

Coaching Tip: How to Reduce Self-Doubt and Boost Your Self-Confidence

Hi everyone, welcome to my coaching tip of the week on how to reduce self-doubt and boost your self-confidence.

It's been almost 9 years since I first trained to be a coach. Although I knew that coaching was my passion, it sure brought up my stuff and I don't mean in a good way. I think that's what is supposed to happen when you do something meaningful, something that's incredibly important to you. It smack gobs you right in the face. So here I was entrenched in learning the coaching tools – not just learning them intellectually, but really deep practicing them. It took an incredible amount of energy and effort for me to coach, mostly because it was brand new territory and I didn't always know what I was doing. I had a coach mentor/savior at the time who helped me to understand that what I was experiencing was part of the process toward competency, in other words it was normal and common but at the time I thought “if this is what the rest of my journey is going to feel like, I may as well disembark now.”

But clearly I didn't and I'm glad I stuck with myself. I kept chipping away at my toxic thinking – you know, the “I'm not good enough” essay...except mine was entitled “I'm not competent”. That annoying thought showed up everywhere in my practice, from my discovery sessions to my real coaching sessions to my writing and my teaching. Every mistake I made, either real or imagined, became an integral part of my “I suck tapestry”. A tapestry that I liked to haul out and revisit as much as possible, like wrapping myself in a warm blanket on a cold night...except there was nothing warm or cozy it – it was downright prickly.

Fast forward to a few weeks ago when I was coaching one of my favorite clients who had an experience that week which triggered her self-doubt. As I listened to her, I couldn't help but feel the agony she was experiencing as a result of her self-perceived limitations. And then she asked me something along the lines of this: "when will I ever get over myself and feel more confident?" And with very little thought I blurted out "when you get tired of your story".

If you want to feel more confident and self-assured when it comes to coaching, you need to ask yourself "Are you tired of your story?" If the answer is yes, then that's the first step towards real and lasting transformation...it's like the alcoholic whose first step toward a different kind of life requires that they admit they have a problem. The second step is to intervene. In other words, break up the party!

Here's the thing. Thoughts happen...with or without your consent...in fact according to Psychology Today we have 60,000 thoughts per day that run through our mind...most of them don't stick...if they did, we probably would be dead by now...the ones that do stick are the ones you're allowing to run havoc all over your brain, picking up sluts along the way and creating such a ruckus that you are no longer driving the bus...the party crashers are. You're in the back seat sick to your stomach and wondering how this ever happened in the first place.

Thoughts can either be temporary visitors or they can be annoying house guests that take up space in your home...you get to decide...but I will tell you that there are no shortcuts, no magic pill if will...there wasn't for me and there isn't for you. If you are tired of feeling insecure, if you are tired of feeling doubtful, if you are tired of feeling like shit, you must intervene.

Here are some simple ways to facilitate a self-intervention - it's based on ACT therapy and I use it on myself all the time.

First, it's imperative that you notice the anti-self-talk. Observe your mind chatter. What's it telling you?

Two.... Slow down...like you're driving your car and approaching a stop sign. Take a breath, and release the air through your mouth. Take

another breath and another until you start feeling a sense of calm and your mind stops racing.

Three, take the cluster of thoughts, the related essays and name them. Mine's the "I'm incompetent story". What's yours?

Last, set a boundary with yourself and enforce it – just like you would if someone toxic enters your energy field. I usually say "ahh...there you are again with the story that you're incompetent. I was expecting you but you cannot stay. Acknowledge it, thank it for stopping by and show them the door. Remember, thoughts cannot hang around without your approval. Giving your negative thoughts any sort of attention beyond an acknowledgment just encourages more of the same.

The bottom line is that it takes discipline and a certain degree of effort to reduce your mind chatter but this is what it means to be self-compassionate. It's nothing short of what you would do for someone else that you deeply care for. Finally, I invite you to forgive yourself for not being perfect, for making mistakes, and for falling short of your ridiculous expectations...Forgive yourself for being human and maybe, just maybe you'll begin to grow into the self-confident coach you want to be... the one you deserve to be.

Cheers,

Jackie