

Confident Communication



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With Your Host

Natalie Bacon

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Confident Communication

Welcome to the *Design Your Dream Life Podcast* where it's all about designing your life on your terms and now your host, Natalie Bacon.

Hey friend. Welcome to the podcast. What's happening? More specifically, what is happening on your calendar on May 13th in the afternoon? It's a Thursday. I want to invite you to join me for a live class. I'm teaching a brand-new class called 'Stop Overworking and Start Living: Work Life Balance Redefined'. This is something that I'm really passionate about and have been implementing in my life.

More importantly, I've been coaching so many women on this topic in the last year. I'm going to be teaching a lot more of it. To start, I want to invite you to this free live class. It is at 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time/1:00 p.m. Pacific Time/3:00 p.m. Central Time. It's a Thursday. Mark your calendars. Take off work. Do what you need to do, but I invite you to join me live. You can get all of the details over at nataliebacon.com/balance. That's where you'll be able to reserve your seat.

What else is going on? It's May. This month in Grow You we are studying and practicing confidence. Self-confidence specifically. I'm teaching a brand new five step method to increase your self-confidence. That is relevant because today's podcast topic is all about confident communication. How to communicate confidently. This is one of the steps in my five-step method.

So what I want to do is introduce you to this step and invite you to join us in Grow You as we work through all five steps and sort of apply this to our lives. You'll get a full class, workbook, coaching, support, all of it. You can join us over at nataliebacon.com/coaching.

So the part that I'm going to teach you about on today's episode is the specific way that you communicate and whether you do that confidently or not. This particular step actually has three mini steps within it. So there is the mental chatter, meaning the conversations that you have with yourself in your brain. There is the words that you have with others, the

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conversation that you're having with other people, and then there is the non-verbal communication. So that's your body language, your tone, your facial expressions.

So I want you to just think about how you generally communicate. Whether it's with yourself in those sorts of thoughts that you have, that conversation inside your brain, that mental chatter. How you communicate with others when you're conversing. Do you think that you feel confident? Do you think that you exude confidence? What's kind of your general demeanor? Then also what is your body language showing? What is it saying without you actually using words? Is it saying you're open and available and confident? Or is it saying that you're shut down and insecure and sort of hiding?

I'm going to go through each of these three parts to confidently communicating. But as I'm going through them, I want to invite you to just think about how you're currently doing each of these instead of trying to change them right away. So in any transformation, before you can really change you have to get more aware of where you are right now. So it's really tempting to want to change everything really fast, especially if you're an action taker.

What I want you to do is just start to think about, "Okay, how do I talk to myself? How do I show up when I'm talking with others? What kind of language do I use? What is my body language saying? What do I think it's saying?" Most of the time we don't pause and take the time to become more aware of the way that we're communicating. I'm telling you. If you do this, you will show up so much more confidently.

Confidence feels amazing. I think that many, many, many of my clients come to me because they want to show up more confidently whether it's in their marriages, in their jobs, in their communities. Whatever it is, I think a lot of us, myself included, want to work on our self-confidence. Communication is one of the main parts of how to do that.

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So let's dive into part number one, which is the mental chatter. So if you think of the desire to want to communicate confidently, it all starts with that mental chatter. Meaning what you say to yourself. So just start to notice is what you say to yourself very supportive or is it more judgmental?

I heard an author recently talking about being the scientist versus that judge. I think it was actually Marc Brackett in the book *Permission to Feel*. He just kind of mentioned it as a side comment, but I love it. I totally grabbed onto this idea of you having the energy of being a scientist where you are wanting to learn more and be open and be curious. Or are you having the energy of a judge where you want to make judgments and conclusions right away?

So just notice that about yourself. Is the main mental chatter, is the main mental communication that you have in your brain. Those sentences, that language, those thoughts. Are they mostly judgmental and closed and do you come from a place of really wanting to have that sort of control? Or are you coming from a place of being very open and curious and wanting to learn more.

It takes a lot more trust with yourself to have sort of that scientist mentality versus the judge. Typically when you're in that judge role, you are in scarcity and you're looking for control. So in an effort to feel safer, you're trying to make these conclusions and judgements. Sometimes you do it sort of against yourself and you sort of beat yourself up. Contrast that with the default feeling being safety, and you're not sort of urgently trying to feel more control. So then you approach it more as this sort of scientist.

Another way that I like to think about this that I'm teaching this month is the inner critic versus the inner coach. So we all have an inner critic and inner coach. The inner critic generally has this idea of I'm not enough and I don't have enough. Contrast that with your inner coach. Your inner coach is supportive and open and connected and honest. So we all have both, but you get to decide who's in charge.

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So I like to think about making a mistake or fumbling or getting results that you don't really want. You kind of miss the mark. What is the mental chatter like in your brain? How do you communicate with yourself? What's the conversation with yourself like?

Are you really hard on yourself? Meaning are you the judge who has this inner critic where you're saying you didn't do a good enough job, you aren't cut out for this, you should just stop while you're ahead, this one totally wrong. I can't believe you're doing such a bad job or any sort of judgements that are really negative and harsh. That's your inner critic. We all have that to an extent where we're wondering are we really good enough and we beat ourselves up.

What you can do is you can let those thoughts go and have your inner coach really be the leader. It takes practice, especially if you're used to letting your inner critic dominate. Your inner coach is going to say the truth to you, but in a much more supportive way. So your inner coach doesn't ignore the fact that you missed the mark, or you made a mistake. Instead your inner coach is going to lean in and support you and love you through it all.

So your inner coach is going to say, "Yes, you made a mistake. And now what? What are we going to learn from this? How are we going to move forward? It's okay that you're feeling sad or disappointed. That's totally fine. Now what are we going to do? I love you. I got you." So there's this authenticity and intimacy that you have with yourself when you have mental chatter that comes from your inner coach.

So whichever sort of dominates whether it's your inner critic or your inner coach, it doesn't really mean anything about you. We all pick up our inner dialogue from our life experiences starting from as soon as we can cognitively comprehend the people around us, our parents. From birth until however old you are now, what you've done is picked up on other people's language and internalized that.

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Some of it's going to be really good and supportive, right. The part that leads to you using your inner coach. When you use your inner critic, it doesn't mean anything's gone wrong. It doesn't mean something's wrong with how you were raised. It doesn't even mean that you're bad or can't change it. All it means is that you're in the habit of letting the inner critic, that mental chatter, determine how you're going to feel. You sort of give more weight to the inner critic.

What I want to offer to you is that part of communicating confidently and feeling confidence is you deciding—and it is a decision—that your inner coach is going to be the one in charge. Like I see you inner critic and here's what I have to say back.

So we're not going to try and hide the inner critic and avoid the inner critic. What we're going to do is we're just going to say, "I see you and here's what else is true. Yes, I missed the mark, but I don't have to beat myself up about it. What I can do is I can find a lesson and I can have compassion for myself and I can love myself fiercely and unconditionally."

So I think if you take this concept of the inner critic and the inner coach, and you think about sort of the mental chatter that you have, it's going to help you show up so much more confidently. Because when your inner critic is in charge, you sort of show up with more insecurity, with more doubt. Even more shame. But when you consciously see that you have a choice and you can have your inner coach lead you, you're going to show up feeling better with so much more confidence because you have your own back. So it's taking control of that mental chatter.

The second part of communicating confidently has to do with the words you speak when you are conversing with someone else. So, of course, your thoughts are going to determine how you speak, the language that you use, the action that you take. For many of us, we are in the habit of people pleasing. We care about what other people think. It's not a bad thing that we care about what other people think. What's bad is when we care about what other people think more than we care about what we think.

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So the confident person says, "I hear what you're saying, and I have a different opinion. Here's my opinion, right." It's still in that connection and you're listening, and you respect the person you're conversing with. And you add value by saying, "Here's what I think. What do you think about this?"

The insecure person is going to be all up in the other person's business thinking, "I'm so worried about what they are going to think of me. I don't agree with them. I can't possibly tell them I don't agree with them. They're definitely right. I'm probably wrong."

So what happens when you aren't confident and you don't feel confident when you're conversing with others, your language will display that insecurity. So you will sort of hem and haw. You will probably apologize for even doing nothing wrong. It's saying sorry all of the time. It's also being indecisive.

The reason that this shows kind of a lack of confidence is because you don't trust your own decisions, and you think that other people's decisions are automatically better than yours. It doesn't even really matter what it is. You just think, "Well, for sure they're going to know what's best. My decision isn't possibly going to be as good as theirs." So we give more weight to the other person when we're not feeling confident. It's because we're thinking that we are not good enough. It's sort of that inner critic that's sort of ruling our behavior and our conversations with others.

Another way that you can notice how you're conversing and whether it's through confidence communication or not is whether you are really wrapped up in your own thoughts during a conversation with others. So here's an example. Let's say that I am having a conversation with one of my girlfriends and she is sharing a story with me.

If I'm feeling very confident, I'm going to listen to her. I'm probably going to be looking her in the eye. I am going to be engaged and wanting to give to her. Meaning, I want to add value. I want to listen. I want to support her. I'm

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really in the connection of the moment. I have space for that. When you are not confident, you're actually so much more self-absorbed because you're really in a state of worry. You're worrying about what the other person's going to think. You're worrying about what you're going to be able to say to make sure that she responds in a certain way.

So if I was doing that with this same girlfriend, I wouldn't be present and showing up in a way that I could give value to that conversation. Instead, I would be really consumed with my own thoughts and what she's really thinking and possibly how she's going to react to what I say. Sort of this little mini game of control and trying to sort of manipulate the conversation.

So interestingly when you are most self-confident, you are open, and you want to give more. You have the capacity to give to that other person and to listen when you're conversing. Your language will show it. It's not about being agreeable, but it's about connecting and being open. That's how you'll show up if you feel confident.

If you don't feel confident, if you feel insecure or worried or like you're not good enough, you will show up in conversations not fully present because your mental thoughts, your chatter, are so wrapped up in making sure you're safe and secure and people like you. You can't give in that moment.

It's just really fascinating to know that the more self-confidence you feel, and you have the actually less self-absorbed you are. Because you're not going around thinking about yourself all the time. It's not arrogance. It's just genuinely, "I love myself. I got my own back. And I love you, and I can show up, and I can love you in this conversation. I know that I have value to add just like you have value to add. That's confident communication.

The third part of confident communication is the non-verbal communication. So we communicate physically with our non-verbal cues. Physical gestures will rarely hide the truth while words often do. So, for example, if I'm conversing with a girlfriend and I'm agreeing with everything she says. But I'm doing it from a place of wanting her to like me, I'm not doing it from a

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place of genuinely thinking that way. My words will agree with her. I'll say something like, "Yes, I totally agree with you." But my nonverbal cues will not. It's fascinating.

So even if my friend whom I'm conversing with isn't consciously looking for these verbal cues, she's always unconsciously looking for them. We all are. This is sort of a survival mechanism that we've learned how to do as we've evolved as humans. We want to make sure we're safe and secure and part of the pack. It's really useful. We can read people's facial expressions, body language, and their tone of voice.

It's the old saying it's not what you say, it's how you say it. This is part of that nonverbal communication. So regardless of whether the person who you're conversing with is intentionally looking for the nonverbal cues, which 9.9 times out of 10 we're not doing this. We're not consciously saying, "I'm going to go look for nonverbal cues." We're still doing that even though we don't consciously think we're doing it. We don't think about it at all. We just think that we're communicating.

It's like after a conversation and you know the person agreed with you and they said they supported you, but something was off. Our brains are so smart they can pick up on that. Maybe the one, the body language, the facial expressions. I mean I think you could even apply this digitally. If someone is pretty non-responsive and sort of short, we pick up on that. It's not necessarily the words that they're saying. It's the nonverbal communication.

The messages we give with our nonverbal communication tell someone whether to approach us. And they tell someone whether we want to invite that person into our space. Or they tell someone whether to avoid and we're not interested. So these nonverbal cues, this way of nonverbal communicating give us cues about love and attraction and security and all of the other sort of emotions that we feel. We're feeling them based on our thoughts, but our thoughts are often based on how we're interpreting the

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world not just through words that are said but through those nonverbal ways of communicating.

I like to think that your body doesn't lie. It always tells the truth. I once heard Tony Robbins talk about this. He was talking about looking at people's nervous systems and how they're sort of moving their hands and their faces. There's facial expressions.

I used to have a facial expression app. I don't know what it's called. I don't remember. But it was something to do with micro expressions. And how as humans, we generally have the same responses on our faces when we feel fear, when we are excited, when we're happy, when we're disgusted. There are actually professionals who do this for a living. Some of them are high up in law enforcement, and they're trained to read facial expressions.

There was a show a while back on this. I can't remember what it was called. Something like don't lie to me or something about lying. The way that they determined lying was sort of this broad rulebook on nonverbal communications that most people do when they're lying. It's really fascinating. I love this stuff. I think just the human species and the way that we communicate is so fascinating.

So what I want to suggest to you is to start with just noticing where you are. So what is your mental chatter like? That's part one. Are you letting your inner critic dominate or are you balancing it with the inner coach and letting the inner coach dominate? What about the words that you use when you're in conversations with others? Are you conversing from a place of openness and giving value and respect? Or are you a little bit more insecure and unsure and really kind of all up in your head instead of being present and open and willing to connect?

You'll know this based on the language that you use. It will be a cue into what you're thinking when you are present with others. So just start to notice the language you use when you're talking. What are the actual

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words that you speak? Are they signs that you're feeling really confident? Or are they signs that you're feeling really insecure?

So we can always look at our own actions and work backwards and see. "Okay, what was I thinking and feeling that drove me to take that action?" So language and your words are actions. The action that you speak. That will tell you what you were thinking and feeling. If you are feeling insecure and unsure, your words will be very different than if you are communicating and speaking from a place of feeling confident.

Lastly, you want to pay attention to your body language. Pay attention to your facial expressions. The tone of voice you use. Are you gesticulating a lot with your hands? Are you closed and crossing your arms? Do you turn away? Are you looking down? Or are you a little bit more open and available and kind of standing confidently? There's sort of this sense that when you're confident, you're very open and appear to stand with a strong stature. Conversely if you want to avoid and hide and shrink, you're going to be crossing your legs, crossing your arms, looking down. Sort of doing what you can to almost physically hide.

Again, the first step of this is simply to be aware of all three types of communication that you currently do. It's tempting to want to go to the part where you change all of it at once, but it's going to serve you so much more if you simply become aware of it. So as that person who wants to have that inner coach sort of dominate, just allow yourself to be the watcher of your mental chatter, the words you have with others, and your nonverbal communication. Do that from the place of being this scientist who is curious and open and just start noticing.

Ask yourself questions. "I wonder why my brain thinks it's a good idea to always want to reply and to always be worried about what other people are thinking. Like my brain thinks that's definitely a good idea. I wonder why." When you slow down and you approach yourself as that scientist from curiosity, you're going to get so much access to what's really going on.

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Conversely if you just try to change all of these things at once, it's not going to stick. So the good news is even if you do try to change them all at once, it won't last. Kind of the old habits and patterns will come back up. Then it's just another opportunity for you to do this work. So the more that you slow down, you approach yourself as that curious scientist who loves yourself unconditionally, the more you're going to gain access into how you're showing up, how you're communicating, and how you're feeling.

So if you want to work on communicating more confidently, being more confident. Again, this is just one of the steps in my five-step self-confident method. I want to invite you to join us in Grow You for the remaining four steps. You'll get the full course, the workbook. I'll coach you. You'll have 24/7 written coaching support. That's what I have for you today. I'll talk with you next week.

If you loved this podcast, you're going to love Grow You. Grow You is my virtual life coaching program where I take everything on the podcast to the next level. I invite you to join our amazing community of women and moms and deepen your own personal development. Head on over to nataliebacon.com/coaching to learn more.

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