

This is the Do It Scared Podcast with Ruth Soukup, **EPISODE #41**. In today's episode, we're talking about how to find the support to go after your dreams....even when it feels like no one believes in you.

Hey there, and welcome back to the Do It Scared podcast! As always, my name is **RUTH SOUKUP**, and I am the founder of Living Well Spending Less and the Living Well Planner, as well as the founder of Elite Blog Academy, and the New York Times bestselling author of six books.

And whether you are new and just finding me through this podcast for the first time, or whether you've known me for a while from Living Well Spending Less or Elite Blog Academy—welcome! My hope is that this is a place where you will find new inspiration and motivation to move past the things that are holding you back so you can create a life you love.

In today's episode, we're chatting about a topic that I get asked about ALL. THE. TIME. In fact, I'd say that it is probably one of THE most common questions or problems that I hear about from the women in our community, and that is how do you find the courage to really go after your dreams when it feels like the people around you—your spouse or your parents or your friends or whoever—don't really support you. They either think your dream is stupid or a waste of time or unrealistic, or maybe they just don't get it. What do you do? How do you deal with that? And how do you find support for your dreams elsewhere.

I think it is such an important topic because daring to go after a big goal or a big dream is HARD. It takes so much courage even when you have support, and it can sometimes feel completely impossible if you don't have a good support structure in place.

But, as we are going to talk about today, that's not a reason to give up on your dreams. Remember—even a good excuse is still an excuse! And if you don't currently have a good support system in place to push you and encourage you and hold you accountable, then it is your job to FIND that support system, and to find that encouragement, and to take the right action steps that will set you up for success.

Because ultimately, that's what this podcast is all about. It's about having the courage to set big goals and then to create a plan for going after them, in order to can create a life we love.

Because courage doesn't mean we are never afraid. Instead, courage is being scared but taking action anyway, despite our fear. It is putting one foot in front of the other,

even when we're not quite sure where the path will lead us.

Okay, so one more quick thing before we dive into all the practical application today's episode—As always, I've got a great little download that you can grab that will outline all the practical strategies I'll be sharing with you today. You can get it, along with our shownotes, by visiting DoltScared.com/episode41. Once again, to get the shownotes and the corresponding download for this episode, simply visit DoltScared.com/episode41.

And while I'm handing out instructions, the other thing I want to make sure I do is invite you to follow me on Instagram. It's the place I share daily thoughts and inspiration, and the one social media account that I manage personally, which means it is also the best place to message me directly with your feedback, comments and questions! You can find me at [@ruthsoukup](https://www.instagram.com/ruthsoukup)—that's r-u-t-h-s-o-u-k-u-p.

Alright, with that out of the way, let's dive in!

In 2010 I started writing my blog Living Well Spending Less. And at the time, I was literally just looking for something to do that wasn't going to Target. But then, as I started diving in to this whole new world, of blogs and blogging and bloggers, I realized that there was this whole other world out there, an online world full of possibilities that I had never even known existed until that point.

And what's more, I discovered that there were people out there who were making money through their blogs and online businesses, and I was convinced that if other people could do it, I could too.

And so I made the decision, that I was going to figure out how to make money from my blog. Not only that, I told my husband that I was going to make enough money blogging that he could quit his job.

And then he told me that was the stupidest thing I have ever said. "Honey," he said, "come on! You can't make money on a BLOG."

It's a story that I've told lots of times. In fact if you've been listening to this podcast or following me online for any amount of time, you've probably heard it before.

Because it's a great story, right? Mostly because you all know the ending.

As it turns out, you CAN make money from a blog. And not only that, I DID make enough from my blog that my husband WAS able to quit his job, and then grew my company from a little blog about coupons to a full blown media company.

I got to prove my husband wrong, and his eternal penance is that he gets to hear me tell that story over and over and over again.

Poor guy. It's a good thing he is such a good sport about it!

But the part of this story that I want to highlight today is the part that usually gets glossed over—those two and a half years between me setting that goal of making enough money from my blog that my husband could quit his job, and ACTUALLY achieving that goal.

That's the part that doesn't get told, because that's not the part that's glamorous or funny or exciting. It's not all that compelling to hear about how many mistakes and false starts and wrong turns I made, or how frustrated I felt, or how much I wished for someone to show me the way.

It's not fun to hear about how I worked my butt off, day in and day out, getting up at 3am and sometimes even 2am every single morning, not actually knowing if all that effort would ever actually pay off. It's not fun to hear about how hard it was, and how scary and disappointing, and how many times I felt so close to throwing in the towel.

Because in hindsight, 2 and a half years doesn't sound like a long time, but when you are in the middle of it, it feels like an ETERNITY.

Especially when you don't feel like you have any support.

My husband thought my goal was insane. My real-life friends found the fact that I wrote about coupons incredibly embarrassing, and beneath them. I even found out that I had basically become the source of entertainment for them, as they would make fun of me behind my back. At one point I asked my sister if she was reading my blog and she told me, "no, I'm not really into that sort of thing. I think it's kind of stupid." I was SO hurt that she wouldn't at least try to support me. Even the teller at the bank would mock me. Every time I went in to make a deposit, she'd say in her snide, condescending voice, "how's the cooooupooon bussiness?"

It used to drive me CRAZY!

And let me just tell you, there were so many times, especially after my business started to take off, that I SO wanted to say something snarky like, "You can see my deposits—the coupon business is pretty dang good!"

But the thing is, hindsight is 20/20, and I realize now that even though I didn't always feel like it at the time, I did have support.

Because while Chuck was certainly skeptical for a long time, he did actually support me in his own way. He was the one who encouraged me to incorporate my business, even before I had made any money, and went with me to the accountant to make it happen. He went out of his way to make it work when I told him I wanted to attend my first blog conference, even though he still thought the whole thing was pretty dumb. He would take the kids out on the weekends so that I could work on the blog, even as he wished I wouldn't.

He didn't necessarily believe in my dream, but he did love me, and that meant supporting me in the only ways he knew how.

But I can tell you that at the time, it didn't always feel like support to me. I so wished that he would get more enthusiastic.

Heck, even now I feel that way sometimes. I see other bloggers and authors and influencers whose husbands have joined their business, or who have built something together, and I sometimes think, "oh, that would be so nice to have a relationship like that."

I can't even get Chuck to come be a guest on this podcast!

But what I have come to realize and appreciate is that he does support me in his own way. Chuck is 100% a behind-the-scenes guy, someone who clears the path so that I can shine. He is my counterweight, providing much-needed balance in my life.

And I think a big part of the reason I felt SO unsupported sometimes was simply because I was so scared. I was going after this huge goal, and I really had no idea what I was doing, or how I was going to get there, and I really just wanted someone to take my hand and show me the way and tell it was going to be okay.

And I see now that there was no one who could actually do that. I had to figure it out for myself. And I also had to realize that support comes in many different forms.

So why am I telling you all of this?

I guess because I just want to start this conversation about finding the support to go after your dreams by pointing out that support might not always look exactly the way you think it is going to. People rarely behave exactly the way we want them to. They don't say or do exactly the right thing, and they can't read our minds. And that means that the support you get might look different than what you think you want, and that is okay.

And if you start this journey from a place of grace and gratitude, you might just find that support is all around you.

But with all that being said, I do still think that there are some clear action steps you can take to find more support in your life for going after your big goals and dreams. And if you have been feeling unsupported or alone in your journey, then these are some of the steps I recommend you take right away.

ACTION STEP 1: GET CLEAR ON WHAT YOU WANT AND WHY YOU WANT IT

The first step is to get crystal clear on exactly what it is that you want to achieve—the goal or dream that you are aiming for—and more importantly WHY that goal matters to you.

I talked about this a little bit a few weeks ago, in Episode 37 when we talked about how to make New Year's resolutions that stick. But in that episode, I explained that when you set a goal, it has to be something that you actually care about—not something you think you are supposed to do, or some expectation put on you by someone else. It has to be YOUR goal, the thing YOU care about, something YOU really truly want to achieve.

I think that a lot of times we pick goals that we think we should want, rather than goals that we actually want. And when we do that, it is hard to find that inner motivation to keep us going, which means that we start looking for motivation to come from outside sources—we expect other people to lift us up and keep us going and keep us strong. And that means that we will be much more likely to feel like we are not getting enough support, because we don't have enough inner drive holding us up and sustaining us.

So basically I guess what I am trying to say is that the main support and drive for our dreams has to first come from within. And that comes when we are not only clear about what we want to achieve, but clear about WHY that goal matters so much to us. We have to feel it in our core.

And not just that, but getting clear about what we want makes it easier to explain to other people what we are trying to accomplish, which will in turn make it easier for them to get on board or at least just understand what we are going for. If that goal is nebulous or unclear or if we have a hard time explaining exactly what we want, then it is more likely that other people either won't really get it or will be skeptical.

So get clear about what you want and WHY that goal matters to you—that is the first action step you'll need to take when it comes to finding more support for your big goals and dreams.

ACTION STEP 2: KNOW WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT YOU NEED, AND MAKE THE ASK

The second step you'll need to take, then, is to figure out what kind of support you actually need, and then—and this is the difficult thing—to actually ask for it.

And this can be really hard sometimes. Because truthfully it is easier to just get frustrated at the lack of support, or to be hurt or angry because the people in our lives aren't stepping up and giving us the support or the encouragement or the help that we need.

A lot of times, especially with our spouses, we want them to be able to read our minds, and to just know what we need. This is something I talked about a few weeks ago too, in episode 35, which was about self-care.

But oftentimes, even though we don't always want to admit it, at least some of the fault—maybe even most of the fault—rests in the fact that we haven't been clear about

the kind of support or encouragement or help that we need.

Of course, in order to get clear with other people about the kind of support we really need, we must first get clear with ourselves. I think sometimes we don't make the ask because we don't really know what we need, or what we want. We just want something that we don't feel like we are getting. Or maybe that's just me!

But I think sometimes it is a matter of getting really specific about the kind of support and help you need, and the support that is going to be meaningful to you.

Maybe it is a matter of sitting down with your spouse or your partner or your siblings or your parents or whoever you are hoping to get more support from, at a time where you are not angry or upset or in the middle of some big fight, and saying something like, "This is the goal that that I am trying to accomplish, and it is really important to me." And then maybe take some time to explain your why, and why this goal matters to you. But once you've done that, then say something like, "I know you might not totally understand why I want to do this, but I need you to know that your support is really important to me, and here are some specific things that you could do that would really help and encourage me."

And then you tell them the specific things they can do. Maybe you need them to ask how things are going every once in while. Or maybe it's having your husband take the kids out of the house every Saturday so you can work on your goal. Maybe it's prayer or words of encouragement. Maybe it is making some connections or introductions on your behalf.

With my own husband I had to realize that he was never going to "get" the blogging thing, and that he was probably never going to be super enthusiastic. He was never going to be one of those husbands that wanted to go into business with me. Even now, there is nothing that drives him crazy more than hearing me talk endlessly about business or blogging or marketing....which for the record, I could literally talk about All. The. Time.

But you know what? I've also realized what a blessing that is to me. It forces me to have some balance, and to have a life completely outside of and unrelated to work.

And there have been so many ways that my husband HAS supported my dream along the way, but sometimes I had to let him know what I needed.

So know what kind of support you need, and then make the ask. That's step 2.

The **THIRD STEP** you'll want to take is to **EXPAND YOUR CIRCLE**.

It's never a good feeling to feel like you are all alone, especially when you are working towards a big goal or dream. And while your spouse or your family or circle of close friends might do their best to be supportive, chances are, that if they're not in that world that you are in, or if they are not going towards a similar goal, there is going to

be some aspects of your experience that they just can't relate to.

And that doesn't make them bad people or even unsupportive, that just makes them human.

Think about it.

For the most part, we all see life through the lens of our own experience—our own feelings, our own interactions, our own desires and dreams.

What you want, or what you are dreaming about might be so far outside of what the people around you are thinking or dreaming about, that they just can't relate very well.

And that's why it is so important to expand your circle to include friends who are existing in the same space, or who are going towards similar goals. If you're starting a business, that means finding a circle of other business owners—maybe joining the chamber of commerce, or connecting with a small business owners group online.

If you are going back to school, maybe it will be finding a study group to connect with, or getting involved with the student body somehow, so you have other students to connect with.

If you are working to pay off debt, it might be taking a financial peace class or connecting with a debt-free group online.

Whatever you are trying to accomplish, chances are there are other people out there in the world who are doing something similar, and probably just as badly wanting to connect as well.

In fact, I've found that this has been one of the most frequent requests in our communities—so many people asking how they can get connected with other growth minded people, wanting a place where they can get support and encouragement and accountability.

It's something that we get asked about so much that we recently created an online community to do just that. It's called Doing It Scared, and it is a pretty incredible group of people dedicated supporting each other as they go after their goals and dreams. If you want more information about how to get connected in this community, you can check out our website at doitscared.com

But regardless of where you find that additional support, whether it is in the connections you make in real life or online, you'll need to expand your circle—and that's step three.

Your **FOURTH AND FINAL STEP**, then, is to **STAY ENCOURAGED**

Let's not kid ourselves here. Doing it scared is not for the faint of heart. The process of facing our fears and going after big goals and dreams is rarely easy

And while on one level, in theory, most of us probably understand that to be true, on a practical level, it's not always easy to remember. When things get hard or disappointments and obstacles show up, all that optimism and excitement we felt in the beginning is soon replaced with discouragement and frustration and fear.

We don't want it to be hard. We don't want it to hurt. We don't want to get our hands dirty, or to have to fight for what we want, or to feel the pain of defeat or the humiliation of failure. We don't want to face adversity, or to risk being judged by others. We don't want to have to take responsibility or find out we might not be good enough to achieve what we want.

When the going gets tough, it can be tough to stay encouraged. But that is exactly the time when we need encouragement the most. And while you could sit around waiting and wishing and hoping for that encouragement to come from somewhere or someone else, the reality is that you'll probably be waiting a very long time.

Remember, in the end, the only thing you can ever control is you—not what happens to you, but how you choose to respond. And that means that one of the very best things you can ever do for yourself is learn how to put safeguards in place that will help you avoid and overcome discouragement, and find more joy along the way.

Have you ever noticed, when driving on a hot sunny day, that it sometimes looks like there is a shiny wet spot up ahead? It's known as a highway mirage, and the most infuriating thing about this mirage is that you can never actually get to it. No matter how long or how far you drive, it is always somewhere up ahead, far off into the distance.

Unfortunately, our big goals can sometimes start to feel exactly like that highway mirage—always just out of reach. Instead of motivating us, they become a source of frustration and discouragement because they just seem so far away. And when that messy middle hits and things start to get hard and painful and intense, it is only natural to feel discouraged, or to feel as if you are never going to get there.

It is all too easy to fall into “the space between,” that place somewhere in the middle of where you are and where you want to be. It's that place where you have all of these big goals and there's always more to do to get there, but you never quite make it. If we spend all our time in this space between, we will never feel like we are getting anywhere or accomplishing anything, even though we actually are. That is why it is so important to take time each day to also look back instead of only looking forward, to actually celebrate your wins and accomplishments, rather than continuously focus on all the things you haven't done just yet.

Having clear goals is wonderful, and being a goal-oriented person can be a huge strength, but neglecting to focus on what you have already accomplished and what

you are continuing to accomplish—even if you aren't quite there yet—can easily bring you down.

And not only that, you need to actively work at continually filling up.

Because the thing is, as humans, I'm pretty sure that we have an insatiable need for encouragement. It doesn't seem to matter how often we might hear that we are smart or capable or beautiful or courageous or any other number of positive messages, we still need to hear it again and again. No sooner than we've heard it, we forget it again. Life gets crazy or hard or stressful, self-doubt and all those fears creep in, and suddenly all that confidence starts to fade away yet again.

And that's why it is so important to keep filling up. There is no limit to the number of motivational and self-help books you should read, the number of times you should read your favorite bible verses or devotionals, the number of inspirational podcasts you should be listening to, or the number of events or gatherings you should attend, because the energy and excitement, the motivation and the inspiration that feels so incredible in the moment will eventually fade away. But even so, the more positive and uplifting messages you have pouring in, the more likely you'll be to hold on to some of it.

You need to keep filling up.

Make it a habit to listen to podcasts or encouraging audiobooks while you're driving or working out or doing the dishes. (Is a great one to start with!) One listener to this podcast told me that she just listens to all of the episodes over and over again, so that she always has my voice in her head.

Or maybe you could make it a goal to read at least one inspiring book a month or be on the lookout for events and gatherings happening in your area that will get you fired up.

Actively work at staying motivated, and make encouragement and inspiration a priority so that the progress you make doesn't fade away.

In the end, courage is a daily decision—one that requires the willingness to act, even in the face of fear, and to keep taking steps toward your goals, even when you're not always sure where the path is going to lead.

But even as you do this, it can be frustrating and disheartening to feel like you don't have enough support—or maybe even any support—along the way.

But before you start feeling sorry for yourself, make sure you have taken the steps we've talked about today—first get clear about what you want and why you want it, so that others have a better chance of understanding it too. Second, identify what kind of support you really need—and then be willing to ask for it, rather than expecting other people to read your mind. Third, make an effort to expand your circle and find other like-minded individuals who are going towards similar goals that you can relate to better. And

finally, work to stay encouraged. It's your job to make sure you are putting safeguards in place that will help you keep filling up.

Okay, so don't forget that if you would like the worksheet that goes along with this podcast—that will walk you through the four steps I shared and also include links to the resources I talked about, you can get it, along with our show notes, at doitscared.com/episode41. Once again, that's doitscared.com/episode41. Also, if you want more information about how to join the Doing it Scared community that I mentioned in this episode, you can find everything you need to know at doitscared.com as well.

And then, before we go, I just want to say, as always, that I LOVE hearing from you! If you have any questions about what we talked about today, or any other topics that you would like to see addressed on the Do It Scared podcast, please feel free to reach out, either via email or just by messaging me on Instagram.

And that about does it for this episode of the Do It Scared with Ruth Soukup podcast! Thank you so much for joining me today! If you liked what you heard, you can leave a review on iTunes, or, better yet, share this episode on your Insta story and tag me to let me know! If I repost your story, we'll send you a do it scared t-shirt just for fun!

Also, be sure to subscribe, either on iTunes or Stitcher or wherever you like to listen, to be notified of new episodes!

And speaking of upcoming episodes, be sure to join me next week as we chat with my dear friend Kate Ahl about business and life, and about finding the courage to push through the hardest moments of our life. Kate has such a great story to share, and there are so many good nuggets in truth in this interview that you have to hear! Also, you may remember that Kate interviewed me on her Simple Pin podcast a couple months back, so if you listened to that episode you will definitely love hearing the other half of our conversation here!

I'll catch you then!