Welcome to The Verywell Mind Podcast! I'm Amy Morin, the editor-in-chief of Verywell Mind. I'm also a psychotherapist and a best-selling author of four books on mental strength. Every Monday, I introduce you to a mentally strong person whose story and mental strength tips can inspire you to think, feel, and do your best in life. And the fun part is we record the show from a sailboat in the Florida Keys! Don't forget to subscribe to the show on your favorite platform so you can get mental strength tips delivered to you every single week. Now, let's dive into today's episode!

Do you let your insecurities prevent you from doing big things? Do you often put yourself down or talk to yourself in a negative way? Do you spend a lot of time worrying about what other people think? If you answered yes to any of those questions, today's episode is for you. Having a healthy amount of confidence is really important. If you're overconfident, self-doubt creeps in and affects your performance. Or you might not even bother trying to do hard things. But overconfidence can also be a problem. If you underestimate a task or overestimate your abilities, you won't do well either.

Today, I'm talking to Lisa Bilyeu. Lisa's the co-founder of the billion-dollar company Quest Nutrition and the co-founder and president of Impact Theory. She's also the host of Women of Impact, a show that features women who've overcome incredible hardship to achieve massive success. And now she's the author of a new book called Radical Confidence. In it, she describes how she developed the confidence she needed to create the life of her dreams.
Amy Morin:
Lisa Bilyeu, welcome to *The Verywell Mind Podcast*!

Lisa Bilyeu:
Oh my God, Amy, thank you so much for having me. It's such a pleasure to be here and just hang out with you.

Amy Morin:
You too. I've known you for a while now, a few years. Been a long time, I guess. It feels like a long time since I was on your show years ago, but I heard you were writing a book. I didn't know exactly what your book was going to be about, and then I figured out it's about confidence. I thought this is the perfect book for you because you exude what a confident person looks like. I'm thrilled that you wrote it and thank you for putting it out there into the world.

My first question is, what does it mean to be... Your book is called Radical Confidence. What does it mean to have radical confidence as opposed to just how to be confident?

Lisa Bilyeu:
Yeah. I want to take us back a little where this concept really hit me and changed my life. Like absolutely changed my life. I was stuck from what I now call purgatory of the mundane. For eight years, my life was just mundane enough. It never hit rock bottom. We all know so many people that make massive changes in their lives when they hit rock bottom, because you almost don't have another choice, right? My life never hit rock bottom. I had a husband that loved me. I had a roof over my head.

I had two puppies that I adore. I didn't hit rock bottom to make a change and the mundanity of life was keeping me stuck. That's why I call it the purgatory. Now, when you think about it, a lot of us practice gratitude, which I 100% understand why. I practice gratitude myself. But what I realized is being grateful for certain things was exactly what was keeping me stuck in other areas of my life. Because the narrative in my head was...
telling me, "Lisa, who are you to ask for this when you have a husband that loves you? How ungrateful are you to want more when you have a roof over your head?"

The gracefulness was keeping me stuck and I thought I didn't have the confidence to make a change. This is where radical confidence comes in, because over time I realized that I had to stop waiting for confidence. Confidence was a feeling. I want to feel good about doing this act. And then I realized, but what if I didn't have to feel good? What if I could actually take all of my insecurities, all the fear I have, or like rightfully so my insecurities and fear because I wasn't experienced in what I wanted to be, an entrepreneur, but I still did it anyway.

I faced the fact that my insecurities were holding me back, but I kept moving forward. And that's what I call radical confidence. It's not about feeling amazing about yourself. It's about still stepping up to the plate, bat in hand. Even if you're worried you're going to swing and miss, even if you're worried that you're going to swing and mess up royally, you still freaking show up and learn.

Amy Morin:
That's one of the things I appreciated so much about your book. So many other people, when they talk about confidence, they'll say things like, "List five things that you're good at and read it to yourself in the mirror," and that kind of stuff. And that kind of stuff can kind of help sometimes. But you make it abundantly clear, you have to get out there and do something. You can't just shift the way you think, or you're not going to magically wake up tomorrow and feel better.

You got to go out and do those things and doing those things and being insecure while you do them doesn't mean that you can't still be a confident person. The fact that you're pushing through those insecurities is what matters.

Lisa Bilyeu:
Yeah, absolutely. And that's the thing it's like... I love that you said you can't just say it. And that's why when I'm like, "Hey, I've got radical confidence, which means I'm insecure and do it anyway." It's not as simple as that. You need tactics. You need tools, because in those moments where you have crippling anxiety, where that voice in your head is literally telling you, "You are no good. You're going to mess up. You're going to embarrass yourself," all these things are very true and can be very crippling.

Looking back at the eight years where I didn't make a move, it was because I allowed that to dictate how I showed up. It's not about, just go and do it anyway. It was like, okay, I know I need to, but I don't feel ready yet. How do I take that first step, even though I feel completely inadequate? How do I take that next step when the voice in my head is telling me I'm no good? That's what the book is about, is about taking the tactics
of actually how to step into it, and then over time building the competence so that you get so good that you end up with confidence.

But I want people to stop focusing on freaking confidence as the end goal. Because that's the thing, no one says, right, Amy, "I want confidence by itself." You want confidence to do something. You want confidence to go after that job. You want confidence to tell your parents that you no longer want to study science and, in fact, you want to be a standup comedian. You want confidence to tell your partner that you're no longer happy in the relationship. You want confidence for something.

What I'm saying is if we can just change our mindset and start focusing on that end goal and putting tactics and tools in place that allow you to take small incremental steps towards that goal, now you can still be scared, now you can still be afraid and insecure and maybe not even have the skillset, but you're still taking those steps forward that eventually will lead to competence, that will eventually lead to confidence.

Amy Morin:
As a therapist, I can't tell you how many people come in my office and say something like, "I need you to make me confident so I can either apply for that promotion, go back to college." I don't have any magic wands. I can't suddenly make you wake up tomorrow and feel confident enough that you can go do these things, but I can give you some skills and tools and strategies that you can use to start taking those steps.

And then when you go back to college, when you get that new job, when you end a relationship that isn't good for you, that's how you become more confident. In your book, you give us really good strategies of steps and things and actionable tips of things we can do. I'd love to run through some of those. One of the things you talk about is the fact that we need to save ourselves.

Lisa Bilyeu:
Yes.

Amy Morin:
So often we think, okay, somebody's coming to rescue me. They're not, right? How do we save ourselves?

Lisa Bilyeu:
Yeah. This was one of those most powerful lessons that I learned, and it was one of those moments that it actually could have broken me forever, or it could have made me the person you see today. I want to take you back. We're starting Quest Nutrition. I've been a housewife for eight years. My husband asks me to just help him on his new
business, right? I had the mindset myself, "I'm a good traditional Greek wife. Of course, I'm going to support my husband. I've spent the last eight years doing it.

I've given up hopes, all my dreams of making movies. And now I've dedicated my life to being a good wife and serving my husband." When he asked me to help him with Quest, I was like, "Oh my God, of course, yes. I'll help. I'm a good Greek wife to help you." I dive in and start helping him. Now, what I didn't realize is the company would grow 57,000%. Every step of the way, I was learning how to handle my insecurities because our house was on the line. Our house was down as collateral.

Every time I didn't show up for myself, every time I didn't push the boundary, every time I stopped at an obstacle, I kept telling myself that, "Hey, you may lose your house." In that, I took it very seriously. The sad news is I went all in to the detriment of my health. I went in thinking, I've heard all about the grind. Entrepreneurs say you've got to put in every ounce of your being to make a company work. I ignored my body. I was having massive digestive issues and they were getting worse and worse and worse, and I was ignoring it every step of the way.

And then finally, one day, when actually the dream came true. Tom and I would drive around Beverly Hills and we would literally dream about the day that we would buy a house there. And that was our motivation on the days that really sucked, on the days that we were really sad or just tired and you're like, "Why on earth am I doing all this?" Everyone's had those moments, right, where they're going for their dream and they're like, "What the hell am I doing?" In those moments, we need to remind ourselves.

We drive around Beverly Hills. And then cut to three years later, we grew 57,000% and we actually get the house in Beverly Hills. It's like the fricking dream come true goal. It's like I wanted to do a '90s hip hop video with champagne under the waterfall. That was my dream. The day comes. I mean, I cannot believe it's actually happening. The day comes. I drink the champagne, and that was the day that my health changed overnight. It felt like my gut erupted. And after that day, I could barely eat anything for at least a year.

I was losing weight. I was like 20 pounds lighter than I was now. I am literally living the cliche that money doesn't buy happiness. It was like almost comical on like the timing. I couldn't eat. I couldn't stand up for longer than five minutes at a time. I couldn't wear a bra. And at this point, quest is like the biggest nutrition company in the world. I'm feeling shame. I'm feeling embarrassment. I'm hiding it because I'm like, "well, hang on a minute, I'm co-founder I can't have these health issues. What are people going to think?"

Always worrying about the outside. What I did is I kept waiting for other people to save me. I would go to the doctors and I'd be like, "All right, best doctor in Los Angeles and you've got all these famous people on your wall, save me." They're giving me pills. They're giving me antibiotics. They're giving me prescriptions. Nothing worked. Nothing
Nothing worked. To the point where I was so just giving my power over that a
doctor once said, "We've just done an allergy test, Lisa, and it shows that you are
allergic to beef. You actually need to stop eating beef."

Now up to this point, the only thing I could barely stomach when I said I could
barely eat anything, the only thing I could barely was beef. Now, I knew it felt good, and
yet an expert told me I should stop. And Amy, I stopped. I listened to the doctor
because I thought they could save me. I went into absolute gastro distress. I had to go
back to the beef because they were telling me to eat raw vegetables. Anyway, cut to I
was just looking outside and I couldn't find an answer for two years.

I was literally like just losing weight and getting wafer thin. To the point where
one of the most blessings, insights, mindsets I discovered, which was, oh, I need to stop
waiting for other people to come and fix me, because right now I am given my power
over. Now, if I can change my perspective and say... Sorry, let me just back up actually.
I was saying, "Well, the doctors did this to me. The doctors gave me antibiotics. The
doctors wouldn't have given me that many antibiotics if they knew it was bad for me."

The second I started to realize I was turning to them to heal me, I realized I was
repeating their habit. I was looking outside of myself to get someone to tell me what to
do. Once I turned my perspective into, "What if this was all my own doing?" Now, some
people will be like, "Oh my God, you're blaming yourself. You should never blame
yourself." But at that point, I was like, "How can this empower me? Blaming is
destructive, right? But if I can take ownership over it, how can this empower me?" In
that moment, I said, "This is my own doing. It's not the doctors. I swallowed the
antibiotics."

When the doctor said, "Lisa, I probably shouldn't give you this many antibiotics,"
not once, Amy, did I ask them why. Not once did I go on Google and go, "What does too
much antibiotics do to your gut?" I didn't ask the questions. I turned to an expert
expecting them to give me the results, and I was doing that with my healing. Literally in
that moment, I was like, I need to stop looking outside for other people to save me. I
need to recognize I am absolutely the hero of my own life. I love hero analogies.

It gets me excited, and I think how you feel about something makes a difference.
I use that analogy on purpose to uplift me, to get me into the superhero mindset. I said,
"Now you have to save yourself." Now, if saving my... What does saving myself look
like? It means trusting my body, trusting the signals my body is giving me. From that
day on, I took full ownership. I got out my little black book and I wrote down every single
thing I ate, every single thing that impacted me, how my bowel movements were, how
long I slept for, how well I felt.

Did I have clarity? Was I able to make decisions? The second I took full
ownership, the second I decided I am going to save myself was literally the pivotal
moment that I changed my entire health. I am now so much better, and I've taken that
mindset into other areas of life, into my relationship. I really want people to think right now as I'm talking, what are the things that they're having issues with in their life?

And just ask themselves the question, this isn't about blame, this isn't about anything like that, but just ask yourself the question, if I could take ownership over this, right this problem, what would I do differently? How can I show up today? How can I show up tomorrow to try and save myself, to try and be my own hero? And just by asking the question will start leading you to incredible solutions in your relationship with your partner, in business, in your health journey, in any goal you're trying to do.

It takes the power that you're giving away and takes full ownership and gives you the ability now to make a change.

Amy Morin:
Where's that line between taking feedback from somebody who's an expert, whether it's a doctor or somebody in business that has more experience than you, and then to take their opinion, but also not blindly following somebody's advice and thinking that it's all the way up to them or that it's all the way up to us? How do you find that line?

Lisa Bilyeu:
Yeah, I love this question. I position myself as being the learner. Telling myself, "Hey, Lisa, you're the person that learns," allows me to get back up every time I fail. It allows me to enter situations where I don't know what the hell I'm doing, like writing a book, and it just allows me to go, "But I'm the learner. Doing this, I'm going to learn a lesson." Every situation that if I'm the newbie, I come into it with other grace and I give myself the grace to go, "Lisa, you don't know anything. Who's the expert in the room and pay attention to them." Right?

Because I'm not going in saying, "I know things better than everyone else." No, that is setting you up for failure. If I go, "Okay, this doctor knows way more than me, so I'm going to treat him like the expert. He has more credibility than I do." I actually use this language in our business. There'll be someone in our company, let's say tech, and they've just started the business. They give me advice and they're like, "But only if it's up to you, Lisa." I'm like, "It's not up to me. You have credibility here. That's why I hired you."

Having the credibility, listening to them, but then testing and not going into it blindly. For instance, the doctor said to me, "Hey, you should eat more vegetables and stop eating beef." I went into it going, "Cool," even though I already had proof in my knowledge over the past year that beef was actually the thing that helped me. I was ignoring the knowledge I brought to the table, and that's where the line is. Are you ignoring things you actually know because someone is coming in and telling you so?
Are you dismissing experts because that's just as important? I go into... I'm actually going to take their word as truth even if I disagree. That's always my first step. Don't dismiss an expert. But let me tell you, if an expert isn't able to help you, then you need to start tapping in to your gut, because intuition I don't think is blind intuition. Intuition is things that we've been taught time and time again every single day for our entire lives that we've learned. Something isn't right here.

It might be a micro expression in the doctor. It might be something that you've heard where your past experience tells you, "Huh! That actually isn't true." But intuition isn't blind intuition. It's been cultivated our entire lives.

Amy Morin:
Yeah, and I think we've all been there where we took somebody's advice and there was part of us that thought, "This doesn't make sense. I probably shouldn't be doing it," yet we thought, "This is an expert, so I'm going to do it." But we're the expert in our own lives, at our own bodies, in our minds. Okay, well, this is what I'm going to try. This is what I've tried and hasn't worked.

We know too when somebody's not listening or somebody doesn't know our story where somebody just offers you advice and you're like, "Yeah, but you don't know the back story." Unless we trust ourselves to know, "Thank you for that, but I'm going to do it this way," it's really tough to make a lot of decisions.

Lisa Bilyeu:
Yeah, and because I'm not afraid to fail, because I have the identity of the learner. I'm very willing to try things. I think that that's also the key is that I try things and then assess them. And then if you keep repeating the same mistake and the result keeps happening, where the definition of insanity is doing the same thing and expecting a different result. I just treat it as a learning experience.

Amy Morin:
I love that. Because you won't know what works for you unless you experiment. We do lots of behavioral experiments. I always recommend people, try this for a couple weeks. You'll either feel better, worse, or the same. If you feel better, we'll keep doing it. If not, we'll find something else.

Lisa Bilyeu:
I love that. The one thing that I also add is I assess. The language I use, is it going to dent the car, or is it going to total the car? I will more than happily try anything that would dent the car. I will never do something that will total the car. Before I try it, like even if an expert's telling me, I'll have to assess which one is it. Because even if they're
like, "No, no, no, no, this is going to be amazing. This is the thing," if it is going to wreck the car, I just won't do it.

Amy Morin:
That's wise. I love that. I love that saying. Something else you talk about in the book that I've never heard other than I think Tom invented it, your husband Tom, emotional sobriety.

Lisa Bilyeu:
Yes!

Amy Morin:
You talk about that and I thought that's brilliant. Can you explain what that is?

Lisa Bilyeu:
Yeah, oh my God. He came up with a phrase and I just ran with it because I love it so much. Amy, have you ever had alcohol before?

Amy Morin:
Yes.

Lisa Bilyeu:
Have you ever had a couple too many drinks one or two nights?

Amy Morin:
Yep.

Lisa Bilyeu:
You ever woken up the next day and gone, "Oh God, I can't believe I said that. I can't believe I did that."

Amy Morin:
Yep.

Lisa Bilyeu:
I have too. I think a lot of us have. That's exactly how I see emotion, where you've had one too many shots of anger or some emotion and you act out of character, and next day or after the fact you regret it. Now I go just like alcohol, because it's an easy analogy for me to go to, it's I know that if I have more than two shots, I know I'm going
to start acting slightly out of character. I know that if I'm going to take that third shot, that I'm going to be at home, that I'm not going to be around strangers.

I put in things that I know where my limits are, but we don't do that with emotions. To me, it's about identifying how you are feeling, where your emotions are, how they escalate, and then how you're able to see that with clarity, so that you don't find yourself in another situation where you're regretting it. Let's face it, when you're going off to anything, a goal, a dream, a relationship, any of that, there are going to be moments where someone upsets you, someone says something that frustrates you, someone makes you cry, makes you angry, makes you frustrated, anything.

I go, in those moments, how do you show up? To me, feelings are absolutely fricking imperative, right? I'm not that person that's like, "Ignore your feelings. Block them out." No, no, no. They absolutely will be a highlight to tell you and your body where things aren't right, where certain things don't sit right with you, and they can be a protective mechanism, but they also can absolutely lead you astray. In those moments, when you're feeling emotional, does it serve the situation? Yes or no.

I've never been in a situation, Amy, in my own personal life where I've been heated and I'm glad I stayed in that moment heated. I've always regretted it. Even if I'm just like, you know what? I had the right to be angry. Yes. You have a right to be angry, but are you proud of the person that left that? And often when I'm angry, words come up that aren't... It's not articulate. It's actually not showing that person respect, even if they disrespected you. I go, "Who do I want to be? Who do I want to show up as? How do I do it?"

When it comes to emotions, how do you become emotionally sober in those moments that don't serve you, whether it's relationship or business or whatever. I now break down in the book how to identify when you're spilling over into emotional drunkenness, when you've maybe had one or two shots of too much anger, and then how to deescalate, how to take that emotion and pivot it and moments to do that, and moments actually where you absolutely need to walk away because right now your emotions are not actually in true alignment with the situation. I'm just going to own it.

Amy Morin:

We make our best decisions when our emotions and our logic are a bit in check. The more emotions go up, the more logic goes down, things go out the window. If somebody gave you an IQ test when you're really angry, you're going to score really low on it. There's tons of research behind that that shows as our emotions go up, we get kind of dumb. And that's the last time you want to hold a really important conversation or do something that really matters to you because you can't even think clearly.

I was thrilled that your book covers that like, okay, what do you do when your emotions get really high? And for most of us, there are certain emotions that get us and
others that aren't a problem. I don't lose my cool very often. If I'm angry, whatever. I can usually still tame my temper. But anxiety, if I'm really anxious about something, the next day I'd be like, "What was I thinking?" But in that moment, I'll say something because I just want my anxiety to go away, or I want somebody to be safe.

Looking back, I'll think, "Wait, that wasn't logical what I was thinking in that moment." For all of us to recognize what are those emotions that get us and how do you calm yourself down in those moments so that you don't do those things that you regret.

Lisa Bilyeu:
Yeah, and then how to set yourself up so that you're less likely to get in those moments. Even things like hangry, we all know hangry exists, right? You get angry when you're hungry. Now think about the fact that just by going, "Oh, okay, cool. I'm going to monitor how much I eat and make sure that I don't get to the point where I get so hungry that I get angry," right? Know they self.

That's really the point is that assess the moments where you have been emotionally drunk, replay them and then say, "What are the red flags that I can pinpoint that I can then assess? Come up with a game plan. So that next time I find this red flag is waving, I know what to do." And then also know that if you're about to enter a moment or a situation that maybe you're anxious, or maybe you've been there before and you're like, "Oh my God, every time I have a discussion with this person at work, I always get into an argument with them. They always rattle me up," okay, now identify.

Know they self. Make sure that you sleep well the night before. Make sure that maybe you don't have too much caffeine. Make sure that you don't have too much sugar. Know that yourself and know what these things are that contribute to your emotional drunkenness.

Amy Morin:
And that's an important point because so many people think, "Well, I should be strong enough to handle anything. Therefore, if I'm in this situation, I should have been able to be calmer." Sometimes modifying the environment is the smartest thing you can do. When the outside feels like it's in order, then our insides are like, "Okay, I can handle this so much better." One more thing I want to talk about is your chapter about toughening yourself up.

Lisa Bilyeu:
Yes.

Amy Morin:
I really like this because you make a clear distinction between toughening yourself up in a way that would be like, "Oh, nothing bothers me." It's quite the opposite about recognizing the pain. One of the stories that you tell in this book, which you alluded to a little bit earlier, is these stomach issues that you had. That was the problem. But you spent a lot of time just treating the symptoms, right?

Lisa Bilyeu:
Yeah.

Amy Morin:
You tell this story about you're on a date with Tom and you're drinking Pepto-Bismol, but you're not really treating the deeper underlying issue. And so many of us do that in life where we think, "Okay, I'm going to address this," but we're just addressing a symptom, a little problem over here, rather than the main problem that's underneath. But can you explain more in your words about what it means to toughen yourself up?

Lisa Bilyeu:
Yeah, absolutely. I love that because... Here's the thing, I try to be tough and I think so many of us do. We don't necessarily look at the bigger picture and we just go like just push through it. Just push through it. And so many of us women do it, like, "I'm fine." No, no, no. We don't want to be the burden. We don't want to be the bother. It's like, "No, no. I'm fine. I'm fine. Suck it up and keep doing it." That was part of the toughen up, right, where it's like, to survive in business, you actually do have to be tough.

There's these moments where I'd adopted that belief, toughen up, get hard, nothing could push you around, Lisa. You are the hero of your own life, right? A lot of the mindset can actually help you, but sometimes it can actually be detrimental and knowing where that line is and knowing when you're spilling over into it. I thought, just be tough. No one wants somebody who's moaning and complaining all the time. I had massive gut issues. It was a date with my husband, and it was the most romantic day.

I planned it. I was so excited. We go to this restaurant and my stomach really starts hurting. And in that moment I'm like, "Well, I can't ruin the occasion," right? The voice, "You can't be the one. I mean, your husband's been looking forward to it for so long. You're about to have like a massive romantic evening. You've planned it all." I was like, oh my God, I know I can't really eat right now, but what if we went and got Pepto-Bismol? Let me just make my stomach okay so now I can actually still have a romantic evening with my husband.

Instead of saying, "What is wrong," I literally tried to just keep on toughening up, and it became detrimental to my health. To me, it's about where is that line between being tough where it's needed, because in business you do need to be tough, but also
where you can, give yourself grace. I say, be the buttercup. Where are the moments where actually the softness is beautiful and is important to lean into. What I do and what you do is we care about people. We really want to see change.

And so many people say, "You know what? You shouldn't care what other people think. You do you." And it's like, but I do care. That's the buttercup side of me. I really do care because I actually want to make a change in people's lives. How do you navigate the caring, the softness, the emotion, the giving your body grace to heal, giving your body grace to speak up and say, "Slow the hell down." How do you do that?

And also, how on earth do you in moments that are required toughen up, not let people push you around, set boundaries that are very clearly for your health, your sanity, your mental state, and how do you do both? That chapter really does cover taking the ownership, but making sure you don't eliminate the beauty that is also us as women, the buttercup, the soft side of it. It's playing with the dualities of that.

Amy Morin:
And such an important concept, right? If you're a little sore from working out two days ago, going back to the gym might be one of the best things you could do. But if you've got a broken ankle, don't go to the gym. Give yourself some time off. But it seems to be such a difficult concept. Again, as a therapist, I'll have people come in and say, "Well, I need more energy." Well, somebody who's working 80, 90 hours a week and they think that I'm going to be able to give them energy by talking about something.

They're out there killing themselves and think that they should be able to do more. And then on the flip side, I have other people that say, "Well, I have depression, so I haven't left the house in three weeks." They need to push themselves to get out of the house. Knowing when do you push yourself, when do you practice saying, "Okay, I'm going to give myself some slack right now and not push myself," that's a delicate balance to be had sometimes.

Lisa Bilyeu:
Yeah, it really is. For me, I go, "What is my goal?" Everything that I do is in service of my goal. When I go when it comes to my health, my goal is to create impact. How can I show up every day if I'm sick? How can I actually show up every day? In fact, how can I show up every day and empower people to live the life they want, to live the life that makes them happy if I'm freaking miserable behind the scenes? I absolutely hold myself to my own standard.

It's like I know it's so cliche, but it's cliche for a reason, put your oxygen mask on before you help others. It's like it's so true and I learned the hard way. I was going to be there for my husband. I was going to be there for the company, for Quest. I was going to be there for our customers, but I wasn't there for myself. And sadly, because I learned
the hard way, I made a promise to myself, girl, back then. Five years ago, I literally made a promise to myself.

I said, "Lisa, when you get better, never ever will you put your health last. You must come first." That's where I do that fine balance where I know because I've done the work of identifying where those flags are, where I spill over into, "You're a beast," and now, "Oh my God, you're about to crash and burn." I know that fine line because I've worked on it and I've identified where that is and it's if I'm not sleeping well, if I only eat twice a day, if I go to bed late. Those are all signs I'm about to crash and burn.

I know. Now I know how to pivot. Now I know how to show up every day and I know how to maneuver. Because to your point, it's sometimes really hard. But let's say your client has the goal where it's like, "I need more energy, but I'm working 90 hours." What's your goal. You need energy. Great. Then if that's your goal, you need to stop working 90 hours. There are some things like that that I actually love that are black and white, because it just forces me to go, "Lisa, you can argue with yourself."

How many times do we argue in our own mind about like, "Well, it's not that bad. Oh no, you're going to be fine. Come on. You can do it. Toughen up." We all argue with ourselves, and I need things that are black and white like that, that says, "Oh, Lisa, you've spent two days where you haven't gone to bed at 9:00 PM, you've gone to bed at 10:00 PM, you know that's a red flag."

Amy Morin:
I love your book. I hope all of our listeners go pick up a copy of Radical Confidence because it's not your usual confidence book. You give us a really clear roadmap of, okay, here are some strategies. The stories about yourself are great. You're honest about the struggles that you have gone through and make it really easy and actionable for all of us to say, "Okay, I can do these things." Lisa Bilyeu, thank you for being on the Verywell Mind Podcast and for sharing all of your wisdom in your new book.

Lisa Bilyeu:
Oh my God, Amy, you know how much I adore you. You're freaking awesome. Thank you so much for having me on. I hope that everyone listening can become radically confident in their own way to really live the life that they want.

Amy Morin:
I hope so, too!
Welcome to The Therapist's Take! This is the part of the show where I'll break down Lisa's mental strength-building strategies and share how you can apply them to your own life. There are three of Lisa's strategies that I highly recommend!

**Number one: empower yourself to be the expert on you.** Lisa said she used to follow advice from doctors and other experts who told her what to do. She didn't trust her instincts enough to do her own research or try to better understand why she was being told to do certain things.

When she started thinking more critically, though, about the advice that she was being given, she realized she needed to empower herself. That's really important. As a therapist, I always tell people, "You're the expert on yourself." I could give them a list of things that work for most people, but just because those things work for most people doesn't mean it's going to work for them. It's up to them to decide what they want to try, what they want to change, and how they want to create those changes.

Whether you're getting lots of unsolicited advice from a friend, or you're being told what to do from an expert, remember that you're the only person who can decide what's best for you.

**Number two: gain emotional sobriety.** Lisa shares how strong emotions can make us think and do irrational things. You can probably think of some examples in your own life of things that you've done when your emotions were high. Maybe you sent an email at work when you felt really angry and said some things that you later regretted. Or maybe you've texted and called someone incessantly when your anxiety was high.

That's when Lisa says we need to get some emotional sobriety. Do things that help calm your feelings before you take action. We've done several episodes on the coping skills that can help you regain control of those emotions that are driving you to do irrational things. Whether you do some breathing exercises, or you go for a walk to calm down, it's important to get your emotions in check. The more emotional we are, the less logical we are. We make our best decisions when our emotions and our logic are in balance.

It's important to recognize when you need to decrease your emotions and raise your logic.
Number three: know when to push yourself and when to step back. Lisa uses the phrase "toughen up, buttercup" to reflect on the idea that we should be tough sometimes, but also we should be soft at others. Sometimes it's obvious to know the difference. It's okay to run with a slightly sore muscle, but don't keep going if you have a broken ankle. Most of the time though it's difficult to know when you should step it up and when to back off.

Let's say you're tired after work. You could convince yourself that being strong means working out even though you don't feel like it and you push yourself to go to the gym. On the flip side, you might tell yourself that practicing self-care is important, you should listen to your body and take breaks, and therefore skip the gym to go home and rest. There's not a right or wrong answer. It's up to you to decide when to push yourself and when to step back. In the therapy office, we often find that the same problem has different solutions.

One person with depression might convince themselves they should stay home by themselves all the time and just watch TV until they feel better. Their solution might be to push themselves to go out and do things even though they don't feel like it. But another person with depression might be accepting invitations to everything. They might be so busy racing from one activity to the next that they lose sight of who they are and what they want to accomplish.

The solution to their depression might involve saying no more often so they can relax and focus on self-care. You might have to do some experimenting to figure out when to push yourself and when to step back. Challenge yourself enough to step outside your comfort zone, but step back and relax enough that you can take care of yourself as needed.

Those are three of Lisa's strategies that I highly recommend! Empower yourself to be the expert on you, gain emotional sobriety, and know when to push yourself and when to step back.

To hear more of Lisa's tips, check out her new book, Radical Confidence.

If you know someone who could benefit from hearing this message, share it with them. Simply sharing a link to this episode could help someone feel better and grow stronger.
Do you want free access to my online course? It's called “10 Mental Strength Exercises That Will Help You Reach Your Greatest Potential.” To get your free pass, all you have to do is leave us a review on Apple Podcasts. Then, send us a screenshot of your review. Our email address is podcast@verywell.com. We'll reply with your all-access pass to the course.

Thank you for hanging out with me today and for listening to The Verywell Mind Podcast! And as always, a big thank you to my show's producer (who has the confidence to wear white sneakers on a rainy day), Nick Valentin.