

Building Jesus-Focused Confidence in Your Young Adult Child

Many pundits accuse the Millennial generation of being overconfident. Even Millennial leaders are bothered by this tendency of their own generation. Over 50 percent of respondents in our Millennial Survey indicated that they get frustrated with this know-it-all stance.

Is it possible that this is only an external façade based on Google or YouTube knowledge, versus the kind of insight and discernment that helps us weather the inevitable storms of today's workplace and the shifting cultural chaos?

If we were to look at their social media accounts, we would see most Millennials portray exciting and successful lives. However, this is rarely a true reflection of the full spectrum of what is going on in an up-and-coming leader's life. This socially accepted practice has pitfalls. Comparing their own lives to the social media accounts of others can leave many young people feeling inferior and depressed. It's only when their confidence stems from a solid foundation that they will develop faith in their core purpose and understand how they can use their unique skills and talents to accomplish that purpose.

Our roles as parents, mentors and coaches is to nurture a high appreciation for the work they do. They become confident contributors when their work is aligned with their unique wiring and calling. I'm always encouraged when I read the great advice in Colossians 3:23: "And whatever you do, do it heartily, as for the Lord and not for men."

How to Help Your Millennial Develop Authentic Confidence

- Fight the Instant Gratification Syndrome

Some Millennials have difficulty connecting what they're doing today with what they want to be doing in the future. They want to see results right now.

Possible reaction: Your Millennial will become disheartened, and their confidence will be shaken if they are unable to connect their "now" with their future. It's under these circumstances that many young people think the best solution is to find another job or project.

Practical Tip: The YouTube video, "Work as Worship," by RightNow Media is a great summary of the struggle between what is regarded as work and what has spiritual meaning. This resource helps Millennials as they seek out the purpose of their own lives and understand how they can be a light in their current work environment. I highly recommend watching this video with your Millennial. It will likely spark a great discussion. When we shift our minds to see our work as important, everything changes. Encourage your Millennial to embrace positive internal messages such as these:

"I choose to view the work I do now as important."

"I choose to start making a difference today and not wait until the perfect job comes along."

- Conquer the Misalignment between Meaning and Purpose

Millennials want to have meaning and purpose at work, but they don't see how their gifts and talents align with the feeling of purpose.

Possible reaction: When up-and-coming leaders are not operating in their sweet spot, they feel they're not getting anywhere. This affects their confidence, which in turn has a negative impact on productivity and engagement. We all feel it, but Millennials seem to have a particularly hard time

recognizing this frustration.

Practical Tip: A number of years ago, I learned about an ancient Hebrew word in my Transformational Leadership studies. This word was used for both work and worship: Avodah. Historically, our Western culture has divided life into secular and sacred. Work is secular. Purpose and meaning are spiritual. What might happen if you can help your millennial see their work with an Avodah perspective, where they find the daily practical opportunities to serve God through serving their colleagues and clients? For some, this will mean working to solve social issues on a big stage. For others, it'll mean making a positive impact on a colleague or client. Even if someone doesn't have a strong personal faith, they can find a purpose beyond themselves within the context of their work.

- Overcome a Lack of Resiliency

Without the ability to bounce back, make a mistake, face the consequences of a poor choice, or get a "no" from a client, a millennial's confidence will be shaken.

Possible Reaction: Millennials who don't have the resiliency to quickly recover from setbacks will lose confidence in their abilities. They will most likely delay charging after their goals and could also fall into the trap of focusing on identifying problems and pointing fingers instead of finding creative solutions.

Practical Tip: My Finnish ancestors used the word "sisu" to describe an unrelenting ability to face and overcome seemingly insurmountable challenges with grit, determination, and creativity. Encourage your Millennial to deal with disappointment, look for creative alternatives and take calculated risks when they don't succeed the first time. Assist them to practically implement your advice by resolving to root out excuse-making, and replace it with asking this question: "What might I do differently to get the result I

want?" By asking this catalyst question, they will develop a sisu spirit that will ramp up their resilience robustness and keep them from falling into the victim mentality that pervades our society.

I know Millennials get a bad rap in the press, and many negative stereotypes are used to describe them. However, as a mother of three Millennials, I choose to celebrate and embrace this exciting generation. I encourage you to continue developing the myriad of unique skills, talents, and strengths they bring to our world. Your parenting mentorship can help them shake their know-it-all label and ensure they make a confident contribution to their communities, businesses and organizations. {eo}

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