious-ish. I was a CPA and then climbed the ranks in big pharma. I also have two kids aged 9 and 12 and a super full life. For most of my life I hustled bell to bell. I had no idea what it looked like to relax, didn't sit down all day long.

I would push myself, completely exhaust myself, and then wake up and do it again the next day and I felt awful. There was no calm, no balance and absolutely no slowing down, and it paid off. I was working all the time, and I was making all the money, way more than I needed, winning awards that come along with that kind of success. And to everyone on the outside I looked successful, but let me tell you, I did not feel successful. I was tired and overworking with way more on my list than I could ever actually get done.

When I got home from work, I had nothing left for the people that mattered most and then I got sick, and everything had to change.

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Nina: Yeah. And I'm Nina, I'm also ambitious-ish. And for me, burnout was my baseline for years. I worked in PR for Fortune 500 brands on global campaigns. I took the elevator to work in my suit and uncomfortable shoes, carried my Blackberry in my right hand and a latte in my left. Remember Blackberries? Life didn't look all that bad around me, but how I felt living it, did. Somewhere along my way, I learned that muscling through and kicking my own ass was the only way to get things done.

And it was confusing because my work was rewarded by the people around me, the world around me. This must be the cost of ambition, I thought. If I'm being really honest I was kind of allergic to feeling more content, because wouldn't that make me less productive and more average? So I fell into this habit of busy, constantly performing and achieving. I couldn't turn it off. I overscheduled, overworked, and overdid it. And underneath all of this, overdoing was this impostor syndrome. I felt like every room I walked into, I had to prove myself. It was exhausting.

I was hustling daily to keep my head above water but for what, for who? What was I saying yes to? Who was I saying no to? Was it serving me, my relationships, my health? And then I got sick too.

Kelle: And now we're life coaches. We're still living these big lives that we love. We're just doing it in a way that feels way better. And even though we have massive goals, we know how to make them happen and take care of ourselves in the process. We didn't stop doing all the things that we wanted to do, that were working. Burnout isn't doing too many things. It's not doing enough of the things that really matter. We stopped doing all the things we thought we should be doing, the things people expected of us. We stopped being codependent. We stopped people pleasing.

Nina: And we had sort of a reckoning. We took a hard look at our lives and redecided what was important to us without all of the compromises. We sort of redefined what ambition meant and what it looked like for us. Now, we know if we've been struggling with it, with being ambitious-ish, then chances are you've been struggling with it too.

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Kelle: We get the constant feelings of guilt, shame, regret, and fear. We get that you want to figure out a way to work through that because you know there's a version of you on the other side that you'd like to enjoy, happier, more present. Someone who isn't living with a constant narrative of a to-do list, who's remembering what you actually have. Right now it feels like you're not living up to the person the outside world thinks you are, or the person that you want to be, and it feels like you're failing.

Nina: You're in survival mode. The stressors are ridiculous at times. You're just so volatile. You want to be less triggered by the small things. You don't really understand why they're constantly undoing you. You want stability and consistency, to prioritize big problems and small problems, and to engage with the world on your terms, not reactively. You're constantly questioning how to balance it all and not compromise your big dreams and goals.

Kelle: But you already are a rockstar. You're compromising yourself, lighting yourself on fire to keep everyone else warm. And you know that whatever you're doing right now isn't sustainable. That's where we come in.

Nina: You don't have to wait for a health diagnosis to change your life. You don't have to wait until the kids are older or until you get the promotion, you're divorced, or you move houses. You can start now, today.

Kelle: So tell us, does any of this sound familiar. You cannot work anyone, you're on a hamster wheel, you have to keep going, you cannot stop. You're trying to keep up but it's crushing you. Guilt and shame keep you stuck.

Nina: A lot of the women we work with say they've lost touch with themselves. A lot of them are burning out and feel disconnected in their relationships. "The novelty of success has worn me down", they say. "I'm doing what everyone's telling me to do, but I'm failing. I want more balance. I just don't know where to start." And this makes complete sense. It's what happens when you prioritize everything and everyone except you in your big, beautiful life.

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Then you look around and you don't recognize yourself. You feel disconnected. You judge yourself, maybe bully yourself. You decide to do more so you can be better, and you become too exhausted for it all. Sound familiar?

Kelle: If this resonates, maybe you're ambitious-ish like us. We shame ourselves and beat ourselves up and it feels terrible. When we unwittingly abandon ourselves like this on repeat, we learn to not trust ourselves, and so we bail on ourselves on repeat. This is not only disastrous for you, it doesn't in any way help your relationships.

Nina: Instead of doing more, we need to check in and go deeper, to become aware of the false narratives driving all of that overdoing. The stories in your head, you likely learned a long time ago when you were young. Stories like if I don't do it, it won't get done and I'll be punished. Or I don't want to let them down. Or the busier I am, the better I am. I cannot work anyone. I'm not good at relaxing. I don't walk slow. And our personal favorite, resting is lazy.

Kelle: Uncovering the thoughts driving your actions, questioning them, and then thinking on purpose is what coaching's all about. It's not about tweaking what you're doing or buying the latest planner or time management hack. It's about questioning how you're thinking.

Nina: We're going to talk about this a lot, we're redundant when it's important, but it's the one simple truth of our coaching practice. Change your thoughts, change your life.

Kelle: We're going to talk science for a quick sec because we're nerds like that. Alright, your thoughts drive your feelings, your feelings drive everything you do or don't do, and your do's and don'ts create your results.

Nina: So by checking in on what you're thinking, we want to help you uncover the reason why you do what you do, the way you do it. We want to show you how it's made complete sense for you. Up until now, it's totally made sense. I mean, look at you, you're incredible, it's gotten you to where you are and where you are is not bad at all. Pretty amazing.

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Kelle: And now might be the time to take a better look at some of those stories and beliefs, to update them to who you are today and where you're heading moving forward in your big, beautiful life.

Nina: Because sure, you can totally repeat what you've done in your past, but we're guessing that since you're still listening, you may want to go where you've never been before. That's where we come in. As your coaches, we guide you toward a future that's different than your past. To offer strategies, tools, and support to help you feel better, more empowered, to show up as that favorite version of yourself.

Kelle: If someone had told us this was possible 12 years ago, we'd call BS so fast. All the tools you'll learn here aren't just for work life balance or being some version of successful in your career. They apply to any part of your life, not just successful in the conference room or at home, but really any area, relationships, everything.

Nina: Just imagine, that said, what would our days and weeks feel like if we didn't put our careers at the center? What if we traded those professional ambitions for a different kind of striving, for connection, community, curiosity, even rest and relaxation? We tell ourselves we'd lose our edge, our bonuses, our reputation.

Kelle: So we stay where we are, overwhelmed and frustrated and it feels terrible. We don't feel like we have a choice. We're determined to make this happen until we get to a point where we just can't anymore, where we don't even want to. What we've been doing, how we've been living, is no longer working. And we question, what's it all for, is all this striving and achieving and misery worth it, is burnout worth it?

Nina: This is what *Ambitious-Ish* is all about, questioning your values and beliefs and making sure they align with how you're living your life and how you feel in your life. So often these beliefs go unchecked for so long, we need to check in. So if you want to be more present with your family and have more connection with the people that are most important to you, what's getting in the way? If you want to have more balance in your life and feel more calm so you can actually

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enjoy the life you work so hard to create, what exactly does that look like for you?

Kelle: The key is learning to shift from living with an unmanaged mind to a managed mind. We always say when emotions are high, thinking is low. You've seen people road raging. They're giving you the bird and they've completely lost their minds because you forgot to use your blinker. Or the person at the coffee bar who's completely out of control upset because the barista added whipped cream to their skinny grande quad caramel macchiato thing.

Nina: Yeah, Geez, these brains of ours love high emotion, they love the drama. I mean, look at the news. Look at what the majority of humans are drawn to on TV. We want drama and excitement, and that's great when you want to be entertained, but not so great when you're having a conversation with your partner or solving a problem at work.

Kelle: When you understand how to manage your mind, when you know how to actually feel your emotions, instead of letting them yank you around and calm your nervous system down. You're more empowered, even powerful, at work and beyond. You're making better decisions, bigger contributions. And you're more available for what's most important to you, community, friendship, rest, connection, family and pointing it when you want to.

Nina: Yeah, you become the captain of your ship. You're driving your life, not reacting to it all. You're confidently ambitious-ish. There's more meaning. You notice the little things that make a big difference like the giggles of your kids in the back seat of the car, the warmth of the sun on your skin, the smelly steam from the dryer vents on the houses along your walk in the morning. Maybe it's just me.

Kelle: You're also okay with a little stillness, some quiet. You can actually sit by the fire with a glass of wine and be present without the urge to fluff a pillow nearby or check your phone. And then you have energy for what's most important, who's most important, for what really matters. And if I'm being honest. I am still fluffing the pillows from time to time.

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Nina: Kelle, I think we used to call this phenomenon, fake resting.

Kelle: Oh, yeah, I would pretend to play a game with my kids or watch a movie with them, but sort of be multitasking at the same time with some laundry and my phone and making dinner. So I wasn't really anywhere.

Nina: I can't even multitask anymore. I know you're the same. It's kind of hilarious, I even turn the volume down on the music or a podcast when I need to send out an email. It's just when I do multitask, I'm doing a lot of things but not doing any of them well.

Kelle: Yeah. This is how so many of our clients feel when we first meet them. They're questioning, do I need an executive coach, a relationship counselor? Do I need to learn how to meditate? Do I need a parenting class, personal trainer, nutritionist, a personal organizer, maybe even a new planner or vacation, breathwork, some Botox or a peloton or another glass of wine? Are we right? What we offer is that the common denominator is you, so why don't we start there?

Nina: And when we say you're the common denominator, we don't mean you're responsible for everything. What we're trying to explain is you're responsible for how you experience everything, for the space in your mind and finding where you have choice.

Kelle: Where are you making choices? Where can't you, aren't you? What are you telling yourself is your obligation or your duty and is that true? Taking responsibility for your thoughts and feelings and behaviors is a big part of living your life with purpose, on purpose.

Nina: Yeah, totally. To get out of your very beautiful, unique version of autopilot and to stop overriding what you know is true for you, to put everyone else's needs before your own. To respond to what the day throws at you with integrity, not taking on the weight of the world. This is a big part of becoming proudly and confidently ambitious-ish.

Kelle: We learned at a young age to blame people and circumstances around us for how we feel, like on the playground growing up, our classmates made us feel

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left out or they hurt our feelings. We bring these stories to our adult life, and they wreck us, they totally wreck us.

Nina: We start to feel powerless to affect our situations, our problems, to change our lives. We're constantly overwhelmed by it all, by trying to change the people and situations around us so we can feel better. But what we know from coaching is that this is one of the most important stories we have to unlearn in adulthood in order to feel more ease and freedom. We can't change them, but we can change how we show up to them, how we experience all of it.

Kelle: Listen, we've been there. This is simple, but it's not easy. And this is where we have a choice. We can choose between the pains of making changes and the pains of staying the same.

Nina: We can stay where we are, circling the dream and feeling like everything's a chore, a to-do to get through and trying to change the world so we can feel better. Should I divorce them, sell the house, get a new job, send the kids to boarding school?

Kelle: Or we can shift our thinking to show up differently and start to actually enjoy the life we work so hard to create. We don't have to affect anything outside us at first.

Nina: Smart, driven women have very specific stories and thought patterns that they've practiced over their lifetime. We are very familiar.

Kelle: That's why our coaching specifically is the inner work that changes your outer world, high achiever. It's long term change from the inside out for a very specific beautiful type A ambitious-ish human brain like yours.

Nina: We're always looking to help our clients feel more empowered, to feel better when things suck instead of sucking it up.

Kelle: Because women are socialized from birth to not trust our own decision making and wisdom.

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Nina: And we will never feel peaceful until we believe in our own capacity to handle whatever comes. We'll never feel powerful until we trust our own decisions.

Kelle: We will never feel safe until we know how to rely on ourselves first, not the wobbly humans around us. To not only survive but thrive no matter what comes. That's the skill you need to weather any kind of crisis or chaos in your home or in the world.

Nina: Because you're here, because you're listening to our very first episode, we want to share one of our foundational tools with you for free. This is our five step empowered mindset guide to help you shift out of disempowered thinking into empowered thinking so you can feel more calm, balanced, and capable from the inside out.

Kelle: You can use this tool in any situation in your life to feel more empowered, to take your power back when you feel stuck, when you feel confused or overwhelmed. It's simple, it's doable and it's free. Go to www.kelleandnina.com/empower. And I'm going to spell that out. Go to www.kelleandnina.com/empower. We'll link it in the show notes. The empowered mindset guide will help you feel more calm, more balanced, and more capable in no time.

Nina: So in wrapping it up, *Ambitious-Ish* is about checking in when your intuition nudges you, when you feel like geez, there's got to be another way. This just isn't sustainable. It's about taking a hard look at what you're saying yes to, what you're saying no to and why. And then what would I do if no one else's opinion mattered here and even what would I do if I knew I couldn't fail?

Kelle: We're humans, not robots, rock stars. It's time to treat yourself that way, to like yourself more.

Nina: Yeah, in the episodes ahead, we'll talk really specifically to you, the smart driven woman about how to feel more calm and clear, creating balance, tools, and strategies to manage stress and burnout. And how to make a greater impact and achieve your goals with more meaning and presence.

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Kelle: Long term change happens on a deeper level. Like an iceberg, there's so much below the surface supporting what you've created in your life. That's where we need to go to get out of daily overwhelm, to work smarter, not harder, to achieve what's most important and to actually enjoy the life you work so hard to create.

Nina: We need to see what's going on below the surface that's driving your actions and trajectory and edit, edit your limiting beliefs, and then think on purpose.

Kelle: How you're being, drives what you're doing. This is where we start. Are you in?

Nina: We're here for that and we're here for you. Talk soon.

Kelle: Alright, until next time, bye friends.

Nina: Bye.

Nina: To celebrate the launch of the show, we're giving away a curated bespoke gift box hand-picked of our favorite things. We're giving away 3 boxes to 3 lucky listeners who follow, rate, and review the show.

Kelle: It doesn't have to be a 5-star review, although we sure hope you love the show. We want your honest feedback so we can create an awesome show that provides tons of value.

Nina: So visit ambitious-ish.com/podcastlaunch to learn more about the contest and how to enter. Be quick! You don't have long. We'll be announcing the winners on the show in an upcoming episode!

Kelle: Thank you so much for listening to today's episode of *Ambitious-Ish*.

Nina: If you're ready to align your ambitions with your heart and feel more calm, balanced, and connected, visit kelleandnina.com for more information about how to work with us and make sure you get on our list.

Kelle: See you in the next episode!