

Learning To Be More Confident

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AIMS

- a) help you understand what confidence is and why it works;
- a) help you learn some of the mental habits that underpin confidence
- a) help you to apply these to real goals that you identify in your life.

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METHODS

- a) 6 lessons and 20 steps
- b) 26+ exercises after each lesson/step for here and at home/work.
- c) Individual and group exercises
- d) ONLY divulge in group what you feel comfortable with – otherwise discuss with confidantes in private.
- e) Workbook/handout provided.

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**Part 1
What is Confidence and How Does it Work?**

- Lesson 1. Identify Your Challenges
- Lesson 2 A Surprising Way to Control your Brain
- Lesson 3 Finding Your Sweet Spot
- Lesson 4 What is Confidence?
- Lesson 5 Can Do – Can Happen
- Lesson 6 Confidence Can Be Learned

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**Part 2
Aspiration, Attention, Action, Attitude**

- Step 1 Aspiration
- Step 2 Use Attention to Control your Emotions and Performance
- Step 3 Do an Attention Audit
- Step 4 Take Action in Spite of Uncertainty
- Step 5 Deliberating and Implementing
- Step 6 Attitude to Self

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**Part 3
Attitude to Failure, Adversity, Asking for Reassurance, Anxiety**

- Step 1 Attitude to Failure
- Step 2 Adversity
- Step 3 Asking for Reassurance
- Step 4 Anxiety

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**Part 4
Actor Mindset, Address the Impostor, Address Saboteurs, Affirm Your Values.**

- Step 1 Actor Mindset
- Step 2 Address the Impostor
- Step 3 Address Saboteurs
- Step 4 Affirm your Values.

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GROUP EXERCISE

In your groups, each person briefly outline what they understand about confidence and its relevance to work, home and social life as they have observed it.

Put forward any questions you have about confidence.

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**PART 1
What is Confidence and How Does it Work?**

9

Lesson 1
Identify Your Challenges

10

Question
Can you think of a challenge that you face, internal or external, that causes you anxiety or self-doubt when you imagine facing it?

11

Questions
Do you lack confidence to do things that you want to do or feel you should be able to do? For example, giving a presentation to a group, bringing up a difficult issue with a colleague or friend or trying out that new role or activity?
Do you sometimes feel like an impostor – surrounded by people who seem so much more confident and competent in their roles?
Do you sometimes find it hard to make decisions because you second-guess yourself and keep oscillating between possible courses of action?
Do you sometimes stay quiet in meetings where you have something to say because you fear how others will respond?
Do you sometimes say things like I'm not very good at this but..... or You probably think I'm an idiot but.... before you speak up in a meeting?

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Questions
1. Are you aware sometimes of trying to make yourself invisible in meetings by sitting at the back or making yourself small?
2. Have you sometimes avoided applying for more senior positions not because you lack the skills, but because you lack the confidence to take the responsibility?
3. Are there sports, hobbies or other activities that you would like to try but don't, because you lack the confidence to take the first steps?
4. If you face difficulties in completing a task – for example, learning how to use a new piece of technology, learning a musical instrument, or solving a problem at work – do you tend to give up saying things to yourself like I'm no good at this?
5. Are you sometimes aware that many of the people around you seem effortlessly confident, in contrast to you?

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TASK for Lesson 1
Think about the above questions and consider what challenges you would like to work on over this course. Write down 3 challenges for yourself that you could consider working on.
• Challenge 1.....
• Challenge 2.....
• Challenge 3.....

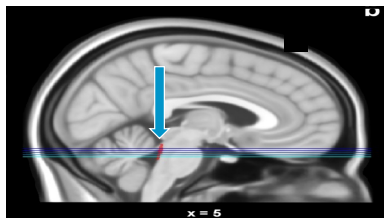
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Lesson 2
A Surprising Way to Control Your Brain

15

Breathe

16



17

TASK for Lesson 2
Practice 4-6 slow breathing for several minutes before going on to the next lesson.
By all means experiment with the count – some people find it helpful to hold their breath for a count of two before they breathe out – 4-2-6.
Find what is most comfortable for you and do it 10-20 times while sitting relaxed and with your eyes closed.

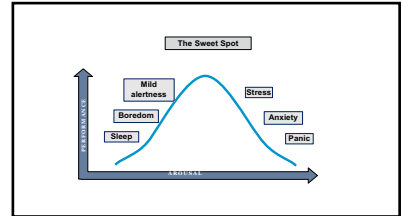
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Lesson 3
Finding your Sweet Spot

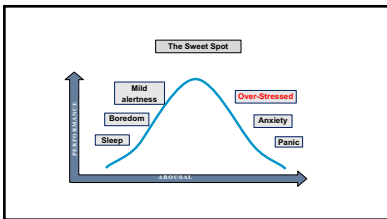
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- Take a look at this figure. You will see that there are different mental states on this curve – ranging from sleepy on the far left to panic on the far right.
- These are different levels of something we call 'arousal' – the state of excitation in your brain.
- Where would you locate yourself on this curve right now?

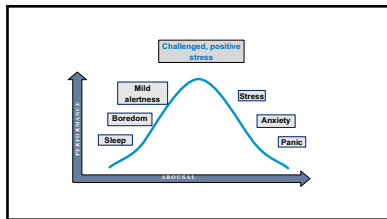
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Feeling in control of your emotions is the foundation stone of confidence.

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- TASK for Lesson 3**
- Each time you change what you are doing – for example, between sitting reading to standing up to make a coffee, or from answering emails to phoning a colleague – take 30-40 seconds to reset your brain chemistry by taking a few slow 4-6 breaths.

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Lesson 4
What is Confidence?

26

By the end of the decade we will put a man on the moon.
President J.F. Kennedy May 25, 1961

27



28

CONFIDENCE
~~optimism~~
~~self-esteem~~
Empowers Action

29

Humans imagine things that do not yet exist and work to make them happen.

 This is the bridge to the future.

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TASK for Lesson 4

- 1. Write down 3 examples of people you have seen or heard of who have embraced an uncertain future and, through confidence, done things that have taken them forward in life.
- 2. Go back to the 3 personal challenges you set out in Lesson 1. Write down a number between 0 and 100 about how certain you feel about achieving each. 0 would mean you think there is no chance, 100 means you are certain.
- 3. If you wrote 100 for any of them – think about revising that challenge to one where you are less certain about achieving it.

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TASK for Lesson 4

Examples of people who have taken action in spite of uncertainty

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

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TASK for Lesson 4

How certain do you feel about achieving each of your 3 challenges – rate 0-100

- Challenge 1:
 - Certain (100).....Fairly sure (75).....50/50.....Very unsure (25).....Can't do (0)
- Challenge 2:
 - Certain (100).....Fairly sure (75).....50/50.....Very unsure (25).....Can't do (0)
- Challenge 3:
 - Certain (100).....Fairly sure (75).....50/50.....Very unsure (25).....Can't do (0)

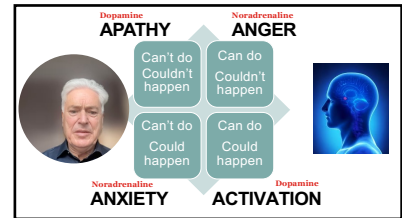
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Lesson 5
 Can do – Could happen

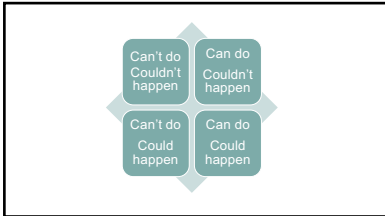
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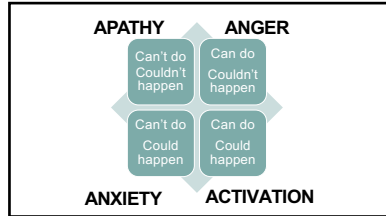
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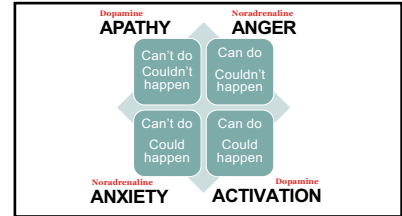
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Apathy

- It lowers your mood and makes you more depressed;
- It makes you more anxious and less likely to take action
- It saps your motivation and lowers your initiative
- It slightly lowers your mental sharpness because of the lower dopamine levels in the frontal lobes of your brain
- It makes people less likely to do what you ask - you become less persuasive and your status goes down.

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Activation (Confidence)

- Your mood is higher - confident beliefs act like a mini antidepressant
- You are less anxious and therefore less likely to avoid a difficult challenge
- You are more motivated and therefore more likely to take the 1st and subsequent steps towards a new challenge
- You're a little bit smarter because of the increased dopamine in your frontal lobes
- These confident beliefs makes you more influential and persuasive with other people and therefore more likely to get your way towards your goals.

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TASK for Lesson 5

- Go back to your three challenges that you identified at the beginning, and ask yourself about your can do and could happen beliefs about each of these three challenges.
- For each challenge, estimate how likely it is that you can do the thing, and that if you do it the outcome could happen.
- Do this using the same scale as in the last lesson namely zero to 100.
- If you find that you have very low scores - say less than 40 or 50 for any of your ratings, then carefully think about your challenges and whether they need to be amended.

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TASK for Lesson 5

- Challenge 1 (Repeat for Challenges 2 and 3)
- CAN DO
Certain (100).....Fairly sure (75).....50/50.....Very unsure (25).....Can't do (0)
- COULD HAPPEN
Certain (100)..... Fairly sure (75).....50/50.....Very unsure (25)..... Couldn't happen(0)

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GROUP EXERCISE

What are the external habits of confidence that you have observed in other people: of way of speaking, content of speech, posture and bearing, facial expression?

What are the internal habits that you surmise confident people you have observed may have – for example of thinking, emotions.

What are the equivalent habits of underconfidence you have observed?

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Lesson 6

Confidence Can be Learned

45

Confidence is ..

- A collection of behaviours
- That are learnable
- Work exponentially via the Winner Effect
- Via multiple little success experiences
- That build up to big success experiences
- Which can be engineered through self-set goals.

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The Mathematics of Confidence

Doing nothing at all..

$(1.00)^{36} = 1.00$

..taking small consistent actions

$(1.01)^{36} = 37.7$

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TASK for Lesson 6

Sit down with a friend, relative or partner, and try to summarise to them what you have learned about confidence so far. Discuss with them their own experience or thoughts about confidence or lack of it – not necessarily in themselves, but in friends, family or acquaintances. See if you can identify different ways in which confidence has played a part, positively or negatively in the lives of people that you learn about.

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PART 2

Learning to be More Confident – Aspiration, Attention, Action, Attitude

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Part 2

Aspiration, Attention, Action, Attitude

- Step 1 Aspiration
- Step 2 Use Attention to Control your Emotions and Performance
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- Step 4 Take Action in Spite of Uncertainty
- Step 5 Deliberating and Implementing
- Step 6 Attitude to Self

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Step 1

Aspiration

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ASPIRE...

Let your imagination free to picture of some future possibilities for you personally and professionally and, if appropriate, the organisation or company you work for.

Be playful and don't let yourself think of obstacles or practicalities.

Do this for 1 year, 5 years and 10 years hence

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Examples	Your Personal Life	Your Professional Life	Your team/ company
1 year	Run a half-marathon	New qualification	Significant growth
5 years	Leading role in amateur dramatics	Head of department	Market leader
10 years	Establish family home	CEO	Global reach

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You Aspire to..	Your Personal Life	Your Professional Life	Your team/ company
1 year			
5 years			
10 years			

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Feasible?	Your Personal Life	Your Professional Life	Your team/ company
1 year			
5 years			
10 years			

55

Feasible?	Your Personal Life	Your Professional Life	Your team/ company
1 year			
5 years			
10 years			

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Do Your Goals Match Your Aspirations? - If so, write in the goal in the appropriate box below

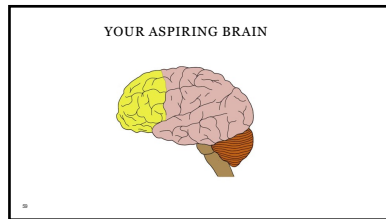
Do Your Goals Match?	Your Personal Life	Your Professional Life	Your team/ company
1 year			
5 years			
10 years			

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Review Your Session 1 Goals. Do They Need to be Changed? If so, write in the new goals here

Revised Goals?	Your Personal Life	Your Professional Life	Your team/ company
1 year			
5 years			
10 years			

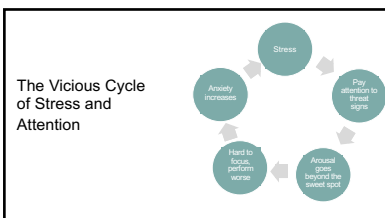
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Step 2
Attention: Use It to Control your Emotions and Performance

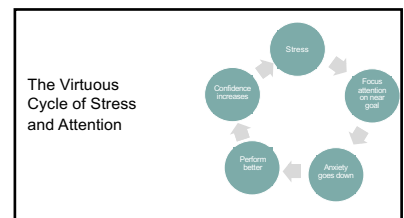
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TASK for Step 2

- Think back to times when you've controlled your emotions by choosing what to pay attention. Discuss this with a partner, friend or colleague about and ask whether they have done this.
- When you notice that you have a negative emotion – say anxiety, sadness or boredom – experiment with choosing to pay attention to something or someone – even to a positive memory – that counteracts that emotion.
- People often feel that their emotions are caused by things that happen in the world when in fact they are controlled by what we pay attention to, not by the events.
- Make a note of times you have done this in the past and keep a record of when you manage to do this in present times.
- Times when I have controlled my emotions by controlling my attention:
 1.
 2.
 3.

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Step 3
Do an Attention Audit

66

Do you usually have a clear goal in mind for everyday tasks – or are you often distracted from one thing to another?

67

Do you multi-task – eg responding to message alerts in the middle of writing a report?

68

Do you pause between each new activity or do things just run into each other?

69

Can you just focus on one thing for 30 minutes?

70

Do you talk your way through daily or work tasks, for example –

'Right, I'll allocate 10 minutes to this problem and then take a break/cup of tea/walk'

71

Do you take short 3-5 minute breaks during the day, where you do *nothing*, including checking your phone or the news?

72

Do you usually have a plan for your day?

73

Task for Step 3

- Keep these 6 questions about your attention to hand – either printed out or transcribed in a notebook or diary. At the end of each day, review how you have used your attention that day, guided by these questions. Give yourself an attention mark out of 12 each day. See if you can get to near 12 as a routine.
- Did I multi-task? Yes Sometimes No (0 for yes, 1 for sometimes, 2 for no)
- Did I pause between tasks? Yes Sometimes No (2 for yes, 1 for sometimes, 0 for no)
- Did I focus completely for 30 minutes? Yes Sometimes No (2 for yes, 1 for sometimes, 0 for no)
- Did I take 3-5 minute brain breaks? Yes Sometimes No (2 for yes, 1 for sometimes, 0 for no)
- Did I have a plan for my day? Yes Somewhat No (2 for yes, 1 for sometimes, 0 for no)
- Score out of 12

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GROUP EXERCISE

Discuss the results of your attention audit with the group

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Step 4
Take Action in Spite of Uncertainty

76

Think of a time when you backed out of something because you were anxious.

E.g. call off that meeting, back out of that interview, cancel that date...

How did that make you feel?

77

"I always did something, I was a little not ready to do, wow I'm not really sure I can do this... But I push through"


Merissa Mayer CEO Yahoo



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"As you start to walk on the way, the way appears"

Rumi (1207-1273)



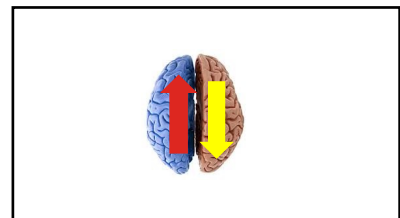
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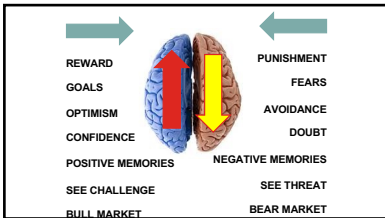
One can choose to go back toward safety or forward toward growth. Growth must be chosen again and again; fear must be overcome again and again.

Abraham Maslow

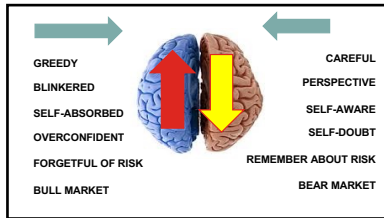
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Task for Step 4

Write down some examples from your life of times you have faced up to challenges and taken action to meet them.

Now write down examples of where you have avoided challenges and pulled back from action.

If you had to plot a graph of where you have been in this tussle between going forward to reward versus pulling back in fear of punishment, what would it look like?

Draw a graph on the blank one below about your own reward/punishment action/avoid journey in your own life – at any time scale you choose.

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Step 5
Deliberating and Implementing

85

Think of a problem or issue that you are indecisive about. For example:

Should I ask for promotion?
Should I move house?
Should I change job?
Should I go back to College?
Should I have that difficult conversation?

86

Think about one of your personal goals that you decided earlier you wanted to achieve. Think about the concrete steps you will have to take to achieve it.

87

Deliberative v
Implemental
Mindset

88

An
implemental
mindset
benefits
confidence

89

How good/bad are you at setting goals for yourself over different time scales of:

- * minutes
- * hours
- * days
- * weeks
- * years?

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Tasks for Step 5

How well do you balance deliberation and implementation in your life?

Are you an action-person who seldom stops to review your goals?

Or are you a habitual goal-deliberator, always second-guessing yourself and seldom fully committing to action?

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Tasks for Step 5

• Break Goal into 5-10 steps

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....
- 6.....
- 7.....
- 8.....
- 9.....
- 10.....

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Tasks for Step 5

- Goal Step 1
- Time
- How I know it's finished.....
- Pre-commitment actions for Step 1
 - a).....
 - b).....
 - c).....
- Reward

93

Repeat for each step, and then repeat steps for each goal.

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Step 6
Attitude to Self

95

Do you think that your abilities/intelligence are pretty much fixed by inheritance or early experience?

Or are they a result of a combination of factors including education and other types of experience?

96

Do you think that your personality and emotions are pretty much fixed by inheritance or very early experience?

Or are they a result (at least partly) of learning and lifetime experience?

97

Fixed mindsets cause a fragile confidence that copes badly with negative feedback or failure.

Fixed mindsets make key brain areas close down after negative feedback or failure so you don't learn from it

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Tasks for Step 6

- Think about these questions. If you feel comfortable doing so, discuss your answers with others.
- Do you think that your abilities are pretty much fixed by inheritance or education? Or can they be changed? What about your personality, emotions or habits?
- What would your parents' attitudes to failure have been?
- Failure has positive effects which you can use;
- or Failure experiences help you grow and learn;
- or Failure has bad effects and you should try to avoid it.

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Part 3
Learning to be More Confident – Attitude to Failure, Adversity, Asking for Reassurance, Anxiety

- Step 1 Attitude to Failure
- Step 2 Adversity
- Step 3 Asking for Reassurance
- Step 4 Anxiety

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Step 1
Attitude to Failure

101

Think back to a time when you failed

- exam, an interview, a failed promotion, or some more personal event such as a failed relationship.
- Maybe you feel that twist in your stomach, or that feeling of pain, disappointment or maybe even humiliation
- Now try and catch the thoughts that were going through your mind after the failure.
- What sort of things were you saying to yourself?
- Did you catch thoughts beginning with /...? – / can't do this... / I'm a failure... / I can't go on with this... / I'm a laughing stock...

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Think of a Failure Experience you have had.
 What were your thoughts?

<p>Big 'I' thoughts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm no good at this... • I'm a failure • I can't go on with this • I'm a laughing stock 	<p>Process thoughts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hmm, that was tough – I wonder what happened? • I need to work out what happened • Getting through this is going to make me tougher • It's hard to learn from a failure, but it's the best teacher.
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Tip

Failure is a much better teacher than success but we have to embrace it, not run from it.



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Tasks for Step 1

- Failures in my life
- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- My responses to these failures (particularly words and actions)
- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- Examples of when I have learned from failure.
- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

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Group Exercise

- Discuss times when you have learned from failure

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Step 2
Adversity

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Think of some adversity that you have had in your life

- Bullied in school, a financial setback in your family, illness, being treated unfairly in some way or going through a bad patch emotionally.
- If you cannot think of any adversity, then you're very lucky.
- Or are you?

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What doesn't kill me makes me stronger (within limits)

- Research shows that some moderately tough experiences can be like a type of emotional vaccination that make you more resilient.
- Severe adversity is quite another matter, and no one would wish that on anyone.
- However, young people who experience moderate levels of adversity end up more emotionally robust than young people whose early life has been completely free of any adversity.

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Tough times and Negative Emotions eventually pass

- Particularly if you:
 - Don't fear fear
 - Don't let yourself feel out of control
 - Set internal goals where necessary

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Tasks for Step 2

- Note down examples of adverse experiences you have had in your life. Think about whether there were any positive outcomes for you in any of them.
- Discuss any of these experiences with others if you feel comfortable doing so.
- Finally, can you think of some internal goals you could have set for yourself in the context of tough experiences. If so, make a note of them below.

Internal Goals

1.
2.
3.

111

Step 3
Asking for Reassurance

112

How often do you do things like these?

- Apologizing too much
- Brushing off compliments
- Putting off even small decisions because not sure if had chosen correctly
- Self-deprecating jokes – I'm such an idiot. I'm just so disorganized

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Reassurance can be a trap

Habitual reassurance-seeking serves to reduce anxiety but can become a disabling habit that saps confidence in yourself...and saps the confidence of others in you.

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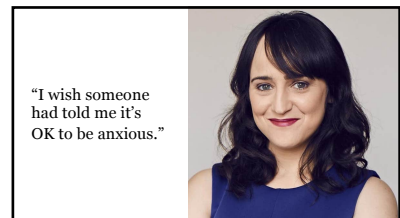
Tasks for Step 3

- Examples of reassurance seeking.
 1.
 2.
 3.
- High Risk situations for reassurance-seeking
 - What are the high risk situations for doing this? – For example, certain meetings or situations. List some below
 1.
 2.
 3.

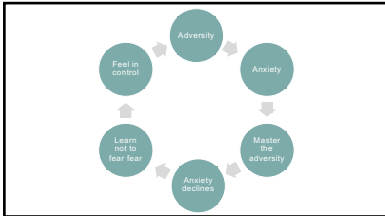
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Step 4
Anxiety

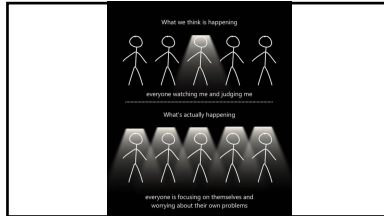
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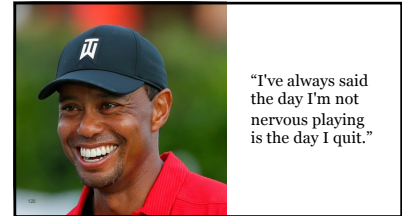
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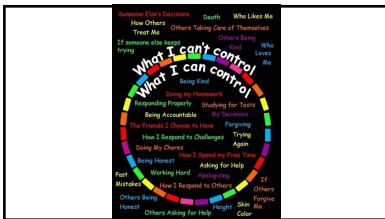
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121

Tip

Anxiety and excitement have the same symptoms.

- Say 'I feel excited' when you feel your racing heart and sweaty palms.
- See harnessing these symptoms as a challenge rather than as a threat.

122

Tip

Set internal goals for yourself

- The frazzle rule: always have a shadow internal goal
- If the external goal seems unattainable, focus on the internal goal

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Tasks for Step 4

- Think of a situation facing you that makes you anxious when you think about it – in work, home or elsewhere.
- Try to feel yourself into the anxiety that this situation arouses in you.
- Now try to turn that sense of threat into one of challenge by setting an internal goal for yourself about how you will behave in that difficult situation.
- Try to get into the frame of mind where you have an edgy anticipation of the difficult situation to see whether you can indeed perform in spite of anxiety.

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Comments and questions about progress towards goals

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Part 4
Learning to be More Confident – Actor Mindset, Addressing the Impostor, Addressing Saboteurs, Affirming Your Values.

- Step 1 Actor Mindset
- Step 2 Addressing the Impostor
- Step 3 Addressing Saboteurs
- Step 4 Affirming your Values

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Step 1
Actor Mindset

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- In 2012 Novak Djokovic had a breakthrough in his mental game.
- As he began playing on the biggest stage - he'd have doubts at the worst moments. Match point. Self Doubt.
- Pre-breakthrough, he saw these thoughts as a major problem...As bad...As something he needed to eliminate.
- "I used to freeze up whenever I made a mistake."

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- His breakthrough - accepting he could not eliminate his negative thoughts and self-doubt ...Even at the worst times on the court.
- Old Mindset: *I need to improve so that negative thoughts NEVER arise on the court. If doubt occurs, something is wrong.*
- New Mindset: *Because I am human, I expect negative thoughts to happen when the pressure is highest.*
- Now he EXPECTS doubt to arise on the biggest stage.
- His insight: "Everyone goes through these thought processes of self-doubt. I don't think it is particularly bad. Before, I was trying to ignore it or shut it down"

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Decentering

- You are not your thoughts
- Third person commentary
- Being a performer (not all the time!)
- Speech
- Posture
- Eye contact
- Power of silence

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Tasks for Step 1

- Audit yourself for your external of confidence – speech, posture etc.
- Practice some of these decentering methods.
- Practice them in your imagination first, then if you can, in easy situations.
- See if you can try at least one of them in a difficult or stressful situation which would normally make you feel anxious.
- Review your 3 challenges in terms of the actor mindset

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Step 2
Addressing the Impostor

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Do Any of These Apply to You?

1. I can appear more competent than I actually am.
2. I dread being evaluated.
3. My present position is due to luck rather than my capability.
4. I'm afraid people are going to find out about my true ability
5. I find it hard to accept praise for my accomplishments.
6. I often compare myself with others and think they are smarter than me.
7. Even when others are sure I can succeed in a project or exam, I always have doubts.
8. I feel discouraged if I'm not 'the best' or at least 'very special' in situations involving any kind of achievement

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Feeling Like an Impostor Sometimes is both Normal and Healthy

- Your colleagues should worry if you never feel like an impostor.
- High achieving people drive themselves with high standards - they tend to be hard on themselves in assessing this
- There is little worse than working with someone who overestimates their abilities and is complacent in their incompetence.
- When you say to yourself "I can do this", or "we can do this", you are choosing to focus on the probability of success not on the smaller chance of failure.

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Actors Don't Feel Like Impostors

- Conscientious people find this difficult because it feels as if they are deceiving people or maybe even deceiving themselves.
- An actor on the stage does not feel like an impostor because she is playing a character quite different from her personality.
- But she can embrace the role and enter that character with a conviction and credibility that brings the audience with her.

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Task for Step 2

- *Ask friends, relatives and colleagues who you trust about their experiences of feeling like an impostor.*
- *Take a bird's eye view of your own achievements – as if you were an external consultant – and assess how justified your feelings of being an impostor were.*
- *Try to adopt the actor mindset in such situations – be the actor who is playing a role and assess yourself on the performance of the role.*
- *Do not confuse the role with your core self and any personal doubts you have.*
- Review your 3 challenges in terms of impostor feelings.

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Step 3
Addressing Saboteurs

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The Internal Saboteur

- The most malicious saboteur of your confidence is very close to you. It is you.
- We all belong to groups defined by age, sex, race, social class, occupation, physical appearance, nationality, accent, education or disability.
- Some groups have stigma associated with them – negative stereotypes leading people to associate certain negative qualities with them, consciously or unconsciously.
- It is too easy for us to bring that negative stereotype into our minds and apply it to ourselves.

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The Internal Saboteur

- For example, if older people being tested for memory function – if they are tested in a youth-dominant, college, white-coat environment they remember much less than in a less youth- and clinic- focussed place.
- This all happens because the internalised stereotype raises anxiety about performance on the test, which in turn lowers both confidence and performance.
- This can be done by challenging others who voice the stereotype, talking yourself out of that belief – I am just as good as them... - or by joining with like-minded members of the group to reinforce the non-stereotyped beliefs.

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The External Saboteur

- But there are saboteurs outside of ourselves also, sometimes very well-meaning ones.
- Sometimes people close to us can be unsettled if they see us succeeding in some domain more than them.
- It can arouse vulnerabilities in them, feelings of inadequacy, which can then turn into sabotaging actions and words that try to undermine confidence and reduce the threat to their competitive self-esteem.
- The mere presence of a power relationship can, because of the dominance that power gives a person, can undermine confidence.
- A partner who has a greater emotional need for their partner than vice versa, puts the other person in a position of power. This unbalanced power can undermine confidence.

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The External Saboteur

- Men on average tend to be over-confident in comparison to women. This gives them status and hence power, on average, in many situations (with many, many exceptions).
- The most powerful antidote to such saboteurs is to make yourself aware of the sabotage and name it to yourself and to others.
- Simply calling something out can give you a sense of control, and when you feel more in control, this makes you more confident.

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Task for Step 3

- **TASK** First, try to identify any negative stereotypes that you have internalised. List them
- Second, list any saboteurs around you who are well-meaning or unaware of their sabotage. List them
- Third, if there are any, list any saboteurs around you who consciously and deliberately undermine your confidence. List them

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Step 4
Affirming your Values

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Threats to the Ego

- Think of a time in the past when you felt belittled, even humiliated.
- Maybe it was a rejection by someone, a failure to get a job you hoped for, or an exam failed.
- Think of the failure experiences that we discussed previously, to help you summon up the feelings in your body and thoughts and emotions in your mind of that sense of belittlement.
- Make some notes below about what the situation was and how you felt.

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Who are you and what do you stand for?

- Leadership
- Competence
- Friendship
- A comfortable life
- Creativity
- Love
- Toughness
- Kindness

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Who are you and what do you stand for?

- Curiosity
- Freedom
- Adaptability
- Poise
- Cautiousness
- Intellect
- Rationality
- Achievement

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Who are you and what do you stand for?

- Helpfulness
- An exciting life
- Imagination
- Equality
- Persistence
- Wisdom
- Honesty
- Optimism

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Who are you and what do you stand for?

- Sociability
- Loyalty
- Adventurousness
- Self-control
- Cleanliness
- Bravery
- Patience
- Modesty

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Who are you and what do you stand for?

- Family wellbeing
- Independence
- Liveliness
- Organisation
- Empathy
- Gratitude

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Choose 5 Values Closest to Your Core Identity

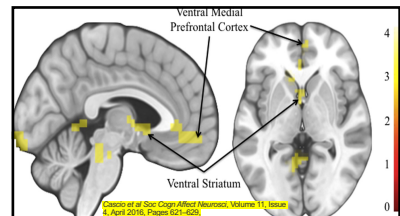
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

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How Self-Affirmation Works

- If you make someone feel threatened – say by invoking shame or fear of humiliation or failure – then their response will tend to be one of self-protection, of devoting mental energy to protecting their good view of themselves.
- We all need to feel good about ourselves and this is the basis of our sense of self-worth.
- That sense of self-worth has one important function – to ward off awareness of our own mortality.
- Self-affirmation of our values produces powerful changes in the brain (eg reduced amygdala activity), increased self-reflection in the middle part of the frontal lobes, reduced arousal.

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Task for Step 4

- Write down why you hold your values and what they mean to you.
- Now go back to that situation of belittlement or humiliation you re-imagined at the beginning of this step.
- Try to summon up the thoughts and feelings again.
- Does affirming your values help take some of the sting out of this painful experience?

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Overconfidence

- Confidence is a 2-edged sword
- Remember the challenge-threat competition of the brain

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REWARD
GOALS
OPTIMISM
CONFIDENCE
POSITIVE MEMORIES
SEE CHALLENGE
BULL MARKET

PUNISHMENT
FEARS
AVOIDANCE
DOUBT
NEGATIVE MEMORIES
SEE THREAT
BEAR MARKET

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GREEDY
BLINKERED
SELF-ABSORBED
OVERCONFIDENT
FORGETFUL OF RISK
BULL MARKET

CAREFUL
PERSPECTIVE
SELF-AWARE
SELF-DOUBT
REMEMBER ABOUT RISK
BEAR MARKET

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Review Your Challenges

- Please review the challenges you set for yourself earlier in the course. Did you achieve one or more of them?
- If not, then consider what may have caused this.
- Did you lose heart – or confidence?
- Did you persist through failure and practice the new habits needed for confidence often enough?
- If you did achieve one or more of your goals, then congratulations.
- But don't stop there – there are always new challenges as you try to cross that bridge to the future.
- The habits of confidence will help you cross it.

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