

Ep #94: Thinking of Quitting? A Tool to Help You Decide



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Heather Branscombe

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Episode 94, Do This Before You Decide to Quit.

Welcome to *Clinicians Creating Impact*, a show for physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech-language pathologists looking to take the next step in their careers and make a real difference in the lives of their clients. If you're looking to improve the lives of neurodiverse children and families with neurological-based challenges, grow your own business, or simply show up to help clients, this is the show for you.

I'm Heather Branscombe, Therapist, Certified Coach, Clinical Director, and Owner of Abilities Neurological Rehabilitation. I have over 25 years of experience in both the public and private sectors, and I'm here to help you become the therapist you want to be, supporting people to work towards their dreams and live their best lives. You ready to dive in? Let's go.

Hi there friend, I'm so glad to chat with you today. I thought I'd share some tips that come from my thoughts about work this week. I'm in the process of some final interviews of just some amazing, outstanding clinicians, and as I think about hiring these clinicians that are working currently in a variety of different settings, it had me thinking about quitting. Just quitting in general.

Most of us will end a position for a variety of reasons along our career and I've had this unique opportunity to hear about a lot more stories of transitions in my current role because it involves hiring. So today I wanted to share my experiences so that maybe next time you're frustrated at work, before you decide to quit your current position, you can decide what is actually the best decision for you.

There are so many valid reasons, I'd like to start off with, to be frustrated at work as a clinician. Be it something about the system of seeing clients or patients, the overall work conditions, the compensation, the workload, or something else. I'd like to say even at the most amazing job, these kinds of challenges can come up. And when they do, if you have a plan of how to handle it in advance, you can make sure that ultimately whatever you decide to do about it will result in something that is in your best interest in the long term.

Ep #94: Thinking of Quitting? A Tool to Help You Decide

So before I do so, I wanted to highlight that sharing these kinds of insights through the podcast is a passion project of mine because I want all clinicians, even if they never work for us or with us at Abilities, I want them to be able to use this tool set as a way to magnify their impact. And one way to do that is to help me to spread this message.

You can help me to do that in a couple of ways. First, if you can follow, rate, and review this podcast wherever you're listening to it, that helps us feed the algorithm so that when a clinician is searching for this kind of podcast, it will come up. Secondly, if you can share this podcast or better yet a favorite episode with a colleague, that would be amazing. If you've heard this before and you meant to do it in the past, and maybe you haven't done it yet, that's okay. Let this be a sign that today is the day that you can help other clinicians.

And if this is your first episode, first of all, welcome, thank you for listening. And hopefully as you listen, you can decide who of your clinical friends could use this kind of help next. Again, thank you in advance for your action here. And with that, let's get back to helping you decide what to do before you quit.

If you are anything like me, and I assume you are because we both have human brains and like to solve problems quickly, the brain will offer us all kinds of quick thoughts when we come up with a challenge at work, especially if it feels like a more chronic problem with no obvious solution. So the thoughts that come up often sound something like, well, it must be better somewhere else. Or I've heard that there's this place X that does it much better than where I'm working now. Or if I went out on my own, I wouldn't have this problem.

There could be some kind of excuse like this or some other kind of flavor that basically, if you change where you work, that will solve the problem that's coming up. That will help you to solve that frustration. And on the one hand, that's actually probably true. There are many ways and places that you can work as a clinician, including going out on your own, that could quickly solve the one problem that your brain is trying to solve for when you're frustrated.

Remember, the brain is always looking for that quick, easy, and least effortful way to solve a problem. And so your brain's doing exactly what it's supposed to

Ep #94: Thinking of Quitting? A Tool to Help You Decide

when it offers you some thoughts like that. And I'm not even saying that that's even the wrong answer. As an organization that is always looking for smart and talented clinicians to work with us, I actually hope that that's the case.

Yet, there is a downfall from just letting that particular part of the brain that offers the first answer to run the show, especially in your career. What I know is that the one thing that is always coming with you when you choose to move to that new position, even if you choose to go out on your own, is you bring your own brain with you.

And while that part of the brain that offers those quick solutions to solve the problem is super efficient, I also want to share that that isn't always the most effective solution that is available to you. The truth is, there are pros and cons to every position and every career path. So as you move positions and even choose to go out on your own, you may have new pros, but you also may have new cons.

When you don't take the time to look at the thoughts that you're having and what the brain is really trying to tell you about yourself and your values, you often get the same patterns of challenge in a new position. So things are better in a new position, even if it's going out on your own, until it's not.

I know that from experience because I've actually experienced it for myself. And I also see it all the time when there are people that are applying to work with us.

I remember there was a point in my career very early on in my career that I made a change in positions because I just felt like I was tired of working with adults with chronic health conditions coming from workplace injuries. And then I decided quickly to work with children. I thought in that moment, changing jobs would make me happier at work because working with children, in my brain, was less challenging than working with adults. I know some of you might think that's crazy, but that was my thought process at the time.

I quickly found out that, first, children can also feel challenging to work with. And secondly, you are also working with adults when you work with children, in the form of caregivers. Now, while I do think long-term, that actual change was

Ep #94: Thinking of Quitting? A Tool to Help You Decide

beneficial, the reason that it was beneficial was much more accidental than I'd like to admit, and I'll tell you why later.

In my current role at Abilities, I talk with clinicians that are super excited to work with us because they see us as a dream job. And that's part of our marketing and that is to sell the dream of working with us. While this is amazing energy to have, we actually purposely have a slower and more deliberate hiring process because we want clinicians to have the time and space to make a decision that ultimately works best for them long-term.

A quick hiring process where a clinician needs to sell themselves before they really even know if they want to sell themselves for this job to work with us, really is of service to no one. And while we want to work with a clinician's timeline for transition, my experience has been that if a clinician wants to rush a job transition ASAP, it generally means that they're running from another job rather than actively choosing us as a new position.

So, today I have a process for you to help you to decide what your brain is trying to tell you when you're frustrated and then to decide if you want to quit your current position or not.

So, the first step is to decide what the actual problem is. Now, at a surface level, generally there's a problem because we feel some level of frustration. But I'd invite you to go deeper. And if you haven't done so yet, you can listen to episode 54, which is all about frustration at work and actually tells about why it's actually one of my favorite emotions at work right now, and I have no intention of leaving my work at any time.

The short version of that episode is that feeling frustration is really a signal of some kind of misalignment, either misalignment of the want that you want or of your values in general. So, this step is your opportunity to get curious about your frustration and to figure the problem out. The danger of not getting to the root of the frustration is that you can be putting a metaphorical band-aid on a bullet hole. You wouldn't want to plan a session for a client without an assessment. So, don't make a plan for yourself without assessing your own root problem.

Ep #94: Thinking of Quitting? A Tool to Help You Decide

Then once you have an idea of what the problem actually is, you can go to step two, which is to ask for what you want. Now, I know so many of us identify as people pleasers, and so we naturally either, one, don't decide what we actually want, which was step one, that's why we did that first. Or secondly, two, we think it's just easier to please others than to please ourselves.

And again, in the short term, it could be easier, and there is likely an opportunity to help you to get more of what is important to you long-term. That in turn, will not only help you, but also those you impact. It's why our mission at Abilities is to create an outstanding staff experience and an outstanding client experience, because I know they aren't mutually exclusive. Happy and empowered staff can show up and create a better client experience.

The missing step for so many of us as people pleasers is that only you can empower your own experience by asking for what you want. So let's start to add to the thoughts given by our lower and more efficient part of our brain that says that we can only please them or us, and start to use that higher part of our brain to find the win-win solution to solve our problem that generated that frustration.

So those win-win opportunities can come from the answers of questions like, how can you do more of what you want? How can you use the flexibility in your current position to get more of what you want? How can you ask for what you want from clients, from co-workers, from employers? These are the kinds of questions you can take the time and space to answer that will give you longer lasting results than a quick job change.

Just last week I had a conversation with a very good friend of mine and a fellow clinic owner about a compensation challenge that kind of illustrates this point. The clinic owner was reaching out to me because of the amount of compensation that this clinician wanted, and she wanted to check in with me to see if it was fair. She wanted to ask me what I offered.

Now, while I was totally happy to share with my friend, I also wanted to dig a little bit deeper and ask her why she was asking. And really what she was doing is she was looking for evidence that it was okay to decide what she wanted or to

Ep #94: Thinking of Quitting? A Tool to Help You Decide

justify what she wanted to others. And I hear that all the time. So both from clinic owners, because I have friends that are clinic owners, but also from clinicians.

Clinicians will ask for what they want by saying, well, I can make this amount here. And I want to say there is a role for market analysis by asking for what you want, but no matter what the area, your ask doesn't need to come from external validation. It's much more powerful to come from your own value of what you're asking and why, especially when you can find the win-win opportunity in your ask.

Now, again, these options aren't as easy, but they can help you in the long-term to listen to yourself and to use all of your amazing brain to find those kinds of unique and long-term solutions that ultimately benefit everyone. So my final part of this process is to invite you to love the place and then from that love of that place, to find a place that fits your values. So you ask for what you want. Sometimes you'll find the answer that you're looking for and sometimes you won't.

What is amazing about this process is by listening to your frustration and assessing the root, you're going to have a much better understanding of what is really ultimately important to you in your own working environment. And then if you do decide to change your position, you're going to be that much more discerning to make a change that's actually helpful. Ideally, it is most optimum to move on from any work situation from a place of love, love for you as a clinician and what you want, and also love for the place that you're looking for.

Just because your values may not totally align with the place that you are working at and want to work for, doesn't mean that they're a bad organization. It just means that they're not a great fit. It's why when we hire at Abilities, we ultimately hire for fit. I really do believe that there is no real bad clinician and no bad opportunity or organization, there is just a fit that isn't ideal.

And what I've learned is sometimes that fit is about timing as much as anything else. When I look back to one of my own experiences of changing jobs, that one that I was talking about earlier, it really was helpful, but not because I actually switched. But because I was then exposed to something that I learned was

Ep #94: Thinking of Quitting? A Tool to Help You Decide

actually really important to me, which is helping people over the long-term. This is a value that I've been able to retain, even as my clinical caseload has changed completely to just clinical support of other clinicians.

So the next time that your brain offers you the thought that you might want to quit, don't ignore it, but don't indulge in it too quickly either. First, decide what that urge is trying to tell you. Second, find a way to ask for what you want in your current position. And then third, from a place of love for you and the place that you're currently in, decide what the next best step is for your clinical career, even if it's quitting.

I know that even as you try this out in the least perfected way, you will help yourself and your clients as you work your way to creating your own outstanding experience. Let me know how it goes and reach out if you need help. Yes, I am busy, but I am never too busy to connect with you. Please feel free to email me at heather@abilitiesrehabilitation.com. Have a great week and I will talk to you soon.

If you enjoyed today's show and don't want to worry about missing an episode, you can follow the show wherever you listen to your podcasts. And if you haven't already, I would really appreciate it if you could leave a rating and review to let me know what you think and to help others find *Clinicians Creating Impact*.

It doesn't have to be a five-star rating, although I sure hope you love the show. I'd really want your honest feedback so I can create an awesome podcast that provides tons of value. To learn more about me and the work that I do, visit my website at www.abilitiesrehabilitation.com/clinicianscorner to download your free Getting it All Done at Work process and to see what I'm up to. Thanks so much.

Thanks for joining me this week on the *Clinicians Creating Impact* podcast. Want to learn more about the work I'm doing with Abilities Rehabilitation? Head on over to abilitiesrehabilitation.com. See you next week.