

130. The not enough syndrome: how to break free and achieve more

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.

Hello, friends, welcome back to the podcast, you're listening to Episode 130. The not enough syndrome, how we break free and achieve more. So, you know, before we start, just a quick little side note, I just finished my first overnight shift at my new hospital. You know, I'm an ER doc and I still work part-time because I love clinical medicine. I just love it so much. And I sort of took this unintentional sabbatical, because when we moved out to Atlanta, from California, my medical license took forever to go through the system and get processed. So I couldn't start working until very recently. So last night, I had my very first clinical shift, and it was overnight, and I had a lot of emotions, you know, prepping and getting ready, because the truth is that medicine can be a little toxic if you're not careful. I think the external expectations that we place on ourselves as physicians, especially if you're a parent, are really intense.

And if you're not careful, it can be really draining. And I had a lot of those types of emotions. And I had to really be mindful of my own sacred energy and how I was going to protect that. Anyway, I'm glad that that unintentional sabbatical and just sort of my own journey through life and where I am today allowed me to have the awareness of what I needed to watch out for, and how to protect myself. Anyway, I'm going to create an entire podcast episode on how you can do that for yourself. Because I just was so I guess, like fueled with energy. Instead of feeling drained. When I left the department, I felt happy that I was able to serve in that capacity. I just love patient care so much. Because of being able to connect with the patient, when they're at that stage in the ER, feeling scared and vulnerable, and being able to offer them compassionate care, many of our patients are homeless, or uninsured. And being able to offer them dignity in that space is just such I feel like for me is such a gift to the world. I just love that I'm able to do that.

So anyway, be on the lookout, I have a podcast episode coming out on how you can also protect your own sacred energy, it's going to be in about two weeks or so. So be on the lookout for that. Alright, so today we are talking about the feelings of not enough. And just a quick reminder that my Business Mastermind is launching in January. So the enrollment is going to open in December. the waitlist is up now. So if you are interested in getting a project, a program a side gig off the ground, you want mentorship, you want guidance, you want coaching around all of the business aspects. How much do you charge? How do you market? How do you structure a program? What do you cover all of those types of things? How do you do a beta launch all of those things, I'm going to walk you through exactly how to do that I'm super excited, I'm only taking 10 people because I really want to work closely with

everyone and give everybody the results that they deserve. And so we are going to unblock all of the mindset things that are getting in the way. But we're going to get into the nitty-gritty, the actual actions and you're going to be so kind of accelerated in your growth because I just love to get people going. When I work with my students, people get a lot of results because I'm really good at unblocking the things in the way and ensuring that they're taking the appropriate actions. So if that is something that you're interested in that waitlist is open, now there's a link in my show notes for it. The enrollment is going to open in December, and we are getting started in January 2024.

So if you're looking for a way to achieve something big in the new year, this is a great way to get started. Alright, so let's get started on today's podcast. So, you know, as we're getting started on today's podcast, I want you to take a second and just think about when was the last time that you had a thought that you weren't working hard enough. Or maybe that you weren't replying to your emails fast enough, or that you weren't making enough money? Or that you needed to get more clients or you needed to lose more weight? Or you weren't financially well enough yet. You weren't smart enough to be in a space or successful enough. So I want you to notice what all of those thoughts have in common. I want you to notice all of those thoughts. I'm not smart enough. I'm not you know, thin enough. I haven't made enough money. I want you to notice how all of them lead to the same exact feeling.

When you think of one of those thoughts, it essentially leads to a feeling of inadequacy. And the conundrum of this is that most of us are thinking these thoughts unintentionally without even realizing it. And we actually think that they're helping us. So I want you to take a second and ask yourself, when was the last time that I thought this? And if you're like me, or most of my students, you probably have these thoughts pretty often. It's probably something that is so subconscious, that you might not even realize that you're thinking it. You might not even realize you're having these thoughts that are leading to these feelings of inadequacy.

And if I were to ask you, why do you think you think that you're not? Like, why do you think your brain does that? That you're not answering emails fast enough? Why do you think your brain is offering you the thought that you're not making enough money? My experience has been, you think that it's likely because it's motivating you to do more. And I want to pause there because I just think that that is a huge moment of awareness for many of you if this is you. Because this was definitely me. I had my thoughts on repeat that playlist that I had going on in my brain was that I wasn't successful enough. Which is why I thought I had to work harder, achieve more, keep getting, you know, promoted, what else? What else, what else I would, you know, get promoted to one position and immediately be thinking about the next two or three things that I wanted to do? And I would keep pushing harder and harder and harder.

So here's the thing about thinking that you're not enough. So I'm just going to review the cognitive thought model, which I talk a lot about on this podcast. And remember, the cognitive thought model comes from way back during the Stoics 300. BCE, and likely even before that, but that was one of the first times we saw it recorded. And what the cognitive thought model asserts is that any thought that you think is going to create a feeling that feeling drives your actions, your actions are what create your results in the world. And, you know, I like to put our feelings into two sorts of buckets, feelings that propel you forward, like motivation, commitment, and determination, and feelings that paralyze you and

keep you stuck. Like disappointment, guilt, shame, inadequacy. So notice when you're thinking, a thought that is propelling you forward, like when you're motivated, what do you do? You're gonna get up in the morning, you're gonna go for the run you had planned when you're feeling defeated? What are the thoughts that paralyze you? What do you do? You turn off your alarm and you crawl back into bed.

So again, emotions either propel us forward or paralyze us and keep us stuck. So if you are having a thought, like, I'm not smart enough, or I'm not working hard enough, and you have that feeling of inadequacy, what actions do you think you're going to take when you feel inadequate? What actions do you think you take? Now, if you think your action is you work harder, and a pause there, because it's actually not the case, when you're feeling inadequate, the actions that you take are, you stress out, you ruminate over all of the ways that you are actually inadequate, you start thinking that you need to do more, so you start making like to-do list, but you're actually not taking any actions from feelings of inadequacy, you're just creating negative thought loops in your brain that are causing negative feelings in your brain that are actually not helping you be more productive.

And here's the other thing that's actually wild, that when you have this recurring thought in your brain, like I'm not smart enough, or for me again, that I'm not successful enough, guess what? No amount of action will ever help you believe that you are successful enough. Again, for me, it didn't matter that I was, you know, a physician with a degree from UCLA, I also had to have a master's degree from Harvard. And it didn't matter that I had a degree from Harvard, I also had to be like the best resident, not just any resident, that chief resident, and then it didn't even matter, I had to graduate immediately and get the best fellowship. And then that didn't matter. I had to get the best position as department chief, as early as possible. And that didn't matter because now I needed to be the chief medical officer of a hospital.

And so notice how for me when I had this underlying thought error because again, thought errors or thoughts that we think are not giving us the results we want in life, I had this underlying thought error that I wasn't successful enough, which was being fueled by this level of insecurity, feeling like I was an impostor, feeling like I needed to prove myself to the world. And because I thought I had to prove myself, I thought that the more successful I became, the more that I proved myself to people around me, the more that they would believe that I was smart enough or good enough to finally be in that space. But what did it lead to? It led to me overworking because now I was taking unintentional actions, I was pushing harder, working harder over-committing.

So notice when you have an unintentional thought, these thoughts that you are thinking that are not giving you the results you want in life, they're gonna lead to unintentional feelings. Those unintentional feelings lead to unintentional actions, or Carter commit, you're stressed out all the time, which leads to unintentional results like you burn out, or you eventually block yourself from ever believing that you're successful, because you have these thoughts that you have to keep working harder to become this other version of you. So any actions that are fueled by the thought that end and not enough, not working hard enough, not that enough, not smart enough, not beautiful enough, not making enough money, will never give you the result that you want to prove that you are actually enough. But I pause there for a second because I really want that to sink in. This is like that entire concept of you setting a goal for yourself that you keep moving that goalpost away and further away and further away. And you

never get there, because you have this thought error that you can't get there because you're not enough. Man, this just is like reliving ending with me again, as I think about this because I've coached so much so many of my students on this recently. But it also for me like this was so like, this was so rampant in my own brain. In fact, when I started my coaching practice my coaching business, I had this thought that when I finally made six figures in income in a year my business would be successful, and I would be enough. I didn't even link the enoughness to this, I just said that my business would be successful.

And then I achieved six figures. And I was like, no, no, no, no, no, that's that. That was a fluke, I have to do it again. But I have to do it bigger and better. And it has come only has to come from this. And then I did it again. And more the second time, and I had the same thought errors again. And the second time I was like, Oh my gosh, finally the light bulb went off. And I was like, Oh my goodness. Now I'm making multiple six figures. And now I am still thinking this clearly, no amount of income is gonna make me feel like I'm enough, because I keep moving the goalposts away. And for me, that meant that I got to go inward and do a lot of healing work around my stories of insufficiency. inadequacy of not being enough.

And here's what came up for me that I think may really come up for a lot of you. And that's this, that we have these feelings of inadequacy because we think they motivate us. You know, I just talked about that a second ago, we think it motivates us to work harder. We think we need that thought or who would we be without it? And that right there is the biggest one. We have been practicing this thought that we're not enough the start the start of inadequacy and insufficiency for so long. That when that thought gets challenged when I'm like no, hold on a second, what if your business exercise is successful? Or if you are smart enough to be in that space? It just throws you for an entire loop. Because now you're like a second? Who am I? What motivates me? If I actually believe that I'm good enough, smart enough, successful enough? Now what motivates me, and that is an entire just like that is just an entire like goof your brain is like hold on a second. And I have seen my students like to pause and have those aha moments when we open this up for them.

I really hope that's happening for you right now. Because what I often see is that so many of my students are afraid that without this thought they will become lazy, or unmotivated. And what is the worst thing you can call a high achieving person high achieving woman high achieving man, especially if you're like first generation? What's the what's the worst thing you can call someone lazy? When you get called lazy, it's like a moral stab. It's like, oh my god, I'm not lazy and work so hard. And so that's even the possibility that if you don't work hard enough, you might be thought of as lazy. You might be lazy, and that fear drives you to keep pushing to keep working hard instead of looking for another way to be motivated.

So I want you to just notice that right now. The truth is that if you are listening to this podcast, and you have followed me for a while, and this stuff is resonating with you, then the odds are that it's highly unlikely that you are a lazy person. Highly unlikely that you are someone who is lazy. You might tell yourself you're lazy too. be mean to yourself because you think it motivates you, you might tell yourself, you're not disciplined enough because you think it motivates you. But odds are, it's highly unlikely that you actually are. And it's highly unlikely that you will ever stop trying that you will ever stop achieving that you will become a blob on a couch, highly unlikely. It's not possible, because that's not who you

are. You know, if you're listening to this podcast, you're likely someone who likes to work hard, who has integrity, who's committed. And now what gets to happen from this podcast episode moving forward, is that you now get to approach your goals and what you want to achieve in the world. Without the hypervigilance without the feelings of inadequacy that you think you need to motivate you that actually are just getting in the way, they're just slowing you down.

They're just causing anxiety, they're causing negative emotions, and negative hormones to flood through your body, which you don't need. Now you get to do the opposite. So how do you actually move away from this thought that you're not enough? How do you move away from feelings of inadequacy? And this is a really big one here. This is a really big one. Because the truth is that you can continue to be incredibly inspired, motivated, and passionate about the work you want to create in the world without fear, without fear-based emotions, like inadequacy and insecurity. What else would drive you? Like? Why would you want to do that work? So for me, when I asked myself, I was like, Oh my gosh, because it's what I'm put on this earth to do.

Like, I want to continue to be in service to the world at the highest level for the highest and greatest good of all, that's why I want to do it. Not because I don't think I'm good enough, not because I need to prove myself. And once I was able to notice that, oh my gosh, like all of these years up until today, like, you know, when I had that awareness, my work had been like trying to prove myself to others. And of course, it was doing it in a way that was aligned, like I was a physician, like I wasn't service. But really, I kept continuing to achieve and succeed because I thought I needed to prove myself to other people. And once I was able to let that go, oh my goodness, it created so much peace in my life. It created peace in my marriage and my relationships, I was able to show up in spaces, from a place of just like my highest self, just really in love with my work, wanting to be of service to the people around me and help them not compete with them. Because once you realize that, there's no competition here, the only competition is you with your own brain, that every time everyone else succeeds, you succeed, because there's very, there's very little separation with you. And that other person, everyone is doing this for the highest and greatest good of all. And that was the most freeing and liberating thought, and moment of awareness that I'd created. So here's what I want to offer you.

First is, if this resonates with you, I want you to notice without judgment, just notice, be curious about how often you're having these thoughts, and how are they showing up for you. Is it you know, your house is not organized enough? Your kids are not doing enough like programs or projects, your kids are not doing good enough in school, notice all those things, because that is a reflection of you, you are judging yourself to your kids, or that you're not exercising enough. Notice all of that. Because of all of those thoughts. They're giving you some sort of false reward. Like for me, my false reward was thinking that they were motivating me. So I want you to pause and reflect and ask yourself, what are these thoughts giving me like, What false reward Am I getting? And we say false reward? Because it's not actually serving you. We think it's a reward, but it's actually not. And the truth is that oftentimes when our brain offers us these thoughts, it's protecting us in some way. So for you, it might be protecting you in that you think you need to be motivated. Do you think it's protecting you from being lazy? So I want you to just reflect for yourself and ask yourself how often do I think these thoughts just notice? And don't be mad at yourself.

Don't judge yourself for thinking of them. Just notice with curiosity and ask yourself, how are these thoughts trying to protect me? Once you notice without judgment, and with curiosity, you can then offer yourself some self-compassion because until you can see any of those thoughts that are giving you unintentional results in your life, what I call unintentional thoughts, until you can see those unintentional thoughts with compassion, with love with curiosity until you can notice that those thoughts were trying to serve you and help you. If they didn't know any better, that's just patterns that you've been practicing for a long time.

Until you can see them with compassion, you will not be able to shift, you will not be able to come from a place of love of service, you know the place of freedom and liberation. Because when you judge yourself and reject your thoughts, you're also holding yourself hostage. And the way you move away from that into a space of freedom and liberation is by offering yourself self-compassion in that space. So I want to share a few intentional thoughts for you. So once you do this work for yourself, once you're able to offer yourself some self-compassion, here are some thoughts that you can start to practice. And feel free to use these thoughts exactly as they are, adapt them, and come up with your own whatever serves you. So here are some thoughts that I offer my students and I've offered myself number one, I am whole and complete, just as I am, I am whole and complete, just as I am. I am so grateful for the person that I am and who I am becoming.

I am so grateful for the person that I am and who I am becoming. I have everything I need within me. I have everything I need within me. And plain and simple. I am enough. If that serves you, I am enough. For me that didn't even resonate with me I was that last thought might serve you and if it does beautiful. But for me, I was so far on left field, like there were so many areas in my life that I had just decided I wasn't good enough in because I thought I needed to think that I'm not good enough at exercising, I'm not good enough at my app workout. I'm not a good enough meditator. I'm not a good enough wife, like whatever those thoughts that I had, like the thought I'm enough, it wasn't even landing with me like, Okay, well, I don't believe that. So if that lands with you, that's beautiful. And if it doesn't, that's okay. Try one of the other thoughts.

First, try one of the other thoughts first. And one of the things that I will also offer is that's really helpful for a lot of my students. And for me too, is to create gratitude for those spaces where I feel inadequate, like I'm not successful enough. How you want to replace that is, I am so grateful for my success. Replace not enough with gratitude. You know, I'm not making enough money, I am so grateful for the amount of money that I'm making. What that does that slight little shift one, you'll notice the energy when you just shift that for yourself, and you just replace those for yourself. But what it's actually doing is it's literally elevating your energetic field.

You know, we all are coming through this world with a specific energy, everything in the world has an energy. And whenever you're thinking thoughts of lack of insufficiency of the inadequacy of scarcity, where do you think your energy level is, it's pretty low, that's where you're vibing. And guess what you're attracting more of that you're attracting more of the scarred city more of not enough, you're looking for evidence or you're definitely not making enough money, you definitely shouldn't be worried. And when you can replace that with I am so grateful for insert whatever your inadequacy thought is, I'm so grateful for my beautiful body. So grateful for how much money I'm making so grateful for. For me,

it's like I'm so grateful for the success of my business, when you can shift that you start to vibrate from an energy of gratitude and abundance. There are three beautiful energies to vibrate love, joy, gratitude, and abundance. Those energetic fields, guess what, attract the same thing. And that right there, my friends is one of the most beautiful places to be. And that's what I hope for all of you. And I invite all of you to try that today. Right sweet friends, I really hope you found this podcast episode helpful. I hope it sparked some thoughts for you and a new way of thinking about things. And really a new perspective. Honestly, one of the gifts of being a human being is that we have the ability to be alchemists to create magic with our thoughts the way we see the world with the way we want to perceive the world around us. And that happens when you examine your thoughts. Alright, I love you all so so so much and I will see you next week at your sweet friends 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 [Vanessa Calderon md.com forward slash join](http://VanessaCalderon.md.com/forward/slash/join). I'll see you there.