

Ep #7: Alignment: Living the Life You Really Want



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Hosts

Kelle Cobble & Nina Lynch

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Nina: Have you ever made a decision in your life based on someone else's expectations knowing deep down it wasn't really what you wanted?

Kelle: Or maybe you thought you wanted one thing, and you got it only to realize it wasn't actually what you wanted at all.

Nina: Yeah, stay tuned as we talk about how living out a list of shoulds is actually a recipe for resentment and regret and what in fact does create meaning and fulfillment.

Kelle: Let's get going. This is *Ambitious-Ish*.

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: Hey, I'm Kelle.

Nina: And I'm Nina. Let's start off with a little story.

Kelle: A few years ago, we asked a new client who'd just come on board about her emotional health. She had no idea what we were even talking about. She had never even thought about it.

Nina: This is a typical side effect of ambition.

Kelle: Yeah, she met all of her financial goals and let everything else in her life slide. She let her health slide by choosing work over sleep, getting outside, working out. She let her relationships slide by choosing work over spending time with family and friends. She stopped doing things she loved doing, like going skiing with her group of girlfriends because she wasn't willing to make time for it, and I mean they skied too slow.

Nina: Let's be real.

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Kelle: There was no time for self-care, or even to consider emotional well-being. In her words, “If it didn’t make me money or further my career, I didn’t do it.” Work ran her life.

Nina: Yeah. And once she had kids, she shifted a bit to include some time with them, but work was still taking up the majority of her time. She felt guilty when she was working instead of spending time with her kids, but then she felt that antsy restlessness when she was spending time with them, when she should have been working.

Kelle: Now, she got to the point where she was annoyed when her clients would call her. It was like a machine that didn’t turn off, she said, “I never stop thinking about work. It’s in the back of my mind with everything I do.”

Nina: I remember her saying that one of her big clients would call her and she would just roll her eyes. She was just so burnt out. Her life, like so many of the lives of the *Ambitious-Ish* women we work with, was out of balance, out of alignment. And we’re taught from a young age to get approval and validation from people and things outside of us.

Kelle: This looks like believing other people’s opinions of us over our own opinion of ourselves, measuring our worth by the numbers on the scale or the numbers in our bank account, or even the tags in our clothing.

Nina: And even where we live, where we go to school, where our kids go to school, where we work, what our title is and more. We’re taught what it means to be successful, which has typically meant to make a lot of money.

Kelle: Yeah, so we put our heads down and grind for years, decades even. And this works for so many of us when we’re in our 20s and our 30s. And then we get to a point where we just can’t do it anymore, where we’re not even willing to do it anymore. We’re no longer willing to sacrifice who we are for money. The value exchange of money for our time is just no longer worth it.

Nina: And this is where alignment comes in. Alignment is about making choices in the moment that serve you and taking your life back. To take time to reevaluate your priorities. To make decisions that are for you, not for the bottom

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line so you can live authentically. To take the wheel and drive your life. To live more intentionally instead of letting life just happen to you.

Kelle: Your life is a combination of all the decisions you've made. We need to take a look at our decision-making process and decide where we need to shift and then practice decision-making in a whole new way.

Nina: Yeah, alignment is making choices that are in integrity with what's most important to you so you can write your next chapter. We work with our clients using a combination of somatic or body based practices which is really how to listen to your gut feeling, what you're feeling in your body and how to manage your mind using what we call thought work.

Kelle: When your mind and body are working in harmony, how you feel, what you think, and the way you act brings you into alignment. Alignment is your navigation system.

Nina: Yeah. So ask yourself, am I feeling the way I want to feel? And if the answer is no, then ask yourself why.

Kelle: Let's go back to that client that we mentioned a couple of minutes ago. She was feeling out of alignment because she was running her life based on a set of values that no longer felt authentic to her. She was still valuing this idea that she had to work hard, she had to keep producing and accomplishing and it felt terrible. That's all she had known, working hard, getting the recognition, the validation and the big paychecks that came along with all of that.

Nina: Yeah, we needed to check in on and update her value system. Values are an important part of being in alignment, they are our why.

Kelle: When you know your values, what's most important to you, they help guide you to stay in alignment and drive you towards your truth. Making decisions is easier because your values help prioritize what's most important to you.

Nina: We're going to have to back up a sec here, though, Kel, what is a value?

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Kelle: Alright, values are your principles or think of them as your standards, what's most important to you.

Nina: I love thinking of them as my standards. I love that. I think what happens over the course of our lives is we inherit or fall into or are socialized with certain values and beliefs like we were talking about in our 20s and 30s. We learn to hustle. We develop earning power and ambition. Our lives start to revolve around these values, our relationships and work. Hobbies slide in after work or on the weekends between social events and our lives inevitably become more full as we move through life.

Maybe we find a partner, start a family, get the promotion, retire the bike or the paintbrushes. Our brains continue to tell us to hustle and earn and strive, because that's what we've practiced for so long, but at what cost?

Kelle: These values, they've gone unchecked for so many years, we haven't stopped to look around and recalibrate what's most important, what's really most important, not what's urgent, not triaging, and surviving life, but actually thriving in life. This definitely showed up for me in my life. And it's what shows up with so many of the brilliant women we work with.

Nina: So if this is resonating with you, you are not alone. The truth is, you have a beautiful human brain, and we can show you how to use that brain for you instead of against you. It wasn't designed to help you create the life you've always dreamed of. It was designed to keep you safe in the cave, avoiding discomfort and seeking pleasure and safety.

Kelle: Alignment is about using your brain for you, thinking on purpose, to feel better in your life and take actions that are aligned with what's most important to you now.

Nina: Yeah. So there are three types of values we look at with our clients. The first we call the shoulds. Shoulds are sort of these inherited values. They're superficial. They come from society, maybe family and our social conditioning. We call these dysfunctional beliefs because they're not in alignment with your personal unique truths. It's what other people want, expect or judge for you.

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Kelle: Maybe you went to the school your parents wanted you to go to or you chose a career based on what they or somebody else in your life wanted for you. So my dad really wanted me to be a PE teacher growing up because he thought it looked like fun and you got summers off. And once I found out what teachers made, there was no way I was doing that. No offense against teachers. That has to be the hardest job in the world.

But after growing up not having money, I valued financial freedom. I was not going to get paid what teachers got paid. I decided on a career that I didn't necessarily love, but I thought it could make me the most money. That's why I went into sales, and it totally worked for me until it didn't.

Nina: Yeah, whenever you're working from a should, you're going to eventually create pain for yourself. You may have heard this saying, don't should yourself. We say it all the time to clients. That's what's happening in this type of value. We make decisions not based on what's genuine and authentic to us, but on what we think we should do. Yeah, Kel, your story reminds me, did I ever tell you, I really wanted to be a physical therapist at one point?

Kelle: Yeah. What happened with that?

Nina: Yeah, I just got feedback and opinions from some important people in my life at the time, namely, my mom and my ex-husband. And they just shared their thoughts with me, their opinions, and I gave their opinions and feedback more value than my own. So I bailed. No regrets, here I am, but it's just interesting to look back on.

Kelle: So interesting. Okay, let's talk about the second type of value that we work with, with our clients, is outer values or chosen values. So many values will resonate with each of us personally. And for this reason we may try to hold them up. We try to act with these values as often as possible, but when we have too many, they'll totally conflict with each other.

Nina: Yeah, super common. More on that in a moment. The third type of value we call inner values or core values in coaching. These are the three to five critically important personal values that each of us hold. If we don't live in

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connection to these core values, we're going to show up and feel dissatisfied, embarrassed, maybe even burned out. We might feel ashamed or sad, really empty.

Kelle: And totally out of alignment. To live a fulfilling life, honoring your core values is key, so what happens when our values are conflicting? Let's talk about outer values versus inner values. When an outer value is in conflict with a core inner value, it can lead to stress, it can lead to unhappiness, it could just lead to not feeling good.

Nina: Yeah. So going back to our client. If connection is a core value, but she's still spending most of her time working because she also wants to be successful, she might feel guilty or stressed. She, of course, felt out of balance because she was putting so much time into work and not enough time into other areas of life that were important to her, family, friends, her own physical health, joy wasn't even on the list.

Kelle: Yeah, not even on the list. And we explored, what was she thinking that was causing her to work so much? Because remember, your thoughts create your feelings. And if you haven't gotten a chance to listen to episode six where we talk about feelings, you may want to go back and check that one out.

Nina: Yeah. So the thought she was thinking, if it didn't make me money or further my career, I'm not going to do it. Her values of success and work ethic were in conflict with her core value of connection. There is the tension. This is one we hear often with our *Ambitious-Ish* clients. As high achievers we feel like we have to sacrifice one for the other. We have to choose one or the other, we can't have both.

Kelle: Which by the way, we don't, we don't have to choose. So more on that later. We do not have to sacrifice one for the other. Shoulds and inherited values can also get in the way of making decisions. So a decision you made in the past may need to be revisited to be in alignment with your current core values.

Nina: This is where we work with our clients and help them redecide, giving themselves permission to redecide, making new decisions that are in line with

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the values they have today. Not still living with the same decisions they made in the past with a different set of values.

Kelle: This is important, living out a list of shoulds does not create joy. It creates resentment.

Nina: Resentment, low grade anger. By looking at what she was thinking, back to this client, this old story this client was telling herself that success was the most important thing. That thought, if it didn't make me money or further my career, I'm not going to do it. This was making her feel anxious. And when she felt anxious, she overworked. She didn't take care of herself. She wasn't making time for the things and people that were important to her now at this particular time in her life.

Kelle: She had to update her thinking to go along with her current set of values. Let's do this now. We're going to get clearer on our top three to five core values knowing that they're not set in stone. They totally flex, they can change over time or in different situations or circumstances in your life. Just think of them as a navigation system that changes as you change or your life changes.

Nina: Yeah, and if you're not sure or you're confused, just choose what you think are your three to five. We'll just start there and experiment. Once you start creating some actions around those values, you'll see if taking those actions gives you greater peace or clarity or whatever emotional goal you want to feel. This is all part of the discovery. You can live into a value for a while and see if that feels in alignment or if you want to try on another one.

Kelle: Feel free to put them on a sticky note, hang them on your fridge, put them in your phone with an alarm, put them on your wall or somewhere that you can be reminded of them daily. When you're clear on your core values, you feel better, you make better decisions that are for you. You'll have more enjoyment in life, more satisfaction and peace. And you'll also have greater purpose, clarity, and grounding.

Nina: Yeah. So ask yourself this, what emotions do I associate with being more clear with my values? For example, if one of my core values is peace, what can

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I do to cultivate a feeling of calm and groundedness in my life? So then you may want to put some habits in place that support your value of peace. You could spend more time in nature, stop doom scrolling social media, try meditation or yoga.

Kelle: Often, a person's habitual patterns or needs are getting in the way of living in alignment with values, habits are values in action.

Nina: Yeah. So see if you can think of it as steps. Number one, what are my values? What are my core values? Number two, what emotions do I want to feel that go along with those values? And number three, what habits and rituals can I practice to support and go along with the emotions I want to feel and the values I want to live by?

Kelle: So if your core value is health and you want to feel more vibrant, what habits do you need to add in to support those? So for example, a habit could be taking a walk every day, eating more vegetables, eating less sugar, working out at least a couple of times a week, drinking more water, even getting better sleep. Pick three to five habits you would like to add into your life over the next 10 weeks. And remember, take your time, take baby steps with this.

Nina: Yeah. Give yourself a break. Make it a priority to reflect on your values and your life. Just ask yourself, where am I putting my time and energy? How is that affecting me? Am I spending enough time in my life living into my values? Write it down every time you do something which gives you satisfaction. This could be noted at the end of the day, we love a noting practice. And then write down what core value that activity would fall under. By the end of the week you'll see if you're taking actions in your core values.

Kelle: This is where we start. In future episodes we'll go deeper and talk about how listening to your body and being in your body plays into being in alignment and how to cultivate your intuition and allow that to guide you. We'll talk about boundaries, how to set boundaries properly, and then how to follow through on those boundaries you set. We'll talk about how to stop people pleasing, how to stop caring so much about what other people think, how to schedule your time in

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a way that's in alignment with how you want to actually live your life. And what your self-concept, what you think about you has to do with all of that.

Nina: This is so cool. So much to uncover. Okay, practice this work. Do the exercises we mentioned. We're just going to continue to peel back the layers here. Alright, see you next time.

Kelle: Alright, see you next time.

Nina: If you enjoyed today's show and don't want to worry about missing an episode, you can follow the show wherever you listen to your podcasts. And if you haven't already, we would really appreciate it if you share the podcast with others who you think would benefit from it, and leave a rating and review to let us know what you think.

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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 <https://www.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!