

122. Sustaining a Conference High: Keeping the spark alive with strategies for long-term motivation

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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.

Hello, my sweet friends. Welcome back to the podcast. I'm so excited to have you here. Remember that if there is a topic that you want me to cover, please send me a DM you can follow me on Instagram at VanessaCalderonMD. And just message me and tell me what it is you want me to cover. A lot of these topics are coming from some listener requests. And so if you have something that you really want me to cover, just send me a quick DM on Instagram. And if we haven't covered the topic already, I will cover it here. I respond to all those DMs personally myself. And if there's a topic that we have already covered, I will do my best to point you to the podcast episode that covers it. So direct message me at VanessaCalderonMD on Instagram. And friends. By the way, if you like this podcast, it would really, really really help me out for you to rate the podcast and leave a testimonial. When you rate the podcast and leave testimonials, it actually makes it easier for other people to find the podcast. So it makes it much easier for other people to also be helped by the content that we're creating over here. And please feel free to share this podcast with your friends, with your colleagues, with your sisters with your DS with your deals.

I had a girlfriend of mine telling me how she had her husband listen to the entire series on the patriarchy because he wanted to understand what she was experiencing. And so she hadn't listened to the entire series of the patriarchy. So I really appreciate that because the podcast is for everyone. Alright, so last thing, the last update is I have an incredible coaching program that I teach it's called The Journey. It's a comprehensive approach coaching program where you get a ton of didactic, so a lot of teaching modules that you can watch on your own time, plus personal help for me where I coach you one-on-one, and really support you in creating the things you want to create in life. So if you love what you're listening to, and you want to take this to the next level, I highly recommend you check out my program the Journey VanessaCalderonmd.com/join, you can read more about it there. And you can join us whenever you're ready. But the program itself is really fantastic. It's a bunch of really smart women, a ton of women of color, who really care about your success just as much as you do. The community itself is so amazing. I love the community, just so compassionate, so caring, so supportive, really helping each other out. And on top of that, you really get to achieve your highest potential without stress and without burnout. And for me, I think it's one of the biggest gifts of life, which I think is you know, we're all on this journey of life, to really, really feel like we're self-actualized that we are fulfilling our purpose in life, right? And that's what the program helps you do.

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let's get started on our topic today. So today, we are talking about how to sustain a conference. Hi. So how many of you guys have experienced going to a big conference or a meeting or a retreat, and leaving that feeling incredibly inspired or really motivated to make some changes, only to find yourself a few days later, forgetting what you learned, or going back into old habits, and sort of not keeping that inspired motivation to make change alive.

Now, oftentimes, that's natural, right? We get back into our regular life or regular routine, and it's sort of natural. But there are some things that we can do to continue to keep that spark that motivation alive and actually start taking action that aligns with what we learned. So that's what we're going to talk about today. So today's episode, I actually started drafting before I went to my big conference, but it was inspired because I was going to our big national conference. As many of you know, I'm the National Wellness and Resiliency Director for this large national organization, a physician group. And we just had our large national annual meeting. And, you know, I've been part of this organization for a little bit more than a decade. I've been going to this meeting every year for the last decade. And it gets better and better every time we go because the organization gets better and better. And it is something I'm incredibly passionate about. And so I was thinking, you know, I go to these conferences and I always leave with something and so what is it that I want? Keep after the conference, and that's sort of why I started drafting this episode.

So, what I'm going to do now is I'm going to share with you a few strategies that you can use to keep that post-conference high. And I'll share with you how I use them. Okay, so the first thing is, after you're done with a big conference, you want to create a summary of your key takeaways. So I normally do this immediately after the conference, either on my flight home or in the morning, after, I'll just take some time to sit and digest. I'm usually so full of motion when I leave one of these events that I try to do it right away. So I'll do it that night. Or really, I usually do it on my flight or when I'm at the airport. So what you want to do is you want to summarize your key takeaways in your insights. I use just a regular journal to do this, but you can do it in whatever way makes sense for you.

So I do it in my morning journal. So the things that you want to think about are these, what were your key takeaways or your key insights? So list them. Why did those things resonate with you? And I think that's one of the most important things because oftentimes, these things resonate with us. And we want to stop and pause and really ask us to ask ourselves, why? What was it about this one key takeaway that really resonated with me? What did it help you think? What were you thinking? Before you learn this? Was there something that just created an aha moment, a moment of awareness for you? And how does knowing this new thing make you feel? So as an example, for me, one of the things that really stood out for me from this conference was how clear the purpose of our organization is. And for me, what I learned is how important it is to have a really clear purpose and mission in life. And I am extrapolating that to my business, to my coaching business to the journey, which is my coaching program, and really, to the way I live my life.

For example, when I started taking my notes as to why it was so important, I realized that it helped me think that it's so important to be driven by a higher purpose. That is one of the things that will always

inspire and motivate me, and likely most of you that are listening. So that's what it helped me think and what it helped me feel it helped me feel aligned, it helped me feel committed, it helped me feel inspired, and it helped me feel incredibly passionate. So that's what I would ask you to do, I would ask you to sit and think about your key takeaways or your insights, why they resonated with you what they helped you think, and how knowing this made you feel. Again, feelings are incredibly important, because feelings are the thing that drives all of our actions. If you remember back, the cognitive thought model, I've taught this a lot. Your thoughts create a feeling your feelings drive, all your actions and your actions create your results in the world. So it's really important to get clear on your feelings. So I'll share what came up when I did this exercise for myself. Because the first thing you do is create your summary of key takeaways, which is what I did.

The next thing you do is create good immediate action items. So what are the things that you want to do that were inspired by this conference? So right after the conference, you make us a list of specific action items or goals inspired by what you learned. Now, this could be implementing a new strategy, adopting a new habit, or setting a career milestone by X number of months, I will do why. And for this, I really want to caution you to not go overboard less is really more here, I usually try to only choose two or three things max that I want to change. Because when you commit to only two or three things, you're more likely to do them. Instead of you know, coming back with the list of 1015 things, and then you start feeling overwhelmed, or you start feeling insufficient, like you're not doing enough. And that's not what you want. What you want is the opposite. You want to leave inspired and committed to making change. And you get super clear on those two to three things that you want to change.

So for me, the action items were number one, I want to get really clear on my purpose, my vision, and my mission. Number two, I want to actually write it out and have it printed so that I can see it every day next to my desk. And number three, I want to start getting up earlier so that I can meditate. So I meditate every day. I've been doing that for about a decade. And you know, we moved to Atlanta recently and my kid's school now starts so much earlier than it did when we were back in California. So I used to get up before school when we were in California before they started school and do my morning routine, which included meditating journaling, and a little bit of yoga. And now that we're here and their school started so much earlier, it was hard for me to wrap my head around how much earlier I needed to get up. And I hadn't set a super healthy routine. So one of the things I committed to is getting up earlier.

So now my alarm is set at 520 in the morning, which gives me enough time to sit to meditate journal, and do some yoga before I get the kids up to go to school. And so far, so good. So that's my recommendation, you choose two or three things that you want to do. And then you set a timeline. So create a timeline for when you plan to implement your ideas or your strategies. Again, when you get super clear as to a buy, when date By when will have this achieved, it makes it so much more likely that you will actually achieve what you're setting out to do. So you want to create an action plan. But you also want to create a by one day, and it doesn't have to be super rigid. Remember, you are the person setting the by one date, you are setting your own timeline. So be kind to yourself, but set a timeline that will help you actually follow through. And then the last thing you want to do is you want to make sure that you celebrate your achievements. Anytime that you actually implemented a change based on what you learned from the conference, take a moment to celebrate. So I've been getting up earlier. And it's

been feeling great. And I've been having some more time to really ground myself and tune into myself and my intuition, and spend that time meditating and getting connected to my spirituality. And it feels incredible. And I'm just so happy that I'm doing it. And really, I'm just really proud of myself for doing it. So that's your opportunity to really make that change and celebrate yourself. Another thing you can do here is you can set visual reminders of the things that you took away. So if you heard a quote, if something really inspired you, you write it on a post, paste it on your computer, or your laptop, or somewhere that you see. So that you have it there to always remind you of that feeling, it will help reinstate that feeling that you had at that conference.

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So I'm gonna just, there's two more things I want to share with you in terms of strategies. But before I go on, I want to share the purpose and the vision that I ended up creating based on my inspiration from the conference. So remember, I went to this conference that was super inspired by how clear our purpose and our vision were. And I chose to do that for myself, I said, I really want to create that for me and for the business that I've created for this beautiful organization that I've built. And so I drafted my own purpose, vision, and mission statement. And so I'm going to share that with all of you because I'm just so inspired by what I was able to create.

So my purpose. So again, your purpose is really why you exist the reason for existing so why do my organizations exist? Why did I create the Empowered Brain Institute? And it's really simple for me, it's to change the world. I'm doing it plain and simple because I'm a changer like I'm here to make a difference in the world. And I'm here to change the world. That's it. So your vision, your vision is what you aim to achieve. So my vision for the organization, my vision for the organization, what I aim to achieve is to end generational trauma, and internalized cycles of oppression. That's what I'm here to do. My vision and what we do inside of the journey. Yes, we help women achieve their purpose. And we do it by teaching them all of these ways to use their emotions and their mind so much more effectively. And ultimately, what we're doing is we're ending generational trauma and internalized cycles of oppression, all the internalized racism, internalized sexism, internalized phobias, whether that's fatphobia or other things, we learn how to enact and really empower women, which leads me to my mission. So your purpose is why you exist. Your vision is what you aim to achieve. Your mission is how you plan to achieve it.

So my mission, how do I plan to achieve it? By doing what we're doing every day by empowering women to achieve their purpose without stress and burnout? And then you get nitty gritty into your principles and the culture. So your principles are what do you stand for? And so for me, what do I stand for? What does my organization stand for? We stand for transformation, compassion, courage, vulnerability, authenticity, for living a life of integrity, where you are always choosing you and being yourself, and for service. And then culture, how is it that we behave on a day to day so how is it that the organization everybody that interacts with our organization and works for our organization? How is it that we behave with one impact over ego? Our impact matters so much more than our individual egos. Number two, I have the sense that for us it's really important to always be over-delivering. Our students always feel like they won the lottery when they Try to program because they're always been, they're always experiencing so much more than what they thought that they were going get. So always be over-delivering service excellence. So we do things with excellence. Perfection is silly. It's not

something that we ever aim for. But we do aim to do things and excellence. And we aim to do it with funds, that's a huge part of our culture is to do it fun. Whatever I do, I want to be light, I want it to be easy, and I want it to be fun, do it fun. And then the last two is an approach with unconditional love. So for me, I always approached seeing the best in others and doing my best to offer unconditional love. That doesn't mean there are no consequences for bad behaviors or bad choices. It just means that I will always offer unconditional love and kindness.

Alright, so that is what I created based on my inspiration, and motivation from the conference. So again, you create a conference summary, and your immediate action items, set a timeline, and celebrate your achievements. So once I did that, I was so proud of myself for being so clear and so driven. So I celebrated that as well. So celebrate your achievements, and set visual reminders. So for me what I just read to you, I'm posting it up in my office, and I'm framing it so that I can see it every day. But you can also just use it posted if you heard a quote that you really liked and post that somewhere that you can see regularly. And there are two other strategies here that I think are really important. One is finding an accountability partner.

So if you went to this conference, and you reconnected with a friend or a colleague, or you met somebody new, who also shares your goals, it's a great opportunity for you to create community and connection, and keep each other accountable for implementing what you learned, you can just reach out and say, Wow, that was really, that was really great. Maybe we can check in with each other and see, you know, like, are we achieving what it is that we want to achieve? And it might feel a little awkward thinking, you might feel awkward thinking that other person's not going to want to do that. But you would be surprised by how many people are looking for that same thing. So many people are looking for that same accountability. So you wait, you might make somebody's day by offering that by offering to be their accountability partner. And it's a big win-win.

And the last thing here is to create a follow-up for any networking, anybody that you met, that you're inspired by anybody that you reconnected with, feel free and feel comfortable and confident reaching out to them to cultivate those relationships in that connection. I'll tell you that nobody achieved success alone. And for me, the more that I put myself in a community with other people who inspire me, other people who are doing great things in the world, the more, I see that what I want to create is possible. And even it's like if I put myself in spaces that feel uncomfortable, like around people who are doing things that I perceive to be red or blue at another level for me, just like their businesses or their founders, their founders have huge organizations. When I put myself in those spaces, it's a little scary. And sometimes they feel a little insecure. And it's also incredibly inspiring, because I am okay, being a beginner, I am okay knowing that, you know, I haven't achieved everything I want to create yet. And I am okay, knowing that there's so much for me to learn.

So networking and following up with people that you meet that inspire you, is incredibly important. So how do you do this, you can go on LinkedIn, which is easy, follow them on Instagram if they're on Instagram, shoot them a quick email, and set up a virtual coffee. No agenda, like agenda free to say hey, I'd really love to connect and just get to know what you're doing. My husband is so good at this and setting up these virtual coffees. But it's really just a great opportunity to get to know somebody meet them, and just see like, how is it that you can support them. And just by nature of you supporting them,

the universe will reward you and they will likely also want to support you. So when you create these sorts of networking and follow-ups do it in a way when there's no agenda, don't say like, what is it? What's in it for me? Or what am I going to get out of this? Do it without an agenda and just a way to get to know the person and really ask yourself like, how is it that I can help this person? That is what's called a transformational relationship, which is the opposite of a transactional relationship.

Transactional relationships are really like, you know, tit for tat, what's in it for me, transformational relationships are all about service and it's really the universe rewards you on a much higher level when you're able to do it that way. All right, friends, I just gave you a bunch of stuff to support you in sustaining that conference high and you know, keeping that spark that motivation that inspiration alive After you attend a conference or a retreat, and these are specifically the things that I do every time and I think they've helped me be a, you know, a little bit more successful get a little bit more done when I go, and, you know, really get the best I think the return of investment on my time at the conference, whatever money I spent to be at the conference, and really like the time away from my family because when I travel to these things, I'm taking time away from other priorities of my life.

So I want to make sure I'm getting my best return on investment when I do these things. Alright, sweet friends, I hope you found that helpful. I hope you can start putting some of these things into practice. And remember that if you are enjoying what you are learning here, please, please please rate the podcast wherever you're listening, please rate it. If you are listening on iTunes or somewhere else you can really leave a review. Even if it's just three sentences three words like this is a great exclamation point, or whatever it is you want to leave, it's really helpful for you to leave a review. It helps other people then find the podcast and it just works in the algorithm of podcast worlds, that when the podcast is rated and reviewed, it makes it easier for other people to find it. So it would be really helpful. If you could rate and review the podcast. They can if you like what you're listening to and you want to start applying all of these things. You want to work with me directly. I encourage you to join us on the journey at VanessaCalderonmd.com/join. Right friends, I am sending all of you so much love today. Hasta la proxima

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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.com/join. I'll see you there.