

93. How to create authentic self confidence and move away from feeling like you're not enough

Vanessa 00:00

Welcome to the Empowered brain, the only podcast using science, psychology and coaching to help you rewire your brain and create a life you love with your host, Dr. Vanessa Calderon, a Harvard grad physician, master coach, and mother of two.

Hi, Friends, welcome back to the podcast, you might hear some beautiful rain and thunder. From my background, there is a beautiful storm happening here. And I get to watch it from the coziness of my office. But it's happening outside and my microphone is awesome. And it picks up on everything. So you might hear that in the background. But don't worry, I am safe.

So today, I want to start by saying what is up friends, I am so excited to be here with all of you. I just came back from an incredible conference. It's called the woman's physician wellness conference, I got to speak at the conference. And it was such a gift to be there with so many beautiful people, so many human beings that are experiencing the same exact bullshit. So much insecurity and self doubt and feelings of guilt. All of the things that we all experience, you know, there's this line in the work of trauma, which is human connection, mitigates trauma. And it is 100% true. When you connect with other people, and you're able to share what you're both dealing with, you create this connection, this sense of like acknowledging each other's human experience.

And all of a sudden, you start witnessing each other's trauma, and it makes it feel less severe human connection mitigates trauma, which is why being around people is so important. And if you are a female physician, I want to highly recommend that you attend one of these conferences, if you feel like you need to take a pause. If you feel like you need to reconnect with yourself. It's called the woman's physician wellness conference, you can Google it, a dear friend of mine, Dr. Erica Hill puts it on and she's just a lovely human being. So shout out to her. Okay. And that No, I do not get any financial incentives or any money at all for promoting a conference. I just really believe in that. I think it's awesome.

Okay, so when I was there, I experienced the most fascinating experience, which, again, I'm not surprised by it. But it's always kind of eye opening when it happens. And this is what happened. So I was going to be the very first speaker to kick off the conference. And I had prepared this amazing talk. And listen, I have you guys know, I have degrees from everywhere, including Harvard, I have advanced speaking degrees. I've been trained to speak in public, I've done a million public speaking

engagements. I've spoken internationally, I've spoken in front of crowds of like, 1000s of people. So I feel pretty confident on stage, I still get that little kind of discomfort, you know, or little nervousness, but it excites me. I love speaking in public. And as I was preparing for this talk, I had this huge sense of doom, like holy smokes this talk is I really want to make sure it's a good talk.

So I prepared it and I practiced it. And I do all of the things I teach my students inside the journey to do when we're preparing for a talk. In fact, I created an entire podcast episode to teach you how to prepare for a talk. I think it's Podcast Episode 50, something 54. So you can go there and learn how to deliver any talk like you're on a TED stage. So anyway, the morning of the talk, I walk into the room, and I see all of these physicians, female physicians sitting on all these tables. And all of a sudden, I had this huge sense of imposter syndrome come over me, like who am I? What was I thinking? Why would they want to learn from me? I am not good enough to be here. And I couldn't believe it.

Of course, now I'm resource enough. And I have the awareness to notice that that came out for me. But I was so surprised it came up for me. I took a deep breath I was able to process. But it was just so fascinating to me that regardless of all of my degrees, regardless of all of my training of how much I had prepared for this talk, that still came up for me that morning, I got up on that stage, I delivered that talk. I knocked it out of the park, I was so proud of myself. I saw the women's faces, I saw how engaged they were, how much the talk was helping them how much the tools I was teaching was really supporting them, and learning all of the things I was teaching. And I got great feedback afterwards. And I just sat and I processed a lot of my thoughts and as I was connecting with the other incredible woman in the room.

I mean, there were women there that were trauma surgeons, the you know, there were women there that had done incredible things had started international clinics and hospitals. Really amazing things. As I was connecting with all of them and hearing their stories, I realized how everyone has this sense of insecurity inside. Again, not surprising world insecure. But it was just so surprising to me to hear some of their stories of how inadequate they felt, even after getting all of that training, all of their degrees, all of those things that they have. And it just reminded me how we cannot search for confidence, self confidence outside of ourselves. And that no amount of degrees, no amount of letters behind our name is going to give us the self confidence that we're looking for.

So today, what we're going to talk about is why it's like that for most human beings, but especially women, especially women of color, and especially if you identify from a marginalized community or marginalized identity. And I'm going to teach you a few things that you can start doing to build your own self confidence. Okay, so you create confidence within yourself, you create self confidence inside of yourself, I did an entire podcast episode, episode number 39, to teach you the four C's of building your own confidence. So go take a listen to that if it's helpful. But here's the thing, we have been socialized to doubt ourselves.

Again, if you're a woman, if you're a person of color, if you're a woman of color, if you come from a marginalized identity, you have likely been socialized to doubt yourself to doubt your intelligence, your capability with things like a capability with finances, with leadership. And here's the funny thing, that something inside of you knows that that is not true. That all of those lies society is trying to tell you how

you're not good enough, you're not beautiful, you're not this, you're not that something inside you knows that's not true. And you are trying to reconcile that small light inside you telling you that you are in fact worthy, with the outside world that is sending you all of those cues that you are inadequate. So what do you do to try to reconcile that, you go out and you get a ton of degrees, you go to the best schools, you get the best jobs, you buy the biggest house, you try to save as much money as you can. And all of that you do, because you're trying to solve for that feeling of insufficiency. You're trying to prove that you are in fact enough.

But here is the catch 22, my friends, that that feeling of insufficiency cannot be solved outside of you. It will not be solved by how many degrees you have by how many letters you have behind your name, it will not be solved by how big your job is, how big your title is, how big the size of your offices, none of that will solve that feeling. I know from personal experience, I have been chasing that feeling for a long time of my life. In fact, not up until very recently did I realize I actually had that inside me. But it took a while for me to get there. And it took me chasing some sort of inadequacy chasing some sort of definition of success outside of me to try to prove that I was in fact enough. Again, we create our own sufficiency internally. Because if we start with the thought, I'm not enough, or I'm feeling inadequate, or I'm insufficient, I don't have enough degrees yet, or I'm not smart enough yet, or I don't have enough money yet.

Think about that cognitive thought model that we talk about all the time. Your thought creates your feeling you're feeling will drive all of your actions, your actions create your results in life. Remember that cognitive thought model comes from cognitive behavioral therapy, but it's really based from like 300 BCE from the time of the stoics it's been proven time and time again to work. So when you think and you start with a thought of being inadequate or insufficient, and you have a feeling of inadequacy or insufficiency, what is that going to drive you to do? Work harder, get more, do more. never rest Keep going Keep going Keep going. And do you see what I want you to see here is that you the result you create in your life is that you are continually chasing something you can never you can never catch because if you have that thought error, I am not enough. I am not smart enough. I am not good enough. I am not beautiful enough. No amount of action will solve that for you. The way you solve it is you acknowledge that that thought error is exist and you solve it for yourself by changing the way you think about it.

Okay, so I'm going to walk you through a few different ways to do it. Okay. So the very first thing I want you to do, if you identify if this resonates at all with you is I want you to start right now, by noticing how sufficient you are right now, in this moment. Whatever you're doing, as you're listening to this episode, whether you're out for a run, if you're driving in a car, if you're doing the dishes, whatever you're doing right now, stop, notice how sufficient you are in this moment, take a breath. Notice how your body always knows exactly what to do to keep you alive. You can breathe in, you can breathe out, notice how strong your legs are, your knees are, how strong your back is, how you can stand there, how sufficient your body is at keeping you up. Take a take a pause, put your hand over your heart. And notice how your heart always knows exactly what to do. It knows exactly how to beat, it knows exactly how much blood and nutrients to pump out to the rest of your body.

So take a moment and notice how sufficient you are right now. And how sufficient you are in almost every moment in life. Now what I want you to do is I want you to think about the times when you feel insufficient. What is happening? Where are you? Are you at work? Are you in a relationship? Are you in school? What is causing you to feel insufficient? Again, it's nothing outside of you. It's what you're thinking about that? Is it because you think you don't belong because you don't think you're smart enough because you think they're better than you? Is it because someone wants told you that you're not good enough to be there. I want you to notice the thought that drives that feeling of insufficiency. And now I want you to notice how that feeling of his insufficiency feels in your body. For me, it feels like this nine sensation in my stomach? What does it feel like for you? Do you feel it in your chest? In your abdomen? Is it a tingling or tightness in your shoulders? How does it feel for you? And the reason why I want you to notice how it feels for you is in those moments when you are feeling inadequate, not enough, insufficient.

The first thing you will notice is what's happening to your body. Because we're not always conscious of what we're thinking. But our body knows, our body knows because there's a subconscious thought driving us to have a feeling in our body. So when you feel that feeling, whether that's free for me, it's that nine in my stomach, but if it's your shoulders or your chest, whatever it is for you. In that moment, I want you to pause doesn't take long, takes about three seconds, pause and say to yourself, I noticed that I'm feeling and just get curious about what you're feeling. I noticed that I'm feeling the nine in my stomach. I noticed that I'm feeling a chest tightness. When you do that you bring awareness to your body. And then you're able to bring awareness to your thought. You can say what am I thinking that's causing me to feel this or maybe you already know, I noticed that I'm thinking that I'm not enough, I noticed that I'm thinking that I'm not good enough to be here that I'm not smart enough. I don't belong here. And when you notice that just create that awareness. And notice you notice the thought error. And you separate your core self from your thinking brain, your thinking brain that's always going to offer you some bullshit, some inner critic stuff, all this negativity, you can create space between your core self and that thinking brain.

And then what I want you to do, and this is what I want you to do on the regular, I want you to practice a thought that serves you practice a thought that serves you you can practice I am enough or I am whole and complete. Okay, so how do you practice that thought? So you can do it. Very simply write it down, put it in front of your laptop, make it your screensaver on your on your phone, I am enough or I am whole and complete. Or you can even do this if you want to take it one step further. I recommend a lot of my students do this. You can download a free app it's called Think up and you can record your voice saying the statement or the thought you want to believe. Now in the beginning it's going to feel really silly. It's going to feel really silly to think facade or Practice the thought or read the thought, you're gonna say, oh, yeah, haha, you might not even feel anything at all because you just don't even believe it. But the more that you practice it, the more your brain will create a connection with that. It's called cortical thickening. It's what happens in our brain. It's why we can, why our brain experiences neuroplasticity.

Because our brain will shift it will shape it will remodel based on what we want to experience. So practice that thought I am enough. You can download that app think up if it's helpful. And here's one step further. When you wake up every morning, what I'd like for you to do is wake up every morning, put

your hand over your heart and say, Good morning, Vanessa, or say your name. Good morning. I love you. I am enough. Good morning. I am enough. I love you. Good morning, Vanessa, you are enough. I love you. Try it for yourself, my friends.

Okay, we talked today about creating your own confidence. We talked about why we are socialized, to feel insecure to feel inadequate. And again, I didn't go into this in detail. But I have an entire podcast series on internalized racism. So if you are a person of color, and this is resonating with you scroll back, I think it's in my episodes in the 70s or in the 80s, where I have an entire podcast series on internalized racism and doing your own work. Because those types of social cues that we get outside of us, and they're they're subtle social cues, but we get them all of the time, are leading us to believe that we are inadequate, that we are insecure that we are insufficient. And you don't have to be a person of color to have internalized that. If you are a woman, if you come from a marginalized identity, you probably have internalized a lot of that same thing. So I want you to do your own work. Because again, you cannot create your sufficiency outside of you. You have to create it from within.

And if you want help doing this, my friends, I want to invite you to join us inside the journey. The journey is my all inclusive coaching program where I work directly with all of you to give you the tools that you need to live big to stop feeling insecure, to be able to be confident in every room that you're in. I want to help you do that. Because when you show up like that when you show up as the most authentic you that is where magic happens. All right, sweet friends, enjoy the rest of your week of yours

Hey, sweet friends, if you love what you're learning, then you've got to join us in the journey. It's my all inclusive program and the best community out there giving you the education you never knew you needed to help you create a life you love. Join us at [Vanessa Calderon md.com](http://VanessaCalderon.md.com) forward slash join. I'll see you there.