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Amy Morin:
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 five books on mental strength. My new workbook went on sale this week. It's called 13 Things Mentally Strong People Don't Do Workbook, and it's filled with mental strength-building exercises straight from my therapy office. You can buy a copy wherever books are sold.

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. 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!

Today, I'm talking to New York Times Best-Selling author Lewis Howes. He's the host of one of the top podcasts in the world called The School of Greatness. He's written several best-selling books, including one that's also called The School of Greatness,

Today, he's talking about some of his favorite tools, tips, and exercises for turning your dreams into reality. Make sure to stick around until the end of the episode for The Therapist’s Take. It's the part of the show where I'll give you my take on some of Lewis' strategies and share how you can apply them to your own life. Here's Lewis Howes on how to develop The Greatness Mindset!

Amy Morin:

Lewis Howes, welcome to *The Verywell Mind Podcast*!

Lewis Howes:

Amy, thank you very much. Appreciate it.

Amy Morin:

I'm excited to talk to you about all sorts of things, but I just got a copy of your new book, The Greatness Mindset, and really enjoyed reading it. I'm curious, you talk about greatness in lots of different ways. Your podcast is about greatness. You have another book about greatness, The School of Greatness. You do a greatness event. How did greatness become the thing that you decided you wanted to make your platform?

Lewis Howes:

I think I used to always be obsessed with the idea of success, but I realized after 30 years of my life that success didn't work for me. That success got me results, it got me accomplishments, it got me money, it got me credibility, but it didn't bring me a lot of peace at heart and fulfillment and joy and self-love, and it wasn't a sustainable motivator.

I realized that success is a very selfish thing. It's nothing right or wrong, good or bad with that, but it was selfish in the pursuit of wanting to win, look good, be number one and succeed. When I realized about 10 years ago that I was just kind of been doing it all wrong, that I wanted to understand more about what greatness was.
To me, greatness is including your goals and dreams and succeeding, but making sure you're lifting everyone else up around you and being of service to something greater than just self, something greater than me looking good, or me winning, or me being a New York time bestseller, but actually how can I drive for my goals and make sure that I'm empowering others around me, inspiring others around me, and lifting them up in my journey.

For me, it's been a 10-year process of understanding the difference between success and greatness and how much more joy and peace and fulfillment comes with greatness over success.

Amy Morin:
I'm glad you said that because I would imagine a lot of people listening might have thought greatness is about achieving the next big thing, making a lot of money, having a lot of followers on social media or doing something incredibly amazing, but...

Lewis Howes:
No.

Amy Morin:
... you argue that greatness could just be about being the greatest you can be in the position that you're in?

Lewis Howes:
I mean, I just feel like all the money in the world or all the success in the world doesn't matter if you don't have peace in your heart and if you don't have harmony and alignment with yourself. I'm not saying that I don't have stressful moments and adversities and challenges that I face, but actually going to sleep peacefully, waking up and having love and acceptance for who I am in the world, in the direction I'm heading.

No matter what type of stress or chaos is going around me, having that type of harmony and alignment with who I am and a gratitude with an acceptance of everything I've been through to now and knowing, yes, I want to improve, and yes, I want to grow, and yes, I
don't want to be complacent, but I also want to have harmony and integrity and alignment within me. I typically manifest in beautiful ways outside of me when I'm able to do that.

If I manifest and attract and create everything abundantly on the outside, but I still don't feel enough on the inside, I don't feel like that's true greatness. I feel like it's, okay, you've been successful and that's hard to do. It's hard to be successful. It's hard to accomplish. It's hard to build a business. It's hard to launch a book that you've done. It's hard to do a show or put your art out there. It's hard to express yourself creativity in the world in whatever endeavor you want to do as an athlete, artist, anything. That's hard. It's hard to succeed at a high level, but can you succeed and fully love and accept yourself? Can you succeed and have quality relationships around you? Can you succeed and stay healthy mentally and emotionally? I think that's the difference between the two.

Amy Morin:
I think some people will say, "Well, why do I need to be great? How come I just can't be good and enjoy my good enough life?" What do you say to that?

Lewis Howes:
I think you can enjoy your good enough life and your good life. I just actually think that is great when you enjoy your life and being okay with where you're at and accepting where you're at. If you're not accepting it, then there's something within you that's missing.

Amy Morin:
Yeah, yeah, I think that's very true. We did this episode with Ronald Siegel and he's a Harvard professor, but his take was, his book is The Extraordinary Gift of Being Ordinary, turned out to be one of our most popular episodes because I think our audience was like...

Lewis Howes:
Really?
Amy Morin:

... "Ugh," just gave some permission to say, okay, you can still be a good person. You can still go out there and do some cool things, but that pressure, sometimes I think people feel to always be getting to the next level and they exhaust themselves.

Lewis Howes:

Yeah, I don't think it's about, for me, it is not about being extreme to get to the next level. It's about being aware of what season you're at currently and knowing that the only way to continue to feel, I feel like a peaceful and grateful is that you are working on something that you're developing and growing something. It doesn't mean you have to be extreme in your efforts of accomplishments, but I don't think having zero mission in life brings joy and fulfillment.

I think contributing to society, contributing to the people in your life, being of service does that and typically, if you want to be of service at the best level, you've got to learn to overcome certain things within yourself. You've got to learn to step beyond yourself and not just be okay, isolating constantly. It's a yes and.

Amy Morin:

Yeah, I think there's a balance, right? Self-improvement with self-acceptance and you can do both things at the same time.

Lewis Howes:

Exactly.

Amy Morin:

One of the things you talk about early on in your book is about having a mission. This is another thing. I think when we talk about having meaning or purpose in your life, sometimes people get anxious because they think, "Well, I'm not changing the world. I'm not out there doing any of these huge things. I'm just a accountant or I'm a stay-at-home parent," but you talk about a mission in a different way. Can you explain a little bit about your idea that we should all develop a meaningful mission?
Lewis Howes:

I just think in one sentence, we should know what direction we're heading into at this season of life. Again, I look at everything as a season. When I was broke, on my sister's couch, I don't know, 15 years ago, I didn't know what I wanted. I was in a season of self-exploration, of discovery, of sadness, of frustration, and that was the season I was in and a season of overcoming a lot. How do I actually make a living? How do I get a job discovering who I really was?

I was in a season of figuring things out, and all I could think of was, how do I make enough money to get my own apartment and get off my sister's couch? How do I make money, period, and get my own place so I can feel like I can take care of me? That was the mission for that season of life. I couldn't think beyond where I was at. I couldn't think beyond anything else of changing the world or curing cancer. That wasn't even in my thought.

Once I was able to accomplish that mission, then I had completed the season and now, like sports, the Super Bowl just happened. The season is finally over. Now, people will get to evaluate and reflect on that season, that year, that time, that relationship, that career, that whatever, and say, "Okay, do I want to continue into a new season of this same mission? If not, then I'm an exploratory this season."

Again, this can be your relationship, your health journey, your finances, your career, whatever might be. I know as an author, Amy, when you put out a such a great book like you did, and you changed a lot of people's lives through essentially one article that became a phenom article that turned into a series of books, you could write a book and then you could say, "Well, do I want to write another book? This was really challenging. I know how hard it is to write a book." You can ask yourself, "Is there a new season of this?"

When you write a book, you're in a season of, first, creating the idea, putting the other proposal, writing it, months of editing, then the work actually begins after the hard work, which is launching and promoting and putting it out there. Then, you're going to ask yourself, "Do I want to keep doing this? Do I want to do another book?"
It's just evaluating what season we're in and getting very, very clear on what feels meaningful to us. I'm just a big believer that in one sentence, meaningful mission, if you can get clear on it, it'll give you more peace of mind under the stressful chaos that might be coming your way. I'm not saying this eliminates all pain and suffering, but it gives you clarity of where you're heading. I think that clarity is powerful.

Amy Morin:
I like that because a lot of times people will talk about having a meaningful mission in life, not just in a season. The truth is, maybe your parent gets sick and you end up caring for them for six months or a year and whatever your mission was, it shifts, right? When you become a parent or you've switched jobs, there are those times or maybe whatever's in front of you right now that you're working on might not be your mission five years from now.

Lewis Howes:
Exactly. Yeah, exactly. Being aware of what season you're in.

Amy Morin:
The book you explained too, this really cool exercise about the perfect day itinerary. Can you walk us through that?

Lewis Howes:

Yeah, the goal is to work towards the perfect day. Again, there's really no such thing as a perfect day every single day, but I feel like if we can look back on our life and our memories, we can be like, "Man, that was a beautiful sunset. That was an amazing dinner I had with friends. That was a great morning experience that I went through when I went on this trip or at home one time with a friend or my partner. That was a great work day. I was just in the flow. Things just clicked."

The goal would be to map out. If you can go in your mind visually and then almost emotionally, experientially as well in your body, and imagine what that day could look like, that perfect day. If you string in all these great memories from the past or you
envision something you want to create, and that becomes the experiential imagination of a perfect day.

I just think it's getting clear on what that feels like, looks like, smells like, tastes like, and the experience is getting clear on that in your mind as a dream, as a movie that you think about in your mind of what could be, maybe you've experienced some of it, but you want to create it more frequently.

Then, drawing that out through words, through poetry, through an expression, writing it down on paper, what does it look like? Describe it to me in detail and really describe it to yourself in detail, what this looks like. If you can map that out from the moment you wake up, this is what I smell, this is what I experience. I wake up alone. I wake up with a person that I love the most. I open the window and I look at this. What is the whole thing?

Walk me through it from the moment you wake up, to the moment you've fall asleep, to what you dream about at night when you're sleeping, to how you feel. I feel rested. I feel energized. I feel excited. I feel courageous, whatever it might be, I feel connected, and present, and loved, and seen, and all these things. Writing it down of what the perfect day is, and then that's step one.

Step two is then actually scheduling in all of these things in your day. If you have a routine that you want to spend two hours in the morning where you wake up next to the person you connect intimately. You have a cappuccino on the windowsill, looking out of the nature, actually schedule that and experience it. Don't just wake up on autopilot or go through the day on autopilot. Create the perfect day itinerary and live it as frequently as possible.

When you schedule these things based on a visual representation of an experience you want to have, you're more likely to create those moments more frequently. It doesn't mean there's not going to be breakdowns and challenges and adversity that happens, and you may not be able to do it every single day, but if you can do some of it every day, it's a beautiful experience.

I don't know if, Amy, if this was something that you ever dreamed about of living on a sailboat and traveling around and being in the ocean and experiencing life with freedom
and being able to pull up the anchor at any moment and sail away and go to a new town, or just be in the ocean for three days and catch my own food and wake up with epic sunsets or sunrises.

I don't know if that's something you've ever dreamed of and if you're creating it right now because of it, but it probably didn't happen by accident. You probably need to just say, "Well, maybe I just think I want to do this today and try it out." You probably had some imagination about it. I think a lot of us do things on autopilot as opposed to by design. This helps us design emotionally, mentally, and then also schedule practically the actions we're going to take to create that experience.

Amy Morin:

It sounds so simple on the surface, doesn't it? Yeah, I just write down what you think you would do and yet most of us never take the time to do that.

Lewis Howes:

Yeah.

Amy Morin:

We get so passive about where our time goes, how we spend it, and before one year goes by, 10 years go by, and if you're not active about it, you'll never make those things happen. I love that you included that in your book about looking ahead. Then, you also include the other one where you look back, is to think about your obituary and more at the end of your life. What do you want to look back on, right?

Lewis Howes:

I think it's important to look back on it. This is something I reflect on frequently because I like to think I live a pretty urgent life in terms of I'm present and peaceful and aware in the days, but I'm also urgent in my desires and my dreams of at least trying them and putting them out there and being okay if they fail, but putting them out there.

Part of me really wants to reflect on if it is over tomorrow for me or today for me, which I hope I live a very long, healthy life is my intention, but if it is over today, looking back
from where I am to today, am I proud of how I showed up with the important people in my life that I really show up and am I proud of how I show up to people that I'm not that close with, the people that I've seen once in my life, strangers or people I've collaborated once in a while, am I proud of how I showed up and could I be at peace knowing that I was of service to people and I was generous with my energy, my presence, my thoughtfulness, my appreciation, and looking back on that.

For me, I want to look forward to that experience and know that, you know what? I did the best with where I'm at and make sure I'm doing it now, not waiting to do it later.

Amy Morin:
Yeah, it seems morbid to do that, but I think it's a great exercise to do because it makes your value suddenly become crystal clear. I'm thinking, am I really prioritizing where I want to spend my time and who I want to spend it with or not?

Lewis Howes:
Exactly.

Amy Morin:
Another thing you talk a lot in the book that I really liked was about overcoming fear, specifically the fear of judgment.

Lewis Howes:
Mm-hmm.

Amy Morin:
This one, I think a lot of us think, "Oh, I don't really care what other people think," but then when it boils right down to it, of course we do, and we're afraid that people are going to judge us or think that we're weird or think that we're not good enough or if we tell them, "Hey, I have this plan," they might laugh at us. How do we work on that?

Lewis Howes:
This was my biggest fear. It took me the longest to overcome, and it's a constant journey in practice. It's not like I'm a perfect human being and I've figured this out, but it's a constant journey in practice of applying, for a long time, I used to be a people pleaser and just want to please everyone, I'm sure everyone liked me, and that would cause me to give in sometimes of who I actually was and the things I wanted to do in order to have other people be okay with me.

In that process, I would abandon who I was or I abandoned what I really wanted to do. I was actually inauthentic to myself when I would only do things to please others so that they would like or that they wouldn't not like me. I think it was more the fear of people not liking me than actually liking me.

When I've started to practice that over the last few years, it's a challenging thing because you've got to learn how to fully accept and be okay with who you are and love time with yourself no matter what people say about you. You got to make sure that you have a really core group of friends or family that appreciate and love you for who you are and not just needing to please them also, because if people are constantly getting upset at you and you don't feel like you have a strong relationship with self or a few other good people, then you are going to be walking on eggshells and giving into others.

This was one of the hardest things for me to do and it was also why it was hard for a while, 10 years ago, I couldn't take criticism online until I learned how to overcome that process of the fear of judgment because I was so worried about everyone would say about my work or my message and negative reviews that I had to defend myself a lot as opposed just say, "Okay, that's just someone's opinion, and it doesn't define who I am," but so often we take the opinions or the critiques or the criticisms of others about who we are. It really isn't.

It's about their expression of you, their interpretation of you, or maybe something they're going through personally that they want to get out because they see something in you they don't like about themselves. The more we take these things personally, the more it just holds us back from our gifts and putting ourselves out there. It's really a process of overcoming the need to be liked, overcoming our ego of needing people to see us in a
perfect way and knowing we are not for everyone, and that's okay. When we can accept that, we set ourselves free.

Amy Morin:
Yes, absolutely.

Lewis Howes:
I don't know if you've ever experienced challenge with that, Amy.

Amy Morin:
Oh yeah. Even as I was writing books about mental strength, I lived on a boat, but by then I started doing speaking engagements and I would be on TV and I thought, "I'm not going to tell anybody I live on a boat." I hid it for a couple of years.

Lewis Howes:
Really?

Amy Morin:
Yes, because I thought, people are going to think you're not really like this business person, or you don't really know what you're doing. You're living on a boat in the middle, bobbing around in the middle of the ocean. James Altucher outed me once and said, "Hey, she lives on a boat." All these people came out and said, "Hey, that's really cool." I was like, "Is it?" I had sort of convinced myself like, "Well, it's not my fear of what people are going to think, but it's the truth that other people are going to not take me seriously if they think I live on a boat."

I'd sort of convinced myself that it wasn't my fear of judgment, it was that I was actually going to be judged and it would hurt my career. Obviously, now I brag about the fact that we podcast from a sailboat, but I think it's easy sometimes to convince ourselves that it's not our fear, it's just that it's a reality. Other people aren't going to accept me, so therefore I won't put it out there.

Lewis Howes:
When we fear so much that we won't be accepted by others, we typically don't accept ourselves...

Amy Morin:
Right.

Lewis Howes:
... but if we accept ourselves fully, which took me decades for me to learn this the hard way, and through lots of pain and suffering, when I learned to accept, "Well, this is who I am and if I can't accept myself because I'm so worried about fitting in or belonging to others, it means I don't belong or fit into myself." That's the root that I need to focus on. That's the root cause of me doubting myself, causing this fear of judgment.

Let me work on not trying to belong and fit into others and be accepted, but actually accepting myself fully. I think that takes the most courage to accept yourself for your shortcomings, your mistakes, your flaws, your insecurities, all of it, and say, "You know what? I'm still okay with who I am. Maybe I didn't like certain things, or maybe I'm upset about certain things from the past, but I can learn to accept, forgive, and move on and be at peace with who I am." If I'm not happy with who I am, what am I going to do to improve upon that? What decisions or habits or behaviors do I want to improve upon where I would be proud of myself?

Again, we don't need to beat ourselves up and constantly be a self-critic, but be a positive self-coach and just focus on the improvement in the growth and how far we've come, not how far we're yet to go.

Amy Morin:
You also talk about healing the past a lot in this book about going backwards, sometimes to say, all right, there's this thing that I haven't worked through or that I have to, and you talk about it in your other books too, like The Mask of Masculinity. You share more about your story, but how do we heal the past, is always a question. I'm a therapist, so people come into my office and say, "I don't want to talk about my childhood. Do I have to?"
Sometimes it's really something that happened when you were seven years old and you got made fun of on the bus or something like that and we do have to go there in order for people to figure out, "Well, here's why I still carry this belief around," but can you just talk a little bit about your thoughts on healing the past?

Lewis Howes:

Yeah, I mean, well, our emotions are a byproduct of our memories of the past, of our experiences. All the experiences we've had are stored in memories as you know, and they are byproduct of why we become emotional in certain situations because there is a memory associated to a feeling that causes us to be triggered and respond or react to certain ways.

We are reactive or triggered or our nervous system gets heightened because we get cut off on the road, or because someone doesn't text us back after a day, or because someone says something nasty to us online, then there is a wound as you know, that it's yet to be mended. Every time, if we have a wound open for 20 years and it just gets poked constantly, it's going to be hurting. There's going to be a pain. There's got to be some type of irritation, inflammation, stress that doesn't need to be there.

We've got to face ourselves as simple as that. I mean, it's a simple concept but hard to do. We've got to be willing to face anything that is still wounded within us. Here's the thing, for so long, I didn't think I had any wounds because I didn't want to acknowledge them or face them, and I just wanted to push them off. I just wanted to play through the brokenness in my life. I just wanted to go beyond it and not think about it or address it. That worked to get me success and results, but it didn't work to make me feel celebrated, seen or enough internally. It didn't matter how much I created on the outside, I still didn't feel what I needed on the inside. I was still very reactive and angry and upset for a long time.

It wasn't until I was willing to face it through, I feel like it took me a lot longer than most people. I sometimes learned slower than most of the world. I had to make a lot of mistakes over and over again and feel a lot of pain and suffering internally until I was willing to go all in and face it. I think when we have the most, the biggest breakdowns is sometimes when we say, "Okay, I'm done feeling this way once and for all. It's now
"ready to go all in on this," but facing ourselves in whatever ways that is, whether that's therapy or workshops or meditation retreats or different ways that we can physically and emotionally process and release the past pain and create new meaning around those memories.

I think, again, our personality is a collection of the memories and the meaning we develop based on those memories and our personality becomes our personal reality as Dr. Joe Dispenza says. If we are a personality that is triggered and wounded and fearful, then that becomes our environment and our personal reality and our life. If we want to change our personal reality, we must learn to change the old way that no longer supports us in what we want.

That's healing, that's mending, that's forgiveness, that's finding peace with the past in whatever ways and processes that work for you. Again, I've done lots of different modalities and they all work for different people, but figuring out what works for you is the key.

Amy Morin:
Can I ask, what did work for you?

Lewis Howes:
It all worked.

Amy Morin:
Yeah.

Lewis Howes:
I mean, it all worked in seasons and different stages, but it really kind of started 10 years ago, but I've done, I have an emotional coach that I see almost every two weeks now for the last two years that's been extremely effective, but it's worked not because I show up somewhere and have a coach. It works because I say, "Give me all the feedback possible to set me free. Put me through any exercise you want me to go through. I will sit here and open up for as long as you want. Give me more."
I'm like a maniac in these sessions because I'm like, "I will break down anything. I will go anywhere. I will process anything. I will share anything. I will be vulnerable about everything. I will cry. I will laugh. I will scream. I'll punch a pillow. Whatever you tell me to do, I'll crawl in the fetal position if you tell me to do it, whatever. I'm like game to go there physically, mentally, and spiritually and emotionally to create and sustain inner peace and harmony."

It's not just saying, "Well, I go to a therapist once a month and I just talk about these things every now and then." I don't think that will be as effective as if you say, "I'm going to do this workshop and go all in and then realize that healing is a journey. It's not a three-day experience or a two-week retreat, a meditation retreat in India that opens the portal, but life happens. If you're not applying practically on a continual daily basis the lessons you've learned and you're not integrating daily, week after week, month after month, year after year, you will fall back into old pattern. You will fall back into the old personality that you built up for decades.

This is a daily practice of integrating the lessons into life when the triggers arise again, because the trigger will come, it'll wound, it'll feel like, "Ooh, there's a wound. I don't like that. Okay, what is the lesson I learned? What is the practice, what I would need to remember? Remember this about myself? I'm forgiving. I'm peaceful." Applying it in the wounded moments. Most people are not willing to stay consistent in that. That's why I feel like having an emotional coach just guides me and supports me to take on the pressures and the weight of the responsibilities of life while being peaceful at the same time.

It is having the awakening, the opening, the pathway, the experience, the event, the retreat, whatever it is, and then, the consistent application with support from someone. I just think it's hard to do it on your own and to, if you truly want to stay on top of emotional freedom, I think it's challenging to do it on your own if you're in a busy work environment or busy world. It's possible, but if you've struggled with it, I think having support helps you.

Amy Morin:
Two huge takeaways from that I think are not to confuse our outer success with being healed, because I think sometimes we look at people and we think, "Look at how successful they are. Obviously, they don't have any problems," but that's different, your outer success compared to your inner peace. Another one is knowing that it's a process. Sometimes somebody will go to therapy for six months and then say, "Close the book on that. It's never going to be an issue again," or they go to a weekend retreat and say, "Nailed it. No problems."

Lewis Howes:
I feel great. Yeah, everything is, I felt [inaudible 00:29:19] so much, but things come back.

Amy Morin:
I'm glad that you said that. Last thing to talk about is sort of what you just mentioned about enlisting support, because somebody might say, "Well, the path to greatness is really what I'm going to do all on my own." You make it clear in your book, we need other people to help us along the way.

Lewis Howes:
Yeah, good luck. I don't think the greatest athletes, LeBron James and Kobe Bryant and Michael Jordan and all these great athletes, when they got to their first championship with great coaching, they didn't say, "Thanks, coach. I think I'm done. I'm going to do this next year on my own and I'm going to win a world championship again without a coach." They actually said, "All right, my coaches help me get here. I need to hire more specialists, more coaches to keep me at the top so that I don't fall back down."

Even then, it doesn't guarantee you the results you want, but it supports you in having feedback and accountability and seeing your blind spots and pushing you beyond what you're capable of because I can go to the gym and work out extremely hard one day with the best of them, on a great day when I'm feeling energized, I can train with the best of them. I can have an amazing workout, but what about on a bad day when I don't
feel energized and I don't feel excited and I feel like, "Ugh, I need more time and rest in between."

If I had a coach, they would be able to push me just a little bit harder and hold me accountable. I can do it every once in a while on my own, but just having support or accountability or someone helps me push a little more. That's what the great athletes do. They don't just say, 'Oh, I figured it out on my own. Let me just coach myself this next season.' No. They look for better coaching.

Amy Morin:
I love that idea. Whether somebody finds a professional or you just get friends and family who are supportive, people who understand, right?

Lewis Howes:
Exactly.

Amy Morin:
Well, Lewis Howes, thank you so much for being on the Verywell Mind podcast. I hope all of our listeners go get a copy of your book, The Greatness Mindset, and learn more about all of the things that you do and the wisdom that you share, because your book's full of some pretty cool exercises and some really good stories from people. Thank you for sharing it.

Lewis Howes:
Thank you, Amy. Appreciate you.

Amy Morin:
Welcome to The Therapist's Take! This is the part of the episode where I'll give you my take on Lewis' strategies and share how you can apply them to your own life. Here are three of my favorite strategies that Lewis discussed.
**Number one: create your ideal day.** This is a simple exercise, but it could be really powerful. Spend some time thinking about how you'd spend your time during an ideal day. Who would you spend it with? What would you be doing?

Then, think about how that compares to an actual day in your life and see if there are some things from your ideal day you can incorporate into your everyday life. I really like that Lewis shared this exercise. You can get more details about it in his book and some other exercises that will help you figure this out as well. But so often we get somewhat passive about our time, and we don't create the experiences that we want, or we don't prioritize the things that we think are important.

Then (sometimes before you know it), years have passed, and you still haven't done the things that you wanted to do. We get so caught up in the day-to-day stuff that we don't take the time to zoom out and really examine our lives from a larger perspective. Spend some time thinking about what your ideal day would look like. Write it down, and then see if there are some changes you want to make to incorporate more of your ideal day into your actual days.

**Number two: work on accepting yourself, not being accepted by other people.**

Lewis talks about how a greatness mindset isn't necessarily about accomplishing huge things, but instead, it might be more about having inner peace. You can't have inner peace if you're consumed with trying to keep up a certain image or if you're constantly worried about other people judging you.

He challenges people to work on self-acceptance and to take a closer look at their emotional responses when they get criticism. Of course, that's easier said than done if you're someone who spent your whole life worrying about how other people think about you, but letting go of your worries is actually quite freeing.

In my therapy office, sometimes we develop real-life challenges for people to start doing things that could mess up their image in some small ways at first. Someone might purposely post a picture of themselves on social media that isn't flattering, or they might send an email with some typos in it, or they might share a mistake with their friends just to see what would happen. Never has it turned out to be as bad as they expected it to be.
In fact, sometimes when people challenge themselves like this, they'll come back into the office and say, "In a strange way, I feel like people might even like me more because now they know I'm not perfect." Look for ways in your own life that you can work on practicing self-acceptance so that you can worry less about whether other people accept you.

**Number three: develop a mission for this season in your life.** I was really grateful that Lewis talked about having a mission just for this season in your life and how that mission might change as other areas of your life change. That's great because most people don't actually create a giant mission that involves saving the planet or donating millions of dollars to charity.

Instead, a more realistic one might be to be the best person you can be to your friends, or maybe you just want to spread some joy in your workplace. There's research that shows people who see themselves as part of a bigger mission have happier lives. For example, in one study, the janitors at a school who see their duty as keeping the school clean so that the kids can learn tended to be way happier than the janitors who only looked at their jobs as a task like sweeping the floor. Think about what your mission is or how you're part of something bigger, and you might develop a completely different mindset when it comes to your life.

Those are three of Lewis's strategies that I highly recommend. Write down what your ideal day looks like and incorporate some of those strategies into your life. Work on accepting yourself, not being accepted by everyone else. And develop a mission for this season of your life.

To hear more of Lewis' strategies, pick up a copy of his book *The Greatness Mindset*. If you know someone who could benefit from hearing this message, share this show 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 or Spotify. Then, send us a screenshot of
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Thank you for hanging out with me today and for listening to The Verywell Mind Podcast! As always, a big thank you to my show’s producer (whose mind is so great that he has to wear an XL snowmobile helmet when I convince him to go snowmobiling), Nick Valentin.