

CONFIDENCE

Don't assume that confidence comes naturally to seemingly confident people. They may just seem that way.



Confidence-building is a skill that you are capable of mastering. But like any other skill... you need to practice. And believe me — I've been practicing for years...

I grew up so shy and I wasn't born with the confidence gene. My father didn't finish high school, my mom only finished high school and out of 4 of us, my sister was the only one that went to college to become a teacher because that was the safe job in those days. No entrepreneurs, no guest speakers, no authors, and we never had any conversations about confidence. I was lucky that my parents always showed me unconditional love, but I had to carve my own path to help me overcome a negative self-image. I truly don't know what drove me to seek out professional, financial and, of course, personal success...but perhaps it was a course of events and something inside me that helped me ditch some insecurities and discover some confidence.

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STORY TIME

"If you talk about what you know and you'll always know what you're talking about."



Let me share a personal story with you.

Having a book signing was an item on my bucket list, yet when it finally happened (the photo on the left at my first book signing) I was a wreck. I hadn't memorized my book and I was afraid I'd be asked tough questions. What if I'd be found to be a fraud? Someone who wasn't an expert?

But the reality was — I knew more about the subject than anyone in that room. What I didn't know then, but I live by now, is that I only had to talk about the chapters that I liked best — the topics I felt confident — and the information I enjoyed sharing the most.

That's why I'm smiling in the photo on the right — that's me, years later with the second edition of my book, Read It Before You Eat It - Taking You from Label to Table, and after doing hundreds of interviews about my book and how to shop for the healthiest food in the store. I love talking about my book now because I've learned to control the conversations and therefore, welcome the feeling of confidence.

The lesson learned here is that being a writer or an author and getting your work published doesn't automatically mean you will be confident. But if you talk about what you know...you'll always know what you're talking about!

TITLE TREPIDATION



Although I have been writing throughout my entire career, because since my Bachelor's degree was in Clinical & Community Dietetics and My Masters was in Nutrition, I never called myself a writer because I didn't major in journalism. It actually wasn't until I got my first two writing jobs — one as a columnist for Newsday and the other was as a blogger for USA Today that I (sort of) called myself a writer. And even then...I thought my Editor would ask me to do over the drafts I handed in (because after all, I wasn't really a "journalist")— she barely made any corrections in my work and she loved that my stories brought tons of fan mail and comments.

Sadly, what I've noticed from the people that I coach is that whether it's "artist," "speaker," "writer," "photographer," "expert," or "author" — these are labels we're afraid to give ourselves because we don't believe we deserve them. Why are we hiding from these titles? "Influencers" are out there acting all nutrition-savvy all the time even though they don't have degrees! Right? They have no official qualifications... so what might they have that you might not have enough of?

You guessed it...they have lots of confidence!

So how can you become more confident?

CONFIDENCE

is something you can build

Be confident in the way you think. Your opinions matter. IF YOU ARE ASKED TO SPEAK ON A TOPIC — there's a very good chance that you know more than your audience. Even if you know just a little more — you still have something to teach. Something to share with others. Something valuable to say. For example, (and I know I could hear some gasps from this audience with this example), if you truly believe that it's important for clients to use a scale as a tool to measure an element of their success — don't be afraid to say so even if you'll get some backlash from other RDs. On the other hand, if you think most scales should have never been made because they're detrimental and they measure anything but success — then you're entitled to feel that way. We'll get back to this banter in a minute... but if you're going to make statements, you need to stand by your words without fear.

Be confident in the way you look. Whether you dress professionally or casually, you need to feel grounded in whatever style you feel comfortable with. I love to wear a T-shirt and jeans — but unless I'm doing an interview from a farm, it's not likely that I'd wear that on TV wearing. But if that's your brand — go for it. Know yourself and how you want to appear to others.

And pay close attention to your body language — crossing your arms, rolling your eyes and not making eye contact can speak louder than any of your words.

Be confident in the way you act. How do you want to come across? What is your image or your brand? Some RDs like to use curse words and they like to go for that shock value. Others like to be funny, taking a light-hearted approach. What actions make you feel more secure? How do you want to represent yourself?

Be confident in what you know. Don't talk about subjects you're shaky on. If you're not really a super-science type — don't pitch a story about how the Krebs Cycle works... especially if you're pitching to Cosmopolitan Magazine! Don't pitch stories about topics you don't like to talk about. I often get asked to give interviews about topics that I don't love to talk about — but I know my limits and my preferences.

Be confident in the way you feel. This is a tough one. This is going to take work, my friends. You've gotta dig deep and search for the confidence you didn't even know you had so that you can share your important messages with others.

I know you've been working very hard all of these years, **developing your imposter syndrome skills and building up your negative self-image.** I have a feeling you've had lots of demeaning, image-shattering, nasty conversations with yourself that brought you to where you are today. **An insecurity expert.**

CONFIDENCE

I can help you grow your confidence

We compare ourselves to others instead of comparing ourselves to ourselves. And here's what is so unfair about that practice: we compare our worst selves to their best selves.

You're comparing your problems to someone else that you assume has it all figured out. You can never win in this battle because you're not really comparing yourself to them — you're comparing your weakest, most vulnerable side to their strongest side.

We only see their polished, carefully curated traits — they are not showing us their insecurities, their baggage, their past or what they're not good at.

We don't actually know a whole lot about the people we compare ourselves to. So if you want to spend your time wisely and gain confidence and success at what you really want to accomplish, it's best to learn a little more about yourself before you waste time and focus your energy on someone that may just be an illusion.



Since plant-based diets are so hot these days, I thought it was best to equate growing confidence to gardening.

Whether it's through email, D/Ming me on Instagram, Tweeting on Twitter, messaging me on Facebook or just clicking on this [link](#)...I'm here if you need me and I hope this is just the beginning of many conversations we'll have together!