

Ep #72: How to Develop Confidence & Feel Better About Yourself



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Olivia Vizachero

Ep #72: How to Develop Confidence & Feel Better About Yourself

You're listening to *The Less Stressed Lawyer* podcast, Episode 72. Today, we're talking all about how to develop confidence and feel better about yourself. You ready? Let's go.

Welcome to *The Less Stressed Lawyer*, the only podcast that teaches you how to manage your mind so you can live a life with less stress and far more fulfillment. If you're a lawyer who's over the overwhelm and tired of trying to hustle your way to happiness, you're in the right place. Now, here's your host, lawyer turned life coach Olivia Vizachero.

Well, hello there. How's it going? I know that in the last episode I promised you an episode all about time entry and billable hour bullshit, for lack of a better term. I am going to record that episode. I'm just not recording that episode in this episode. I am going to be fully transparent, I am up to my eyeballs in prep for Montana, for the live event for *The Less Stressed Lawyer Mastermind*.

I was just in Fort Lauderdale over the weekend, heading to a client's baby shower. It's a client of mine who has become a really good friend. So, I want to do that episode justice. It's going to be a really dense episode. I want to get into truly all of the billable hour issues that come up, and the time entry issues that come up.

So, I started outlining the episode to record it, and I just realized it was going to be really, really in depth. We'll see, it might even be a two parter, I'm not sure. But with that being said, I don't want to rush it.

I don't have the time in my schedule, ahead of Montana, to record it the way I want to record it, so I'm going to give you a little bit of an interim, interlude, intermission episode, like a palate cleanser, between the last episode where we talked about the fuckit point, and then time entry and billable hour bullshit. Which is just such a catchy name for the title of a podcast episode. So, I think I'm going to stick with that.

In today's episode, we're going to cover how to develop confidence and feel better about yourself. This is actually inspired by an exercise that I

Ep #72: How to Develop Confidence & Feel Better About Yourself

gave to a client earlier today, in a one-on-one coaching session. I give this homework to my clients a lot. I specifically assign it to people when they come to me, and they have a really low opinion of themselves.

When they really lack confidence. When they feel very inadequate. When they're full of self-doubt. When they really engage almost in self-loathing, just beating themselves up constantly, feeling bad about the job that they're doing, feeling like they're not measuring up, always feeling inadequate and subpar, insufficient, unaccomplished, and guilty about their performance.

When that happens, when people come to me like that, the first thing we have to start to do is really just start to develop some very small confidence muscles. And the way that we develop that is by changing the way you talk to yourself.

So, when people feel those feelings about themselves, it's the direct result of the thoughts that they're thinking about themselves. They tend to just have what I call a "thought playlist" running on repeat all day long. They have extremely negative thoughts.

Thoughts like, "I'm not doing a good enough job. I'm stupid. I'm not competent. People think I don't know what I'm doing. I don't know what I'm doing. I should know more by now. I could have done that better. I should be further along. I shouldn't have these questions or this many questions. I shouldn't have made that mistake." And everyone's favorite, "I'm failing."

That's what their thought process looks like all day long. And they micro dose terrible emotions as a result of that thinking. So, it's just like drip, drip, drip of inadequacy, inadequacy, inadequacy. Of self-doubt, self-doubt, self-doubt. Feeling not confident as they go throughout their day.

I've told you before, your brain is such a powerful tool. It's actually really good, you might not feel this way, especially if you're a procrastinator, but it's actually really good at following the instructions that you give it. So, if you tell yourself these thoughts unconsciously or subconsciously or maybe even consciously, on repeat, your brain is amazing at saying, "Roger that,"

Ep #72: How to Develop Confidence & Feel Better About Yourself

and it goes out and finds more evidence to support the things that you're already telling it. It's going to look at all the ways that you're not doing a good enough job.

Now, I've talked on the podcast plenty of times about the need to define what a good enough job is, right? Because if we don't define that, we're always going to feel like we're missing the mark, because we don't even know what it is that we're aiming for in the first place.

I have a whole episode where I talk specifically about defining enough. I highly recommend you go back into the earlier episodes of the podcast, and you listen to that. I'll make sure that that episode is linked in the show notes.

So, if you're telling yourself that you're not doing a good enough job, you're going to look for all of the evidence that you're not doing a good enough job. You're going to look for that email from your boss, where they asked you to change these 10 things in the agreement that you drafted.

Or the time that the client was frustrated with you for telling them one thing and then you had to change your mind, or change what you told them, because you learned that it was inaccurate. And upon further research, you realized that one thing that you first said wasn't true, and something else was accurate instead.

You're going to look for evidence of that when you are telling yourself that you shouldn't be asking this many questions. Every time you ask a question, it's going to be like nails on a chalkboard for you because it's coming up against that belief that you shouldn't have as many questions as you have.

You're going to highlight all the things that you don't know, and make a molehill into a mountain every time you don't know something, if you're telling yourself that you should know more than you do. That someone at your level of experience, the number of years that you've practiced, they would know that. Which, if we're being really honest, there is no rulebook

Ep #72: How to Develop Confidence & Feel Better About Yourself

on how much information you should know based on how long you've been practicing.

But we love to tell ourselves those sorts of things, and then our brain highlights any experience that matches, or is in conformity with, those negative beliefs that we keep repeating to ourselves.

So, when people come to me, I can quickly sense if they're very good at telling themselves terrible things. If they're very practiced in thinking these negative thoughts. I can also tell because I'll start to inch into just exploring how some positive thoughts might be true instead. I know thoughts aren't true, we've been over this before; we're not going to get hung up on that.

It's just a question that I ask people, how is that true, just to get their brain to search for evidence to support that belief. Okay? So, when I ask them to do that, when I asked them to find that evidence to support some of the positive beliefs that I might offer up to them, that I might suggest to them, a lot of times people really struggle with being able to answer me, they just come up blank.

I can quickly, quickly tell a couple things. Number one, they never spent any time telling themselves positive things about themselves. It's so apparent. You can tell that it's a skill they haven't developed. It's like trying to do a pull up when you've never done a pull up before. You're not going to be able to do it.

I quickly see that they're not actively engaged, day in and day out, telling themselves good things about themselves, thinking positive thoughts about themselves, and then searching for evidence to support those thoughts, to support those beliefs.

I can also quickly tell that they're very uncomfortable talking about themselves. So, I always explore that first. I always ask them: What do you think about talking about yourself? What are the thoughts that come up for you when I suggest that you talk about yourself, or when I suggest that you highlight your positive qualities? When I suggest you celebrate some of the

Ep #72: How to Develop Confidence & Feel Better About Yourself

things that you've accomplished or some of the things that you're proud of yourself for doing?

Very quickly, anyone who struggles with this line of thinking, they will quickly tell me that they don't want to be arrogant. They don't want to be boastful. They don't want to be rude. They don't want to be full of themselves. They definitely don't want to think something that isn't true about themselves.

They're so worried if they say something positive and then it's not true; which it would never be true or false, it would just be an opinion. But if they think something that other people wouldn't agree with, that that would be a problem.

They really strive to be humble. That's what they've been taught. That humility is ideal, that it's admirable. And that celebrating yourself and highlighting the things about you that you think are valuable, that you think are good, that are positive, that that is something that's bad and should be avoided.

So, they're really not practiced at doing this exercise, at being able to recite things they like about themselves, or to be able to recite things that they're proud of themselves for having done. We start there. I just open the door, and invite them to think about humility and arrogance as a spectrum.

People tend to be very far, at the extreme of humility. I actually like to call this "toxic humility." I should do a whole episode specifically on toxic humility. So, toxic humility looks like ignoring all this proof, all of these situations, all this evidence of your favorable characteristics, of your positive qualities, that would support these positive beliefs that you could have about yourself.

That would make you feel confident, accomplished, proud, assured, sufficient. All those delicious feelings that we would love to feel, instead of all the negative ones that I listed earlier. So, I teach people that it doesn't need to be black or white. That there's a scale of humility and arrogance.

Ep #72: How to Develop Confidence & Feel Better About Yourself

And instead of being at the far end, the toxic end, of the humility spectrum, we can inch it along, sort of like the scales at a doctor's office.

We can inch that weight along and end up somewhere in the middle of that spectrum. We don't need to go all the way to arrogant and hubristic and full of ourselves. But we can be somewhere in the middle, where we're being honest with ourselves and with others about the things that we're good at, about our accomplishments, about what we do well. And we can boost our confidence, we can increase our confidence, and feel better about ourselves when we do that.

So, I have to teach people, first and foremost, that it's safe to even think about yourself in this way. That it isn't arrogant. That you can be confident and humble. All right? That you can be confident and not arrogant. Those things are possible.

Once we create safety around celebrating yourself and thinking of yourself in a positive fashion, because it isn't arrogant to do that, then I give people an exercise. It's the exercise that I'm going to give you for homework, okay? I did this once, and I absolutely loved my client's reaction.

I give this homework assignment in a couple of different ways. I'm going to give you the more robust assignment, and you get to decide how you want to break it up, or how you want to go about doing that. So, a couple months ago, maybe it's longer than that... It is longer than that, about a year ago... I started working with a client.

They came to me very much in the same exact state as the client that I worked with earlier today. So, very down on themselves, very low self-esteem, very low self-confidence, feeling very inadequate, and full of self-doubt, because of the way that they think about themselves and the thoughts that they practice, and then the thoughts that they go out and search for evidence to further support.

So, after we went through and created some safety around 'it's safe to talk about yourself, it's safe to highlight your accomplishments, and the things

Ep #72: How to Develop Confidence & Feel Better About Yourself

that are positive qualities about yourself, the things that you've done well,' I asked this client to make a list of 10 things that she likes about herself.

She about died. She was like, "Ten?!" I was like, "Oh, I'm not done with the homework assignment yet." I was giggling to myself because I was so excited to say the next part, which I knew she was going to fall over when I said it. She couldn't hardly wrap her head around coming up with a whole list of 10 things that she liked about herself.

My rule is, I don't care how big or how small the thing is, you just have to come up with 10. However, that's not the end of the homework assignment. So, the homework assignment was, "I want you to come up with a list of 10 things you like about yourself every single day, and you don't get to repeat any of the things that you write down. So, 10 things on Monday, 10 things on Tuesday, 10 things on Wednesday, 10 things on Thursday, 10 things on Friday, and so on and so forth," essentially until I told her to stop.

It was an exercise that was going to go on in perpetuity. She was beside herself. She was like, "How do you expect me to do that? That's going to be impossible." I'm like, "It's not impossible. Again, I don't care how big or small the things that you choose to list are, that doesn't matter to me. I just want you to find anything that you like about yourself."

Similarly, when working with the client that I was meeting with earlier today, she was also really struggling to articulate at how she's going to be valuable to a law firm that she's getting ready to start a new position with. I asked her, "Explain to me how you will be valuable."

It went off to a little bit of a slow start in the beginning, but after we went through, and again created that safety for her to talk about herself, even if it's just in her head, or even if it's just with me... which is exactly what a coaching relationship is for. We create a safe space when we work together to have these types of conversations.

So, when we created that safety to do this work, I then started to probe. "Tell me how you're valuable. Tell me how you're going to be valuable." We

Ep #72: How to Develop Confidence & Feel Better About Yourself

started to make a list, but I could tell that it was a struggle for her. She was having a hard time articulating the different ways that she would be valuable, even though she's working at one of the best firms in the country, and isn't leaving because she's getting fired.

There's stuff that's going well there, but she's not used to looking for it because she hasn't built this competence muscle where she hypes herself up, where she's her own hype person. So, that's what I want my clients to become for themselves. I want them to internally validate, not rely on external validation.

The way that you do that is you have to tell yourself nice things about yourself, and then look for evidence to support those beliefs. So, we started with the idea that she's valuable. We started to come up with a list, but for homework, I wanted her to continue to add to this list. I wanted her homework assignment to be a little bit more robust than the homework assignment that I gave to the other client, that I just explained to you.

So, in the first situation, the question was simply: What are the things that you like about yourself? List 10. Today, I did it a little bit different. I started with that; I wanted her to think about that, what do you like about yourself? So, that was the first question. The second question was, what are you good at? And the third question was, what have you accomplished?

There might be some overlap there. You might like things about yourself that you think you're good at or that you've accomplished. But I love to ask questions in slightly different ways because I do think there's nuance there. You discover and uncover different responses, different answers to each of those different questions.

You find things that you might not have found had you only asked it one way, versus three ways, versus a multitude of ways. So, I want you to do this, and I always make people actually write this out, it's not okay to just think about this in your head.

Ep #72: How to Develop Confidence & Feel Better About Yourself

I want you to create a space where you do this work. It can be in your cell phone; I love that. It can be in a journal, but I want you to label, whether it's the top of the sheet, or the note in your phone, wherever you're going to make this list at, I want you to label it.

We're going to create. I want to give you five different questions to ask, okay? You can sit down and spend 30 minutes on it. Spend an hour on it, if you want to do that, and you're really someone who likes to journal, and you want to devote a lot of time to this exercise. If that's not you, though, don't you worry. I'm going to give you an easier version.

I want you to create these five questions, these five headings, and you're just going to add one thing to each list each day, so you've got to come up with five answers, every single day. You can do it! My other client did 10 a day, so you can do five.

So much easier it will be to answer five different questions, only one thing for each question, each day, rather than having to come up with 10 answers for the same question day after day after day. So, I'm taking it easy on you whether or not you feel like it.

Here are the five questions. These five questions, if you take the time to answer them, you will really build and bolster your confidence and feel so much better about yourself.

Okay, so the first question is: What do you like about yourself? Question number two: What are you good at? Question number three: What have you accomplished? Question number four: What's valuable about you? Question number five: What are you proud of yourself for?

Those are the five questions: What do you like about yourself? What are you good at? What have you accomplished? What's valuable about you? What are you proud of yourself for?

I want you, each day, to identify one thing for each of those questions. I want you to come up with one answer for each one. Now, for extra credit...

Ep #72: How to Develop Confidence & Feel Better About Yourself

I'm going with the whole homework theme here... the other thing that you can do is think about an example for each one of your answers. Okay?

The way that I described this to my client, it's like you're creating a little motion picture in your head. I want you to think... if you've ever seen the movie, *Cinema Paradiso*, that movie is all about a movie theater in Sicily. They're constantly showing the film room, the projection room, where they get the reels of film, they load them into the projector, and then project the movie onto the big screen.

So, I want your head, the inside of your head, to look like that projection room. Okay? Where the film is going through and it's displaying the motion picture onto the big screen. I want you to see the movies in your head. It's just going to be a little highlight reel of these little examples.

For instance, if you said one of the things that you like about yourself is that you make excellent beef stew... that's one of the things that I like about myself... I would quickly see the highlight reel in my head of me cooking it, of me making that item of meat, preparing it for people, of me tasting it, and loving it and enjoying it, knowing that it's so good.

Obviously, that's just my opinion that it's good. But that is my opinion. I can quickly take myself to that place. I can feel that pride and that sense of accomplishment. I want you to feel these feelings in your body. When you create the little motion picture in your head, you're going to have such an easier time of feeling those emotions and cultivating them for yourself.

If you decide one thing that you're good at is, I am good at finding double spaces in Word documents, where they're not supposed to be there. Again, I told you, it doesn't have to be big or small, it doesn't matter. You get to pick whatever size you want it to be. So, this is a tiny little thing that I'm actually really good at.

I think I can see the motion picture in my head where I learned how to do that, when I was working on the newspaper during undergrad, adding the Features section of the Michigan journal. I would spot those extra spaces

Ep #72: How to Develop Confidence & Feel Better About Yourself

where there weren't supposed to be extra spaces. I did that all the time when I practiced law too, when I would be proofreading and editing a brief.

When I think about what I've accomplished, I've been running a successful business for several years now, I can think of all of the different milestones I've hit along the way. So, I'm proud of myself for running this business. Typically, I'm prouder of myself for doing things that scare the shit out of me than I am for achieving the “trophies.”

So, for me, I'm prouder for creating this podcast, or launching my mastermind, my group program, or doing webinar after webinar after webinar after webinar and reaching certain attendee numbers, as I've gone from my first webinar to my 40th webinar.

When I think about the accomplishments I've had in my business, I see the little highlight reel in my head of doing different webinars over the course of the past four years of starting the podcast, of what that was like getting it off the ground working with my production team.

When I think about pulling off live events... and I think I've mentioned this on the podcast before, but I'm a team of one. A lot of people think that I have a really big team; I do have a team at my live events. However, everything that goes into the planning of my live events, I do myself. So, that gives me a great sense of accomplishment and pride.

When you start to list these things off, you can see, even if you just pick one thing a day, and you can find some evidence to support it, it's really going to change the way that you think about yourself.

All right, so you get to go through this list of questions: What do you like about yourself? What are you good at? What have you accomplished? What's valuable about you? What are you proud of yourself for? You might think that it's valuable that you give people your honest opinion. For me, I'm a problem solver. I think that's something that's super valuable about me. I'm also very resourceful.

Ep #72: How to Develop Confidence & Feel Better About Yourself

Now, that's just my self-concept, that's how I think about myself. But I love that about me. I think that that's very valuable. When I think about what I'm proud of myself for, that kind of ties into what you've accomplished. I find that there are certain things you can be proud of that you wouldn't necessarily consider an accomplishment.

Maybe you've done something that's really uncomfortable. Maybe you've overcome an obstacle that you wouldn't necessarily consider an accomplishment. It's just getting through a setback and you're proud of yourself for that. All right?

Maybe you work out every day, or you work out most days, and you're proud of yourself for doing that. Even though you haven't hit the goal, whether it's a personal record that you're trying to set with weightlifting, or a certain number of pounds lost, or inches lost or whatever, if you haven't accomplished that, but you're on your path to get there. You might be proud of yourself for that.

You might be proud of yourself for volunteering to argue the motion at work. You're proud of yourself for landing a client, because you've been working on business development and that's been something that has had its set of challenges and learning curve associated with it. But you've stuck with it, and you're proud of yourself for that.

Maybe you haven't signed a client yet, but you're not giving up. You continue to stick it out and take the action that you need to take, in order to create the results that you want to create.

So, I want you to go through this process and answer these questions, one answer for each question every day, until the point where you have this very robust set of answers for each of these five questions. All right? You're going to have five separate lists.

I think the beautiful thing to do, you don't have to do this all the time, especially if you put this in your phone and that's where you store it, I highly encourage you though, to take some time and hand write your answers.

Ep #72: How to Develop Confidence & Feel Better About Yourself

Hand write the thoughts that you believe or that you want to begin to believe about yourself. When you do that, you slow yourself down, and you really drop into the belief because you give yourself the opportunity to have that motion picture play in your head. To think about all the examples and instances where you've demonstrated the quality that you're thinking about.

When we're typing, whether it's typing on a keyboard or with our thumbs on our phones, we tend to type so fast that it's hard to give that motion picture a chance to play. So, I want you, every once in a while, maybe once a week, maybe once a month, you decide on the frequency, I trust you to know what's right for you.

But do this exercise; write down the thoughts that you want to think about yourself, write out the answers to these questions. And slowly but surely, as you write them out, you're going to feel the feeling that you're experiencing in your body change. You're going to feel it shift. You're going to feel better about yourself.

It's such a cool exercise to do because you feel it happen in real time. It happens right in front of you. It happens, actually, right inside of you. It's really powerful to be able to create that experience for yourself.

Now, the amazing thing about this, the more frequently you think positive things about yourself, the easier it is to think them. So, positivity begets more positivity. Confidence begets more confidence. Feeling better about yourself begets feeling even better about yourself, which is so fun. I want you to take some time, start making these lists in your phone or in a journal somewhere, and just start today; one answer to each question. All right?

Reach out to me. Let me know how this feels for you. Let me know what shifts come up for you. Let me know what epiphany or a-ha moments you have. I can't wait to hear how it impacts your life. It's really going to be a game changer.

All right, my friends. That's what I've got for you this week. I hope you have a beautiful week, and I will talk to you in the next episode.

Ep #72: How to Develop Confidence & Feel Better About Yourself

Thanks for listening to *The Less Stressed Lawyer* podcast. If you want more info about Olivia Vizachero or the show's notes and resources from today's episode, visit www.TheLessStressedLawyer.com.