

NO MORE STRUGGLING WITH

IMPOSTER SYNDROME

**HOW TO TURN IMPOSTER SYNDROME
INTO HUMBLE CONFIDENCE, POWERFUL
COMMUNICATION & CAREER SUCCESS**

BY DEAN LEAK



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WHY THIS E-BOOK CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE

Thanks for downloading this manual and arriving here.

You've already taken the most important step – the first step – towards harnessing your imposter syndrome.

Does this sound like you? If so, you're in the right place!

- You've asked yourself questions such as, "How did I get here? Was I over-promoted? Did I promise too much? Am I as good as I thought I was? Am I as good as they seem to think I am?"
- You've struggled with imposter syndrome but don't know how to manage it?
- You've tried and failed to 'cure' it with different strategies?
- You don't know how it's holding you back and want to understand why?
- You hold yourself back from taking on new opportunities?
- You don't know how to turn your fears and worries into super strengths?

Trust me, imposter syndrome is incredibly common. It's very common because I've seen it in all levels of experience and success.

In my 15+ years of experience supporting world-class athletes, junior and senior managers, C-suite leaders, coaches, influencers, charity workers, writers and entrepreneurs to name a few, all levels of experience and success have imposter syndrome.

I now work as a performance mindset coach and team culture advisor to entrepreneurs, leaders, and companies such as L'Oreal, PwC, Ofgem, Barclays, UK Sport, WeWork and KPMG on mindset, wellbeing and healthy performance team culture strategies.

Guess what? I still have imposter syndrome.

There, I've said it and got that out the way. My imposter is going bonkers writing a manual on how to harness imposter syndrome. For most of my life imposter syndrome has crippled me and left me spiralling into paths of avoidance and missed opportunity. BUT... I've learnt to turn my imposter into a super strength, and I can't wait to share this with you.

In this e-book you'll learn how to move from suffering from imposter syndrome to thriving with it.

This isn't a recipe, more a comprehensive guide to help you develop your mindset, beliefs and strategies to harness imposter syndrome into a super strength.

I hope you find it useful.

Dean



FOLLOW ME



WHAT IS IMPOSTER SYNDROME?

"Imposter syndrome is a psychological pattern that causes chronic self-doubt and overwhelming feelings of inadequacy" (Sternberg, 1991). It is the persistent belief that one's success is undeserved or has been illegitimately achieved because of luck or other circumstances. The term was first coined by Clance & Imes in 1978. The definition of the Impostor Phenomenon from Clance (1985) refers to an *"internal experience of intellectual phoniness."*

Imposter syndrome also includes the belief that others overestimated one's abilities. Attributing personal success to luck, mis-judgement, charm, networking, presentation skills, or lowering standards. "Imposters" over plan or procrastinate before preparing frantically (Thompson, 2004).

A person with imposter syndrome would feel accomplished and relieved if the task is completed. After a new achievement task, self-doubt and anxiety return (Kets De Vries, 2005).

Do you experience any of these thoughts throughout your day?

- Missed career opportunities, pay rises and promotions
- Avoidance of risk taking and speaking up
- Perfectionism, overthinking and procrastination
- Stress, being overwhelmed and burnout
- ...not reaching your full potential!

These thoughts are normal, expected and you're not alone. **In fact, the way you feel is not your fault.** So many people are held back by imposter syndrome. You know too well the far-reaching consequences (McElwee, 2007).

If you're like me and many others, you're not be alone in perceiving these thoughts as negative, destructive and something that needs pushing aside.

It's hardly surprising we think this because most approaches tell us to overcome imposter syndrome. To kill it off. To conquer it. To get rid of it. That's not my approach. In fact, I'm going to argue that these approaches increase imposter syndrome.

What if you could use imposter syndrome, harness it and channel it into reaching your full potential? What if it isn't a negative thing? What if it can be a signal to show up with courage, communicate powerfully, and take bold action to scale your career?

This e-book is going to answer these questions. But first, awareness starts with understanding the root causes of imposter syndrome.

"I've lucked my way to this role. People are now realising I'm not good enough for this role."

"I need to work harder to prove my worth. I'll stay later this week to prove it to my boss."

"I really don't agree with that behaviour. Don't say anything though otherwise you'll upset them."

"If I make a mistake, I'm going to get fired."

"Oh no. Those persons are here for this interview! I've got no chance now."

"If I don't get this perfect, they'll think I'm lazy and incompetent."

"I deserve a pay rise. But they're others that deserve it ahead of me. Wait until next year."

"Just keep your head down and don't say anything. You won't get found out if you don't speak."

"I wonder what people thought about my session today. Was it good enough?"

"Someone is going to realise that I've blagged my way into this job!"

"There are so many people better than me, I'm going to get found out!"

"If I give my opinion in this meeting, they'll find out I'm not smart enough."

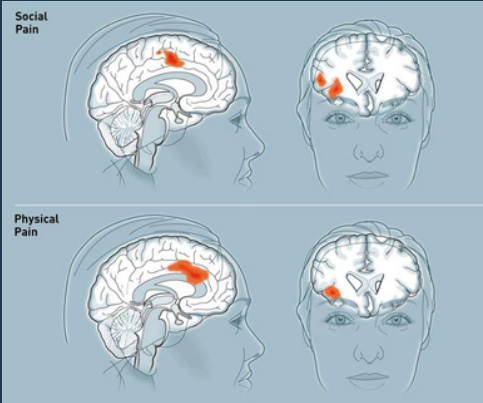
"I need to do something to impress the team."

"I'm not good enough to go for the lead role, I need more experience and time."

WHY DO YOU EXPERIENCE IMPOSTER SYNDROME?

Why do people experience this phenomenon? There's usually no singular cause of imposter syndrome, but rather many. These causes will vary for each individual (Langford, 1993). First of all, we need to understand the human mind (Rock, 2004).

Social and Physical Pain Produce Similar Brain Responses (Rock)



- The human brain is wired for survival.
- The human brain reacts to social threat in the same way it reacts to physical threat. We try to avoid rejection and worry about what other people think about us.
- In judging whether an experience is threatening, the brain predicts how to react based on its own experience first and foremost.
- This response to social threat generates avoidance emotion which leads to avoidance behaviour such as procrastination, perfectionism, over-planning, withdrawal etc
- However, when we feel psychologically safe and within a healthy environment, the brain generates emotions such as excitement, trust, joy and fulfilment.
- The multiple, complex and interacting factors that cause imposter syndrome: societal, relationships, family, education, minority groups and the workplace environment.

FAMILY UPBRINGING

EDUCATION

MINORITY GROUPS

RELATIONSHIPS

SOCIETAL EXPECTATIONS

WORKPLACE

Where do you think your imposter syndrome comes from? What experiences in life have led to feelings of inadequacy? Perhaps you'll resonate with current or past experiences you've had with rejection, critical feedback and high barriers to entry in job roles.

Having an awareness of the causes of your imposter feelings can help you recognise the triggers and how your reaction leads to behaviours that no longer serve you. We explore the imposter habit loop in the next section. But from a neuroscientific perspective, your experiences in life build a programme in the brain that tells you you don't belong when feelings threatened (Corker, 2005).

84%

of people experience feelings of imposter syndrome (Gren, 2022)

£205K LOSS

is average salary earnings loss (in lifetime) when imposter syndrome holds you back from asking for pay rise (Complete success, 2022)

80%

of people are unaware they experience imposter syndrome. A statistic in my poll with 1000+ results

I hope you're now starting to see that imposter syndrome is normal and expected. But experiencing it is not your fault either. You can't always control your environment and you certainly can't change the past. Look at the statistics. Up to 84% of people have felt like an imposter at some point (Gren, 2022). Experienced by people from all walks of life including very well known names. The likes of Albert Einstein, Serena Williams, Jennifer Lopez, Natalie Portman, Lupita Nyong'o, and Tom Hanks have all been reported to have experienced this type of self-doubt (see the *imposter wall of wisdom at the back of this e-book*).

You now have an opportunity to change. It's clear that imposter syndrome is influenced (not determined) by past events and the environment. Why not determined? Because something that 'determined' is unchangeable. That's not the case. Research has shown over and over again that people can change with the right conditions and support.

The question is this: how do we manage imposter syndrome?

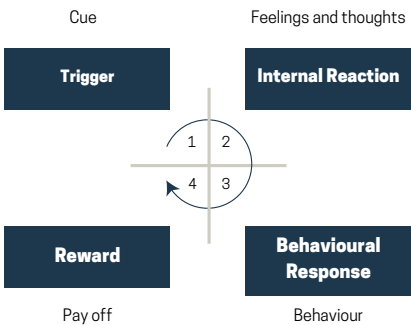
There are two ways to approach this:

- 1) addressing the social and environmental problems that exaggerate imposter syndrome in communities and the workplace (*learn more about this here*).
- 2) considering what individuals can do to harness feelings of imposter syndrome with mental and emotional skills.

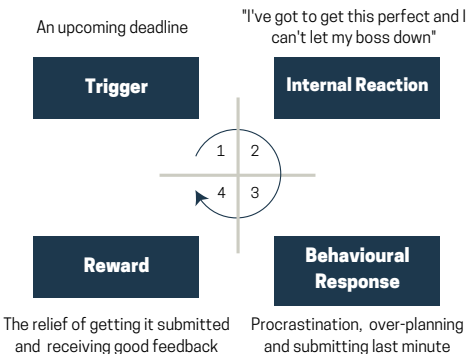
This e-book will focus mostly on individual emotional skills. You can [click here](#) to see how leaders and managers can create psychological safety to support people to belong. We will now explore how imposter syndrome keeps us trapped in a negative habit loop before exploring how we can start to use it as a super-strength.



The Loop



Imposter Loop example



THE IMPOSTER LOOP

A habit is a repeated behaviour that is automatic. When you face a new situation, your brain must decide, how do I react to this?

Except, we don't consciously think that because the brain has a pre-programmed prediction that processes what to do in microseconds. The brain determines the best course of action by reacting to similar and familiar situations from the past. That's why imposter syndrome is cyclical (Clear, 2020).

Habits are learned mental shortcuts. In a way, a habit is a memory of how you solved a problem in the past. Memory helps the brain predict what will work in the future.

So if you're used to procrastinating and over-planning in response to fearing failure, that's a good predictor of future behaviour.

Now of course, that doesn't mean it'll always be this way. That's what this e-book is seeking to solve. But change starts with awareness and acceptance of the system us humans are working with.

WHICH TYPE OF IMPOSTER ARE YOU?

Several behaviours are recognised as typical manifestations of imposter syndrome (Rakestraw, 2017). You can see the top five 'imposter characters' below. If like many people suffering with imposter syndrome, you might tick all five. Or you might find you tick one or two. There's no right or wrong.

Which characters below best describe you? Any character resonate?

(Key point: these characters are **not** actually who you are but the behaviours you display when you the inner imposter voice grips you.)



Workaholic Imposter: you spend much more time than necessary to achieve near-perfect results. You must overachieve to feel validated and struggle with the fear of failure. 'Good enough' is not enough. The long hours you spend working to perfect the task leads to stress and burnout. When you complete tasks, you have an empty and anti-climatic feelings. You have an underlying believe that success is only achieved through unwavering, intensive efforts.



Lucky Duck: you attribute success and achievement in life down to luck or being in the right place at the right time. You feel like praise and applauds are undeserved. Because you fear your luck will run out, you end up taking less risks and putting yourself out there. You worry that at any moment you will finally get found out for being a fraud. You're capable of describing your weaknesses and less comfortable taking about your strengths.



Con Artist: you think that in life you've got by on charm, rather than your 'true' abilities. You often feel like you're tricking others into thinking you're better at something than you really are, that your social skills have blinded others to your shortcomings. You often think that your looks, personality or possessions have been enough to 'get by'.



Chameleon: you go to great lengths to blend in with your surroundings so that your 'flaws' don't stand out. If you feel like you might be found out, you do anything to please or impress those around you. You overly worry about what people think and belittle yourself in comparison to others. You feel like you live your life not in accordance to what matters to you, but what you must do to ensure you do not face rejection or criticism.



Procrastinator: you are very aware that in every situation you will either succeed or fail. So, in order to avoid failure or success, you put off completing tasks in advance of deadline because you don't like the fear of thinking about the task or receiving feedback. You typically procrastinate when there's an upcoming presentation/pitch or when you have to complete an important report/project.

Keep reading on what you can do to avoid the imposter syndrome trapdoor

Tick one or all of the boxes? Congratulations. Welcome to the imposter club. There's no shame in this. No shame at all. Perhaps you can start to see this as the beginning of embracing these characters as friends, even allies, or as a resource you can use as fuel to start showing up as the person you want to be. Still curious?

Before we jump into strategies and skills, it would be wise to understand why we get stuck in the negative imposter syndrome habit loop. You'll find that by understanding the problem we create ourselves, the problem will become the solution.



THE IMPOSTER SYNDROME TRAPDOOR

It's important to acknowledge that we all have the best intentions when trying to manage our worries and stressors. None of us intentionally try to use the wrong tool, technique, or solution to solve a problem. It would be ludicrous to even suggest so. In fact, there really isn't a right or wrong way. You must find what works for you.

Having spoke with many people who've struggled with imposter syndrome, 90% of my clients reported that it was their own mindset and view about themselves that kept them trapped in a negative imposter spiral. These are:

1. Viewing imposter syndrome as a negative thing and something to 'overcome'
2. Attempting to control, change, conquer or fight imposter thoughts
3. Believing that imposter syndrome would one day go away
4. Trying to outsmart the imposter voice by using positive thinking and willpower
5. Using distraction as a means to stop or reduce difficult physical feelings and emotion

But, interestingly, not only did they self-report them as unhelpful strategies, it's backed by research and science as being unhelpful. These approaches didn't get rid of worries of feeling like a fake, fearing rejection or caring what others think, it multiplied it. Multiplied it! It kept the very thing they were trying to remove at the forefront of the mind. Sound familiar? Have you ever removed feelings of self-doubt?

These strategies have been pushed in our faces. How many times have you seen the advice on social media, "just stop worrying about what people think," or, "stop comparing yourself to others"?

Can you see this advice is not particularly helpful? As explained, not only does it encourage us to do the impossible of shutting down our biological, social, and evolutionary need to seek approval and care for others, it frames it as a negative thing. Focusing on negatives keep us wrapped up in the negative. We dance with it. Get tangled with it. Spend hours overthinking it. We fall into the imposter syndrome trapdoor (Collis, 2012).

“Fighting your demons won’t make them go away—it will make them stronger. The only way to get rid of your demons is by accepting them and befriending them. You cannot destroy the darkest parts of yourself. You can only integrate them.”

Mark Manson

Here's a reflective exercise you can do yourself.

Can you recall occasions when you've had unhelpful thoughts and you've tried to overcome them by saying things like...?

- "Just stop worrying about what people think"
- "You've got this, stop comparing yourself to others"
- "Think positively and stop beating yourself up"

Did those counter-arguments help to get rid of imposter syndrome? If anything like me and my clients, no. It keeps you stuck in a negative imposter loop.

And before we rush to want to get rid of imposter syndrome, we should consider some fascinating research. And here's what it says...

"they found that those with imposter syndrome were rated more highly in comparison to those with non-imposters. Also, they were rated as more competent, better collaborators, better listeners. In other words, more empathetic!"

MIT Research

Research from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has demonstrated how imposter syndrome gives you an advantage over people who experience no self-doubt (Tewfik, 2022). **What did the research find?**

In various meta-analysis and control groups with corporate roles, medical students and HR interviews, they found that those with imposter syndrome were rated more highly in comparison to those with non-imposters. Also, they were rated as more competent.

Not only that but those with imposter syndrome were seen as better collaborators, better listeners, had better eye contact and asked better questions. In other words, more empathetic and compassionate. Those who reported to not experience imposter syndrome were deemed less competent in the performance of tasks and lacking emotional intelligence.



But if imposter syndrome is a good thing and can help us get on in life, why do we rush to get rid of it? (McRae, 2012).

Well, beyond societal expectations, there is a term called 'cognitive hooking' that keeps us trapped. Here's how.

COGNITIVE HOOKING: WHY WE GET STUCK

If you catch yourself ruminating or experiencing thoughts of feeling like a fraud, now is the time to develop the skill of noticing it. You can disconnect from unhelpful thoughts with practice by building emotional flexibility. Emotional flexibility is building skills to shift your attention, in the moment, to things that matter. Skilfully guiding yourself to refocus when you get distracted, with self-compassion and discipline, to be back in the moment. When you notice your thoughts, acknowledge them and accept them, you create space for a whole new way of being. To see our thoughts for what they are—merely the by-products of a problem-solving, storytelling mind we must observe them and look 'at' them rather than 'through' them (Harris, 2010).

The term 'cognitive hooking' describes this practice of unhooking or distancing oneself from them. It can assist you in recognising the imposter thought, taking a step back, and determining whether it is useful.

When you 'cognitively fuse' or 'hook' with a thought, you get attached with the thought. Hooking with an unhelpful thought can lead to more troubling thought patterns, increased emotional tension, and lead to unhelpful behaviours and actions, like avoiding giving your opinion in a meeting. When we get used to thinking this way, our thoughts can become too powerful and stop us from seeing other options.

Cognitive hooking involves believing:

- (1) that as a person, you are defined by your thoughts
- (2) that thoughts are rules and you must listen to them
- (3) thoughts are facts and the truth
- (4) the future is determined by the past
- (5) that you are the content of your thoughts

Cognitive fusion occurs when we become so attached to patterns of thought or specific thoughts that they obstruct our ability to do the things we want to do. It's difficult to remember the true nature of thoughts when they become paralysing... but remember they're nothing more than words and images floating through our minds to which we ascribe meaning. We, not the thoughts themselves, decide what those thoughts mean (Meister, 2014).

Below are 6 examples of patterns of thinking that dictate the term of your behaviour. Do you notice anything familiar? Awareness of these patterns will help to spot when you get hooked by your imposter (Albarracin, 2000).

“Look at your thoughts. Let your mind do whatever it likes. Let it become as nasty as it wants! Let the mind tell you all kinds of things-scary things, happy things, wrong things, right things. The mind is only here to make trouble for you, that's all. But when you do not allow the mind to make trouble for you, it disappears!”
- Robert Adam

RULES

What unconscious rules govern your life?
 What stories play out in your mind about how you should feel, think, and act?

Rules are black and white statements you use in reaction to a situation. You pigeon hole yourself to seeing one eventuality or scenarios. It leaves you feeling stuck.

It classically shows up in 'if and then' statements.

Example: "If I feel....., then I can't do....." or "If I do....., you should do....."

REASONS

What reasons do you give yourself (and others) for being unable, unwilling, or unable to do certain things?

We humans are very good at convincing ourselves and others of all the reasons why we can't change. Rather than assuming the validity of these reasons at face value, consider the evidence of your reason carefully. Are they really true? How did you find out?

Example: "I can't do..... because I'm too....." or "I've never been able to do..... because....."

JUDGEMENT

Judgements about yourself, people, events, thoughts, feelings, and behaviours influence our decision-making.

We make sense of the world by judging information internally and externally. Examine your judgements and reflect on where they come from and how they help you live the life you want. Be flexible and hold them lightly as new information comes in. Again, these can be quite black and white statements.

Example: "I'm a person" or "Anxiety is awful" or "You're mean" or "Life is hard"

PAST

How much time do you spend ruminating about events, situations and experiences in the past? Do you hold on to them in a bid that by doing so you might be able to change it?

We cannot change what happened in the past, but we can change our interpretation of it in the here and now. Remember that there is only ever 'now'. There is no past or future. The past is a memory of an event.

Example: "I was I did not act in that way". "People will think I'm an idiot because of what I said". "I was I could just go back in time".

FUTURE

Humans like a sense of certainty so we spend time trying to predict and control the future. That's why we over-plan or micromanage situations. It gives an illusion of control.

Life is linear, unpredictable and messy. You never know what's round the corner. Thinking about the future is another trap that takes us away from our actions... the present moment.

Example: Worrying and fretting about what might happen or escaping the present moment by daydreaming about a better life.

SELF

Everyone has ideas about who they are and what they stand for. Knowing who you are and your values helps you live a purposeful and intentional life. A meaningless life occurs when you define yourself in accordance to your imposter thoughts. Rather than allowing thoughts to pass, your thoughts become your whole identity.

Start observing your thoughts about what kind of person you are and how clinging to them keeps you stuck in problematic behaviour patterns.

Example: "I, an imposter" "I'm weak/worthless" or "I'm lazy and incompetent" or "I'll never make it"

IMPOSTER SYNDROME IS A GREAT THING. WHY?

When you change the way you look at something the thing you look at changes - Dyer.

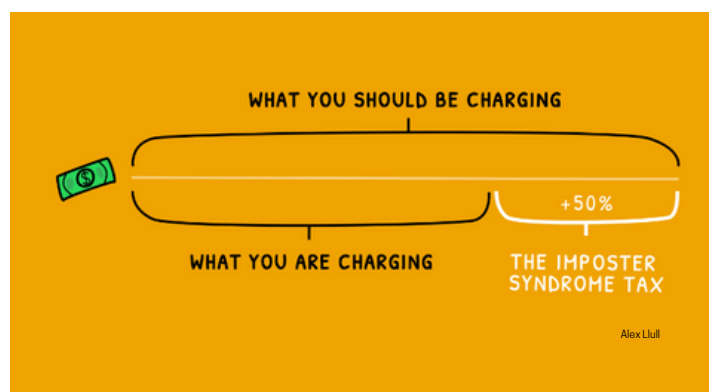
Underlying unhelpful beliefs drive unhelpful behaviour. Things change when we challenge the underlying belief. Here are 9 statements that might help you challenge your perspective on imposter syndrome (Somers, 2022). Remind yourself of these each morning.

1 NOBODYS KNOWS WHAT THEY'RE DOING

Nobody knows what they're doing. We're all making it up as we go along and trying to do our best. Not knowing what you're doing keeps you humble and curious (Gravois, 2007).

Imposter syndrome only persists when you buy into the belief that people know what they're doing too.

Have a look at the wall of wisdom. We're all making it up.



2 IMPOSTER SYNDROME IS YOUR FRIEND

Imposter syndrome isn't going anywhere. Try to get rid of it at your own peril. See your imposter as an enemy and it becomes a battle. See it as a friend and it becomes a partnership. When you see it as a friend you treat yourself with kindness and compassion (Imber, 2022).



3 LIFELONG LEARNER

The first step to learning is understanding what you don't know. Having doubts about your knowledge and skills makes you more likely to be curious, learn more and seek more training.

Learning and success requires experiences and experiences involve failure. Go experiment and try things, it builds character!

In her research on humility and learning, psychologist Elizabeth Krumrei writes, "Learning requires the humility to realise one has something to learn."

4 JUST DO IT

The antidote to imposter syndrome is action. Look at what you've achieved in life and the journey you've been on. How did that happen? It happened because you kept on pushing and getting back up. You've already proven you can do hard things.

5 CONFIDENT HUMILITY IS THE GOAL

Arrogance results from overconfidence without humility. Too little confidence can lead to avoiding new experiences and skills. Confident humility is the goal.

Confident humility means believing in your abilities while acknowledging you may not always have the best solution. Confidence to push boundaries and self-doubt to question your assumptions (Bansal, 2021).

6 DON'T WAIT TO FEEL READY!

You're an imposter, just like everyone else. Starting something new, changing careers, facing a new situation? You're not supposed to know what to do. If you only did things you were ready to do, you'd end up doing nothing (Kolligan, 1991).

Do you think the leader/coach you look up to knew what they were doing before they built their career? No, absolutely not. They felt the same as you. And when you realise everyone's an imposter... you realise that no one is an imposter.

When you're doing ambitious, important and meaningful work, you'll feel stretched beyond your capabilities. It's in this zone we have two choices: stay quiet or speak up. I say keep showing up and be the change you want to see.

7 THE KIND HELPER

When you pay it forward and help people, it exponentially increases the field of luck around you. "Birds of a feather do actually tend to flock together. Mediocrity tends to flock with mediocrity; exceptional tends to flock with exceptional; only fools tend to suffer fools gladly" - Jeff Haden.

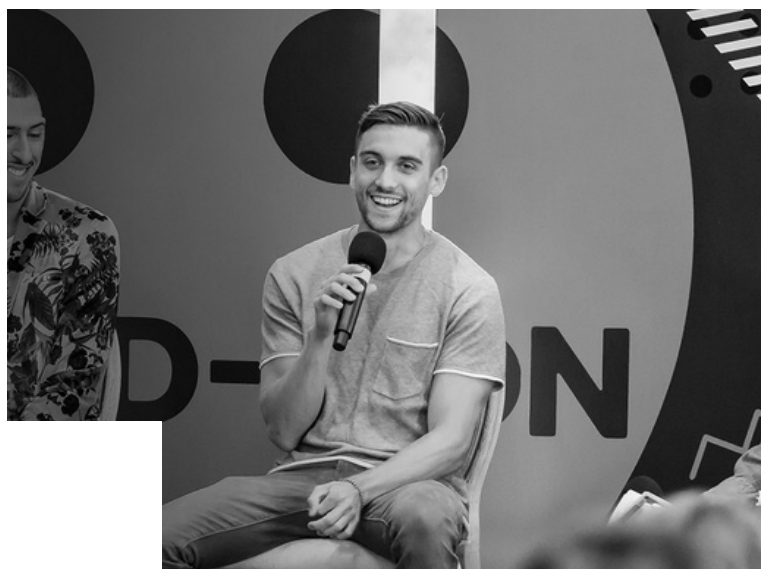
And kind helpers tend to associate with other kind helpers - and by being kind, you make each other 'lucky'.

"When in doubt, act. Nothing builds confidence like taking action, especially when the action involves risk and failure."

- The Confidence Code.

8 PRESSURE IS A PRIVILEGE

If you feel nervous or pressure, it's a sign you're out of your comfort zone. The 'Imposter Mind' would interpret this discomfort as not feeling ready. Instead, start seeing this as a sign you're ready. It's in the zone of discomfort that magic truly happens.



9 SERENDIPITY MINDSET

Nicolas Cole - Digital Writer

Imposter syndrome can deceive you into believing you'll never get another chance if you miss a great opportunity. That's false. Opportunities are everywhere when you put yourself out there and meet more people. Luck isn't created by creating it. Luck, real luck, is something you can't control. Luck happens to us, whether it's good or bad. What we can control is how we react to events or luck, and more importantly, how often we put ourselves in situations where we might get lucky.

THE 6 MUST-HAVE PRINCIPLES FOR LIVING WITH IMPOSTER SYNDROME 1/2

The principles below are mindsets that help you build emotional flexibility to live with imposter feelings, emotions, and thoughts.

1 EMBRACE DISCOMFORT

Humans like comfort and familiarity because it represents feeling safe. So, when we feel something uncomfortable, the body prepares itself to react to the perceived danger by activating the fight/flight/freeze response.

But growth lies outside our comfort zone. Growth lies in discomfort. Managing imposter syndrome isn't about running away from it, it's about living with it.



Discomfort is the price of admission to a meaningful life
- Victor Frankl

2 OBSERVE YOUR IMPOSTER

When we believe our imposter thoughts, like "I'm not good enough", we act on them, leading to an unhelpful outcome. We act on them because we get cognitively fused with them. This all starts because we gave power to our imposter thoughts by listening to them.

Instead, if we notice thoughts and observe them, we create space to choose a helpful action. This is explained more in the next section.



"We cannot empty the mind by thinking. Only by observation."
- Robert Adams

3 ACCEPT YOUR IMPOSTER

We've already discussed that trying to control, fight and change imposter thoughts keep us stuck in an imposter habit loop. This refusal to sit with and be present with the thoughts, stops us moving forward in a helpful way. What's the opposite of this? Acceptance.

Accepting them for what they are rather than judging them.



"The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change."
- Carl Rogers

THE 6 MUST-HAVE PRINCIPLES FOR LIVING WITH IMPOSTER SYNDROME 2/2

4 BE IN THE PRESENT MOMENT

Life only exists in the present moment. That's when we get stuff done. Yet we spend most of our time in the past and in the future which don't exist. The only time that is real is now, right now. When you're listening to your thoughts, you're not in the present.

So, when your imposter shows up in the now telling you that "you're a fraud and don't deserve success", remember it's a constructed story and it's only when you observe this that you have the choice to get back into the present moment.



"We only have control over two moments in our lives. Here and now."
- Saad Khan

5 DO WHAT MATTERS

When we hook, we become our thoughts. Then our thoughts shape the character we become which builds the unhelpful identity we view about ourselves.

Instead of perceiving ourselves based on our perception of what others think about us or based on fleeting imposter thoughts in the moment, have clarity on your values and choose what matters to you.

Ask yourself, do I know what really matters to me in life, who I want to be and what I stand for? Am I doing things that are in alignment with my values, rather than avoiding things because they feel uncomfortable?



"I am not who I think I am. I am not who you think I am. I am who I think you think I am."
- James Cooley

6 TAKE ACTION

Intentions are fiction until they're lived out in reality. The greatest antidote to imposter syndrome is taking courageous action and doing so despite it feeling uncomfortable. It's also the greatest antidote to perfectionism (which causes procrastination).

Thinking alone isn't enough to create change and build new habits. The evidence starts to reframe imposter syndrome as less of a bad thing and more that it's an incredible asset you have.



"Feel the fear and do it anyway."
- Jillian Michaels

3-STEP GUIDE TO HARNESS IMPOSTER SYNDROME INTO ACTION

Here's a three-step model that can be helpful to use when you're feeling particularly stuck in the moment. Perhaps your heart rate is increasing before a presentation. Or you're questioning your ability before a meeting. These simple steps will help you put into practice the emotional flexibility principles in the previous section. NOTE: This takes practice, consistently and persistently.

The AAA Model

STEP 1



ACKNOWLEDGE

Acknowledge your feelings, thoughts and emotions. Notice the physical sensations in your body (i.e. increased heart rate) and the voice in your head saying "I need to make this presentation perfect".

STEP 2



ACCEPT AND APPLY

Accept the feeling and thought for what it is. Avoid trying to change it. Sit with the feeling and distance yourself by **applying** an 'unhooking' technique.

Next page for some unhooking techniques

STEP 2



ACTION

Do what's right in this moment despite how you feel and what you think. Choose an **action** that's going to serve you in moving forward in a helpful direction.

This three-step mindfulness-based approach can help you get untangled from any difficult situation by giving you the ability to take a step back and choose a response, despite what the imposter voice tells you. The next section provides four techniques you can practice to up-skill your ability to acknowledge, accept and apply an unhooking skill so you can take action in the moment. Remember, an action doesn't have to be a big thing, it can simply to be refocus your attention on the task after you acknowledged you fell into a state of procrastination or ruminating.

HOW TO CREATE DISTANCE FROM UNCOMFORTABLE FEELINGS AND THOUGHTS

1 I AM NOTICING I AM HAVING THE THOUGHT

When you notice a thought "I'm not good enough", say "I'm noticing I'm having the thought... I'm not good enough". You've just moved from being the thought "I'm not good enough" to observing the thought instead. Notice thoughts but don't believe you have to listen to them (Hayes, 2019)

2 WRITE IT DOWN

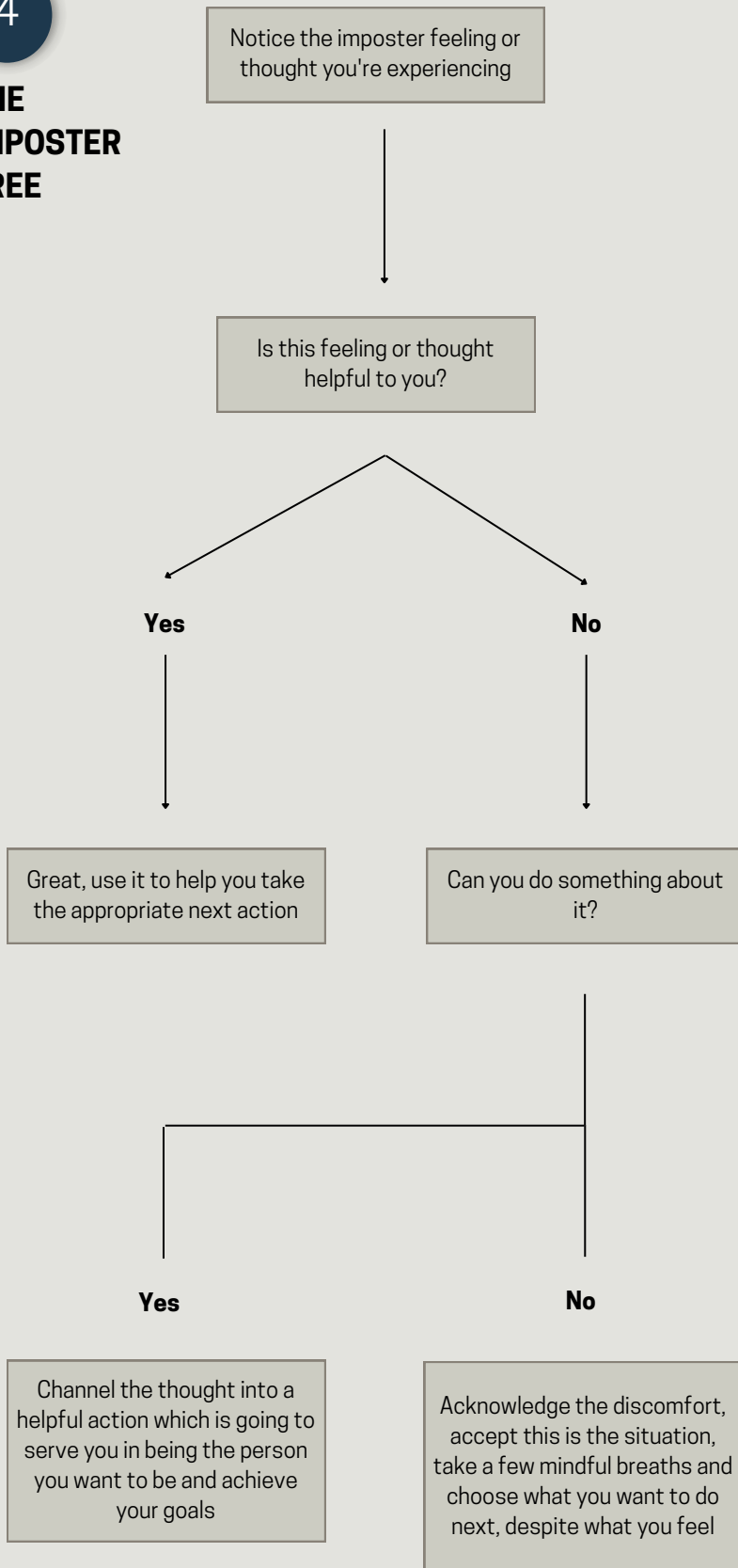
When you notice a thought that is causing disruption, take it out of your head and onto a piece of paper. Trying to silence it keeps the thoughts present in the mind. Writing it down helps you put it into a different perspective. It's incredibly powerful. Try it. When you look at it on a piece of paper, you've taken away a huge amount of power over you. You think, 'was I really thinking that!?'.

3 BOX BREATHING

Box breathing, which is also called "square breathing," is a way to take slow, deep breaths. It can boost performance and help you focus, and it can also help you feel less stressed. It is also called "four-square breathing." Breathing in and out activates the para-sympathetic nervous system which regulates stress.

4

THE IMPOSTER TREE



5

THE IMPOSTER WORRY BOX

This model helps you make a distinction between real worries and imposter 'perceived' worries. By applying this, you'll learn how to experiment with postponing your imposter worries, and scheduling time in your day to deal with this perceived worry. And it's amazing what you find inside the Imposter Worry Box.

Real worries

Real event worries are about actual problems impacting you right now and which you can act on in that moment.

Imposter worries

Imposter worries are about things that do not currently exist, but we perceive them as being a threat in this moment or which might happen in the future.

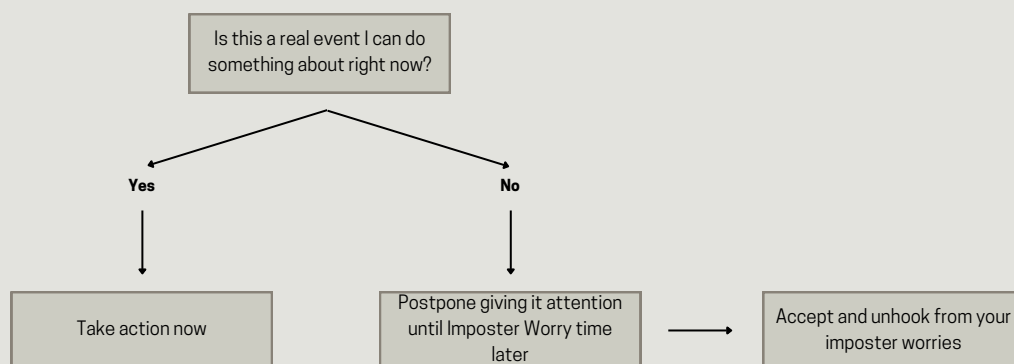
STEP 1: PREPARATION

Decide when your imposter worry time will be, and for how long it'll be for.

- What time of day do you think you'll be in the best frame of mind to attend to your worries?
- When are you unlikely to be disturbed for 10 minutes?

STEP 2: IMPOSTER POSTPONEMENT


Decide whether daytime imposter worries are real event worries you can act on now or hypothetical worries you can postpone until later.

**STEP 3: IMPOSTER WORRY TIME**

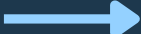
Spend the time you set aside for exploring the worries. Can you jot down any imagined concerns you recall having throughout the day. How much do they currently worry you? Are any of the imposter worries things you can take action on now?

- Try to use all of your worry time, even if you don't think you have much to worry about or if your worries don't seem as pressing at the moment.
- Consider your worries now. Do they still give you the same emotional 'kick' when you think about them as they did when you first considered them?
- Can any of your concerns be transformed into a practical problem for which you can seek a solution?

EXERCISE: IDENTIFYING YOUR IMPOSTER TRIGGERS, THOUGHTS AND COPING STRATEGIES

Situation (Trigger)	Imposter feelings, emotions and thoughts	Unhelpful Coping Action
Write down the event, trigger or situation.	Write down the physical sensations you experience in your body and the imposter thoughts that occur.	Write down the unhelpful coping mechanism that follows the first response.
<p>This is an important step so you can start to prime your brain. Rather than consciously thinking in the moment what to do, a primer reassures the mind that you already know what to do</p> 		<p>How I would like to respond next time?</p> <p>Write down how you'd like to respond. What would be your ideal response to this situation?</p>

Example

Situation (Trigger)	Imposter feelings, emotions and thoughts	Unhelpful coping action
Anticipation of facilitating an athlete review (morning of meeting).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nervous churn in the stomach• "I can't mess this up for my boss"• "I don't feel prepared for this"• "I'm going to get found out for not being good enough for my role"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Over-preparation for the meeting• Lack of delegation/involvement of other practitioners• Speaking too much in the meeting
<p>This is an important step so you can start to prime your brain. Rather than consciously thinking in the moment what to do, a primer reassures the mind that you already know what to do.</p> 		<p>What would be helpful coping strategies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A clear meeting agenda, a meeting framework that involves everyone in the review• Sit with uncomfortable silences• Ask more questions of the support team

Give it a go

Situation (Trigger)	imposter feelings, emotions and thoughts)	Unhelpful Coping Action	How I would like to respond next time?

THE POWER OF VULNERABILITY TO HARNESS UNCOMFORTABLE FEELINGS

“Vulnerability is not weakness. And that myth is profoundly dangerous. Vulnerability is the birthplace of innovation, creativity and change.”

- Brene Brown



TALK TO SOMEONE WHO WON'T JUST SAY, 'COME ON, JUST MOVE ON'

People think they're helping when they say, *"that thing you're worried about isn't a thing; just get over it."* It's their learnt response to try and help you feel better and often, phrases like this are a sign of them not knowing what to say or feeling uncomfortable.

In many cases, the listener (friend, partner or colleague) doesn't understand that you just need to vent and express your emotion. Find those people who allow you to vent/talk without judgement. Think about those moments when you've talked. How did you feel afterwards? And for those who don't typically listen, express to them with kindness that you want them to listen, without trying to solve your approach.



SHARE WITH YOUR LINE MANAGER OR BOSS

A lot of people might think this is crazy at first glance. After all, not everyone has a boss who understands human needs. And if you have a boss who is too controlling, it's understandable that you might not go to her/him right away to say how worried you are that you're not doing a good job. But if you and this person get along well, it might be worth your time to talk. Because there are only really two things that can happen if you do. If you're doing a good job but are worried that you'll be fired, your boss will tell you that you have nothing to worry about. But if you think there's something you could do differently and you're right, there's no one better to talk to about what to do next.. So, take a chance on your boss and say something like, "I wanted to check in on my recent work and see what you think I could be doing better."



CHECK IN ON YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Human beings are more motivated by progress and growth. The key is writing things down and tracking them. If you leave it to the mind alone, the imposter will tell you 'you've not done a good enough job'. There are a number of ways to accomplish this. It could be something as simple as a list of all the wonderful things you've done recently, written by hand. A mood board, perhaps? There are no set rules for keeping track of the things that make you hard to replace. To keep yourself motivated, figure out what works best for you and check in with yourself frequently.

Key point: Many people with imposter syndrome don't talk about it because they're afraid that if they do, they'll be found out as fakes. Not talking keeps you trapped in the imposter habit loop. It's time to talk (talking is not a weakness, it's a strength).

IMPOSTER SYNDROME IS YOUR GREATEST INFLUENCING TOOL

As someone with feelings of an imposter, I find the idea of persuasion, influence, negotiation and selling yourself uncomfortable. And I can hear your imposter voice screaming too. There's no shame in these things. It might feel like it, but there isn't. You have a lot to offer that the world needs.

Thinking back to research from MIT, feelings of being an imposter is an incredible gift because you're more likely to be humble, curious, listen, ask questions and show bundles of empathy. These are traits that people admire. This is about leveraging these characteristics and building on them. Emotional intelligence contains skills that can be developed, honed and, guess what, can be practiced and made habitual.

Selling yourself, negotiation, self-promotion and influencing doesn't mean you're arrogant, egotistical or being unreasonable. It means you have integrity to do what's right. In fact, I don't want you to be reasonable. You should be unreasonable with yourself so you can prove to yourself your own worth.

Here's the point. I'm advocating you to show up in situations more powerfully, confidently and boldly without the feelings that you're being fraudulent while doing so.

As my friend and sports-coaching wizard, Russell Earnshaw, says: "Identify those karaoke moments you avoid and go seek them out with curiosity; that's where growth happens".

After all, isn't giving your opinion, challenging a perspective, asking for advice and going for a promotion motivated by helping others and your profession? What you're going after is more important than the opinion of your imposter voice of doubt (who often makes things up). Keep that in mind.

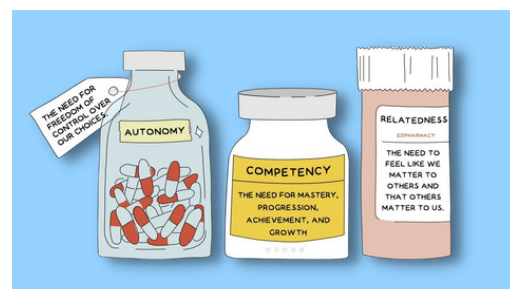
Being humble and empathetic in your influence and persuasion not only helps you to settle your imposter feelings, but you also significantly increase the chances of creating an incredible feeling in others and improving your relationships too. Trust is the key ingredient for gaining influence and being part of a team. It's an amazing feeling. You can be yourself, not feel like a fraud and increase your chances of success.

Influence starts by understanding some of the fundamental drivers of human motivation: control, freedom and autonomy.

When people feel like they're being coerced or lacking control of a situation, they'll resist. They'll look for a quick exit route or reason to say no.

This is reinforced in a famous Human Motivation Model called Self-Determination Theory.

Getting what you want in negotiations isn't about winning an argument or disadvantaging the other person, it's about getting a win-win for both parties. It's about finding a common ground.



You're now going to be introduced to some principles you can play with that will help you build trust with others. As someone experiencing imposter syndrome, it's likely you'll find asking for something daunting. It leads you to taking less risks or putting yourself out there. These tips ease the fear. Use them or adapt them as you wish.

Exercise: choose one or two tactics to apply each day. Perhaps with colleagues, your local coffee barista or a friend.

POWER UP YOUR AUTHENTIC INFLUENCE IN CONVERSATIONS



THE CARING INVESTIGATOR

- Show genuine interest and curiosity through the use of questioning
- Make the other person and what they have to say your sole focus so that you can create an atmosphere of unconditional positive regard, trust and safety.



ACKNOWLEDGE

- Make them feel like they're being heard
- It shows you understand their perspective
- It shows you care about their feelings



CAST A SPELL (EYE CONTACT)

- Maintain a good level of regular eye contact
- It shows you're listening and they feel listened to
- Eye contact actually acts as a cue to help you be present in the moment



THE PLAYBACK

- Acknowledge what's being said when someone says something to you, and then say back to them what you've heard.
- This shows you're actually listening to their words.
- Playback is enough in itself sometimes for the other person to expand further and give you more information. It's a great way to get more information.
- Getting them talking gives you more time to process things.



WE NOT I

- People rebel against people with agendas and self-interest.
- Choose "we" instead of "I" to create engagement, trust and collaboration.

Questioning examples

- "How are you doing? How's family and the kids?"
- "That's interesting, tell me more about that."
- "Oh really, how does that make you feel?"

Tips in conversation

"I know the board are still trying to figure out the flexible working policy. I can see how this is unsettling. I don't have any updates yet, but as soon as I do, I'll inform you immediately."

Case Study

A friend of mine is always being told he creates a magic spell on people. Upon deeper inquiry, people mention it's not how he dresses or what he says, it's his presence in the moment by making the other person feel that nothing else matters. And they say it's his eye contact that creates this.

Tips in conversation

Repeat last few words as questions:

"You're not sure what to do?"
"You're feeling frustrated?"

Or just repeat one word.

"Uncertainty?"
"Stress?"

Tips in conversation

Use we/they

"You're right, we've got a lot to do but we can make this work."



THE 5 STAGES OF LISTENING (HOLIDAY PHILLIPS)

STEP 1

NOT LISTENING

You are not present in the conversation. Your mind is wandering elsewhere. You're in the past or the future.

STEP 2

LISTENING TO SPEAK

You're not listening to what's being said. You're waiting to give your opinion or express what you want. This is a disregard and ignorance of others' perspectives. This is the enemy of empathy.

STEP 3

LISTENING TO EVALUATE

You're listening. But listening to hear if what's being said aligns with your beliefs and perspective. "Is this person interpreting the world the same as me?" This is an error when trying to solve complex problems in teams.

STEP 4

LISTEN TO EMPATHISE

Seeking to understand their perspective and enabling them to feel heard. Skillfully asking questions to cultivate vulnerability, playing back what's been said and avoiding judgement.

STEP 5

LISTENING AS ONE

Organic, effortless and fully immersed in the conversation. There's no outcome or intention to be had, just a state of being completely present. Fully open to possibilities, showing up authentically in conversation and experiencing stillness. A sense of oneness, unity without duality.

"Feeling imposter syndrome is a **POSITIVE** thing. It shows that you are pushing yourself outside your comfort zone and growing. Make friends with it, welcome it, and talk about it. You'll find that everyone else feels the same at some point too."
- **Laura Evans-Hill**



ASK FOR PERMISSION

- Asking for permission gives people the feeling they're in control.
- People want the autonomy and freedom to choose.
- Making demands and imposing an opinion can feel threatening to people and increase uncertainty/decrease trust.
- When people aren't in a state of resistance, they're more likely to be curious and want to know more.

Tips in conversation

You can ask these questions in conversation:

"Could I ask for your advice?"

"Would you mind if we explored our conversation in that meeting?"

"Could we meet to discuss my pay and career opportunity?"



LABELLING

- Labelling can diffuse negative emotions and reinforce positive ones.
- Invite the other person to open up with how they're really feeling.
- Don't be afraid to get it wrong labelling an emotion.

Tips

Use phrases like:

"It sounds like you're upset?"

"It looks like you're frustrated?"

"It seems that you feel lost?"



THE CHOICE AFFIRMATION

- People know they have the freedom to choose what to do, but helping them feel safe to choose helps.
- People don't like saying yes (because it's a commitment), so make it easier for them to say yes.
- You want people to genuinely feel like they want to say yes.

Tips in conversation

"This might be an unreasonable ask because I know you're so busy, so I won't be offended if you say no".

"Only say yes unless you're absolutely comfortable with it".



THE HYPOTHETICAL ASK

- You're going to face pushback and resistance in conversations.
- A hypothetical question makes it feel more engaging, particularly when it's an open question.
- There might be an opportunity to gauge how they're feeling and understand their problem more and gain valuable information.
- Asking questions increases 'liking' (Huang, 2018).

Tips

"Could you help me understand the biggest challenge you're facing with this proposal?"

"If we were to come to an agreement in the future, what needs to change in your eyes?"



AUTHENTIC AND VULNERABLE

- Acknowledge yourself how you feel about the situation with them.
- Do share how you feel (if appropriate).
- Vulnerability shows you're human.
- Research shows that people have a sixth sense for authenticity.

Tips in conversation

"I wish I could make this better."

"I just feel really helpless."

"I really don't know what to say".



REMEMBER THEIR NAME

- Neuroscience shows it lights up dopamine in the brain and creates increased bonding.
- Think how special you feel when someone says your name (or your child's name if you want to go one further).

Tip

Carry a small book/file in your phone to capture names after a first meeting.

I hope these are some useful tips and tools you can use when in conversation with colleagues, bosses, potential clients, existing clients, friends, partners and so on. The key takeaway is that this is a strength-based approach to developing some of the skills you already have and possibly already use. By leveraging these skills to another level you can reduce the amount you see yourself (the imposter) in a negative light and begin framing yourself more positively.

It's incredible the volume of relationships, clients and business I have generated since leaving a full-time job to be a coach/consultant. Despite my imposter voice telling me that "I would never make it as a freelancer" and that "I would never generate enough work because "there's too many coaches/consultants out there", I learnt that if I put myself out there in an authentically humble and confident way, things would circle back round into good things.

Change starts by taking one courageous step at a time and practising these things. **You never know, you could be one conversation away from everything changing for the better.** Then you'll learn how to 10x this skill.

HOW TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE PEOPLE FEEL LIKE THEY BELONG

The imposter threat response is both mentally taxing and lethal to a person's — or an organisation's — productivity.

Because this response depletes blood oxygen and glucose, they are diverted from other parts of the brain, including the working memory function, which processes new information and ideas. This impairs analytic thinking, creative insight, and problem solving; in other words, just when people need their sophisticated mental abilities the most, the brain's internal resources are depleted.



This neural dynamics impact is frequently visible in organisations. When leaders, for example, activate a threat response, employees' brains become significantly less efficient. However, when leaders make people feel good about themselves, communicate their expectations clearly, give employees the freedom to make decisions, support people's efforts to build good relationships, and treat the entire organisation fairly, it prompts a reward response.

Others within the organisation become more effective, open to new ideas, and creative. When fear or resentment make it difficult to focus their attention, they notice the type of information that passes them by. They are less prone to burnout because they can manage their stress. They feel deeply rewarded.

Understanding the threat and reward response can also help leaders implement large-scale change. Many managers have concluded that human nature is simply intractable, owing to a track record of failed attempts to motivate higher-performance behaviour: "You can't teach an old dog new tricks." However, neuroscience has discovered that the human brain is extremely malleable.

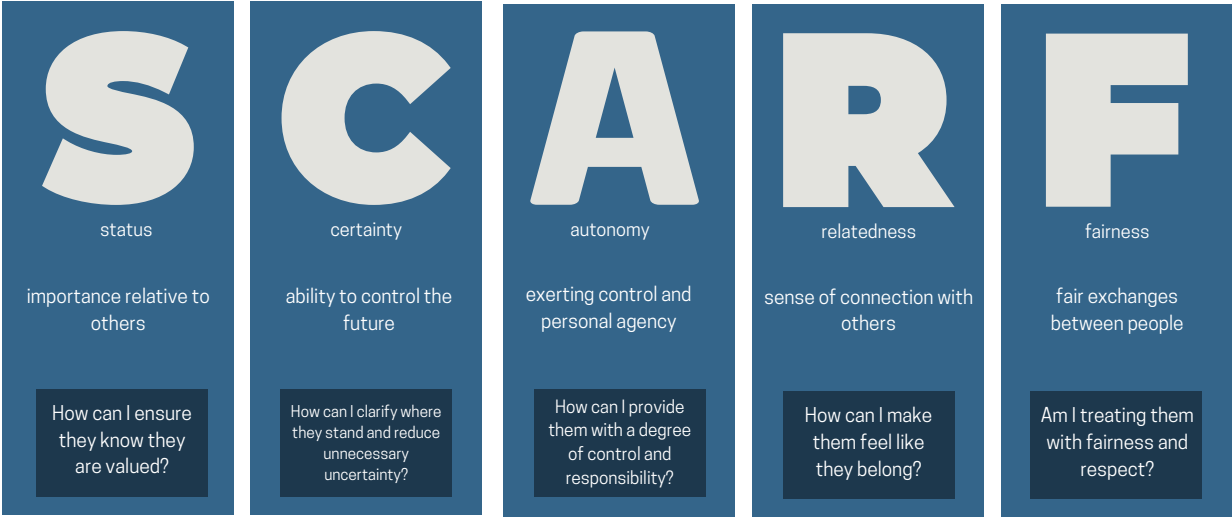
At any age, neural connections can be reformed, new behaviours can be learned, and even the most ingrained behaviours can be modified. Only when the brain is engaged in mindful attention will these shifts occur. This is the mental state associated with observing one's own mental processes (or, in an organisation, stepping back to observe the flow of a conversation as it occurs).

Mindfulness necessitates both serenity and concentration; when people are threatened, they are much more likely to be "mindless." The threat has diverted their attention, and they are unable to easily transition to self-discovery.

David Rock created the SCARF model to help simplify this for leaders and managers. You can see this on the next page.

HOW TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE PEOPLE FEEL LIKE THEY BELONG

Scarf Model - David Rock



SCARF MODEL (David Rock)	ACTIVATES IMPOSTER SYNDROME	ENABLES PEOPLE TO THRIVE WITH IMPOSTER SYNDROME
Status: importance relative to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• mistakes/failures are punished• being criticised and shamed• told you need to always prove yourself	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• acknowledging hard work, effort and achievements• learning and development opportunities• inviting feedback and opinions
Uncertainty: ability to control the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• lack of clarity of people's expectations• lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities• constant change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• clear vision, strategic objectives and roles/responsibilities• minimising unnecessary uncertainty with clarity where possible• clear communication and clarity of message
Autonomy: exerting control and personal agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• inflexibility with time• told what to do micro-managed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• having a sense of control and ownership of work programme• the autonomy/trust to get on with the job
Relatedness: sense of connection with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• feeling let down (people not doing what they said they'd do• being excluded and not included• being judged• lack of connection with colleagues• lack of purpose in job	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• leadership vulnerability• organisational empathy (seeing situations from the other person's perspective)• understanding each other and showing a genuine interest (active listening, curiosity and presence)
Fairness: fair exchanges between people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sense of discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• increase in transparency and openness• people feeling like they belong without changing who they are but being who they are

I AM AN IMPOSTER WALL OF WISDOM

"Identify those karaoke moments you avoid and go seek them out with curiosity; that's where growth happens."

- Russell Earnshaw, Rugby union coach

"We know that at times we tell ourselves stories. These could be about who we are, what we can or should be doing, or what others may think about us."

Imposter syndrome is just one example of a story that we can sometimes tell ourselves in new or more challenging situations. But stories aren't always the whole truth. Sometimes they are designed to try and protect us, or keep us safe and in our comfort zone, rather than tell us the full truth.

The amazing thing is that we have the opportunity to tell a different story, to lead with our values about the person we want to be, the positive that could happen, or the actions we could take when we step into the new unknown."

- Dr Jonathan Smith, Sport psychologist

"I'm a Division 3 coach masquerading as an NBA head coach. I don't feel comfortable in the NBA. I never have"

- Greg Popovich, Basketball coach

"I've had plenty of those moments in my career where I doubted myself, where I felt like I might not be good enough. One of those moments was in the first session working for the Senior England Rugby team when I was asked to give my first training session to the lads. But I am always grateful for what my mum told me when I was younger. She would say, feel the fear and do it anyway. And that's what's helped me approach nervy situations."

- Neil Parsley, Strength and conditioning coach

"The advice I would give creators struggling with imposter syndrome is to stop chasing the 'guru' outcome. You don't need to be some big, fancy guru to help other people. And the way you solve this is by using what we like to call in Ship 30 for 30 'The 2-Year Test.' This means share information you wish you would have known 2 years ago. Because to your 2-year-ago self, you today is an expert in that thing."

- Nicolas Cole, Writer

"I go through [acute imposter syndrome] with every role. I think winning an Oscar may in fact have made it worse. Now I've achieved this, what am I going to do next? What do I strive for?"

- Lupita Nyong'o, Actor

"Use imposter syndrome as a strength to drive your learning so you're able to be the best you can be for others. At the same time, recognise its normal and try to switch channels so you're learning is driven by love not fear."

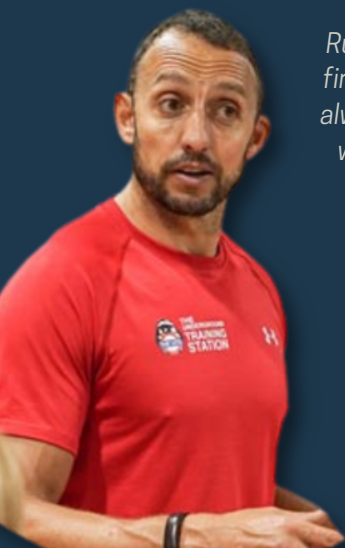
- Katie Warriner, Performance psychologist

"Today I feel much like I did when I came to Harvard Yard in 1999. I felt like there had been some mistake, that I wasn't smart enough to be in this company, and that every time I opened my mouth I would have to prove that I wasn't just a dumb actress."

- Natalie Portman, Actor

"There were two Venus Williamses in our family, it was crazy. At restaurants my parents would make me order first, but once she ordered, I'd change my mind. It was tough for me to stop being Venus and become the person I am. One day I just said to myself, I'm not Venus. I'm Serena."

- Serena Williams, Tennis player



I AM AN IMPOSTER WALL OF WISDOM

"You will never be an expert. Just get rid of this thought of publishing a perfect output. Your imperfect piece of content is your great content. Don't try to perfect it, it's a procrastination in disguise."

- **Sanchin Ramje, entrepreneur**

"No matter what we've done, there comes a point where you think, 'How did I get here? When are they going to discover that I am, in fact, a fraud and take everything away from me?'"

- **Tom Hanks, Actor**

"I have this constant fear that I'm a fraud and that I'm going to be found out. I've always had this feeling that one day they're going to find out that I'm really a fraud, that I really don't know what I'm doing."

- **Michelle Pfeiffer, Actor**

Feeling imposter syndrome is a POSITIVE thing. It shows that you are pushing yourself outside your comfort zone and growing. Make friends with it, welcome it, and talk about it. You'll find that everyone else feels the same at some point too.

- **Laura Evans-Hill, entrepreneur**

"The exaggerated esteem in which my lifework is held makes me ill at ease. I feel compelled to think of myself as an involuntary swindler."

- **Albert Einstein, Physicist**

"Every time I took a test, I was sure that it had gone badly. And every time I didn't embarrass myself -- or even excelled -- I believed that I had fooled everyone yet again. One day soon, the jig would be up."

- **Sheryl Sandberg, Business executive and philanthropist**

"Very few people, whether you've been in that job before or not, get into the seat and believe today that they are now qualified to be the CEO. They're not going to tell you that, but it's true."

- **Howard Schultz, Business-person and author**

"I had enormous self-image problems and very low self-esteem, which I hid behind obsessive writing and performing. ... I was driven to get through life very quickly. I really felt so utterly inadequate. I thought the work was the only thing of value."

- **David Bowie, Singer-songwriter and actor**

"For me imposter syndrome is the little voice in the back of your head that is saying: 'You are going to get found out!'"

The best way I have found to manage this is to take a step back and ask myself:

- Have I gotten here through luck or through my skills and hard work?
- What evidence is there that anyone doubts me or that I haven't been effective?
- Is this helping or hindering me?"

- **Oliver Logan, Sport scientist**

"I went to a lot of events this year because of Deadpool, so you get into the tux and try and look like a grown-up. But to be honest, I still feel like a freckle-faced kid, faking it until I make it."

- **Ryan Reynolds, Actor**

"Where does that feeling of anxiety and self-doubt - of imposter thoughts - come from before we enter a high- stakes interaction, like a job or college interview, an audition, a performance, pitching an idea, or initiating an important conversation?"

Sure, sometimes it's reflecting the truth - but usually not. So how can we think about those feelings in a way that actually helps, not hinders, us?

Usually those feelings are telling us how much we CARE about the interaction."

- **Amy Cuddy, Social psychologist**



SUMMARY

I hope you've found this guide useful. Use it as a guide to keep on referring back to. These concepts and strategies take practice to implement. The good thing? You can start creating change.

It starts by changing your relationship with your inner imposter voice. Befriend and build a partnership with it. Partnerships take time to nurture. Take one step at a time. But make a commitment to take that step. Start today, right now.

- **Experiencing imposter syndrome is not your fault.** There are multiple causes of why we experience these feelings and thoughts.
- It isn't imposter syndrome that causes suffering, **it's your attempt to 'get rid of it' and 'stop it' that exaggerates the negative imposter habit loop.**
- Suffering lessens when you learn to **acknowledge it, accept it and create distance** from it using 'cognitive unhooking' strategies.
- Imposter syndrome isn't bad. It's only bad because that's the way you perceive it. The feelings associated with imposter syndrome can be **reframed as a good thing and a super-strength.**
- **The greatest antidote to overcoming imposter syndrome is leaning into it with courage.** Use the uncomfortable feelings as a signal to take action with bravery.
- Start creating more luck in life by putting yourself in situation to create luck. **Embrace the serendipitous mentality of life.**
- Research shows that **people with imposter syndrome are more humble and emotionally intelligent** than those without it.
- You can **become an incredibly powerful communicator, influencer and forcefield of energy** by leveraging your humbly confident personality.

You can find more of my resources by clicking here.



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THANK YOU!

Congratulations! You have taken a big step forward in understanding and managing imposter syndrome.

Keep putting the theory into practice. That's where the magic happens. Please let us know how you get on in your journey in welcoming imposter syndrome as a friend, and using it to reach within for happiness, courage and confidence.

A big thank you, firstly for investing in us and this product, but more importantly, yourself and your future.

I would also like to say a huge thank you to all of the contributors who gave feedback and contributed to this book. I genuinely would not have been in this position now without your input.

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As a business, your support goes along way in helping me to support individuals, teams and companies. I provide workshops, talks and consultancy if you think there are people/organisations who benefit from support in this area.

You can reach me, and Josh, with the details below.



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