

Ep #25: How to Create Confidence and Avoid Impostor Syndrome



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Tobi Fairley

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You are listening to *The Design You Podcast* with Tobi Fairley, episode number 25.

Welcome to *The Design You Podcast*, a show where interior designers and creatives learn to say no to busy and say yes to more health, wealth, and joy. Here is your host, Tobi Fairley.

How's it going today, creatives? Are you loving your life and business these days? Well, I can truly say that I have never been happier and more fulfilled than I am right now because I have taken charge of my life and my schedule and my mindset and my business model. And now these are the exact steps that I use and that I teach other women to use to transform their businesses every single week, whether they're in an interiors business or another creative business, and it's just so much fun.

And I use these same techniques even with my design clients to change their lives. So if you aren't loving your business and your life as much as I am, and you don't have the confidence to take a leap to a life and a business you dream of, then today's podcast is for you because it's all about confidence and how to avoid impostor syndrome. So let's dig in, shall we?

So what even is confidence? The dictionary says it's a feeling of self-assurance arising from one's appreciation of one's own abilities or qualities. In other words, it's a belief in yourself or really, your overall opinion about yourself. So it's a belief that we will show up for us in the way we say we want to. It's our ability to trust that we will do what we say we will do, not just for other people, but for ourselves. I love this. I love this definition. I love this concept.

I think we often see confidence as something that we were gifted from our parents or something we were born with, and it's like something that we are always searching for, sort of like it's the end of the rainbow or a unicorn and we think it's out there but we don't really know for sure how to get it. And we don't know how to find it or how to even get more of it if we have a little bit of it. But here's the thing: confidence is simply a belief that you will show

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up for yourself. And the most beautiful part is that you can choose to do that every single moment of every single day so let's take a look at this idea of creating our own confidence for a second.

This is very different than saying you will do something and then hoping you follow through. When you do that regularly, you're creating self-doubt because you don't end up showing up for yourself, and that's the exact opposite of confidence. So in the same way that we can create confidence, which may be a new idea to you, what is maybe more believable is that we can also deplete our own confidence every day when we don't follow through, when we don't show up the way we want to in our own lives.

If you cannot count on yourself, you're going to feel insecure, period. You will start to believe that you are at the effect of you instead of in charge of you. This is an idea we're covering in my Design You coaching program this month, and what they've learned - my students have learned - is when a thought is thought over and over again for a long time and often for years, it becomes a belief and it takes some focused and deliberate effort to undo that belief. And confidence is a belief in yourself so if you don't believe in yourself and you don't show up for yourself, then you've got some work to do.

So before we go any further, let's just acknowledge this for a moment. Number one, we have the ability to create confidence in ourselves every single day by the way we show up for ourselves and others. And number two, we have the ability to deplete our confidence every day by the way we don't show up for ourselves and others. Wow, it is all of our own doing. Like so many things regarding mindset and the results we are getting in our lives, it's all in our own control and we don't even know it.

And no one ever tells us this stuff, do they? Nobody ever said to me, "Hey Tobi, if you will just be deliberate in actually doing what you say you want to every day no matter what, your confidence will be off the charts." Or they didn't say, "Hey Tobi, did you know that every time you let yourself down and make excuses and don't take actions and don't live up to your potential

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you are absolutely killing your confidence?" No one ever said either of those things but it makes so much sense, right?

To create confidence, you must consistently follow through on your word to yourself. Here's the thing that I didn't realize for a long time: we aren't born with confidence. We create it in doing what we say we will do at our highest level day in and day out. We create it by having a high regard for ourselves in our abilities and not criticizing ourselves or beating ourselves up regularly or even worse, loathing ourselves. What you think and believe about yourself is what generates or depletes self-confidence. That's huge.

Confidence is a feeling and as I teach with the thought model framework that I learned at The Life Coach School and have come to believe because I used it to change my own life, every feeling comes from a thought, including the feeling of confidence. Isn't it shocking to realize that the way we think about our self is what determines our confidence? We have the ability to just choose our thoughts and beliefs so we can literally choose to be confident.

But so many of us choose to assault ourselves every single day with negativity, constantly reminding ourselves how we don't measure up. I've always had a healthy dose of confidence. It has been instrumental in so much of my success, and sure, I have moments of self-doubt. Everybody does. But I am by nature an optimist and I believe that I am capable of doing anything that I set my mind to. Some of that I think does come from our parents. Them telling us that we are capable or that we aren't. Because we believe what our parents believe as children, and if they believed when we were growing up, while we were forming our own belief systems that we weren't capable of achieving anything in the world that we wanted, then we likely took on that same belief about ourselves.

But here's what I want you to know: you are no longer a child. You get to choose your own belief systems. Even if you aren't lucky enough to have a parent or two parents, or a teacher or a mentor who believed in you 100%, that does not matter anymore because today you can decide that you are

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capable of anything. And you know what? You'll be right. And you will show up for yourself and your confidence will come alive. So before we go any further, I want you to check in with yourself and your beliefs. Do you believe in yourself 100% like I do? Or do you need to stop thinking and believing something or several things about yourself to put an end to your insecurities and self-doubt? It's really important to know if you have that work to do.

Because a confident person thinks they are good and capable and smart and worthy and strong and competent and so much more. And know this, okay, a couple more things I want you to know. Number one, to believe something, we don't have to have other people agree with us. And number two, it doesn't even have to be proven true. We can just believe it because we decide to, even if we don't have any evidence for believing it yet.

That's right. We just have to believe we are capable and worthy and strong and insert any other amazing quality you want to in the blank to create as much confidence as we could possibly want. So yes, it is as simple as believing in yourself. But that's not to say that you just think it once and it's going to stick. Like with any other mindset work, this is something that we have to practice.

And we need to notice when resistance starts to creep in because when we start to increase our confidence with our thoughts, our brain is going to try to derail us. It's going to bring up all kinds of fears that we're wrong or that we're being arrogant or overconfident or all of these kind of crazy thoughts that are going to pop into our head and isn't it so funny how we can go from feeling like we have zero confidence to being afraid we may have too much of it? But that's so natural.

I personally don't even think it's possible to have too much confidence because that's saying that we love ourselves and appreciate our own abilities too much and seeing the epidemic of insecurity in our world and in our communities with our children, I would way rather be on the side of

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over-believing in myself than the opposite, and I definitely want that for my daughter too.

Thinking that because you have a high regard for yourself and your ability suddenly means you will be mean, selfish, or lacking in character, meaning like arrogant or over-confident, that makes no sense at all. I think it's actually the opposite because if you are confident, you are less likely to be jealous or to compare yourselves to others, and that's where a lot of the negativity and the bullying comes in. Yup, we bully other people but we definitely bully ourselves, okay?

And I have seen that the more confidence I have, the more I hang out in what I call fearlessness, and that's a place where I'm loving hanging out because it's the place where I'm unstoppable. It's my favorite emotion.

Now, what about arrogance? Well, arrogance is not over-confidence. It's actually false confidence. It comes from comparing yourself to others and trying to get a higher opinion of yourself than of someone else. It involves putting others down so you feel better about you, and it's really counterintuitive to confidence because when you do put others down, you undermine your confidence because doing that feels bad. Even if you were doing it for a reason and it seemed like a good idea, that at least I'm better than those people, at least I'm smarter than they are, you know what, ultimately it doesn't do anything but deplete your confidence.

Arrogance is based on fear of rejection and it assumes there is a level to our awesomeness and that some of us are more awesome or better than others. But here's the thing: true self-confidence assumes that all humans are awesome, that all humans are capable, and there is no comparing needed. It's abundance thinking, and you know about abundance if you've listened to my other podcasts on abundance. If not, go back and check those out because abundance thinking is where you want to be. It assumes there is enough confidence and enough clients and enough beauty and enough money and enough everything for all of us to have our own abundant amount of it.

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Both arrogance and confidence come from our beliefs about us so we get to decide which one we want to be, arrogant or confident, and then believe accordingly. So why do we want confidence? Well, maybe because in any conversation, the person with the most confidence or the most certainty and the most belief in themselves will influence the conversation the most, right?

Confidence is a dream-maker. It's what helps us take risk and put ourselves out into the world in a fearless way the way we usually all wish we could be. So no wonder we want it. But remember, self-confidence is practiced self-belief. You must be certain about yourself and your amazingness to have it. But you know what? You can just decide to do that.

Now, the impostor syndrome, which so many women - even very successful women say they deal with all the time, this is believing you are putting on or faking or somehow getting lucky and that soon the charade will be over. It's believing that you aren't capable or that your abilities or skills just aren't enough. It's the opposite of confidence.

To be confident, you don't just need to believe in your ability though, but rather rely on your belief that you can handle anything. Even if your ability doesn't measure up in a certain area, you can still handle it. You must realize that the worst-case scenario in most any situation is typically just a negative or uncomfortable feeling like you're going to feel inadequate. But you know what? Feelings won't kill you.

Why won't feelings kill us? Well, you know that now if you've been listening to the podcast because you understand that they are just things, emotions that come from our thoughts, and we can choose our thoughts. So we can choose a different thought if we don't want to feel that emotion, right? So it's just a feeling, and a feeling doesn't do anything but go through our body, and if we allow it, it just passes on through. It's no big deal and it definitely won't kill us.

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Self-confident people have no problem admitting when they don't know something or when they fail. They don't believe that not knowing something or failing either one makes them less competent or less worthy. When you have more self-confidence, you will set more goals, take more action, talk to more people, take more risk, achieve more, you'll believe beyond your current capability and capacity and you'll live into your potential. You will show up for yourself at your highest level again and again.

And the beauty of confidence is confidence begets confidence. The more confident you are because of your thoughts, the more confident you will remain. The impostor syndrome on the other hand is just another way of saying, you know what, I practice thinking thoughts that reinforce my insecurities and I continue to not show up for myself so I don't trust that I will show up for myself in this scenario either and soon someone will discover that I'm a fraud.

We all know how it feels to not be able to rely on someone. It's like flying without a net and it's super scary, right? So be your own net. Know you have your own back and you will never ever ever feel like an impostor. Imagine this: when you're in impostor syndrome, you are fearing two things. Failure and disappointment. But what if you just decided that you were willing to feel both failure and disappointment without resisting them? How would that change everything in your life? How would that change your fear of being discovered as an impostor?

Well, if you believe failure's not an option and that disappointment is horrible, then you're going to spend your whole life trying to avoid both of them at all cost, and that's exhausting. But if you decide to believe that both failure and disappointment are just a part of life and that they're not going to kill you, then there's no longer anything to fear. There's no charade that will soon end. You're just like, oh yeah, there you are, failure and discomfort, I knew you'd come around eventually, okay, I can survive you, you'll be over soon, right?

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And even when fear does creep in, I want you to know this: fear does not prevent self-confidence. It's the unwillingness to feel fear that does prevent self-confidence, the unwillingness to feel the fear is what the impostor syndrome is. So we must be willing to be uncomfortable consistently if we're going to be self-confident. And when we don't try things because we're afraid of failing or we're afraid of disappointment, you know what? We're operating under an illusion. We're operating under the illusion that safety and security and control are real.

But none of those things are real, right? We really don't have control over any of that, even when we pretend like we do. So think about it. We can't really control anything anyway but ourselves. So no matter how safe we try to stay, there's always a chance that the things we weren't expecting or that we were hoping wouldn't happen will. So when we let fear control us instead of confidently believing that we can handle anything and go after our goals, then guess what we do? We just fail ahead of time so we don't have to go through the discomfort.

It's essentially giving up. But what if you started taking a chance even if it might lead to failure or disappointment? What if you started to show up for yourself every day? Will you be scared? Of course. Will you fail? Maybe. But what if you don't even try? Stop resisting fear and show up for yourself and as yourself. Not as an impostor. Just a person who believes that she can handle anything because you can. You have got this and here's one last tip I want you to think about. Practicing confident thoughts keeps the impostor at bay.

So here are a few thoughts to try on for size and you can add others to this list but I want you to keep these sort of in your hip pocket for the next time you find yourself feeling like the impostor in your own life, okay? Here we go. What others think about me is 100% about them and has nothing to do with me. Number two. I was made for this. I was made for this. I'm resilient and resourceful and I was made for this. Number three. Fear is no big deal. Fear is no big deal. It won't kill me, right? It's no big deal. Number four. I love this one. Practice this one every day. It is I have my own back.

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Number five. My potential is limitless but you got to be willing to be afraid to go after that potential, right? And then number six, love this one. Use this one also every day. I am enough. Or even I am enough exactly the way I am. Another one, failure earns success. I've talked about this in other podcasts but if you can believe that failure is just part of the path to success, you will go so far. And then finally, a related one, the better I fail, the more confident I am.

Okay friends, so start thinking you are the amazing, talented, gorgeous, competent, strong, remarkable human that you are because it's true, and thinking this way will create all the confidence that you have always searched for and dreamed of but that you never had, okay? And I'll see you and all your new confidence next week right here on *The Design You Podcast*. Bye for now.

Thank you so much for joining me for this episode of *The Design You Podcast*. And if you'd like even more support for designing a business and a life that you love, then check out my exclusive monthly coaching program Design You at tobifairley.com.