Wynne Leon (00:00)
Have you ever poured your heart into something, reached the finish line, and wondered, why do I feel a little lost? Welcome to the Life of Try. I'm so glad you're here. Maybe you're proud, maybe you're tired,

Maybe you're feeling both, with a little emptiness you didn't expect. There's room for all of that here. Today we're making a little space for the exhale, for resting, finding joy in the small things, and remembering that you don't have to push towards the next mountain. Wherever you are in your own try, you're welcome here. Let's take a breath and begin.

I want to talk about what happens after the try, after the work, after the finish line, when the thing you've poured yourself into is finally done, and instead of feeling full, you feel a little lost. Last Wednesday, after my podcast episode with Melissa Arnot Reid was live, I crashed. I was out of energy. Disoriented. I had spent so long knowing exactly what needed to happen next.

That when it was over, I didn't quite know what to do with myself. That episode was a three month effort. In August I read the book. In September I kept reaching out, hoping Melissa would come on the podcast. And then October was scheduling recording, editing, and promoting. It was its own kind of mountain. And when I reached the top,

There was this quiet feeling I hadn't quite planned for. Not just relief, a sense of loss. Maybe you know that feeling too. You finish something that matters to you and you think, shouldn't I be happier right now? For me, it's not only podcast episodes. It's vacations I've planned, climbing trips, even helping my kids finish a project for school. There's the anticipation, there's the effort, the push, and then it's over.

So I went looking for language for that letdown because I wanted to understand what comes after the try.

Therapist Nero Feliciano, a contributor to the Today Show, describes something called the arrival fallacy. She says it's the belief that once we arrive at a specific destination, we'll finally feel satisfied, happy, or complete. She puts it this way. We imagine the moment we hit the goal as kind of an emotional finish line. Relief, pride.

Contentment. But when we get there, the feeling is often fleeting or missing altogether. That landed with me. I can ask a finish line to do a lot. Prove the effort was worth it, make me proud, tell me I can finally relax. But that moment can't hold all of that.

Feliciano also writes, when we overinvest emotionally in outcomes, we often underinvest in the systems that actually support well-being. Sleep, connection, movement, meaning, rest.

We tell ourselves we'll enjoy life when we get to that goal or afterwards.

And the buildup often outweighs any joy when we finally arrive. The good news is that there's a way to both achieve the goals, but also find contentment in the day-to-day.

For me, that's an invitation to stop postponing the good parts of being alive.

A conversation, a walk, a cup of tea, rest. That doesn't have to be earned by finishing one more thing. And maybe that quiet feeling after a big effort doesn't need to be fixed immediately. Maybe I can notice it without deciding that it means the whole experience was a disappointment. research psychologist Doctor Richard Brown writes

We often naively assume that if the efforts we make in the present are successful, they will undoubtedly lead to increased happiness further down the line. If only it were that simple. So what do we do with what comes after the try? How do we move forward without making ourselves another project to complete? Dr. Brown offers this advice. Sit with your feelings and recharge.

But try to step into the next phase of your life a little wiser. I like that order. Sit with your feelings, recharge, then step forward. Not sprint, step. There's usually a next thing waiting. With podcasts and parenting, there's almost always a next thing. Work too. Sometimes that gives me a little direction, but sometimes moving straight into another task is just more effort than I have to give.

I'm learning that I can look forward to what's next without using it to rush past where I am. last week what I needed wasn't another big goal. It was a Cheetos puzzle. My seven-year-old son bought it and left it on the kitchen table. So I sat down for a couple hours sorting blacks and oranges and

fitting together snapshots of a tiger with Cheeto dust on his fingers. Somehow it was restorative. My attention had somewhere simple to land. One piece, then another. I didn't need to turn those hours into anything impressive. I just enjoyed them. And that brings me back to the process. I can get so focused on the place I'm trying to reach that I miss life happening on the way there.

Even my tea bags try to remind me. They come with little sayings on the tags, and one I get often reminds me that there are a lot of paths up the mountain.

I love that that reminder arrives while I'm holding a cup of tea. A small invitation to pause. A reminder that the climb isn't only about the mountain. So if you're in that quiet space after a try, I hope you'll give yourself a little kindness. You can be proud of what you did and tired from doing it. You can be grateful for the experience and miss having it ahead of you.

Before you ask yourself, what do I need to accomplish this? Try asking what would help me feel a little more like myself today. Maybe it's rest, maybe it's calling someone you love, maybe it's walk, or a very orange puzzle on the kitchen table. The next try will come. You don't have to chase it this minute. For now, take breath. Let the effort count.

Let the rest count too. A try is a try. We keep stacking them together. Not just the big, brave efforts, but the small moments that make the effort worth living through. And when you're ready, take the next step. You don't have to climb the whole mountain today. This is The Life of Try. Thanks for being here.

Thank you for spending this time with me on Life of Try. If you're finding your footing after a big effort, I hope you leave with a little more kindness for yourself. You don't have to turn the quiet after a try into another thing to conquer. If you'd like to keep exploring this, I recommend the episode Growth Mindset, Habit Formation, and the Power of Rest. It's a lovely companion to today's conversation: a chance to explore how growth, everyday habits, and recovery.

can work together. And if The Life of Try feels like good company along the way, please subscribe wherever you listen so we can keep sharing these moments together. Until next time. Let the effort count. Let the rest count too. I'm so glad you're here.