

# 100. Three Principles to Access Your Limitless Potential

**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.

Yo, what's up? We are on episode 100. You know, it's so funny, I had already recorded the audio to this podcast episode. And I realized after that Holy smokes, I didn't include a celebration. So I wanted to include this quick 15 Second celebration because reaching episode 100 is a huge deal. So join me please in celebrating, I wish I had some music to add here. But I'll just say that you know, 80% of podcasts fail. And here we are on episode 100. So enjoy today's episode, sweet friends, your limitless potential awaits.

Hi, sweet friends. All right, so today we are talking about accessing your limitless potential. And the reason why I want to talk about this is because I've kind of been in this state over the last three to four years, where I go out and I set these huge, audacious goals. And then I go to work to create them. And even though something inside me has always really believed that anything is possible, I haven't always been this brave. And this courage, I haven't always been the person that goes out and just like the rose myself out there, and fails over and over again and keeps getting back up again until I eventually succeed. I didn't always have that courage. In fact, when I was growing up, I was really lonely. I felt really lonely and so insecure.

In fact, I remember when I was a kid, you know when you grew up in a Latin house with an immigrant community, there is always someone around, there's uncles and aunts, and cousins and neighbors. And even though there were people around all the time, I still felt really lonely, kind of like misunderstood. And I remember just kind of being a quiet, introspective kid looking around kind of curious. And I was insecure for a large part of my life, I was so afraid to mess up. And you know, my antidote to that was thinking that I needed to be perfect all the time because I thought that if I was perfect, then no one could ever judge me. Isn't it, that's hilarious, because that does not solve the problem, let me tell you. And I made a lot of mistakes.

You know, I made a lot of mistakes. When I was growing up based out of fear. I, you know, when I was matching, for example, when you go into medicine, you have to choose your specialty. And you choose your specialty when you're in medical school, and you go into this process called the match process, where you essentially go into your specialty. So I initially knew that the specialty for me was emergency medicine, it just made so much sense to me. I love that the doors were always open 24 hours a day, I love that we get to take care of anybody that came in the door, regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, race, regardless of your ability to pay, we would care for you, and we'd save your life. And

that really just spoke to me. But I was so afraid of the concept of being an ER doc because that meant I had to work nights, weekends, and holidays for the rest of my life. And that terrified me. So I was like, why would I do that? So I matched into anesthesiology, because I was like, Oh, they have the life. You know, they make a lot of money, they get to like, have their weekends off their holidays off. And I did that for a year. And I was like, this was not the right choice for me. And I did the course correctly. But I went into that first, you know, and based out of fear because I used to make decisions based on fear. Even though I had intuition and this deep knowledge of what the right thing was for me, I chose against that. And I did that a lot based on fear.

And, you know, me of today really leans into my own intuition to my deep inner knowing, and I shift and make decisions differently. And I have a whole episode, the next episode actually episode one on one about alignment and intuition. So stay tuned for more on that. So I share all of that with you today. Because I want to be super clear that you know, throughout my life, I haven't been this person that many of you know today, which is confident and curious and, you know, pretty audacious in the things that I go out and do. I haven't always been that person. But I have learned a lot of things along the way that has really supported me and accessing my own potential. And I want to share that with you. And these are the things I share a lot with the students that I work with. So all of my students decide on the journey. And I know that these principles are the ones that stick because they're the ones that I see that we have to teach over and over again. But once they stick, they really blow up people's performance. Alright, So I'm going to share the three of them with you today. Number one, principle number one, don't be afraid to be afraid. Don't be afraid to be afraid.

So what do I mean by this? So anytime you're going to do something new, you're going to experience discomfort, you're going to experience fear. And a lot of us get really nervous when that kind of fear comes up with anxiety for some of us, we call it insecurity. And there are three things we can do when we feel that insecurity, you can resist it. And by that, I mean, you know, the fear comes up, and you want to be that person that just, oh, I don't feel fear, I eat fear for breakfast. And so what do you do instead? So instead of acknowledging that, it's there, you try to show up with arrogance, you know, you don't show up as your authentic self, you show up trying to be, you know, better than the fear. And it's so interesting because I used to do this all the time, you know, I got my first department chief role when I was only one year out of residency. And here I come this super young-looking, Latina, five-foot 100-pound female physician that has to come in to run this big department. And I was so nervous, I was so insecure, and I didn't know how to deal with it.

And so I showed up with arrogance. Instead, I would show up like, I knew all of the answers, even though I didn't all the time. And, you know, eventually, I shifted, but it took me a while to shift out of that. And so what I want to say is, people, can sense that, just like you can sense when somebody else has been arrogant, you can feel that, you know, you feel that energy, people can sense that with you, too. So fear is going to come up, you can either resist it, the second thing you can do is you can run away from it, which means you never do anything new or scary. You don't choose to do it because you're afraid and instead you run away from it. Or the other thing you can do is when you fear the fear, feel the fear instead of trying to manage it, you ignore it, which means you don't have to really prepare for what it is that you have to do. And the third thing you can do, and this is what I recommend, actually is a

principle of success and a principle of accessing your limitless potential, because this is what's going to shoot you forward. You accept it, you accept the fear.

So instead of resisting it, and running away from it, you accept that it's there. You accept that it's going to be scary. And you accept that you want to prepare anyway, you want to do it anyway. So I'm going to share a story with you that has really helped me sort of accept my own fear. And this story comes from an athlete named Blake Leeper. So Blake Lieber is a marathon runner, and he's a sprint runner. So he's a runner. And he was born without legs. And even though he was born without legs, he has always had this, you know, something inside him telling him that he was supposed to be an athlete. So he went throughout his life, and he got prosthetics and other things. And he would go out and run. And now he's one of the fastest people that run and he's won, you know, in the Para Olympics, gold medals over and over again. And something that he said really spoke to me, which is, every time he would stand at the starting line before they would shoot the gun before his race, he would have something inside of him that would just be so afraid, so scared. And he realized that all that is, is being alive like that, his sense of aliveness.

So what he teaches, and what I've adopted now is when you feel that insecurity inside, yes, that is your sense of liveness. But that's also your opportunity to shift into gratitude, and to say, Wow, I am so grateful that I have the opportunity to do something so big to do something so scary to really give back in the world. Because the only time you're going to feel that fear is when you do something new, bigger, scary. It's because you're doing something exciting and different. And so I want to just remind you when you feel that fear, you want to remove, remember that you are alive and that you are doing this new, big, scary thing because you want to because it's expansive because you're accessing your limitless potential.

So I had to give a talk for I was giving the keynote talk at this big physician conference. And I give up I do public speaking all the time. I talk all the time, and I love it. And it's exciting, and I love being in front of a crowd. And I love connecting with the audience. And for whatever reason, I was feeling so nervous about this one specific talk. And I've been doing this forever. I've been giving keynotes and speaking in front of hundreds and hundreds of people, but this one specific audience, female physicians, hundreds of them made me so nervous and so insecure. I kept telling myself like, I want this to be good enough, I wanted to be good enough, I didn't want them to feel like they were wasting the time wasting their time, I wanted to give them something that they were going to really like be able to take away with. And I felt so uncomfortable when I was preparing. And I felt so insecure, and I was so afraid. And I remember thinking, okay, of course, I'm afraid.

But here we go, like shifting into gratitude at that moment, this is my opportunity to do something so exciting to stand on a stage with hundreds of women that really need to hear this message, and give them tools that they can take away with them, you know, and so what did I do, every time I felt the fear, I leaned into gratitude to how exciting it was to be there. And then I would prepare, I just was comfortable feeling the fear. Alright, so That's principle number one, don't be afraid to be afraid. Right? Number two. The second principle is the only way to succeed is to learn how to fail, the only way to succeed is to learn how to fail. Now, this one was so hard for me because I had to undo everything I had learned for the last 20 years. You know, being a straight-A student, and being the person that was

so driven by external validation, which meant my teachers telling me a great job, always getting straight A's everywhere, bringing my report cards home when I was a kid, and I remember running home so quickly when I would get a report cards because I couldn't wait to show them off to everybody. So being that person, and being driven by success and being so attached to success, that had to, I had to undo so much of that in order to continue to succeed.

So being that person brought me all the way to medical school, you know, I graduated from med school, I graduated as a chief resident for my residency program, and was a department chair. And it got me really far, it got me that far. But to really continue to excel beyond those walls, beyond that, sort of like predictive success, where you're kind of following this path, to really go out and be a successful entrepreneur, I had to let go of that idea. And I had to learn how to fail. And, you know, what I realized is that the only way for me to succeed was to learn how to fail really well was to learn how to fail, learn how to love myself through those failures, and get back up again. So how do we do this? So, you know, the way I've been doing this now is, and I'll tell you that it wasn't easy, I spent an entire year being so disappointed every time I would fail. Feeling that disappointment wanting to curl up in a little ball, knock it out of my bed. I remember I spent the entire when I first chose to become an entrepreneur, at the end of my very first year, I didn't meet all the goals I wanted to meet. And instead of celebrating all of my accomplishments, for the entire month of December, I just sat in disappointment. And I didn't think I was gonna go back out again and do it again.

Fact, I was like, Man, this is hard. I don't know if I want to do this again, why am I doing this to myself? And I am proud of myself for pulling myself out of there. But I share that with you. Because I want you to know that feeling that failure and managing it in the beginning can be really tricky, and can lead to a lot of feelings of disappointment. And the thing is that it doesn't have to be like that. And I want you to learn this lesson because I don't want you to have to struggle the way that I struggled. And this is the lesson that the reason why we get so disappointed when we fail and why failure is so hard for us is because of what we have attached to the concept of failure, what we have made failure means. And this is the thing for me specifically, and I know for so many high achievers, especially people that have been high achievers, and then switch to entrepreneurship. It's that we attach something to this success, the idea of success, we attach our worthiness to the idea of success, which means that when we fail, it is a huge mark on our ego, this huge dark mark on our ego, this huge sense that we have now like done something wrong, that we are wrong, that we should feel ashamed for the disappointment. So if you relate to any of this, any of what I'm saying, I want you to know that you are not alone.

So many of us experience that same sense of disappointment or discomfort when we fail. And so how do we let go of it? We let go of it by first understanding what is it that I'm attached to. And for me, I was so attached to this concept of success again because I had made it mean so many things. If I had made it mean that I was going to be perfect when I succeeded, that I thought that this was the marker that I was on the right track, that success meant all of these external things that I was supposed to be the best podcaster the best, this the best that that's what success was supposed to mean, that things would get easy, you know that success meant everything would get really easy. And, every time I would fail, it was a mark against that. And for someone that was really uncomfortable failing, because I didn't do failure well in the past. In fact, I would push myself so hard and do everything I could to avoid failure. That's how I achieved the success that I achieved in the first half of my life. And what I realized is, you

can keep pushing yourself really, really hard. But the faster you learn how to fail, the more successful you will be.

And that is why I share this with you that the only way to succeed is to learn how to fail. And the faster you learn how to fail and fail really well, the faster you will be getting your success. It's sort of this catch-22. And here's what I will say about that, what I have learned is that failure is just my jumping-off point. It's just my jumping-off point to growth. It's my jumping-off point expansion to whatever is next. And the more I put myself in situations where I'm a beginner, where I'm going to fail, where I already know I'm going to fail, but I know that I will never quit. The more I get comfortable with being a beginner with being able to keep going going again and again and again. And that's what I want to offer all to all of you failure is just your jumping-off point to growth and the only real failure is quitting. Everything else is just gathering information to keep going. And that for me has created so much equanimity in my life, so much peace, and so much fun that like I'm now able to go out and keep setting these big, audacious goals, do everything I can to achieve them. And I don't always achieve them in the timeline that I have set.

But I will always achieve everything I say I'm going to do because I never quit. And that is what's possible for you. Because what actually is the failure is the timeline. It's you not achieving what you say you're going to achieve in a specific timeline. And then just timelines, they're all made up, we make them up in our own heads. And then we get super upset when we don't achieve them when we're the ones that made them up. I know I do this all the time. Or at least I used to. And I still do because I'm a human being. And I'm not perfect, which means I still experienced this, I will still experienced disappointment. But it's so much easier now. I still experienced disappointment when I fail. But I don't go down this downward spiral anymore. I feel that disappointment in my body. And I'm like, Ah, shucks, that's too bad. All right, well, let's figure out what we're going to learn from this lesson and keep going. That's how I approach it now. And it is so awesome. It is so much more fun. And lo and behold, I'm able to learn from my mistakes, I am able to apply everything I'm learning to try again, and I keep going. And that is why I am so 100% in on myself like I'm so convinced, I know that I'm going to be successful and everything that I do because I never quit because I keep going. And that is what's possible for you as well. Alright, so here's the third principle.

So principle number one is don't be afraid to be afraid. Principle number two is the only way to succeed is to learn how to fail. And here's principle number three, focus on your vision. Focus on your vision. In order for you to access your limitless potential, you have to have a vision of what you're creating, you got to be crystal clear on what you want to create and why. And to do that you do have to have the audacity to believe in yourself. In fact, having the audacity to believe in yourself is so important. I created an entire podcast episode, it's episode number 83. Go back and listen to it if you haven't. So one of my most popular episodes, having the audacity to believe in yourself. So when I say focus on your vision, what I mean is when you start doing something big and scary, if you are not crystal clear on what you are creating and why you are going to let all of the stories all of the fear all of the discomforts hold you back and you will likely quit. But if you are super crystal clear on why you're creating your vision, what your vision is, and why. And you're grounded in the difference that you're going to make when you achieve that vision.

That is what's going to continue to put pull you forward. And when your vision of success is greater than your fear of failure. That's when you know you're on a roll. That's when you know you can really just excel. So you want to ground yourself on your vision. And you know, depending on what your vision is, for me, I am 100% service-based, I am all about making a difference not just for me, but for all of the people that I help, and my family and my community.

So when you're grounded on your way so not just your vision, what you're creating, but why you're doing that, that is what's going to continue to pull you forward. In fact, I got this text from my cousin, because I want to share one more thing that falls under focusing on your vision, which is this, I am super focused on what I'm creating. But I forget that my success doesn't mean just something for me or the people I'm helping. My success has a you know, reverberating effect on the people that are around me. And that I didn't realize until I got this message from my cousin. So my cousin is about my same age. We our parents are cousins. So we're second cousins. But in Mexico, and in the Latin community, your upbringing was simply maths. So my grandma sends me this message. And he's also an entrepreneur, and he's gone out and really blown up his business. And I'm so proud of him. So he sends me this message. And he's and it's in Spanish, he and I speak primarily English to each other. And the message is in Spanish, I think it hit me a little harder because it's in Spanish. And I don't have the message in front of me right now. So I'll paraphrase. But he essentially says Fatima, cousin, me familiarise that Donald who yourself at yo estoy Tanoto Yosa team, my family is so proud of you. And I am so proud of you.

For everything you have created for the fact that you reinvented yourself that you you know, I was one of the first cousins to go to college. And I'm the only doctor in the family. I'm getting teary-eyed here. I'm the only doctor on that side of the family. And I graduated from Harvard. And I say that because that means a lot to people that you know, immigrated here and work their butts off to give their kids another opportunity to improve their lives. And so he says, you know, we families that tunnel to Yosemite, por todo lo que, etc. My family is so proud of you for everything you've done. For you being so committed to your community for going back and continuing to help people for reinventing themselves. We're all so proud of you. And it just hit me with that message because it was just so beautiful. And I guess I didn't realize that when you know, and this is what I'll share with you that when you go out to succeed, your success means something for you and for the people you help. But it has a huge reverberating effect on everybody around you, for your community.

And ultimately, for the universe as a whole. You are really expanding all of the universes. Because when people see what's possible for you, that is an example that it's possible for them to you put that in now their perception, the reality that success is possible for them too. And just by your example, you are making a huge difference in the world. So when you focus on your vision, focus on what you're creating, focus on the difference that you're making. And don't forget to also focus on how your example is making a huge difference for everyone around you. All right, I'm gonna wrap up here, I'm going to end by just reminding you of a few things. Number one, your potential is 100%. Limitless. 100%, I will tell you that oftentimes what I've seen with my students, is that all they need is one perception change.

One way to think about something differently, and that blows up their results, their performance in life, is just one way to see things differently. That's it. Your potential is limitless. When you think about the vision you're creating, remember, the sky's the limit in whatever you want to create as possible for you. You just have to have the audacity to believe that it's possible. Number two, remember those three principles. Number one, don't be afraid to be afraid. The only way to succeed is to learn how to fail. And to always focus on your vision.

And I'll end with this. That when you commit to being in it for the long game when you commit to being in it for the long game, choose your vision. Don't let yourself you know feel disappointed because you set some timeline that you didn't meet. Don't be attached to the timeline, be attached to your vision, be attached to helping other people be attached to what it means when you go out there and you make a difference in the world. That's what you can be attached to let go of the attachment to the timeline that's only going to slow you down. That's only going to lead you to some things some disappointment, I can tell you from experience that that's not fun. So be in it for the long game, be committed to your vision, and be attached to your vision. That is what's going to get you there every step of the way. And my friends, if you want help doing this, if you want structure if you want community, if you want to coach, I welcome you and I invite you into the journey, which is a community completely built around compassion support based on these principles, where we help elevate your performance and we're there with you every step of the way. friends again, your potential is limitless. Go out and do whatever it is that you feel in your gut is the next thing for you to do. Because that is guiding you in the right direction. Alright, love you all. Assa la proxima I'll see you guys next week.

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 [vanessacalderonmd.com/join](https://vanessacalderonmd.com/join). I'll see you there.