



EUDAEMONIA **Confidence, with Danny Greeves**

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Kim Forrester 0:00

According to studies, healthy self confidence compels us to make better choices, feel more positive, and enjoy greater physical and emotional well-being. So how can we all get a dose of this life enhancing self belief? You're listening to the Eudaemonia podcast. I'm Kim Forrester, and today we're going to have a conversation about confidence.

Intro 0:26

Welcome to Eudaemonia, the podcast that is all about flourishing. Plug in, relax, and get ready for the goodness as we explore the traits and practices that can help you thrive in life ... with your host, Kim Forrester.

Kim Forrester 0:46

Danny Greeves is a UK-based confidence coach and hypnotherapist who works with people to specifically help them grow and build greater self confidence. His recently published book is entitled *Six Steps to Self Confidence*. It's my absolute pleasure to be connecting with Danny today, to learn more about the power of self belief and self assurance, and to discuss how we can each learn to build confidence and boost our well-being. Danny Greeves, welcome to the Eudaemonia podcast. It's such a delight to have you. How are things with you today?

Danny Greeves 1:21

They're going very well, thank you. I'm really inspired to be here. And thank you for having me.

Kim Forrester 1:25

Danny, while researching for this interview, I was actually surprised to learn that there are two forms of confidence. So, there's situational confidence and there's self confidence. In your book and your coaching work you focus on self confidence but I would like to just take a moment, now, to briefly focus on situational confidence. How would you define situational confidence and how can we strengthen this trait in ourselves?

Danny Greeves 1:52

So, first of all, I decided to make this distinction because so many people use the umbrella term 'confidence' and I was just noticing that there were different patterns in terms of how it shows up. So I thought I'd make the distinction between self confidence and situational confidence. And I've actually found it's been really, really helpful for people to kind of diagnose where their challenge is, because the paths for improving it are quite different. So when it comes to situational confidence, it's when you're considering your specific abilities in a really narrowly defined context. So it could be something as when you speak in a team meeting, or it could be how you introduce yourself at a

party, or it could be your performance in an interview. So it's really narrowly defined. And the thing that is most important is, situational confidence is really closely linked to competence. So it's about the things that you're doing, rather than who you are. So what I noticed is that there are four particular stages that you can go through if you'd like to develop your situational confidence. So the first one is actually just gaining more information. So, it's improving your knowledge base, and just essentially learning more about that narrowly defined context. Once you've gone through that stage, it's about consultation with an expert. So someone who is more experienced or has better results, or someone who is skilled in training other people with how to develop it. The next part is the ability to ask questions and gather feedback. So you can then take the information you've learned, you can take the consultations that you've learned, put them into practice, and then come back with questions so you can then go ahead and refine. And then the last stage is actually just getting confirmation that you're doing it right. So if you work through those four, then hopefully that'll get you there.

Kim Forrester 4:04

So self confidence seems and feels to me to be quite different to situational confidence then. And I think for many people, confidence is a trait that is associated with greater achievement, success, and recognition. But the first words in your book, Danny, are "Confidence is the key to experiencing more fun, meaning, and pleasure in life." Do you think we're generally misguided around the importance of confidence and the impact that it truly has on our lives?

Danny Greeves 4:40

That's a really interesting question. And I'd say we are, maybe not misguided, but maybe we're not viewing the whole piece. So I think maybe we're focusing on a really small portion of it rather than looking at the greater whole. Because if we think about anyone, when they're working towards a goal, exactly as you described, they want to be able to achieve something, they want to feel like they're being successful, and they'd love to have recognition for what they're doing. So I think those things are absolutely valid and it's really helpful to have those things in mind. I mean, for me, particularly as a coach, it's really important to help someone have a clear outcome so they know what they're going towards. The reason that I think self confidence is so important is because, for me personally, it helps me and it helps others to enjoy the journey as well as the destination. So a lot of people have the approach of, "I'll be happy when" they have that success, recognition or whatever. But when you have self confidence, you can deal with challenges along the way, you can get the meaning from them, and you can really help yourself to be more expressive, more creative, more curious. And for me, those are the vital ingredients that you need to have fun. So having self confidence is about enjoying the journey as well.

Kim Forrester 6:10

Immediately, in my mind, I get this vision of Usain Bolt running the hundred metres. Right? In the Olympics. And he is so confident that he's going to win and going to achieve - he's so confident in his skills and his abilities - that he doesn't just, you know, put his head down and sprint towards the finish line. But in the last ten metres, he's often smiling and waving to the crowd. Right? But that's what you're saying there. You know, if we apply that concept to our lives, you're saying that when we build greater self confidence, it's not just that we are striving to meet our goals but that we can also enjoy and maybe trust in the process a lot more.

Danny Greeves 6:50

Yes, absolutely. And I don't know about you but if something is only painful, or only frustrating, or only a challenge, then I'm much more likely to give up. But if I'm getting some feedback along the way - I'm having periods where I can see I'm improving, and I'm growing, and I'm enjoying the process - I'm much more likely to stick with it. So we're all going to come up against challenges but if we can refine our situational confidence, so we're actually, you know, we know what we're doing and we're confident in who we are, then we can all have some more of those Usain Bolt moments where we're smiling and laughing a little bit more.

Kim Forrester 7:33

Danny, in your book, you share a really touching story about you struggling to find a girlfriend for many years, and you admit that you would often turn to alcohol as a way to feel bolder, more sure of yourself, when introducing yourself to potential partners at the pub, or what have you. I believe that many people would completely understand the lure of alcohol or perhaps even other substances as a way to bolster confidence. Is there any benefit in these moments of artificial self confidence? Do they help? Or do they hinder our progress towards true self appreciation and self belief?

Danny Greeves 8:20

Oh, I love this question. And it is something that I've reflected on quite a bit. And I've sort of picked back through and just sort of thought about if and when I would do things differently. And I think we all have our own values, we all have goals that we want to achieve. And I think in reality, if that goal is really important to us, we'll try every trick or tactic in the book. So we'll give anything a go if we think it'll help us to get that outcome. So I certainly don't want to make those sort of artificial confidence boosters to be bad, or to say that they're wrong. Because I can honestly say, I wouldn't have gone into some of those situations if I didn't have that little boost. So I can certainly say they're part of my journey. But they certainly aren't sustainable. So while I was using alcohol as a bit of an emotional crutch, I don't think that's helpful at all. There were times where I was saying, "The only way I can feel confident is if I go to one of those boosters that I know helps." And the problem with that is that, whatever you use, whether it's alcohol or something else, there are costs involved in that - physically, emotionally, financially. So there's definitely a cost to it. So when I actually noticed that "Hang on, this is the only strategy that I've got" then I started to notice I need to do something about it. When I started to find that, actually, there are more sustainable ways to do it - that actually I can feel better and feel more confident - and I was actually, you know, invested in the process of trying different ways, then I could see alcohol as just a short term strategy, as opposed to being the only thing that I can rely on.

Kim Forrester 10:21

Danny, you also share that, for a long time, you were completely unaware of the many ways that a lack of self confidence was limiting your behaviour. And I'm actually sure that many of us often confuse a lack of confidence in ourselves with what we think is actually an authentic expression of our personality. Right? We just say, "Oh, no, I'm just shy", or "Oh no, I like to keep the peace", or "I'm just not that ambitious." Are there particular signs that we can look for in ourselves, that tell us that we are actually acting from a lack of self confidence?

Danny Greeves 10:58

I think there absolutely are because, at a fundamental level, a lack of confidence stems from fear. So I would say, from my experience personally, and from the people that I've worked with, the most common drivers are fear of not being good enough, the fear of failing, and the fear of being rejected. I would say most things come down to one of those three, sort of, primal fears. The challenge is that one of the things that human beings are best at is creating stories to kind of rationalise our behaviour. And we tend to believe our own stories. So I think that's one of the main reasons why we can quite easily get stuck - is because one of the main things our brain does is creates a narrative around what's happening. And we can fully believe in that and that prevents us from changing because we think we know what's really going on. So when it comes to actually overcoming it, I just tend to use one simple question. So it's about just changing perspective, and looking at the situation a little bit differently. And it's simply asking, "If it was impossible to fail, would I still be choosing this?"

Kim Forrester 12:21

Wow.

Danny Greeves 12:22

And then, if the answer is genuinely, "Yes. You know, actually, I would like to just have more time by myself. That's what I prefer", or, "Actually, I don't want to go for that job because it'll change my dynamics and that's not what I'm looking for" - if the answer is genuinely 'yes', then it's a completely different kettle of fish. If the answer is "No, and actually, if failure wasn't an option, I would be doing it", then I think that's probably your biggest red flag that, actually, fear is driving you rather than you making conscious decisions. So it's just a simple question but actually, it can open up quite a lot.

Kim Forrester 13:04

Yeah, and I imagine it could change quite a few of our behaviours and choices if we were to reach for that question in any moment. You are very open in the beginning of your book, talking about your experiences and your past. How does our past affect our present potential for confidence, Danny? What can we do to recognise and hopefully release ourselves from these often unconscious limitations?

Danny Greeves 13:31

Well, from my perspective, your self confidence is essentially the the sum total of how you look on all your past experiences. So the outlook on your past experiences determines how you think about your future, which then goes to determine what you'll take on and what you'll avoid from. So if you're lacking confidence in the now, I'd strongly suggest the problem isn't actually now. The problem is somewhere in the past. Because anytime we have a painful moment, or a trauma as some people may describe it, or we resent certain things, actions or people, we accumulate that as baggage. And these stored emotions just accumulate and build over time. And one thing that I found really interesting is that your brain uses a process known as neuroception. And this is subconscious, so you won't know that it's going on. But neuroception is a strategy that your brain uses to determine whether your environment, or the people that are in close proximity to you, are safe or if they're a threat. So you've got this subconscious scanning going on constantly, but the scanning is filtered based on your past experiences. So if you perceive things to be painful or stressful based on what's

happened in the past, you'll then project them into your future. So I think one of the most valuable things that someone can do is, in whatever way works for them, so there's no one way to do it, but work through and clear out those old wounds and those old pains. Because the more you carry around, the more you'll be bogged down by.

Kim Forrester 15:30

Wow, that's really powerful, Danny. Now, when I came to do an interview about confidence, I knew there was one question I had to ask. And that is the link between confidence and perceived arrogance. You actually write in your book that, as well as bolstering you in tough times, your self confidence practices help you stay grounded and humble when things are going well in your life. So how important is it for us to ensure that our confidence, Danny, doesn't morph into, shall we say, overconfidence, arrogance, a little sense of superiority? And how do we stay mindful of that distinction?

Danny Greeves 16:16

I think this is one of the most important components of confidence. And I think it's also one of the biggest fears that people have, in terms of "If I do become confident, will I become arrogant?". Because I think we can all agree that arrogance tends to repel people rather than, sort of, bring anyone towards us. So it is a very common problem. For me, self confidence is essentially the barometer for how comfortable you are to share yourself with the world. So the more self confidence you have, the more open you are to sharing more of you. The more lacking, the more you want to hide away. Which means self confidence is synonymous with authenticity. So when you're confident enough to be yourself, you're being genuine and you're being authentic. And I think everyone will agree authenticity is not arrogance - they're very, very different. So when we're going through life, if we notice that we're getting a bit puffed up, we're getting a bit self righteous - so we're projecting things on others - then that's sort of our first warning sign that we've left that place of authenticity and we've allowed ourselves to get carried away a little bit. Now, the wonderful thing is, the world around us will bring us back down to earth. So if we get too high above our station, then either something or someone will start to bring us back down to earth. So it's more advisable to be able to do it yourself, rather than something else having to do it for you. In terms of being mindful about it, the approach that, sort of, I've picked up and that I was taught is that, when we think things are going really well, the first questions we want to ask is, "Okay, what could have improved? What actually didn't I do? What did I miss?" So anytime we start to get carried away, we use those grounding questions to help us realise what we could have done instead. And that helps us feel more humble, because we can see things as "We did these bits but we missed these bits" so we can keep improving as we go forwards.

Kim Forrester 18:38

Danny, after many years of reflection, and experience, and knowledge gaining, you came up with a morning routine that helps you with your self confidence. Why is our morning routine so important when it comes to improving our confidence? Would it be equally as effective if we chose to engage in an evening ritual?

Danny Greeves 19:01

So I have a strong preference for the morning, because I think it has quite a few advantages over the evening. So as an example, in the morning, we can choose not to engage with the outside world. So we can choose not to check our emails, we can choose not to look at the news, we can choose not to interact with people outside our own household. So essentially, we can make a decision to focus on our inner world rather than our outer world. And it's much easier to engage in practices where you can reflect, where you can grow, and where you can build confidence if you're starting from a place where it's quiet, it's more balanced, and you've got some space. As soon as we open our emails - and, you know, you get that email that all of a sudden gives you a new project to do, or someone has given you some criticism or feedback - you turn the news on and there's all sorts of new restrictions or changes, or there's someone on the bus who steals your seat, it can be any number of the million things that happen on a day to day basis but by the time you get to the evening, you've accumulated lots of that stress. So when you go to sit down in the evening to then find that place of mental clarity, you're much more likely - I find anyway - to have the baggage of the day getting in the way. Whereas in the morning, you're clean, you're fresh, and you can just get to work.

Kim Forrester 20:45

Yeah. You get more of a chance to determine what your day is going to look like and how you're going to respond to your day. Whereas, if you do it later on in the day, you're saying that we have so many external influences that we kind of lose that empowerment within ourselves to choose for ourselves. Is that right?

Danny Greeves 21:04

Yes, exactly. So I think actually, the point you mentioned there about when we get to have a choice about what our day looks like, is a really important one as well. Because if we have that space in the morning to plan and prepare, then that can set us up for a good day as well. Whereas at the end of the day, we're more reflecting on what's happened, rather than using our planning to make it happen.

Kim Forrester 21:30

Danny, you teach that there are six components of a daily confidence practice, and this includes exercise, personal development, meditation and journaling. But you also say there's a secret ingredient to building greater confidence. What is the secret ingredient and why is it important for us to actively engage in this particular facet of ourselves?

Danny Greeves 21:53

Ah, the secret ingredient. So, it's something that most people find one of the most interesting ideas and concepts. So I firmly believe the greatest way that we can build genuine self confidence is when we are making steady progress in an area that's inspiring for us; when we're making progress in an area that's really meaningful for us. And now, that will be different for every individual on Earth, which is why it's the secret ingredient, because only you will know what that is. But when we're making progress in what we value, it's the most efficient way to build our confidence. So when you can reflect on the achievements in terms of what lights you up, and you can see that you've got a path that's going to move you towards even greater meaning and even greater inspiration, then your

self worth and your self confidence grow, step by step. And when you're in that place, there just isn't enough time, or there isn't enough energy, to waste on negative thoughts and self doubt because you're inspired and moving forwards.

Kim Forrester 23:05

I think we all understand the energy, the motivation, that comes with inspiration. So I completely understand what you're saying there. When we are engaged in something that is truly meaningful for us, it almost takes us to a different level of an experience of life. Danny, the sixth component that you write about is 'learning and study'. And I think it's pretty clear that expanding our knowledge base can have wonderful effects on our confidence and our self belief. You're quick to point out, though, that learning is only truly beneficial if we actually implement what we've learned. All right. What advice would you give to those of my listeners - and there's probably many of them - who have gone and learned something, but are not necessarily implementing that knowledge. They may have a folder full of workshop notes that they've never looked at again, or maybe they've got a certification that they don't utilise. Why is implementation so important when it comes to building our confidence?

Danny Greeves 24:10

Well, the first thing is that, for all of your listeners, you're not alone. I have been there and I was in this camp for a very long time. So I think it's something we can definitely all relate to. The revelation, if you like, that really changed this for me, is when I realised that because we all love to learn - it's in human nature; it's built into us in terms of an evolution standpoint - but your brain will be satisfied, in the short term, by ideas. So when you get new learning, you get inspiring ideas, you create plans, that is actually enough for you to feel better. So when you feel better, often there isn't that push and there isn't that urgency to actually then go and take action. Because we get a lovely dopamine rush from all the lovely inspiring work we've just done and we feel better. The reason implementation is so important is because it turns that information into an experience. So you make it practical. And when you make it practical, you make it yours. So we get short term gratification, if you like, from information and learning, but it's the implementation that leads to long term fulfilment. So for anyone who has folders, certificates, if they're still sitting there, what I'd recommend is, first of all, tap back into the 'why' that you did it. You would have done it for a reason; there would have been something that you resonated with or connected to. So I'd advise you to just refresh the information and see if that connection is still there. It might be that you've moved on and you've evolved, and that no longer sort of works for you - which is fine. But if you do tap into that 'why' and that inspiration is still there, then the key is to take some action on that straightaway. It doesn't have to be big, it doesn't have to be glorious, it just needs to be some form of action that you can then build on. And what we'll often find is that, tucked away in those folders or that certificate in the cupboard, if we actually start to take action on it, it can really make a difference for us. So it's going back in, tapping into it, and then taking action.

Kim Forrester 26:44

I love how that takes us straight back to that secret ingredient. It's really about what inspired us in the first place to go and gain that knowledge.

Danny Greeves 26:52

Yes, yeah,

Kim Forrester 26:53

We can make or break our self confidence, I think Danny, depending on the goals that we set for ourselves, and how successful we are - or not - in attaining those targets, those goals. When it comes to boosting our confidence, what's the most important thing you'd like my listeners to know about goal setting?

Danny Greeves 27:15

Well, I love goal setting. It's actually one of my favourite topics. And the reason for that is, when I essentially learn more about it, it had such a dramatic change to my confidence, because I realised I was only doing half the process. So when you're thinking about goal setting, and there are lots of different acronyms and lots of different methods that you can use. And yes, absolutely, you need to tap into that 'why'. Think about the benefits, the opportunities, and all of the positives that you'll get out of it. The key for me is that every goal that you move towards will come at a cost. And we very rarely think about the costs. We don't think about the drawbacks, the obstacles, the pains that will be involved. And let's be honest, it's because it's less fun. It's just not as interesting to think about. But it's those costs and those, sort of, challenges that allow us to set realistic goals. So when we're aware of the pros and the cons, we can actually make a plan that works. And when we make progress on a plan, we feel more confident. Because when we only think about the benefits and the wonderful outcome, somewhere along the road, there'll be a challenge and then instead of seeing that as something that we're prepared for, often it can be quite a nasty surprise, and it can really take the legs from under us. So if you get to the point in the goal setting process where you're certain you can do it because you know everything that you'll get as a benefit, and you've done your best to find as many of the challenges as possible, then you'll feel so much more confident in achieving it, because you're prepared.

Kim Forrester 29:07

It never occurred to me that a good dose of realism is actually good for our confidence. But that's kind of what you're saying there.

Danny Greeves 29:13

Yes, yeah.

Kim Forrester 29:15

Danny, this is the point in the show where I normally asked for a morning reminder. So I normally ask for a simple practice, or a mantra, or an affirmation that my listeners can apply each morning. But your book literally outlines a morning routine that will build self confidence. So other than 'read your book', which I encourage everyone to do, what simple daily practice would you most recommend to help my listeners build a greatest sense of self confidence?

Danny Greeves 29:44

Hmm, so a simple morning practice. Well, the one that I would recommend is a practice that revolves around gratitude and appreciation. But it's a little bit different to most that I've come across. So the reason it's different is because it has, as you mentioned, a little healthy dose of realism involved. So what I would recommend your listeners to do is, for each morning - and it can be really quick, it doesn't have to be long at all - but think about the last 24 hours. And think about one specific moment where you've either been supported, you've been helped, or someone has thanked you for some way. So it's a thing, person, or an event that you can be grateful for. So that's the first step. And most people will find that relatively easy. But the one that tends to build confidence is after that, think about a challenge, a problem, or something that you perceive that went wrong yesterday, and spend a little bit of time figuring out how that's going to help you grow; what you're going to learn from it, how are you going to do things differently in the future, and how you are going to actually apply that in a different way. And the reason this is so effective is because, each morning, you start to think about what you're grateful for what went right, and you actually become grateful for what went wrong. And I'm using the word 'wrong' loosely here. So what happens is, you build more and more confidence, because it doesn't matter if it went to plan or it didn't, you feel like you're growing.

Kim Forrester 31:29

That is just awesome, Danny. Thank you so much for sharing that morning reminder. Danny Greeves, if people want to learn more about self confidence, if they want to learn more about you and your book, where can they find out more?

Danny Greeves 31:43

So the easiest way would be to go to my website which is www.dannygreevescoaching.com. And my book, Six Steps to Self Confidence, is available on Amazon. So you can get the paperback version or you can get the ebook. And both of those have ways to get in contact with me. So if you have any questions or anything that you'd like to explore more, then I'd love to hear from you.

Kim Forrester 32:11

Well, it's just been a delight to have you with me here on the Eudaemonia podcast, Danny. You've certainly given me many things to ponder and to consider around my own self confidence. Thank you so much for joining me today.

Danny Greeves 32:25

Thank you so much for having me. I really loved being here and thank you very much for the chat.

Kim Forrester 32:31

As the American footballer, Joe Namath once said, "When you have confidence, you can have a lot of fun. And when you have fun, you can do amazing things." You've been listening to the Eudaemonia podcast. If you'd like to learn more about how to live a truly flourishing life, please subscribe and check out www.eudaemoniapod.com for more inspiring episodes. I'm Kim Forrester. Until next time, be well, be kind to yourself, and be confident.