



Feel Good English

"The Ego is
the Enemy"
by Ryan
Holiday

Episode #92

FULL TRANSCRIPT

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Hello there, Kevin here with another episode of the feel good English podcast. The podcast that is helping you, yes you become a more confident English speaker by learning from powerful English lessons the natural way.

Today I have an episode based on a book called "Ego is the enemy" by Ryan Holiday.

And if you've never heard the word **ego**, ego, E G O just to give you a brief definition. The ego is a person's sense of self-esteem or self-importance. Basically, the ego makes you think of how important you are, how valuable you are. So if the ego gets out of control you might think you're too valuable.

This book is all about maintaining the ego **in check**. Keeping something in check means keeping it at a reasonable level. And Ryan Holiday goes very deep on the subject of how to keep an ego in check but he also talks a lot about why the ego can really damage our chances of success. And what does success do? Well, it could bring us a fulfilling happier life.

So I'm going to go into a few ideas from this book, help you understand the main idea, and go find the book, go read it or listen to the entire book so you can go deeper with it. Don't let your ego **get in the way of** you thinking that you need to learn more. The ego might say hey "oh I understand this, this is **no big deal**, I got my ego in check." That's the ego talking.

By the way, if you want to transcripts to this episode, go to

feelgoodEnglish.com. There you will learn how to get transcripts to this episode or to get some free transcripts, which are also available there. So if you're new here, go to feelgoodEnglish.com and start going deeper.

And without further delay let's get into the episode on the "Ego is the Enemy" by Ryan Holiday.

So the first idea here is how the ego is the desire to gain recognition without working hard for it, especially in the days of social media, people wanting to be famous, rich successful, loved by the entire world, without really doing much.

People are very good these days at **showing off**, showing off what they have, what they don't have, showing off their muscles, showing off their car, showing off their butt. The ego wants us to feel important. Wants us to feel more important than we might be. Well, we're all important, but wants us to feel more valuable, more famous than we are at the moment, basically keeping us from doing the hard work that would lead to that.

One of the things that he recommends here is to not talk of success before achieving it. I've talked about this before, not sharing your goals out loud, this goes a little deeper into that saying that, don't talk about everything you want to do as if you've already achieved it before putting in the hard work. An example, let's say you have a fitness goal and you say I'm going to be incredibly strong, I'm going to the gym every day for two hours, become incredibly **fit**, healthy, fit, your subconscious may actually feel that it has succeeded before you even have put in the effort. So it's a dangerous place to be.

One tricky part here is passion, so passion we want to be passionate about something. We want to look for our purpose in life. However, this could be mixed with a big ego as well. Instead of just looking for what you're passionate about, waiting to be extremely passionate about something which gives you the motivation to do that, the book recommends just putting in the hard work. I know that sounds

a lot easier than it actually is. Ryan Holliday talks about how selfish or how lazy it is to just think that we are here to have a comfortable life and I like. And I like this about this book, he says, we're here to serve, to work, to produce. Humans just weren't here just to lay around and be comfortable. If you think of animals, the animal kingdom insects and animals and things like that. They get up in the morning they have their breakfast, their coffee and then they get to work. They do what they need to do, they provide their services to help their animal family, not just sitting around or trying to be lazy. Well, I guess some animals are pretty lazy, but in general they're doing what they need to do to survive. It's a survival method, probably why humans have become so comfortable is because we have the things we need to survive, but we've lost that work ethic, that desire to get up, serve, work hard, do what we need to do.

I have to remind myself of this sometimes, you're waking up on a cloudy day, it's raining outside, you're tired, you say, "oh It'd be comfortable in bed here", as opposed to thinking well, I am alive another day let's wake up, let's get some hard work done. That's what I'm here to do. Serving is our duty, our responsibility. Could be serving others, could be serving your family, could be serving yourself.

One key piece of advice here, is are you doing something to be, or are you doing something to do? Now let me explain the difference. So if we're trying to show off, we want to get recognition, validation, we want likes on our photo. These type of things, this would be doing something to be, right? You're doing it to be somebody versus do you actually want to make a change, do you want to make a difference? This would be doing something to do something. So impressing people, showing off is vastly different from being impressive, something to think about. Are you doing something so other people recognize what you're doing or are you doing something to actually make a difference? Put in the necessary time, put in the hard work, and you will in time feel that validation anyway. People will be impressed by you. You will be able to show

off your new car and to show your house off to everybody, but the hard work comes first.

Often we will try our best, we'll put in our best efforts, we'll be focused, we'll be excited, we'll be implementing ideas from the feel Good English Podcast, feeling inspired, but things won't **work out**. They won't work out the way we were expecting. They won't work out the way we wanted. To work out is to go the way we want it. To be successful, to happen the way we want something to happen. It also means to exercise but that's another definition of work out.

So what do you do? Well, you find out why it didn't work out, so you can do better the next time. If you try really hard to pass an English test, you've been studying for a few weeks and you're really motivated but it doesn't work out the way you want it, you didn't pass, obviously you're going to feel frustrated. The ego gets in there and says hey you should have passed this test, you worked hard on it. You should have passed it. That's the ego talking, ego is basically saying, whatever exists right now is not the way it should be, but the World obviously doesn't work in accordance to our plans. So what do we do to confront this? Well don't try to not feel disappointed but you also should start acknowledging the work that you've done. You've done your best that you can't control the outcome, and you also can't control other people's opinion, and be careful often we feel disappointed because we think other people will feel disappointed in us. Next time you feel down about something that you didn't do, think about it, are you feeling down because you didn't work hard enough or are you feeling down because other people might think you are dumb, stupid, incompetent.

Next time you feel down about something that you didn't do, think about it; are you feeling down because you didn't work hard enough or are you feeling down because other people might think you are dumb, stupid, incompetent? However, all of these feelings in these times of disappointment when things don't work out are what? if you listened to this podcast you know. These are opportunities to honestly reflect on your performance. Sometimes we get lucky

things work out easily, without putting in a lot of work, but that's luck. Most of the time we have to be honest with ourselves about our performance.

A great example of this that just came to my mind right now, think of the Super Bowl. Do you watch football? Think of Tom Brady, New England Patriots, American football team. This year **they were down** by many many points, even until late in the game looked like they were going to lose. I thought they were going to lose to be honest I wanted them to lose. I'm not a New England Patriot fan, but the whole team with Tom Brady at the lead just kept pushing forward, learning throughout the game what to do to beat the Atlanta Falcons, and they did. It was amazing. They **came back** from losing and won the Super Bowl. A great example of how focusing on your mistakes, not giving up, learning from them, can lead you to success quite an impressive showing of persistence here. There wasn't a lot of ego going on, actually, you probably could have seen a little bit more of ego going on the other side of the field. When the Falcons were winning they were looking pretty proud of themselves.

So simply when things go wrong, look at what you could have done differently, and that's just the beginning because then you actually have to find the task that you can improve on and then have the drive and determination to do that, put in the hard work. To wake up in the morning and say I am going to change this. I am here to serve I am not here to lay in my cave comfortably or lay in your bed (I assume you don't sleep in a cave) and keep moving forward, keep learning from your mistakes and keep focusing on the work. Your job is to do the work and to do it well. Recognition rewards rejection failure those are just extras or **by-products** of the work. Handle the process of the work and let everything else take care of itself. Don't let the ego say I deserve all of these other things, the work is not important. Focus on the work.

So action steps here and I'm just going to give you one. And it comes down to this; greatest comes from being humble in the beginning. It comes down to **grunt work**. What is grunt work? Grunt work is

working hard, sweating, putting in the time and effort on something. You have to be okay with being the least important person in the room, until you change that with results. How often these days do people think they're important just by showing up, just by arriving. They get a new job right out of college. They start to say okay I made it to this job, I passed the interview now when am I going to become manager? People often don't feel comfortable being the least important person in the room, but according to the book *Ego is the Enemy*, you should stay there, be okay with being the least important until you change that with results. So all I would ask when you wake up in the morning, tell yourself, I'm going to do my best work today and not let my ego get in the way of, obstruct me from, doing that. It won't let me think I deserve more or those people think I'm not important or I can do everything I don't need anybody's help, putting in the grunt work, putting in a full day of hard work is all this book is asking. And if you think about it, even without the rewards, the recognition, all of those things that might come from that. Putting in the necessary work is satisfying in itself, and to be honest, I think that's the underlying theme here. We talk about success, we talk about having a lot of money. These are all nice, but in the end I think what makes us the happiest, is how we go to bed at night. When we lay our heads down on the pillow, do we think I did my best today, today was a job well done? Or do we think, I could have worked a lot harder today I should have put in more grunt work? Work hard so you can go to bed at night with a smile on your face.

That will do it for today's episode. I hope you enjoyed it. The phrasal verbs from today *show off*, *work out*, don't be a show off, when things don't work out figure out why and fix it. If you would like a transcript to this episode, go to feel good English.com. You can get it there and don't forget becoming better at English is simple. Surround your day with English that inspires you. Practice with it, use it, go deeper with it and keep putting in the grunt work.

And here's a **one-liner** joke for you. What's a one-liner? Well, you

have a one liner joke where it's just one sentence, where another joke with a punchline is where you have a question or the first phrase and then you follow it up with a **second one**. Something like, "what did the bartender say to the horse," that's not the joke for today, but a one liner on ego, here you go.

"if I wanted to kill myself I'd climb your ego and jump down to your IQ".

That's a far way to fall.

See you in the next episode.