

# 82. How to distance yourself from negative thoughts

## SPEAKERS

Vanessa

**Vanessa** 00:00

Welcome to coaching for Latina leaders, the only podcast dedicated to the advancement of Latinas at every level of life with your host, Dr. Vanessa Calderon, a Latina with over 20 years of leadership experience, Harvard grad physician and mother of two.

Hello, my friends, welcome back. How has everyone doing? Alright, so I'm going to teach you something super simple today that is so impactful, it's so effective. And I started practicing this for myself. And then I started teaching my students. And it wasn't something that they needed to practice forever or something that was a difficult concept to grasp. They were just doing it and all of a sudden, they would come back and be like, holy smokes, that really worked. And I was like, Oh, awesome. Okay, well works for me, it works for you. It must really work for everyone. So I started teaching this to more people and in conferences, I go to and retreats that I would hold. And it turned out that this one simple sentence was so effective that I want to teach it to all of you. So what this will do is it will help you distance yourself from negative thoughts.

It'll help you distance yourself from negative thoughts. How amazing would that be? Because how many of us right now are overwhelmed with feelings of anxiety, stress, or maybe just overwhelmed, or maybe it's guilt? We all have these negative kinds of paralyzing emotions that hold us back. For me, my go-to used to be overwhelmed. I used to think that I needed overwhelm to be productive or to be effective that if I wasn't feeling that pressure in my chest, or you know, for you, it might be anxiety or stress, that if I wasn't feeling that, then I wasn't going to it wasn't going to fuel me to do the work I needed to do. But my friends, that is absolutely false.

So if you think that you need anxiety, overwhelming stress, if you need guilt, if you need any of these emotions, to help propel you forward, I want to share with you right now that that is a thought error. That is absolutely not true. And in fact, what happens when you think those thoughts that cause those feelings, what's happening is, instead of you being more effective, and coming from that part of your brain, that higher-order part of your brain that separates us from all other mammals, what's happening instead is that we are triggering our fear centers in our brain, we are triggering cortisol to be secreted through our whole bodies, it's turning off the neck, it's turning off the positive parts of our brain that help us be more effective, and turning on the negative parts of our brain that are making us less effective.

So what I want to do is I want to teach you how to let that go. How to not come from that part of your brain with one simple thing? What I want you to start doing when you start noticing yourself feeling

anxious. First, ask yourself, what is that? What is my one? You know that one negative go to emotion again, for me, it was overwhelming. For a lot of my students, it's anxiety or guilt? What is it for you? Is it stress? Is it guilt? Do you catch yourself always saying I feel so guilty? Or I haven't done enough? Or I have so much to do? What are those things that cause that negative reaction for you?

Now, I want you to ask yourself, how does that feel in my body when I think that thought for me when I used to say when I used to feel overwhelmed, how does overwhelm fill in my body, I was very familiar with overwhelm, I used to feel it every Friday afternoon, it was the end of the week. And it was time for me to close on my laptop and finish work and go pick up my kids and have a weekend with them without working. And I would feel overwhelmed every Friday like I hadn't done enough. And that is bananas because for one I had done a ton. But also, if I'm always thinking that I haven't done enough, I can't solve that thought error by doing more, because there will never be enough work that I could do to feel satisfied. That is the problem with these thought errors there is never enough that you can do to fix that problem.

So for you, if it's anxiety, and you think that anxiety is fueling you to do more and more and more and more actions to solve the problem. Watch what's actually happening, you're actually just taking more anxious actions that are causing you to be anxious. This was a big one for one of my students. And so I want you to just notice that notice how those actions are causing you just to be more anxious, more overwhelmed, more stressed, and they're not at all making you more productive. What you need to do is instead shift from that negative thought-feeling combination to one that's going to propel you forward. I call those paralyzing emotions the emotions that hold us back from taking actions that are intentional versus propelling emotions, the emotions that help propel us into the actions that we want to take emotions like motivation, commitment, excitement, joy, and compassion.

Okay, So how do we create space, how do we distance ourselves from those negative thoughts? Well, here it is, here's that one simple thing, all you need to do is notice and say to yourself, I noticed that I'm feeling or I noticed that I'm thinking. Now the reason why I had you come up with that feeling for you that or that thought-feeling combination that holds you back that paralyzes you. And why want you to feel what it felt like in your body to think and feel that is because oftentimes, we are not even aware that we're thinking those thoughts that are causing those feelings in our body, we have no idea because it's subconscious. And 95% of the things that we think and feel are coming from a subconscious part of our brain. It's not even conscious in our general thoughts. So we often are triggered, and we often know that something's wrong, because we feel it in our bodies. For me, example, on Friday, when I closed my laptop, I didn't know that I was thinking I have so much to do. All I knew is that I was feeling pressure in my chest. That's where I felt overwhelmed. It's the same thing for me with disappointment.

Disappointment is another big one that I have learned to get really in tune with, because disappointment used to hold me back, or really, it was fear of disappointment. So what did that feel like? For me, it felt like this nine sensation in my stomach. So we're going to do a quick exercise. So if you're in a place where you can do this right now, then sit up nice and tall. I want you to do this for yourself. If you're not in a place where you can do this flag this episode comeback or just try it out for yourself right now. And I want you to just think of that one negative thought-feeling combination that paralyzes you. Is

it anxiety? Is it overwhelming? Is it stress? Is it guilt? What is a thought that generally causes that feeling for you? For me again, it was overwhelming.

And my thought was, I haven't done enough, or I have so much to do. What is it for you think about it for yourself. And now as you're thinking that thought and feeling that feeling? Where do you feel it in your body? Pay attention to your body. Where do you feel it? Is it in your chest? Is it in your stomach? Is it at your sternum? Where do you feel it? And what does it feel like? Does it feel like pressure? Does it feel soft? Does it feel empty? Does it feel like a nine sensation? Does it move anywhere? Or is it staying right there? Get really clear to how that feels in your body. Because this feeling is going to be your trigger to know that it's time to distance yourself from whatever thought is causing you to have this feeling.

So when you notice, what I want you to do now is just say, I noticed that I'm feeling overwhelmed. I noticed that I'm feeling stressed, I noticed that I'm feeling anxious. When you say that, that is enough for you to create space between your core self, your inner sage, your inner divine, the beautiful whole view that always knows the right answer from your thinking self from your thinking brain. Because our thinking brain is the part of us that's causing us to be nervous to be anxious to be afraid to be scared. And when you distance yourself, you're creating space between those two things. And that is so powerful. Because now your core self can see Wait a second. This isn't me. This is just my thinking brain. This is just a thought. This is just a thought this isn't who I am.

#### **Vanessa 08:40**

So when you create that awareness, and you say I noticed that I'm feeling insert feeling overwhelmed, guilt anxious, you can then say, What am I thinking that's causing me to feel this? And that's how you start bringing awareness, turning the light bulb on to the thoughts that are causing you to feel that sometimes you might go straight to the thought. For example, jealousy comes up to me sometimes I see somebody doing something amazing in the world. I want to do it too, and I feel jealous. So what do I say? I notice that I'm feeling or I noticed that I'm thinking that I want to do that too. I noticed that I'm feeling jealous. That right there is enough to create distance. Yes, friends, I feel jealous too.

Yes, friends, I feel negative emotions too. I am by no means a perfect human being. I am someone that is completely perfectly imperfect of shit that comes up for me all the time. But I have all of these amazing tools that helps me process them, work through them and come out on the other side. And that's why this stuff is so awesome to do and to learn and to practice, not because we're trying to achieve some version of perfection. But because when we have these tools, our human brain is going to continue to exist. But we don't have to live in that negative space for Long we can shift out of it. That's why I want you to practice this. I noticed that I'm thinking or I noticed that I'm feeling and once you notice what you're feeling if the thought hasn't come up for you ask yourself What might I be thinking that's causing me to feel this? What might I be thinking that's causing me to feel this? Okay, my cuties. I hope you found that helpful.

Enjoy and practice and again, if you want, practice doing this all the time, putting all of these tools into your life, and going to work to change your life and transform your life to live a life of intention, a life that was meant for you, where you are now being so much more effective at everything you do, that you

have more time leftover for the things that you love. Then come and join us inside The Life and Leadership accelerator. It's my coaching program where I work with all of you and you get to learn all of these things on a deeper level. Plus, start applying them to your life and get direct coaching from me. Okay, my friends go to [Vanessa Calderon, md.com](https://www.vanessacalderon.com) backslash join to learn more about the accelerator, and I cannot wait to meet you inside of yours as well. approxima.

**Vanessa 11:16**

Hey, if you love what you're learning, then you've got to check out my free Ultimate Guide to stop people pleasing, where I teach you a simple five step process to stop saying yes. When you really want to say No, you'll be so glad that you did. There's a link to the guide in the show notes. I'll see you next time.