

Podcast Episode 208 - Smart Confidence Building Habits

Trudy Rankin: [00:00:00] Confidence isn't something that magically appears overnight. It's built step by step, just like a muscle is. And today, I want to dive into how you can build confidence that lasts. Now, have you ever found yourself hesitating because you're not sure you have what it takes? Or maybe you're dealing with that nagging voice that says you're not good enough.

So what if I told you there are practical habits you can start building today that's going to turn that voice of self doubt and help you move forward with confidence?

Trudy Rankin: In this episode, I want to share with you nine actionable habits that you can implement right away. As someone who's faced my own challenges in building a business, I know firsthand how vital these confidence building habits are.

I've used them all, and they have definitely helped me.

[00:01:00]

Trudy Rankin: Welcome to the Online Business Launchpad podcast. I'm Trudy Rankin, and I bring you stories, tips, and advice from online entrepreneurs who have overcome problems and challenges to get to success. Because if we've done it, so can you. I've been running my own online business for over nine years now, And because of what I've learned, I've become passionate about helping business owners like you successfully tackle the bumps in the road that could stop you from hitting the goals that matter to you.

I've used my experience and the experience of others to help hundreds of people grow the online side of their business. And one of my greatest joys is working with people who, because of life circumstances, need a flexible work from home option that helps them pay the bills. My mission is simple. I want to help you solve the challenges you face as an online business owner so that you can have more time and money for yourself and your family and more choices in how you live your life.

Built-in Microphone: Confidence is something that doesn't always come naturally. and today I want to talk about some of the habits that you can build

[00:02:00] and actions that you can take that will build your confidence over the long term, just like exercising a muscle makes that muscle stronger. So let's talk about some things that you can start doing right now to develop those confidence building habits.

Marker - 1. The Habit Of Breaking Down Tasks

Trudy Rankin: The first one I want to talk about is the habit of breaking down tasks.

If you're working on something that feels huge or intimidating, like maybe pitching an idea to somebody, or going for a big job or basically starting a business, it will be so much easier to do if you break down this process into smaller, manageable steps.

For example, let's say you're going to pitch an idea for an article to a publication.

You're going to start by finding a publication that takes pitches, and then you're going to research the publication to get a sense of the vibe and what they're looking for. Then you're going to turn your notes into a really rough first draft pitch, and you're going to polish your pitch.

Then you're going to take a deep breath and hit send for the email. And then you need to make sure that you schedule follow up emails, because [00:03:00] most of the time you're not going to get a response straight away. And then you need to keep sending those follow up emails.

So, doing each step builds momentum, and splitting those steps out like that makes the whole process seem not quite so overwhelming.

Marker - 2. The Habit of Reframing Negative Thoughts

Trudy Rankin: The second thing that you can do in terms of building habits that can help you build confidence is to start to think about how you can reframe your negative thoughts.

It's really easy to let our brains droop down into negativity territory, which is not great, because if you don't nip negative thinking in the bud, it can stop you in your tracks and rob you of momentum, of lessons learned, of success. And all because you've convinced yourself that you are not good enough or not experienced enough or who are you to think anyone would want to read what you've written, etc, etc, etc, ad nauseum, you know, please pass the barf bag.

I think you know what I'm talking about. We all have negative, imposter shaped thoughts, all of us, so it's more a matter of figuring out [00:04:00] how to deal with those thoughts instead of beating ourselves up for having them. The trick, of course, and this is mindfulness and habit building coming in. is to first learn to recognize that your thoughts have gotten trapped in a negative mindset whirlpool before you spiral down, and secondly to immediately take an action that's going to reset the focus and direction of your thoughts.

Now, the one thing that I found that really helps me is to reframe what I'm thinking, and sometimes just that process makes me feel like I'm living in a parallel universe. Trying to come up with a suitably positive reframe, but it does help turn thoughts like, I'm not experienced enough, into, wow, I'm learning so much every time I try and fail.

Marker - 3. The Habit of Celebrating Small Wins

Trudy Rankin: The third thing I want to talk about is the habit of celebrating small wins. Now I have to confess that when I was working in corporate as a chief information officer, celebrating the small wins and the successes was not something that pushed my buttons that much.

I would tend to finish something and then [00:05:00] immediately move on to the next thing. But the science is pretty clear on this one. In The Power of Small Wins, a Harvard Business Review article, Authors Teresa M. Amabile and Stephen J. Kramer, and I hope I pronounced their names correctly, dive deep into what they call the progress principle, which very simply they say, of all the things that can boost emotions, motivation, and perceptions, during a workday, the single most important is making progress in meaningful work. And the more frequently people experience that sense of progress, the more likely they are to be creatively productive in the long run.

Whether they're trying to solve a major scientific mystery, or simply produce a high quality product or service, everyday progress, even a small win, can make all the difference in how they feel and perform.

Now, the way I think of it is that acknowledging a small win brings it to the front of your mind, and by focusing on that small win in a very mindful way, even just a quiet little woohoo gives your [00:06:00] brain a bit of an endorphin hit, and I do so like endorphin hits.

Now, there are so many things that can be small wins. It might be sending that tough email, or having that hard conversation about pricing, or submitting a really out there pitch, or even deliberately choosing to take a day off and have some dedicated you time. Anything that's going to help you celebrate that small win in a meaningful way.

Marker - 4. The Habit of Learning from Rejection

Trudy Rankin: All right, let's talk a little bit about the habit of learning from rejection. So here's the thing. Do you seriously know anyone who got a great writing gig the first time they asked for one and they've never been turned down since? Or have you seriously ever heard of anyone who started up a business and they got it absolutely 100 percent right from the very get go and never made any mistakes?

Nope, didn't think so.

We all have to deal with rejection as writers or as business people. And we [00:07:00] might as well figure out how to reframe rejection into something more positive, so that we can use each rejection as a learning tool, rather than letting it eat away at our confidence. Now, recently, I've been thinking about adding a new type of writing service to my business.

So, I started reaching out to people that I already had a working relationship with, and who might reasonably want that service. And I told them that I was thinking about offering this new service, and asked if they would be interested.

And the result? I got a handful of no thank you, we don't need that type responses, plus a bunch of crickets from the rest. So, for those of you who are not familiar with that term, crickets, it basically means absolutely zero responses. As in, no replies at all. And I'm delighted.

Well, why am I delighted when it's actually a rejection? Because I've just saved myself a ton of wasted time and effort by not having to work on creating the new service. If it's not needed, there's no point in creating or [00:08:00] offering it. So now I can spend my time coming up with another, better idea.

Marker - 5. The Habit of Seeking Feedback and Mentorship

Trudy Rankin: Okay, let's talk about the habit of seeking feedback and mentorship.

It can be a really lonely life as a freelancer of any kind, let alone as a writer or a small business owner. And one of the best things I ever did was to join a handful of communities that were full of people trying to do the same thing that I do.

Being in communities like that gives you a place to share, to ask questions, to seek help and give help, and all the things that make a community a great place to hang out. And finding a mentor, either within this community or outside it, is really vital to your long term success. Your mentor might be someone you talk to on a regular basis, or it might be a mix of books, podcasts, and information you find online or on YouTube.

So, wherever you find someone who is ahead of you on the path to success, whether that's in a community or outside of the community, it's always good to stop for a second and see whether they're willing to share what they've learned from their own successes and failures. And that's what we like [00:09:00] doing on this podcast.

We really, really enjoy doing that and also in the videos we make for the YouTube channel.

Marker - 6. The Habit of "Faking It 'Til You Make It"

Trudy Rankin: Okay, let's talk about something that gets said a lot particularly in the world of online business, sometimes for writers, not quite so much usually. Okay. But that's the habit of saying the phrase fake it until you make it and so maybe we should be talking about the habit of faking it until you make it. But I have to confess that I actually hate that saying. Fake it until you make it seems so false. And it wasn't until I started to think about it more deeply that I

realized it that it's simply another way of saying, hey, just get started, you're going to be bad at it, but the only way you're going to get better is to keep doing it, and doing it, and doing it, until suddenly, you realize that you actually do know what you're doing, and can do it well.

And there's something called the Conscious Competence Model that I find super helpful [00:10:00] in explaining how this actually works. Because basically, as you try, try, and try again, you go through four stages. The first stage is unconscious incompetence. You don't know what you don't know. Then you have conscious incompetence. You do know what you don't know. Then you move through to conscious competence. You know what you're doing, but you have to really concentrate to get it right, and then you have unconscious competence, where it's so easy for you to do that, whatever it is that you're doing, that it's like breathing, and you cannot understand why other people find it so hard or even impossible to do.

But I think the key point here is just keep trying and don't give up. You don't have to claim to be an expert when you're not, but you can say that you're working towards becoming one.

Marker - 7. The Habit of Creating Routines for Success

Trudy Rankin: Alright, let's talk about the habit of creating routines for success. Now, I'm pretty sure that I don't have to say too much about how important it is to create routines that lead to success, like writing a set amount each [00:11:00] day, or going out and doing some type of marketing task every day, if you're a writer sending out one pitch a week, or whoever you are, making yourself name all your files in such a way that you can find them again 10 years from now.

Now, I am, of course, assuming that you will be still writing 10 years from now, or still be running your business 10 years from now, because these kinds of routines create structure and give a sense of accomplishment, now, small wins anyone, which helps confidence grow over time, and confidence breeds success.

Marker - 8. The Habit of Continuous Learning and Self-Improvement

Trudy Rankin: Okay, let's have a look at the habit of continuous learning and improvement. Now, it can be hard to know exactly where to spend your time learning new things. and honing your skills because there really is a lot going on right now, probably in your business, um, in the world, in your family, in your life.

But keeping up with trends and what's happening is so important, especially for things like AI artificial intelligence and the impact it's having on [00:12:00] small businesses and writers and translator businesses. So trend spotting and talking with others in your industry is a must do. So is going to conferences and summits, virtual or face to face.

Reading relevant articles and books and, you know, just basically keeping your finger on the pulse.

And if you can afford it, find courses that will help you upskill. Courses about particular areas where you're wanting to get better, or maybe anything on how to use AI to automate your business processes and free up time for yourself.

Marker - 9. The Habit of Using Affirmations or Journaling

Trudy Rankin: All right, let's talk about the habit of using affirmations or journaling. Now, there's one habit that I've developed over the years of running my own business that has really been enormously helpful, and that has been to religiously plan my week every Monday morning. And then at the end of each weekday, I take the time to write down and reflect on how things have gone that day.

I do try to focus on the positive and celebrate those small wins. But I'll also use a not so smiley [00:13:00] face to show when something's not gone as planned or if it's gone off the rails in a really big way. So not only does this weekly planning and daily reporting help me stay on track, but when I'm feeling overwhelmed or bad about what seems to be really slow progress, I can look back at previous weeks and just see how far I've really come.

And that is a really big help with mindset when my brain is spewing imposter syndrome rubbish all over the place, which it does do sometimes.

Most successful business owners I know use something similar to my planning system or they'll write a daily journal about how things are going and how they're feeling.

And other people swear by affirmations, but I finally don't work as advertised for me for some reason, I'm not sure why.

So instead, just before I go to sleep, I'll think about three to five things that I'm grateful for, for that day..

And not only does that send me to sleep in a better mood, but it sets my unconscious mind up in a good way for the next [00:14:00] day.

And there you have it. So creating good confidence building habits that stick is a, is a really long term game that does require intentional effort. And there are a lot of things on this list, so don't try to do them all at once. In fact, I recommend that you pick just one and try that particular one for a while.

You can either start with one that interests you the most, or you can go with the one that seems the easiest for you to get started with. It doesn't really matter. Just choose one and do it. And most of all, remember to give yourself a bit of grace. I find when I'm starting something new or doing something that requires new skills, it's really helpful to remind myself that everyone starts at zero, or as one person puts it, we all start at suck.

And that only by doing what you don't feel confident in doing will you ever develop the skills and the confidence that you need. So when you're not feeling the confidence you need to take that next step or finish that next task, just try a few of these [00:15:00] confidence and habit building techniques. You might just be amazed at how well they work.

Thank you so much for joining me today as we explored these powerful confidence building habits. They worked for me and I'm pretty sure they'll work for you.

Now remember, confidence isn't something that happens overnight. It is a long game, but it's totally worth it. So pick one habit from today's episode and start putting it into practice. And if you found this episode helpful, I'd love for you to subscribe and leave a review. Your feedback helps me shape future episodes, and it also helps other people find the podcast and get the help they need.

Thanks again for listening, and I'll catch you next time on the Online Business Launchpad podcast.