

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Moment 127: How To Build Unbreakable Confidence By Making This ONE Promise To Yourself: Chris Williamson

You talked about the the paint the like the layers of paint that build confidence. This is something that I've been particularly compelled by because so many people that listen to this podcast struggle with the idea of confidence and there's a big industry out there as you've said that says you know look in the mirror tell yourself you're a millionaire say it three times write it in your journal but then as I reflected in as I've written in my book the thing that and it relates to what Alex Hamosy said is the thing that I've learned is it's all evidence for better or for worse stack of undeniable proof and it goes the other way that evidence that you got at seven years old when you went up and tried to do a public speech and everyone laughed at you it's more it's a thicker layer than than one layer of evidence to say that you're capable it's a harder layer to sort of strip um if there is someone listening now and they want to maybe orientate their drive to the fulfilling pursuits that you talk about but also they want to build their confidence what advice would you give them I imagine that's 80% of the listener base here act first okay you have to lead with action because if you are someone that deals with a crippling sense of insufficiency your ability to discount any good thoughts you have in your mind is going to be so strong if you try and lead with positivity first I need to think it wish it believe it and I will achieve it your set point of negativity is going to just crush that into the ground I'm speaking from personal experience right as the guy that was chronically unconfident and still has you know the imposter syndrome that does creep in you have to start with action it needs to be okay what would have had to have happened in a week's time for me to look back on that week and find pride in myself pride's seen as something that you should be ashamed of it's one of the seven deadly sins but David Goggins I did an episode with him a couple of months ago we could put it in the in the show notes if people are interested and he said pride is something that everybody misses that having pride in your name your performance the way that you show up for other people is something that you can do but you need to do something that is worthy of being prideful about right what would have had to have happened in a week for you to look back on that week with pride okay maybe stop breaking promises to yourself when you say I'm going to wake up tomorrow at 7 a.m and when the option comes to hit the snooze button don't do it there's one win that you've got for the day that's action right and it is just you know it's tried to say the Peterson clean your room thing but the reason that that works is that you start with the smallest step a step and you expand out from there you want to become a writer you want to leave your job and become a writer okay can you commit to writing one blog post on substack per week for the next three weeks that would make you feel like less of a loser if you did that action has to come first if you're the sort of person who is chronically unconfident because you will drag your sense of identity behind you Mark Manson says that identity lags behind our status by about one to two years so for both me and you in two years time we'll go I understand why I was in LA that day and and and look back start with action and make small promises to yourself that you don't break if you had a friend and every single time that you and your friend decided that you're going to go out for dinner that friend either showed up two hours late or didn't show up at all you would stop trusting that person that is the relationship

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that you have with yourself you need to be able to trust your own word and a lot of us don't because life is very convenient and it is easy for people to not stick to the promises that they set themselves because our ability to be idealistic is always going to outstrip reality's ability to deliver that to us soon as you posit an ideal you then begin to compare yourself to that ideal and true hell is when the person that you are meets the person that you could have been sometimes I ponder how you've probably seen this in your own life I'm sure you have where you'll have a friend in your life I've got a couple of friends back home who I've tried to help in some way maybe give some advice when they're struggling in their hardest times and the advice has been ineffective and then you've got another friend who will just need one idea they'll be listening to a podcast and one idea will be the seed that changes their life I often like think that I overestimate the power of words because everything you've said there makes perfect sense but we both know that 95 percent maybe more of people that have just received that it will not convert into any kind of behavior habits are hard to break man and the habit of not doing things is unbelievably difficult to get past it's one of the problems with anyone that listens to your show or my show you will love being cerebral right you will love the idea that I can use cognitive horsepower to just get myself out of problems and there is a case of learning as masturbation right and believing that learning about something is the same as enacting it and it's not that's why it has to be action first a quote from one of my friends that he uses when he's thinking about a concept is does this grow corn basically is it useful tell me how I can use this in my life does it grow fucking corn right it's this beautifully beautiful sounding concept cognitive bias that helps me understand the way that my brain works and my relationship with everybody else how do I use that in my life give me something to apply it to and that's why with the confidence thing choose promises that you will never break to yourself I'm going to get up on time for the next month I'm not going to hit the snooze button if you do that and you look back in a month and you go oh my god that that's the first time I've done that in forever maybe that's a big win and you can do the James Clear thing we'll write it on a board we'll track it what gets like measured etc etc but the main thing is just keep promises to yourself and that is a good

way to go from here is an insight I learned about I want to do breathwork cold plunge go to the gym fast until 12 midday get up on time sunlight in the eyes and then whatever it is right that you want to do turn it into a promise don't break the promise one of the really important things you said there was about the size of that first step I was reflecting there on the way that video games are designed to make sure that every subsequent level is not too intimidating that you lose a motivation but it's not too small that you lose motivation as well you can lose motivation on both ways and so it's the same with crosswords and video games they get incrementally more challenging to keep you engaged the size of that first step is I think a central point there because when people listen to podcasts with people like me and you or Andrew Huberman and they hear that they've got to maybe get up at this time go outside gaze earth like put their feet on the ground cold plunge and I go I'm going to do that and I set that as my first step I'm set up for failure how important do you think the size and the subjective size of that small that first step you take to build trust with yourself is and to start that discipline the goal isn't to have the perfect daily routine tomorrow the goal is to still be winning your daily routine in 50 years time if you expand your time horizon sufficiently you will realize that very very tiny steps can compound

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look at the graph of mine or your followers on Spotify especially mine right because I was doing my show for so long and it's just nothing nothing nothing nothing everything well why well it's because it's latent leverage it takes so many layers of paint to get there so yes the first step has to be incredibly small do that make it so small that you can't say no to it and then what's next and then what's next so when I decided that I was going to try and become a more virtuous version of me I was going to start telling the truth I was going to have a morning routine I was going to develop a meditation habit I was going to read all of these things that I wanted to do none of which I did right toward the end of my 20s none of which I did all of which are now the foundation of of my life over I don't know 1500 meditation sessions and all of the authors on the podcast and etc etc I had to do that one step at a time I didn't have a stable sleep and wake pattern until COVID ever in my adult life I'd never gone to bed and woken up at the same time for seven days in a row until COVID because I was running nightlife events right so if no matter how difficult the setback is even if you're a shift worker you're a nurse you're a parent whatever your challenge is just make the promise to yourself sufficiently small that even with that challenge in front of you you can make it work