

A BETTER LIFE WITH RACHEL ROFÉ

A CONVERSATION WITH
ANTONIA
DODGE AND
JOEL MARK
WITT

IF YOU HAVE A
CHOICE, CHOOSE
A BETTER LIFE.

Rachel: Hello, everyone. Today we're here with Antonia Dodge and Joel Mark Witt. They are co-owners of Personality Hacker, a organization designed to help people leverage their own mental processes to optimize productivity, communication, job satisfaction and most importantly happiness.

They're Internet entrepreneurs who have a two-year-old daughter together and Joel has two sons from a previous marriage. Both have experience in juggling their own businesses and raising small children. Thank you, guys, for being here.

Antonia: Thank you, Rachel.

Joel: Thanks, Rachel.

Rachel: The intention behind A Better Life is to show people that if they have a choice that they can choose a better life. In that spirit, can you take a minute to just brag and share with us some of the things that you're most proud of in your life right now?

Antonia: That's a really good question. I didn't think about that before) but that's a good question because it forces us to celebrate some of the good stuff that we've done and things that's we're proud of. We have really done a lot. I've co-owned Personality Hacker for about four years now. Joel bought out my previous business partner and so it's almost like we have started a new business on the legs of the previous one.

In the last year, we've really started rocking and rolling on a lot of the stuff that we had a foundation for before but it feels like it's really hitting a level of thriving now. We started our own podcast, which has become pretty popular in a very short amount of time, which is awesome. We are no longer in the struggling mode of being online entrepreneurs, which is great.

It's difficult for people to get through that struggle, that feast or famine, that starving artist mode in an Internet business. We feel really good that we've accomplished that. We stuck with it enough to get through that and now we're in a really good place in our business. Not only that, but in the last few years I was able to be part of running a TEDx in Las Vegas.

It was called TEDxSinCity, which was a great success and that was really fun. I feel like we've also been able to leverage the understanding that we have about how human beings work, a lot of maps and models to just increase the overall happiness in our lives. Joel and I have a really fantastic marriage and that's something that I think I'm probably most proud of of anything.

Doing all these different things--running events, having an online business, raising small children--the combination of all of it can be

something that feels very heavy and it feels very difficult to maintain working on the relationship. I think the thing that I'm most proud of is that through all of this we're able to leverage some of that stuff that we teach and actually implement it in our lives so that we have a really good, thriving relationship.

Joel: I would second that. Rachel, you went into the personal relationship stuff and that's what I was going to say. You can build a business, you can have a good business life, but if your home life is terrible and you're fighting all the time, not that we don't have our disagreements and stuff, but I am very proud that we have these moments where we have some difficulties because we work together, live together, we're in a romantic relationship, we're married, we have a child together, I have two kids and we're able to work through some of that. So I'm really proud of us as a couple, I think.

Rachel: That's a really big deal. I know even doing business alone, it can just be a huge passion flasher. Then you throw in all those other things in the mix and it's really a testament to how well you guys are able to just relate and also to the amazing personality profiling that you do. I forgot to mention when I was introducing you guys, for people listening, Joel and Antonia are both amazing at personality profiling and meeting people and learning exactly how they work--what their natural strengths are, what they work to overcome and how they can relate in all areas of life.

They teach it. I've enrolled in their classes before. It's just awesome stuff. I know you guys did not just wake up and get to where you are now. I know for knowing you guys you've worked hard. Can you describe maybe a particularly notable time in your life when you felt like things weren't going the way that you wanted or maybe you felt trapped and what was going on then?

Joel: For me, it was just right before I actually met Antonia. I had been living in another city away from my family. I had been going through a separation and divorce from my previous wife and I had two small children. I was a single dad living in an apartment in the inner city, working full time and struggling to try to make an Internet business go.

This was several years ago, probably five years ago now. I was just feeling like a decision point of, "I really want to not live a templated life." I want to make something happen in my life that's a little bit unique and a little bit different and give myself some freedom and some flexibility so that I can live with passion and purpose.

A lot of times people think it's the business training that's going to make the deciding factor for you. For me, obviously the business training was important (I got some really good training), but it was the personal

development work I did, the personal work in myself, the person I was becoming and changing to be and giving myself permission to be a new type of person, literally, almost overnight.

I know the success came later but overnight things started happening immediately. Once I gave myself that permission, the world started opening up. Within a month, I had met the woman I was eventually going to end up marrying and falling in love with and having a baby with.

I ended up leaving the city I was in, quitting my job, going into Internet business full time, meeting a bunch of new and cool people, spending some time in different places. It was an eye opening experience for me to give myself personal permission in that.

Rachel: What did you tell yourself to give yourself permission?

Joel: I was doing a lot of reading of Anthony Robbins type material. I had actually gone to a couple of Eben Pagan's events, personal development events and business events. One of the things that I decided to give myself permission around was this idea that I didn't have to be every day what I had already been the day before.

In other words, when I got up that morning I gave myself permission, and it was a phrase I had in my mind, "Give yourself permission to not be yourself or to be not me," is kind of how I phrased it. It allowed me to answer the question: If I was going to do this, how would I go about it--whatever it was?

For example, the day I met my future wife, Antonia, I was at a conference in Las Angeles, where we had met. I kind of came from a conservative background, conservative family. At the time, I was separated from my wife. We had been separated for a long time and we were eventually headed for divorce. We knew that. It just had not finalized itself.

I gave myself permission at that event to begin to explore a relationship with a new person, immediately. I wasn't like, "Well, I've got to go on 20 dates." Immediately I allowed myself to rush into something that in the past I would have been very reserved about. I remember allowing myself to go up to people and introduce myself to people where I'd be maybe shy or a little bit nervous. These people are high profile or they'd been big business people and I was like, "Hey, I'm Joel," and I'd reach out, shake their hand and I was very friendly.

I still felt really weird and kind of insecure about myself but I was willing to put myself out there. That was one big decision I made personally in giving myself permission in that way. Is that specific enough or do I need to get more granular on that?

Rachel: That's super specific. When you were saying that you gave yourself permission to do things that the old you wouldn't have done, did you think about the type of person that you wanted to be? Was the reference point for going through and talking to people? Do you know what I mean?

Joel: Looking back, I personally don't remember exactly if I had a plan of who I wanted to be. I think I had more of an away-from motivation at the time. I was like, "This is who I really don't want to be." I remember sitting down with a guy who was walking me through this exercise. I was talking about how I have my two children in the city I live in and I feel like it limits me.

I remember him asking the question, "What would happen if you didn't think you had the limit? What would you do?" I remember answering his question, "I would probably move out of town. I'd probably go explore more business opportunities." He said, "What's stopping you?" I'm like, "I can't do that. I can't leave the town I live in because I have a job and responsibilities."

I remember him saying, "What would happen if you could do that? What would your life look like." He began to future pace. I guess in that moment I was starting a future pace of what I could accomplish and what I could become different and opening up my mind to say, "Well, this is interesting. Maybe it's not a bad thing to make these choices."

We assume that we have the outcome clearly defined in our mind and we'll make a choice. If I make this choice, this consequence is going to happen or this result is going to happen. From my experience in just taking a leap of faith, that actually isn't really the case, from my personal experience.

It was a little bit more of away-from motivation but at the moment that I made this decision it was like a toward motivation to live a life of excitement. I think you teach about this Rachel. It's a feeling you go after more than even a thought. It's like, "How did I want to feel when I made some choices?"

I like how you phrase that a lot of times because it was more about a feeling I wanted more than a specific business or specific city I lived in. It was a feeling of freedom, a feeling of being able to fully be authentic to who I am and not have to live a template that other people set up for me.

Rachel: I love that. The reason why I love going after a feeling versus maybe a thought or specific thing is because it's so much easier to live a life right now that you're really happy about if you're just chasing a feeling because you can do so many things to feel excited right here in this moment.

Joel: Exactly.

Rachel: What about you, Antonia? Do you have any times that you remember? It could be anything in your life or maybe something of you guys together, whatever comes to your mind about something where you felt trapped? I think it's just so helpful for people to see that people can have some amazing, brag-worthy things to talk about right now but then also they're really people and, of course, they've had things in the past that they've had to overcome.

Antonia: I see my life as perpetual cycle of being stuck and then working through , coming out the other side and then feeling awesome for a while and then driving to the next feeling of stuck and then working through it and then coming out the other side and feeling awesome. If you choose to scale up, if you choose to continue to challenge yourself, once you climb to the next precipice, then you look at the next climb up and you're like, "Oh, that's right. I'm not done."

A lot of times just having gone through a time period of scaling up, having gone through a time period of what I call "putting pressure through the pipe," exposes all the cracks. I can think of a lot of time periods where it's the next scale-up opportunity that's put more pressure through me and so a lot more cracks were exposed.

It's often times the cracks that feel like those are my stuck points, like, "Oh gosh! I'm not perfect. Look at all my imperfections. What am I going to do now?" Then, of course, I've spent some time working on those cracks, working on the imperfections, or maybe even just the vulnerabilities, and either making peace with them or patching them up in some way and then recognizing that I'm actually ready for the next big opportunity.

I would say that probably the biggest example of this is when I graduated from the paradigm that I was raised in. I was raised in an extremely religious family that had very narrow definitions of what was an acceptable life. Part of that particular paradigm is that if you leave you don't get to take anyone or anything with you.

When I was reaching a level of what I would cognitive dissonance, or my realization that I wasn't buying into that particular paradigm anymore, I realized that if I left I would basically be leaving my family and all of my network of friends behind. It took me, literally, years to make the decision. That's part of why paradigms set themselves up like that.

They allow the social pressure to do a lot of their work for them. If you leave and nobody will talk to you anymore, that's a pretty big incentive to stay. I got to a point of not being able to live with the dissonance anymore. The need to be true to myself, the need to be honest, intellectually honest with myself, was bigger than my need to keep all of those relationships.

The pain of being intellectually dishonest was worse than the pain of leaving everybody behind. Like I said, it literally took me years. It probably took me three or four years of trying to figure out a work around. When I got to a point where I realized there just wasn't a work around anymore, then I left.

When I left, I literally left behind all of my relationships. My parents, their relationship with me, I had been pretty close to them growing up. None of my friends talked to me anymore and I had some extremely close friends. That was just the choice I had to make. Then it was a matter of now rebuilding a lot of things that were basically established over a lifetime.

You make all your good friends maybe in your late teenage years and here I was in my late 20s, early 30s and I didn't have any friends. I didn't know anybody. You build a bedrock of reliance on family members and your parents help get you through some tough times and that was gone. I keep using the word "literally." I'm probably using incorrectly.

I had to rebuild my life. One thing about it was that it was very freeing. I didn't have any expectations on me so I could recreate whatever I wanted to. A part of it was what they call the Blank Canvas Syndrome, which is I can do anything I want and now there are too many choices. There are too many options.

Then at the same time I realized, "I can just create magic if I want to. I can do anything I want to so why on earth would I live the normal templated life?" I lived somebody else's template, which was not the same as most people. The religion I grew up in, the template for that religion is very different than the template that most people are familiar with.

I was already used to being fairly counter culture. I wanted to live my own template so I started developing relationships and doing things that I had heard my whole life I couldn't do, from both my religious upbringing and also a secular point of view. "You're not allowed to teach that if you don't have a 'degree' in that particular thing."

I just decided to ignore all that and do whatever I wanted to do. I was like, "I'm going to do whatever the hell I want to and let's see what pans out." It took a while. It was very painful. It was very difficult. At the other side, I think because I made the choice of intellectual honesty, because I made the choice to no longer live in cognitive dissonance, the only thing I really had was myself.

I just had to maintain total faith in myself that I was going to be okay. I was going to get through it and I was going to rely on my own resources. I'm going to be a lifelong learner and I'm just going to figure this out. Five, six years later, I have a stunning life. I have basically the life that I had always

wanted before and daydreamed about but never thought I had permission to do. Now I'm just living it.

I hate the phrase "soul mate," so I'm not going to use that term, but it's probably as close to accurate as anything. I have a beautiful daughter. I have a great business that continues to do better and better. I continually do things that I do not have the skill level to do, if that makes sense. I'm forever starting projects where I'm like, "Yeah, I have no idea how to do that," and then I just go do it and then it just happens.

I think that's probably why I feel it's a perpetual cycle of being stuck because I invariably bite off more than I can chew and then I just have to figure it out. There are many moments of feeling stuck. There are a lot of moments feeling like I'm not going to be able to do this thing and then somehow miraculously the universe provides. I would say that that's probably my story of my biggest moment of being the Phoenix rising from the ashes.

Rachel: It's a gigantic story. That's just wild to go and be in this religion all your life. It always boggles my mind every time I hear you talk about it. To go and leave behind everybody that you've ever known and really just start from scratch, I would be terrified.

Antonia: It's a scary thing because we have really ancient programming in our minds that tell us that to be booted from the tribe equals death. To willingly leave the tribe, and to go face predators alone and to make your own way, we've lived in a time period where infrastructure allows us to do that for about 5,000 to 10,000 years and we lived in a time period where that equaled death for hundreds of thousands of years.

We have a lot of really ancient programming that says, "If you do that, you're not going to be okay." To make that choice to, you're fighting something that says, "You're going to die now so be ready for death." Obviously my pain levels of cognitive dissonance were much greater than my fear of death, my instinctive old programming fear of death.

There was an incentive for me. I didn't just do it because I'm this amazing, superhuman person. I did it because the pain wasn't worth it anymore. I had to. There wasn't really any choice. The choice was already made for me. It was just a matter of taking the first step. It's not really this amazing. It's more like it hurt really bad and I chose to walk away from the hurt.

That said, once you make an action, a massive, huge, mushroom cloud behind you action that you do for yourself, you do because you have enough faith and you have enough self-love and you have enough desire to not be in pain anymore, once you make that action, you get to a point where you're like, "Well, nobody can do anything to me because I just did the worst thing to myself that I could do and I totally survived it."

It takes you out of that victim mentality and puts you totally into the creator mentality. I get to create my destiny. What can anybody do to me that I haven't just done to myself? That, I would say, is possibly one of the more empowering thoughts a person can have.

Rachel: Once you make that worst-case scenario, you can only go uphill.

Antonia: Exactly.

Rachel: Can you just touch for a second, because you mentioned a couple of times there was a cognitive dissonance with your religion, what exactly was that looking like to you? Was it you were seeing people do things in the religion that you just didn't agree with or how was it for you?

Rachel: I don't think it was behavior as much as it was just purely mimetic. I just didn't believe it anymore. It just didn't make sense. That's fine. There are a lot of different paradigms and perspectives people have and a lot of different religions. They suit the needs of the people in it. It wasn't working for me anymore.

We run a company called [Personality Hacker](#) and personality psychology is our bread and butter. We talk about personality types. That's probably one of our biggest model of human development that we touch on is a variety of different personality typologies. In one of them, the basic premise is that there's a limited number of mental processes that we call can tap into but there's one that's our favorite.

Since I've left the religion of my youth, I've done an informal study of people choosing religions based on personality type. Who stays in what religion and how does that really work. This is not formal. This is just purely observational. I've noticed that if the religion offends that mental process, our favorite way of seeing reality, interacting with it, and it doesn't even have to offend it, sometimes it just suppresses it.

Certain religions are very framed to certain personality types and very oppressive to others. I've noticed that if the religion that you're in or grew up in or have chosen, it doesn't even have to be religion, it could just be a paradigm.

Joel: It could be the family business you grew up in.

Antonia: Yes, it could be the family business or a political affiliation that your parents are very strongly attached to, or whatever it is. If it offends or suppresses that dominant mental process, then it's only a matter of time. You're going to leave it. A situation that suppresses that mental process is unbearable.

The cognitive dissonance that I was experiencing is probably in large parts just a suppression of my dominant mental process. The part of me that I

identify with the most was being massively suppressed and that was the real pain. My mind just kind of went, "Yes, we need to go someplace else. We need to find a place that will celebrate this mental process and not one that continues to repress it."

Rachel: I feel like there's 500 different directions we could go with this because there's so much that you know. One thing that I was thinking while you were talking that would be awesome because you know about all the different personality profiles.

I usually like to ask people what were the mindset shifts that you made or the choices that you made to get from where you were to where you are now. Both of you touched on them. Maybe you could give a quick rundown of the different personality types, not necessarily what the types are but for each type what would be the mindset or shift that would be most empowering for them to get them out of a touch circumstance.

Joel: So basically go over everything we teach in five minutes?

Rachel: Okay.

Antonia: This is 20 podcasts. This is a lot of what we talk about.

Joel: This is good for us thought because it forces us to articulate what we do in a very a pithy format.

Antonia: Encapsulate. Dude, neither of us are pithy. We are the opposite of pithy. We are wordy folk.

Joel: Why don't you talk about the preference of the two, kind of give an overview and then you can maybe...

Antonia: Sure.

Joel: That would be the best we could do probably for this, Rachel.

Rachel: That's great.

Antonia: Let's put it down to its absolute most essential form. Let's put it down to something that's really super simple to digest. In one of the models that we teach, it stands on the legs of the Myers-Briggs system, which stands on the legs of what's considered Jung Yin psychology, from the Swiss psychologist, Carl Jung.

There is a certain set of personality types. In the Myers-Briggs system there are 16. Each one of these 16 types, what defines them are these mental processes that are either dominant or supplementary to their dominant process. A lot of people feel like they know Myers-Briggs if they understand what their four-letter code is.

What most people don't realize is that the four-letter code is actually a decoder ring for your mental processes. They're technically called cognitive functions. They're more complex and complicated than the standard Myers-Briggs that just focuses on introversion, extroversion, sensing, intuition, thinking, feeling, judging and perceiving.

Those four letters, in and of themselves, quite a bit of information and content which is why most people stick with them because they're accessible and easy to understand and there's a lot there. What we like to do is chasing rabbits down trails and doing deep dives. There are eight mental processes in total.

These mental processes are the preferred way of interacting with reality for each of these 16 types. It's the combination of which mental processes you're using, which are your dominant mental processes and what's called your secondary process, that make your Myers-Briggs type. Just to make this super simple, some people lead with what's called an understanding mental process and other people lead with what's called a decision-making mental process.

Now when I say "is called," I mean by us because there are more technical names if you run into the same information other places. These are the most accessible and simple terms that we are familiar with so we're going to use the easy ones because why be hard if you don't need to be.

Why be complicated if you don't need to be. Anybody who's leading with a learning process, interacts with the world in more of a questioning frame. They enter a situation by asking a lot of questions and wanting to know more information. They're always trying to fuel that mental process that wants to know more because they're leading with learning.

They have a tendency to have difficulty making decisions because that's not as fun for them as gathering more information. Getting into action is sometimes more difficult for them. Even if they're good at getting into action, getting into focused action, knowing where they're headed. A lot of times these people will just start doing in hope that where they're going will reveal itself to them over time. They're the ones who like to explore a lot more.

The other style are those who lead with a decision-making process. When they enter a situation, they're entering it decisively. They're much better at making decisions. They're much better at creating trim tabs for what the right action to do or to make is. Which one you lead with will often times inform what situations and circumstances that you are attracted to. Where do you like to end up?

By the way, there are four different kinds of learning styles. There are four different ways that we learn and we have a dominant of them, our favorite type. Those who lead with that learning process choose one of the four and that's their favorite way of learning and interacting with the world.

Those who lead with decision making, there are also four of those. They have one of those four as their favorite way of making decisions or the criteria they're using to evaluate and make decisions. Depending upon our learning style and whether or not we're leading with it, we'll stay in some contexts and leave others because it will appeal to that style of learning.

Take, for example, the religion I grew up in is very buttoned down and I lead with the learning process. I lead with something that we call exploration. Exploration is all about trying new things. It's all about making mistakes mistake the commission. It's all about a messy life in which a lot of information is pulled.

The context I was in was very suppressive of that desire to do new things. Eventually, my driver process, that process that's inside me that is leading me that I identify with the most, got really frustrated and had to break free. Now there are other learning styles that would be, and are, very content in that frame. They learn the same thing over and over and it reinforces a belief and that feels good to them.

That's not necessarily saying that theirs is bad and mine is good. It's just that's how we work. That's how we're built to work. Then you have decision-making people who are attracted to certain styles of infrastructure, certain perspectives and paradigms, ways of seeing reality based on their evaluation criteria.

If it's making their decision-making process or their evaluation mechanism feel good, then they'll stay in certain contexts and leave others. It's nice to believe that we're all making completely conscious choices on everything we do. The truth is is that our genetic makeup, our personality makeup, how we're hardwired, it makes a lot of our decisions for us because it determines what's a tolerable and an intolerable situation.

It also helps determine what is an extremely, ecstatically happy context and what is a miserable context. If you understand how you operate, if you understand how your mind works, it's a lot easier to create goals or what I call magnets in the middle of the field, the thing that we're always trying to seek or calibrate towards.

It's a lot easier to design one of those that's suitable to your personality type. If you get to a point where you have this lofty goal and you discover it was based on somebody else, like maybe you outsourced your goals, you outsourced them to a different personality type, but now you get there

and now you're miserable because it wasn't really your goal. It was somebody else's goal for you.

Knowing how you're hardwired will help prevent that sort of thing from happening. It will also help inform the map you create to get there. Your personality type is going to gravitate towards certain activities and ways of going about things that other personality types would totally mess up but you're excellent at doing it that way.

It helps inform the end game and it also helps inform the map you create to get to that end game. I don't know if that is what you were asking but that's probably as best as I could encapsulate it.

Rachel: That's an awesome way of explaining the types. It's so interesting to hear about different types and then once I know what people are, to be able to relate to them through their lens is just fascinating. I don't know if it's possible but, if it is, is there a mindset or a one sentence affirmation an understanding and a decision-making type could say to themselves to navigate out of a situation that would be tough for them or is that too generic?

Antonia: A lot of times the problems that we face are manufactured by ourselves anyway. That's been my observation. A lot of times if somebody is at a sticking point or if they're in a tough spot, sometimes it's circumstantial. Sometimes we've navigated ourselves into a place that we have to get out of, we've painted ourselves into a corner, or however you want to state it.

Often times though it's a mindset. We have decided that this is a problem. It's something that we determined was a problem and now we're only seeing problems because we decided that it was a problem. While this is not the cure all, obviously, I would say that it's a massive leverage point. Joel was talking about permission earlier. When he gave himself permission to be not himself, that was a turning point for him.

Joel: It was a shift.

Antonia: Yes, it was a shift. I think permission is one of those things that everybody needs but doesn't know they've needed it until they've got it. It's a really tough thing to sell but I think that most personal development, most of the work that people like us do when we're teaching people, fundamentally we're trying to give them a sense of permission. Permission to be themselves.

Permission to see themselves as okay and not fundamentally broken. Permission to rest into who they are. It's almost impossible to articulate until the person experiences it and then they go, "Oh my gosh! How have I lived my whole life without having permission to be me? Why have I been seeing myself as being fundamentally broken this whole time?"

Our parents are probably not our personality type and they probably don't have permission to be themselves and then when they saw things in us that were different than them they may have unconsciously determined that that was a problem of some sort and they unconsciously communicated that to us.

We're raised with this idea that because we're different than our influencers or the people who are heroes in our life then there must be something wrong or bad with me. I do this all the time. I'm not the final word but I'm definitely not an expert word. All of the personality types, no matter what model that I'm using, all of them are needed in some way.

Every single one creates a perfect ecosystem of relationships, societies. We need them all. It's kind of like bees. If they die, we die. If one of those personality types is removed, the rest of us won't survive without them. However you're hardwired, whoever you are and however your mind naturally works, now this doesn't include disorders or if somebody is a sociopath.

We don't need the sociopaths, not that I can see. As far as your natural way of engaging with the world, how you learn information, how you make decisions and how that informs how you see yourself, that's not just okay, that's precious and necessary. So resting into who you are is one of the biggest gifts that you don't just give to yourself but you give to the world.

Giving yourself permission to know that you're more than okay, that you're needed, is one of the greatest gifts that you can give to everybody around you. Now all that mental real estate and all that energy that you're expending to fighting who you are can now be refunneled and repurposed into helping others and to playing a bigger game and to making a big difference and impact on the world.

I don't know how pithy that is. Just resting into how necessary you are and giving yourself permission to be that is one of the greatest gifts you can give to yourself and others.

Joel: Antonia did give a great answer just there and I don't want to diminish that. I think it is a little bit complicated to give an overarching, for somebody who's leading with a decision-making function or somebody who's leading with a learning function, "What can they do if they're stuck or they're in a bad way?"

An overall thing is once you know your personality type, if you do lead with a decision-making function, that means that there's going to be a part of your personality that also learns. The thing that we really teach is to get in to a growth position of your personality. That usually involves the second process that you favor, which is going to be a little different than your first process that will actually grow you as a person.

It's hard to go over all 16 personality types right now and tell you what each one of those would be. Once you understand this and unlock it, that's where you can grow and begin to develop in personal development through that.

Antonia: There's a yin to your yang and knowing your yang and your yin is really important.

Joel: Yes, what she said. And we don't want to see either. Don't show us your yin or your yang.

Antonia: So knowing the structure of your personality type and then giving attention to the part of you that might be going a little ignored is often very high leverage for getting through challenges.

Joel: I would say the biggest thing I've taken away from this, if I only had two minutes to tell somebody something about personality types, I would probably just say, "The biggest thing to understand is that just because your mind learns and makes decisions the way it does, it doesn't mean everybody thinks like you do. If you can just hold space for other people and if they do something that just makes no sense to you at all or just seems crazy or silly, ask yourself; 'I wonder if they're just a different personality type? I wonder if that's what's going on here?'"

That would be what I'd tell people if I had a minute to tell them something. Would you agree? I don't know if you have another minute to give somebody. That's be my minute to give. This is the biggest leverage point.

Antonia: I think I've observed that when people give themselves permission to be themselves they unconsciously give everybody else permission to be themselves too. I usually focus on the pithy statement of: Accept who you are and accept your type and accept how you're hardwired.

I think when somebody really integrates that, when they really nail that part, then it's very easy for them to start giving everybody else permission to be themselves. Yes, I would say that is definitely an end result that improves the overall happiness of yourself and everybody around you.

Rachel: Those are both phenomenal pieces of advice. They're great. I think they build on each other really nicely. I'm so excited that people are going to hear this. I think it's going to be really helpful for them. I also think you have such amazing knowledge around running a business and having a child. I'd love to quickly touch on that too to make sure that people get to hear about that awesomeness too.

For that, can you talk about when you had your daughter how that impacted your business?

Antonia: Talk about mushroom clouds. It was nuclear. I was 34 when I was knocked up. I know that's such a crude term but I always say I got knocked up with my loving husband. I was 34 years old and I had actually never anticipated having children. I think my biology was really barking for it because it happened and I'm like, "How did this happen," as if I didn't spend 14 years preventing it.

It happened and it was like, "Oh gosh! Oh gosh!" That was actually during a time period where we were still in very much building the business. Everything feels so nice and cozy now. Not everything's handled, it's still a challenge, but it's not what it was then.

Then it was like, "I think I can't do this anymore." I really believed that. When I got pregnant and had Piper, I was like, "That's it. It's done." You're going to have to go get a day job and I'm going to have to do transcription online or something," and it's over. That's really the mindset I came from. "I just can't do it. I just cannot juggle all this."

Joel: You had some beliefs around this before.

Antonia: I had such massive beliefs. That's really what fucked me up. My beliefs more than my logistics that were the issue. Piper just turned two on Sunday. Two years later, I'm like, "That is totally doable. That is manageable and I've seen how it can be manageable." I didn't really have any real understanding of how to do it so it was a lot of trial and error.

It definitely stunted the growth of the business for sure. I'm pretty sure that if I hadn't had to figure out from scratch how to run a business with a child, the success that we're experiencing now probably would have happened quite a bit before.

Joel: It's kind of like the business itself is like a child. It needs tons of attention. It needs to be watched, nurtured, fed and cared for. It's kind of like you're raising two children at that point.

Antonia: Exactly.

Joel: Each want their own time.

Antonia: Yes. The belief I had was that it couldn't happen and I had to get over me. I had to get over my belief. Once I got over my belief, or maybe it just sort of happened because I couldn't stop, it was kind of like that thing where I had cognitive dissonance about my previous paradigm. I tried to ignore it and then eventually it just wouldn't go away.

That was the same belief I had around my business. It was like, "I have to stop this. I have to end this," and then I just kept not ending it because I was so passionate about the business itself. I would say that's probably

the number one most important component when you have a business that you're running with small children.

You have to want it really bad. You have to want it so bad and you have to be so in love with and passionate about what you're doing that when you have a moment of "I can't do this anymore. Just shoot me in the face. Stab me in the face. It's over," that part of you goes, "Yeah, we're not going anywhere."

You can pretend like you're going to leave but the passion itself has you by its talons and it's not letting go. I would say that's probably the foundational piece. When you're running a business with a small child, be madly, passionately in love with that business.

Rachel: I could see where I would get that belief too. When I have a child, forget about it. Everything is done. I'm curious, how do you structure your time?

Antonia: Because of my personality type, I'm a very unstructured person by nature. One of the good things is that having a child forced me to have more structure. I'm very willy-nilly. I'm very much like, "Oh, I'll do that when I feel like it," and then I'm pulling rabbits out of hats in the 11th hour.

What's great is that having this other thing that pulls my time and attention and resource means that I have a lot less of it to play around with and that forces me to be more conscientious of how I'm spending my time and resources. I created this little algorithm.

When you're talking to people about how to have a business, be an entrepreneur and also have small children, one of the worst parts of it is that if you say, "I just did this," and you start to talk about your personal experience, there's going to be probably everybody but one person out there that's going to say, "But my situation is different. My circumstances are different. I don't get to do that."

"I can't do that because my situation is over here as opposed to her situation which is over there." If you're going to give advice on this, you have to have an algorithm as opposed to a very specific way of going about it. What I recognized is that all of my best work gets done in two hour chunks of focused time and attention.

If I can have two straight hours of focused time and attention, then that's where my best creative work gets done. That means that everything that I do when I'm structuring my time is an effort to create that block of two hours. Now I can't do one hour. One hour doesn't work because it takes me at least 20 minutes, if not 30 minutes, just to ramp up.

If I can get more than two hours, awesome. If two is good, three is better and four is ideal. Sometimes I don't get that. If I get two, I'm okay. I can do

two at a time. Then it becomes an entire world or entire plan around how to capture those two hours. How do I get that two hour chunk? Anything that fights my being able to get that two hours goes in my liability column and anything that allows me to get that two hours goes in my asset column.

If you look at a lot of people who work full time maybe for other people, do a 40-hour work weeks, I think they've done a ton of efficiency studies where they're trying to figure out just how much real work time happens in the workplace in 40 hours and I think they said it's something like 16 hours every week. Sixteen really good, high-quality hours of work happen in a 40-hour work week.

I know when you're building a business the tendency is to work 80-hour weeks. You're trying to do everything you can to get this business up and running. If you can capture between 20 to 30 hours of really high-quality, focused work, you're actually probably doing pretty good. If you make those hours count, you're probably up there with people who are working 40 plus hours.

Two hours is your goal. Now what are the kinds of things that go into a liability category? For me, I don't have grandparents who can watch my child. Like I said, I don't have much of a relationship with my parents and they live across the country. My in-laws, who are beautiful, lovely people, my mother-in-law has serious back issues and so she can't lift a child, a baby. So she hasn't been able to watch Piper at all. That means I have no grandparents to help me out.

Now a lot of people do have grandparents that will help them out. I have a friend who runs a multimillion dollar business and every Thursday night is grandma night. She has a three year old who goes and spends the night with her grandmother every Thursday and then her mother-in-law comes and picks up her daughter on a semi-regular basis.

That's in her asset column. Mother-in-law is part of her reclaiming as many two-hour chunks as possible. I would see just how much two-hour chunks I could get out of that mother-in-law. Can I get five two-hour chunks from the mother-in-law? Can she give me that? That would go in the asset. I have that in my liability category because I don't have that ability.

I'm from the West Coast and I live in Western Pennsylvania now and everything here feels ridiculously dirt cheap, including the childcare. We have very reasonably priced childcare. I have a babysitter that comes in between 14 and 20 hours a week to watch Piper. That goes in my asset category.

Very reasonable childcare, that's definitely an asset. Now somebody might live in San Francisco or someplace in New York or someplace on the West Coast where the childcare prices are astronomical. That would be in your liability. I'm not sure if you can hear but Piper's screaming in the back.

Rachel: I did. It's so timely.

Joel: It's awesome.

Antonia: Anyway, that's the monster. She's actually being cared for right now. That would go in my asset category and that would go in somebody else's liability category. If anybody's feeling really depressed about their situation, I beg them to write those lists. If you can figure out anything that will give you two hours, put it in your asset category.

Joel: A nap would be in your asset column, a two-hour nap.

Antonia: That's totally in my asset. Piper, we trained her very well and also because of her disposition, she goes down to sleep so easy. She goes down for her naps beautifully. She'll go, "Bye-bye, Mommy," and wave me out of the room. That's a big, fat asset for me. That's massively in my asset column. For somebody else, their child might be too old to take naps now and that will be in a liability column.

I would say a massive leverage point is, if your child has the disposition for it at all, powering through training them to sleep consistently. She's slept through the night since she was five months old, I think. There was great book. I wish I could remember the name of it. There are a lot of books out there that are really fantastic that will help you train your baby to sleep through the night.

Getting them trained to go to bed and just know, "This is nighttime now," and be really good sleepers is a massive leverage point in not only reclaiming time but also in saving your relationship with your mate, if you are married.

Joel: A lot of hard work upfront, but if you can power through it and get through the emotional turmoil, it really pays dividends.

Antonia: She goes to be at 8:30. Now I do life coaching, private coaching, and I have a couple of Australian clients and they don't start until 9:00 P.M. It's 9:00 P.M. my time and sometimes it's 9:00 A.M. or 11:00 A.M. their time. She goes to bed on the dot at 8:30 P.M. and she wakes up anywhere between 8:00 and 8:30 A.M. in the morning.

I know that I have my entire evening if I want to stack clients there. I know that I have until about 8:00 or 8:30 to sleep. I stack it however I can. I just as much time reclamation as possible in those two-hour chunks. I started

writing a book a couple of months ago where I was getting up pretty early and I knew I had until 8:30. I had between 6:30 A.M. and 8:30 A.M. to write that book.

Now that meant that I had less time in the evening, because I needed my sleep, to work but that was when I chose to do it because that was a creative time for me. Just being really flexible and working to get those two-hour chunks, that's one of the ways that I've created an algorithm where if something goes out of my asset column into my liability column, then I just look to find another asset to get those two-hour chunks.

Joel: My experience, being a single dad for about two years and by myself in my own apartment and having my two boys who were about one and three at the time with me in the evenings often, regularly and on the weekends, what I decided to do was divide my time into focused time and non-focused time.

During the focused time, it would be like after to bed at night or before they got up in the morning or their playing something that was occupying them for a chunk of time, I could focus on creative things like writing or putting together something creative. My non-focused time tasks, I could do them with my children around my feet or playing near me.

They could be making noise and I wouldn't need to be focused, like answering client e-mails or doing customer service where it's only a three to five-minute task. I actually created a standing desk in my living room area where I could standup high and have my computer and my laptop up at a standing level.

I'm about 6' 2" so it was a standing level where the kids couldn't reach it. I think my son did pull my hard drive down one time, which my wife was devastated. I had it set where they usually couldn't grab things or pull them off. I would stand and do some of that non-focused type work for a little bit of time.

I wouldn't spend the whole evening doing it but it would give me a little bit of flexibility to answer some e-mails and do some things. I was also at the time working full time so this way I was able to spend time having them with me and also working at the same time. Some of those principles I've brought over.

My boys are a little older now but with Piper as a young baby I'm able to do some of that non-focused stuff when she's in the room with me and there's no one else to watch her and it's just me watching. I can set up tasks in order to pre-paste them to know that, "I'm not going to do this now because I know I'll be watching Piper for an hour later tonight when she's playing and this will be a great thing to do during that time. I'll do this focused work now and then I can do this busy work that has to be done."

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Antonia: If you have a brick and mortar business, you're actually probably going to have a bit of an easier time with having small children because kids seem to be okay if you're busy. If you're moving around, walking around doing physical things, they seem to be a little more forgiving of that than they are if you, say, have an online business where you're staring at your computer screen.

All that is is a challenge for them to get your attention. If you're an online entrepreneur and you're saying to yourself, "This seems harder than it should be," you're accurate. Kids hate when you look at a computer screen. You have to sometimes have them around when you're looking at your computer screen.

The whole concept of raising that computer screen and standing up gives the impression to the child that you're busy doing something physical and they do get a little less insistent upon your attention than if you're sitting down at a desk looking at the computer screen and now they're throwing the gauntlet down. It's go time. I would say that that's really big.

One thing I wanted to mention before too and I'm trying to remember the name of it. It's very simple. I have a link on our website for the childcare that we used. There is an online service that basically connects mothers and people who are looking for childcare with childcare providers. The mom, or the person looking for childcare, it's a paid service for them.

For all the people who are babysitters, it's a free service for them. I just went ahead and paid the fee. I don't remember how much it was. It was \$30 or \$40 a month or something. I just went ahead and paid the \$30 or \$40 for the month. I wrote an advertisement that was extremely authentic, meaning that I was very radically honest in it and I knew that that would get attention.

Basically, I wrote copy in this advertisement to get as high-quality people as I could and then I got all these responses for the area. I staggered them in interviews at a Starbucks. I had seven or eight interviews and I staggered them every 45 minutes for a day. I went through and interviewed all these people and brought Piper to see how they interacted and I got an absolutely phenomenal girl who comes in almost every day now and watches Piper here while I'm working.

It's been a great arrangement. I highly recommend doing something like that if you can. If you can swing it, if you can swing the expense, if you can find that great person, usually if you write a really solid advertisement for what you're looking for, those people will be attracted. I live in a very conservative area of Western Pennsylvania and I totally painted myself as this uber hippie.

I'm not a hippie but I knew that would be something [indiscernible 57:26] could relate to and I painted myself as this super granola hippie person to find somebody who would be into that vibe. Like I said, I found somebody who really gels well. If you want to find that link, you can go to our website: <http://www.PersonalityHacker.com/childcare>.

Go to that website. I think it's <http://www.Care.com>. That's what it called. Go straight to them and find a really great person to give you some assistance. You really can't do it on your own. If you don't have somebody who's swooping in to help you, you can pay for that service and get somebody to swoop in and help.

Rachel: That's great. That's an interesting point you made about the copy you wrote for your ad. I know whenever I'm outsourcing for different jobs the longer that I make my job ads and the more specific and the more like, "You're going to have to do this and this and this," the natural inclination was to think that you're going to overwhelm people. Usually it just ends up attracting all these A-players who are like, "Thank you. She knows exactly what she wants." Then I'm falling over myself with amazing candidates. That's very cool that you did that.

Antonia: I think if you know who you want and get a picture of that person, it's just like advertising for your marketing, you have an avatar in mind. Whatever you're outsourcing, who's that avatar and write totally to them and then you'll find them.

Joel: One more thing I want to mention, if I can Rachel, about working and then having a child, so if you're building a business or if you have some kind of business and having a child. I think with kids, obviously, they spell love T-I-M-E. Time is important and so quantity of time and I believe also quality of time is important, too.

One thing is if Piper is insistent on attention and it's just not working out to get something done in that non-focused time, first of all, make sure I'm spending time with her is important to me regardless of work. I'm spending quality time with her. I spend time playing tea party or going down a slide or taking her to the park.

Antonia takes her on walks during the day and we go different places and do stuff with her. That's really key, I think, to buy yourself some of that other time that you can work. If she's really insistent on attention, I think at the point we realize she just really needs attention, we just stop what we're doing, we turn to her and we give her some of the attention she's asking for, demanding sometimes.

I think often that calms her down and then she's able to be by herself and play a little bit longer if we can give her some quality attention and show her, "Hey, we're still connected. We're still here with you." It's important,

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think, as you're going through your day. I don't think this is something new to parents. They probably already get this. But this is something that's been important for us--that work/life balance.

She's part of our business in a sense because she's with us all the time. She's watching us build this business. It's that experience for her so she needs to be part of our lives in the midst of the business building.

Antonia: One more thing I would tag on there is she has a need that is going unmet and so she's very insistent upon getting that need met because she's a baby and babies don't have the social maturity to shut that valve off yet. We've learned all sorts of ways to shut those insistent needs off. I would say take a lesson from your child and start listening to yours and make sure you're getting your needs met.

Make sure you're nourishing yourself. We have this amazing morning smoothie that we do every morning and we can tell when we haven't done it because we're grumpy bastards. If we do it, then the day goes so much better. We make sure to nourish our bodies. Now sometimes a major project will come up and we're sleep deprived but then we account for that by giving ourselves some rests days afterwards.

That's a great thing about having your own business. You get to determine when your rest day is and when you don't, to some extent. Obviously, you have to manage clients. You have the luxury of setting things up so that if you have a need going unmet you can address it. Check in. Keep your finger on the pulse of your needs.

Are you not getting enough exercise? Are you not eating the right foods? If you're in a relationship, is your relationship needing some time and attention? Are you doing a lot of fighting and bickering? I think the real litmus test is, "Are you taking everything personally?" Are you assuming that everything they're saying is somehow meant to hurt your feelings?

If that's the case, you need to drop everything and go focus on that relationship for a while. Make sure you are getting your needs met, make sure your relationships are getting their needs met and give yourself permission to do that. Otherwise, you're going to run on empty and then eventually it doesn't matter how passionate you are about what you're doing because you will give up.

Keep the passion burning by fueling yourself. Sometimes we have to go the minimum. Just like with Piper, "Right now I'm busy so I'm going to give you 10 minutes of concentrated time and then swat your butt and send you on your way." Sometimes we have to do that with our needs too. "I'm going to give you the minimum amount right now," but then we tag that and go, "Later on I'll make sure to make it up to you." We'll do a full tea

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party with Piper for a full hour, or whatever she wants to do, and then we'll make sure we've made it up to her.

Do the same thing with yourself. If you can't at the moment do a full need met, do a truncated one and then later on make it up to yourself.

Rachel: I love it. I have 800 other questions, like I keep saying, but I know that we've passed the hour so I'm ask one other question and then I'd love if you could tell people where to find you. Because I want people who are listening to know that you guys are real humans with everyday struggles, can you just let us know maybe something right now that you're currently working on in your life and how you're getting through it?

Antonia: That's a great question.

Joel: It is a good question.

Antonia: I came across very self-satisfied at the beginning of the podcast because I am in a situation right now where I'm feeling more satisfied than I have in the past about where I'm at. Still, when you ask that question, I have a bottleneck of all these things that I'm working on.

Joel: I can start with something pretty practical or at least something specific as you're thinking, if you want to think a moment.

Antonia: Yes, please.

Joel: For me, I have a tendency to be an opportunity chaser. I tend to say "Yes" so often because I get excited. It's very easy to excite me about new ideas, new projects. One of the challenges that I'm trying to combat is two-fold. It's taking on too much and then also the tyranny of the urgent, that feeling like everything is urgent when I'm maybe neglecting the important things in life or business.

I'm really conscious focused on trying to slow down and not say "Yes" to so many things, in fact say "No" to more things. I kind of have this feeling like my success, my personal business and all that success, is going to come from some of the things I say "No" to even more so than the things I say "Yes" to. That's a big lesson I'm learning.

I'm not anywhere close to having finished this lesson of learning this. I'm on my journey. I'm on my way of really understanding that I can't please everybody. I can't do everything for everybody. I can't be everything to everybody. Antonia says sometimes I'll be in the midst of six things I'm juggling.

I'll be like, "Everybody wants something from me and I'm so frustrated. Why is this happening to me." I'm like, "Pity me. Poor me," and then I realize, after she gives me nice advice as well, "This is actually my doing. I

took on all of this and it's my responsibility to be more clear, set better boundaries and work through this." Don't let it stack to where I explode and then I'm putting all this emotional energy out toward my wife and my child and my friends or whatever.

I'm more in charge of it before it gets to that place. That's really a lesson I struggle with all the time that I'm working on right now.

Antonia: I have one for my business and one for my personal. In my business, I'm really trying to focus on making sure that I do as much input as output. What I do is so much teaching and so much coaching that I'm in output so often. I've realized that I need to focus on making sure that I have as much input, so reading, learning new information, feeding my mind.

Sometimes I'll use my childcare time to input. I'll pay a babysitter to have me sit there and play video games for an hour because that's what I need in the moment. I need to just completely detox from whatever. Maybe I got off of a huge program that I just put together and I have to play video games for an hour.

I just have to. I'll pay somebody to come in and watch my child while I play video games. I'm giving myself more and more permission to do that and then also I'll just read. I'll listen to music and read while my childcare provider is in and I'll pay her to give me the opportunity to read and listen to music.

Joel: That's caused a little tension between us, I think, because I'm like, "Why are you playing video games? You have a babysitter. Let's work. Let's get stuff done."

Antonia: Right. I'm really working hard on giving myself the thing that I need in the moment, recognizing that. I had a friend recently say, "What if we made big change in the world and what if we walked there instead of ran?" I was like, "That is brilliant." I'm trying to think in terms of how do I make sure that I'm enjoying the ride, that I'm getting my need met and I'm walking there as opposed to running? Sometimes I just get that need met. I'm trying to really focus on inputting as much as I'm outputting on a business level.

On a personal level, I have a tendency to believe that I only have value as a human being if I'm demonstrating it to other people by giving that value, by being the person who's like, "Look at the amazing thing I can teach you," or "Look at the amazing concept that I have," or "Look at how awesome I am because look at the value I'm giving you." That obviously comes from a fundamental insecurity that I show up without value.

In my personal life, I'm really working on recognizing that I have value just by existing, just by showing up, that my life is precious just because it is

and not having to constantly prove to other people how valuable I am. I can go, "I'm here," and that's valuable. Also, if I choose to give more value, then that's okay too, but it's not a compulsion. I would say that's my current personal development project--making sure that I rest into intrinsic value as opposed to having to prove it all the time.

Rachel: Those are awesome answers. Thank you so much. This has been great. I'm so glad, for those of you listening, we decided last minute that Joel would be here on the podcast too. I'm so glad because I think it made this fantastic. Hopefully, we can have you guys back because you have so much to share. For the meantime, can you please tell people where they can go to learn more about you?

Antonia: Our website is <http://www.PersonalityHacker.com>. That's where you find our podcasts, our blogs, our articles, our online assessment that we give and all of our programs. If you want to check out the childcare provider that I use, <http://www.Care.com>, you can go to <http://www.PersonalityHacker.com/childcare>.

Joel: We'd love to meet you and have you come over and say hi to us, so do it.

Antonia: Yes.

Rachel: Thank you guys, again, so much for being here. This was great.

Antonia: Thank you, Rachel.

Joel: Thanks, Rachel.

END

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With love,

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