

106. Bare Minimum: How to Give Yourself Grace in times of Transitions

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.

Welcome back, you are listening to Episode 106. Today, we are talking about the concept of bare minimum, and how to give yourself Grace during transitions. Alright, so I'm going to start by sharing a story with all of you. And this is the story of one of my students whom I'm going to call Rosie. So Rosie was super lucky because she had been in this job where they had given her an entire year of maternity leave. They weren't paying her for the entire year, but they weren't giving her the time for the entire year, which is amazing. So she was she just had her first kid. And she started working with me during her maternity leave. And she was about to go back to work.

So it's been a year now she's about to go back to work. And she has a ton of stress in getting ready to go back. She has thoughts of insecurity, like is she going to remember what she did at work? Is she going to be good at her job, she was afraid that maybe her co-workers were going to judge her because she was slower, or not as good as they were, or that her boss was going to be disappointed in her work. So she had a ton of thoughts about like, am I going to still be good at my job? I've been out of it for a year, I'm sure you guys can relate. And then she had a ton of guilt because now she's leaving her daughter. So she had thoughts like who's going to be able to care for my daughter? Are they going to be doing a good enough job taking care of her? Is she going to be okay? Is she going to be sad, and you're going to miss me a ton of the sort of typical mom guilt that we experience? But for her was sort of, you know, a little greater, because she had been with her daughter for an entire year.

So, you know, when we're transitioning in life, I use her story because I thought it was a great example of a transition. But when we're transitioning in life, whether it's going back to work like her or starting a new job, or maybe it's moving like I'm doing the summer I'm doing a big cross-country move. That act of transition takes an incredible toll on our brains, our bodies, and our human spirit, and an incredible emotional toll. Why? Because the brain has to adjust to something new, it has to get used to what we're doing now. And when the brain is going through the work of adapting, it takes a lot of brain space, it takes a lot of energy because one of the things the brain is wired to do is to keep us safe. So now we're experiencing a new environment. And there are thoughts of whether are we safe. Is this environment safe for us? Are we going to be okay here?

And, you know, the brain is scanning the world around us every five to seven seconds looking for signs of danger looking for threats. And it's already decided that we're safe in the current experience that we're having in this current environment. So when you change and you're going through a new

transition, it has to do that work all over again. So if you ever wonder why it's so hard, or why it's stressful, White takes this huge emotional toll when I'm doing something new, big or different. This is a big part of that. So it's in these moments, it's in these moments of transition, that it's really important to care for ourselves. And that's where this concept of the bare minimum comes in.

The idea of the bare minimum is, is for you to think ahead to tell yourself, I'm going through this big transition, when I'm going through that what is the bare minimum that I can do to be successful, but also give myself space to give myself grace and self-compassion. So for Rosie, for example, she was gonna go back to work. And she had this huge transition. And she was telling me that she still had all the other things she was going to do that week laundry, making dinner, going grocery shopping, and cleaning up the house, there was a big party, and she was planning all of these things that she was still doing. And so I want you to take a second and think when was the last time you had a big transition? Did you give yourself the grace that you needed to give yourself that space so that your brain could adjust? Or did you keep pushing? Did you keep pushing yourself to keep going? Because for so many of us so many high achievers, what we do is this, we have a big transition, and we don't want to change anything at all. We want to keep going we want to keep pushing, because we want to think that we're stronger than that, that we're better than that. And you know why?

It's because underneath all that our ego is trying to tell us that if we don't there's something wrong with us. that we're weak. If we don't keep pushing, we will get judged if we don't keep pushing, people will think that we're not good that we're not good enough if we don't keep pushing. And so we push ourselves to the limits all the time, including these times of transition. But what does that do? That creates an incredible amount of stress on our brains and our bodies at a time when our brains are already experiencing a ton of stress.

So here is what I want to offer to all of you. In those moments of transition, when that stuff is coming out for you, again, maybe it's a new job, maybe it's going back to work. Maybe it's moving cross country like me, maybe it's a big retreat, maybe you're planning a big retreat when you have all that stuff coming up for you. How can you think ahead of time? And how can you plan to be kind to yourself to give yourself the grace that you need to be compassionate with yourselves? How can you practice the bare minimum to give yourself the grace that you need? And again, it's not because you can't work your butt off. And it's not because you can't push through it. It's not because you're weak. And it doesn't mean that you're not strong.

The only reason we do it is because we want to do it. We want to give ourselves that grace that we need during those times of transition. Now because you can't do it. But because you're worth it. You're worth it. You're worth giving yourself that grace, you're worth giving yourself that downtime. You're worth it. Alright, sweet friends, I invite you to see where you can start practicing the bare minimum in your life and create that space to be kind to yourselves and give yourself the grace that you need during big life transitions. Have a wonderful week.

Hey, sweet friends, if you love what you're learning, then you've got to join us on 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/join](https://vanessacalderonmd.com/join). I'll see you there.