



# CORPORATE PA SUMMIT

## Your masterclass workbook

Back yourself: Work Smart: Back yourself and uncover the keys to brilliance

Led by: Jess Stuart



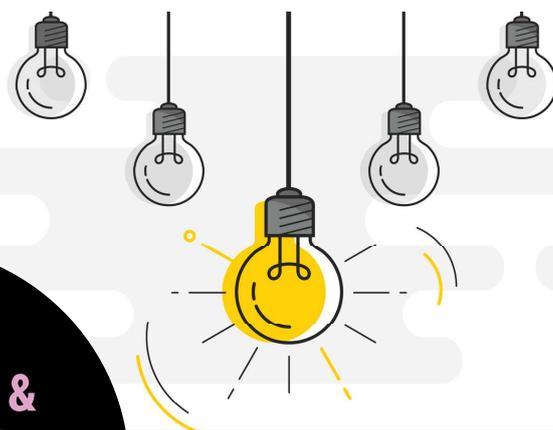
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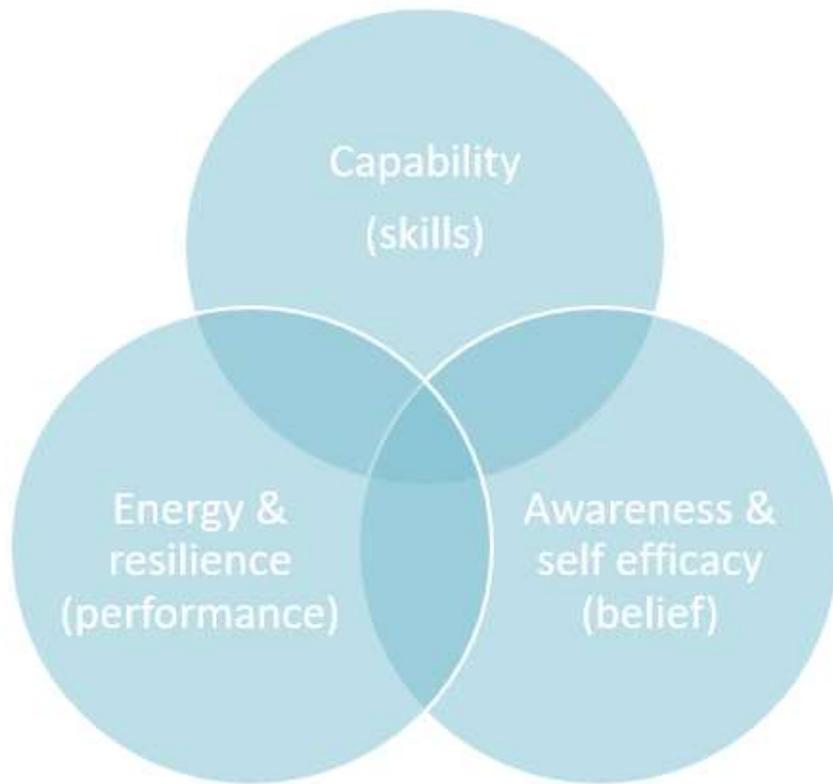
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# BACK YOURSELF & UNCOVER YOUR BRILLIANCE

*Jess Stuart  
Author & Coach*



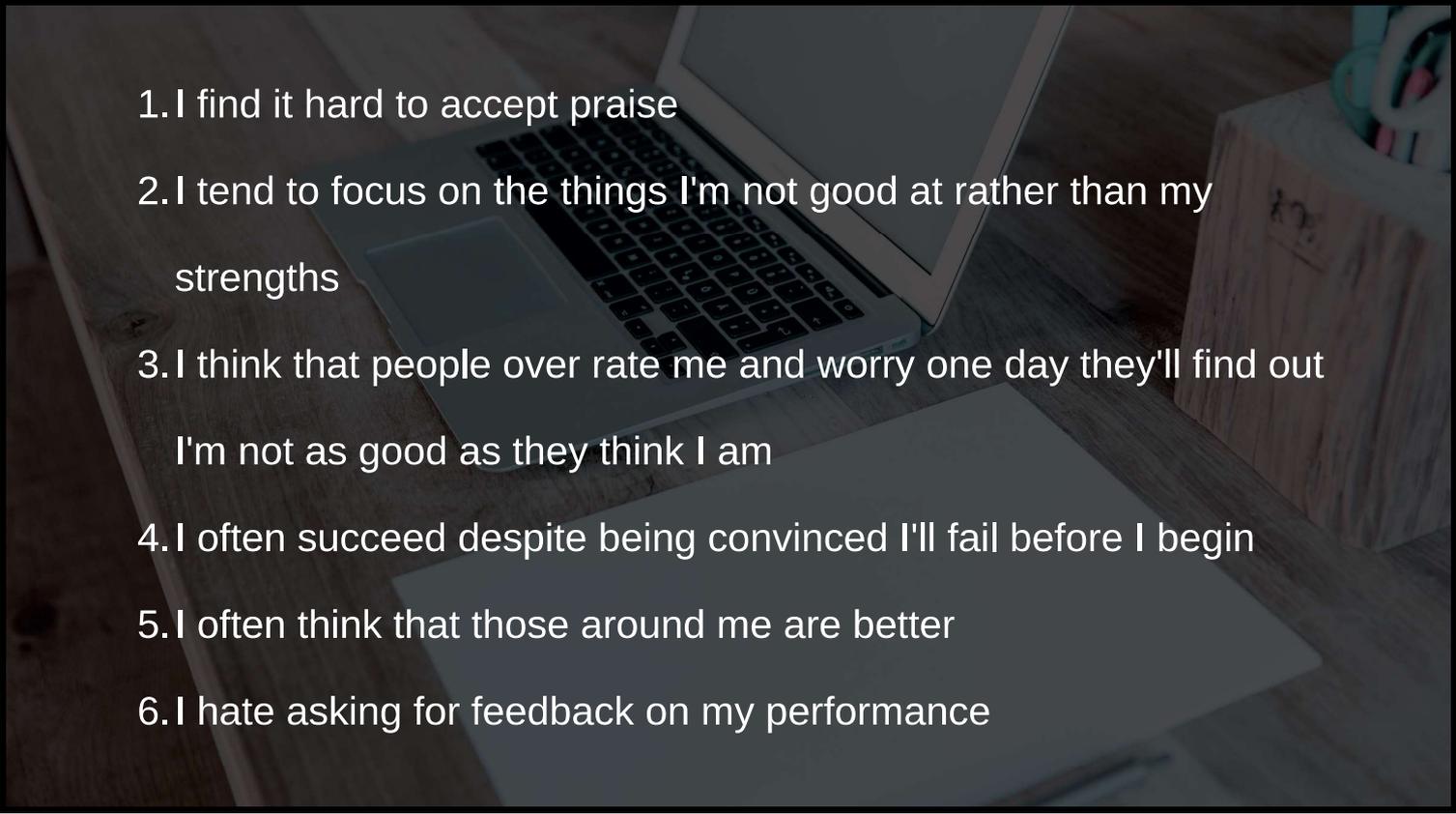


## Imposter Syndrome (Experience)



Inability to internalise accomplishments  
Persistent fear of being exposed as a "fraud"



- 
1. I find it hard to accept praise
2. I tend to focus on the things I'm not good at rather than my strengths
3. I think that people over rate me and worry one day they'll find out I'm not as good as they think I am
4. I often succeed despite being convinced I'll fail before I begin
5. I often think that those around me are better
6. I hate asking for feedback on my performance



Your own experiences



## Common thoughts

It's only because they like me

Someone must have made a mistake

I was in the right place at the right time

I just work harder than others

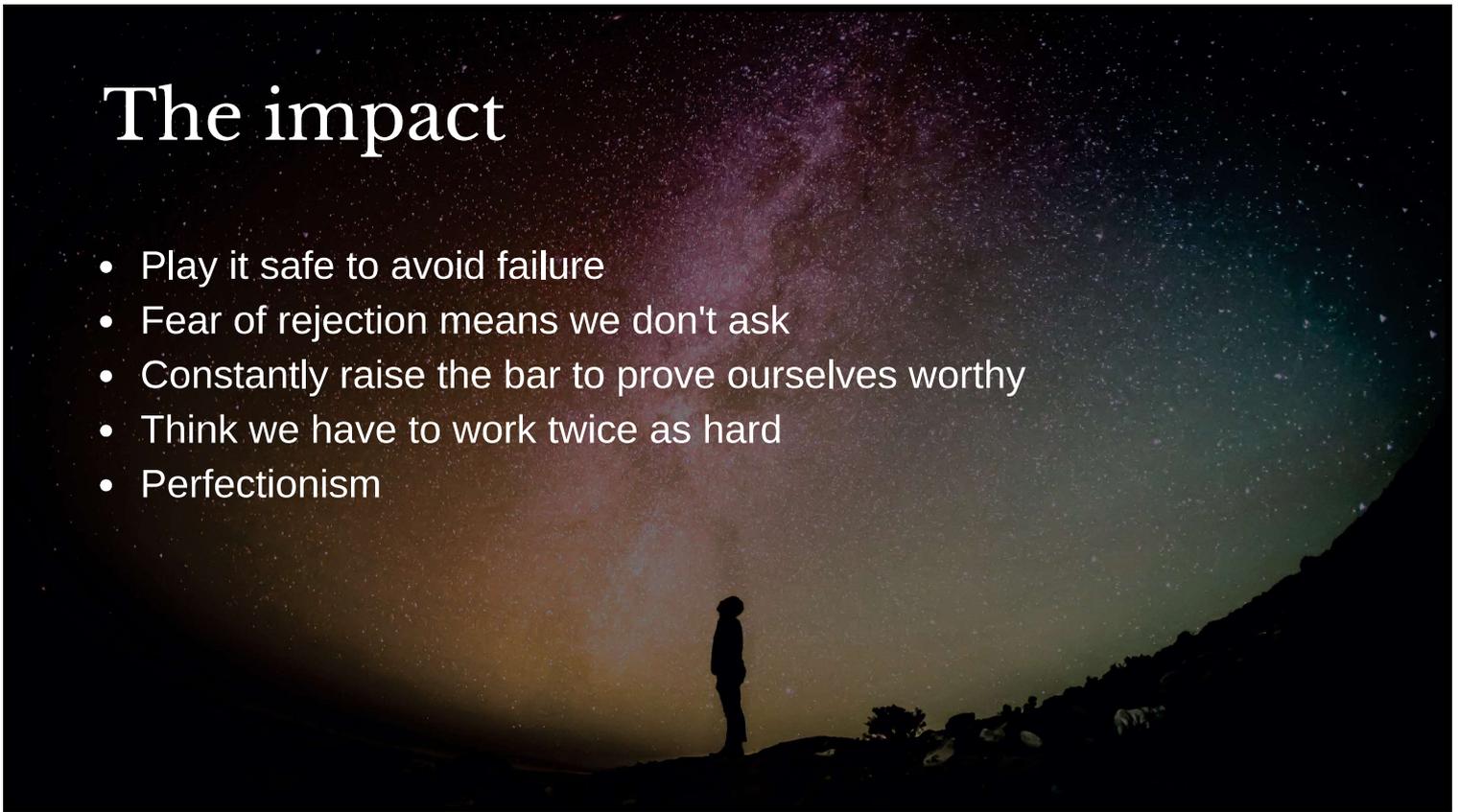
It's just a matter of time before I'm found out

I don't deserve this

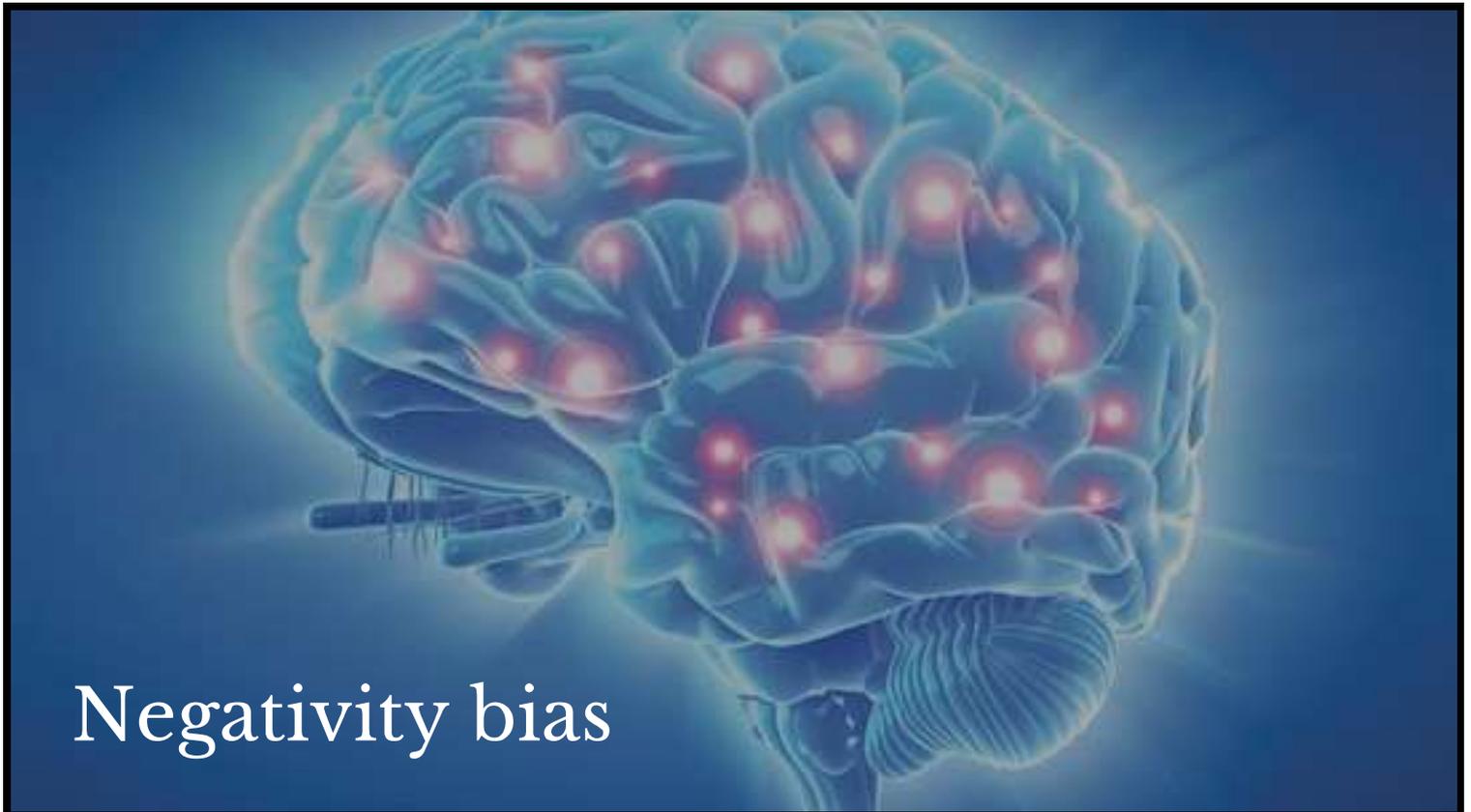
Constructive criticism = condemnation

# The impact

- Play it safe to avoid failure
- Fear of rejection means we don't ask
- Constantly raise the bar to prove ourselves worthy
- Think we have to work twice as hard
- Perfectionism



Negativity bias





# Strengths & Success

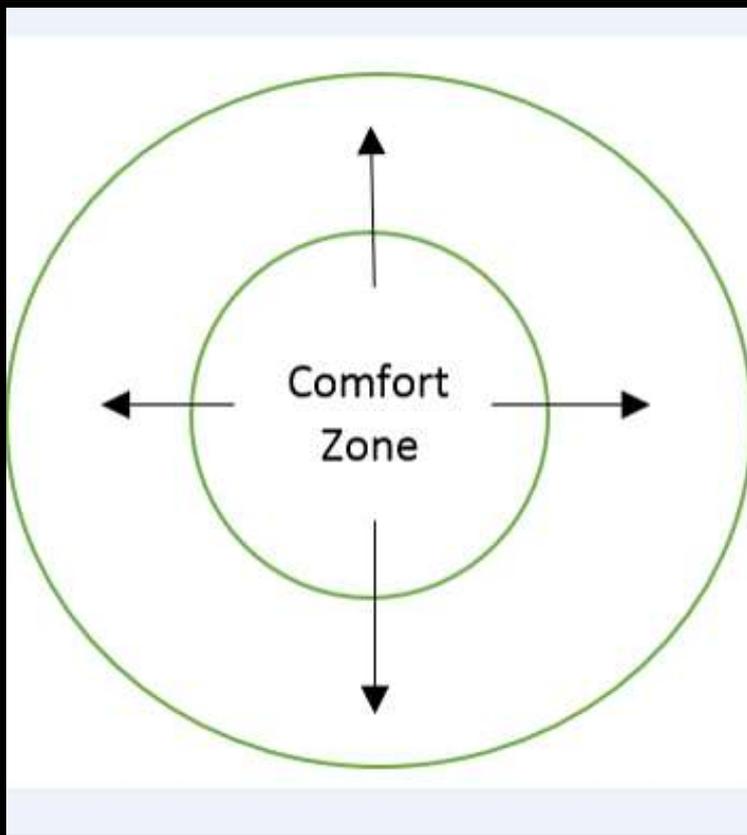
- Un-aware
- Under rate our skills
- Too quick to move to the next goal
- Modesty gets in the way



Thank You



What are your strengths?



Competence = Confidence

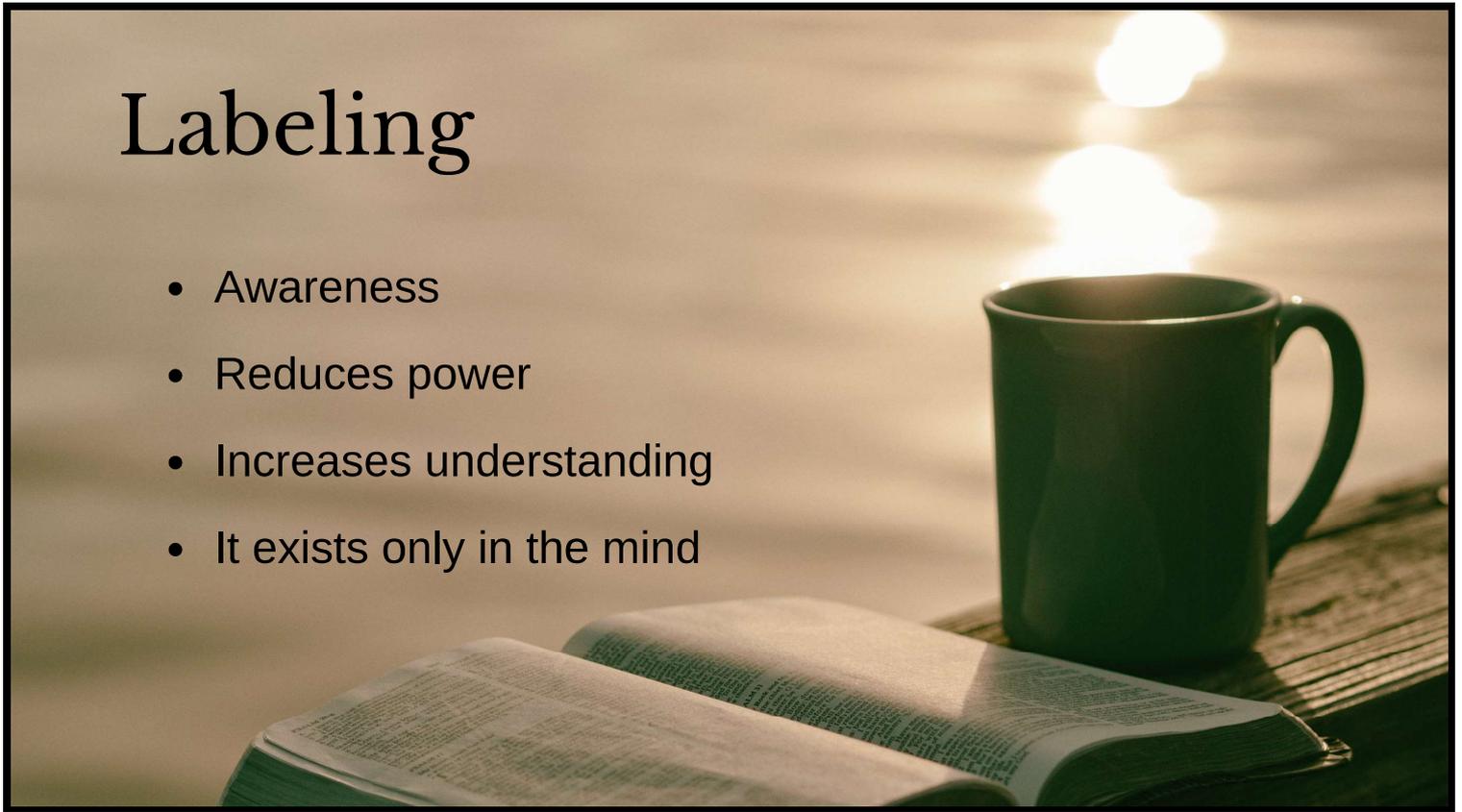


Tools & Strategies



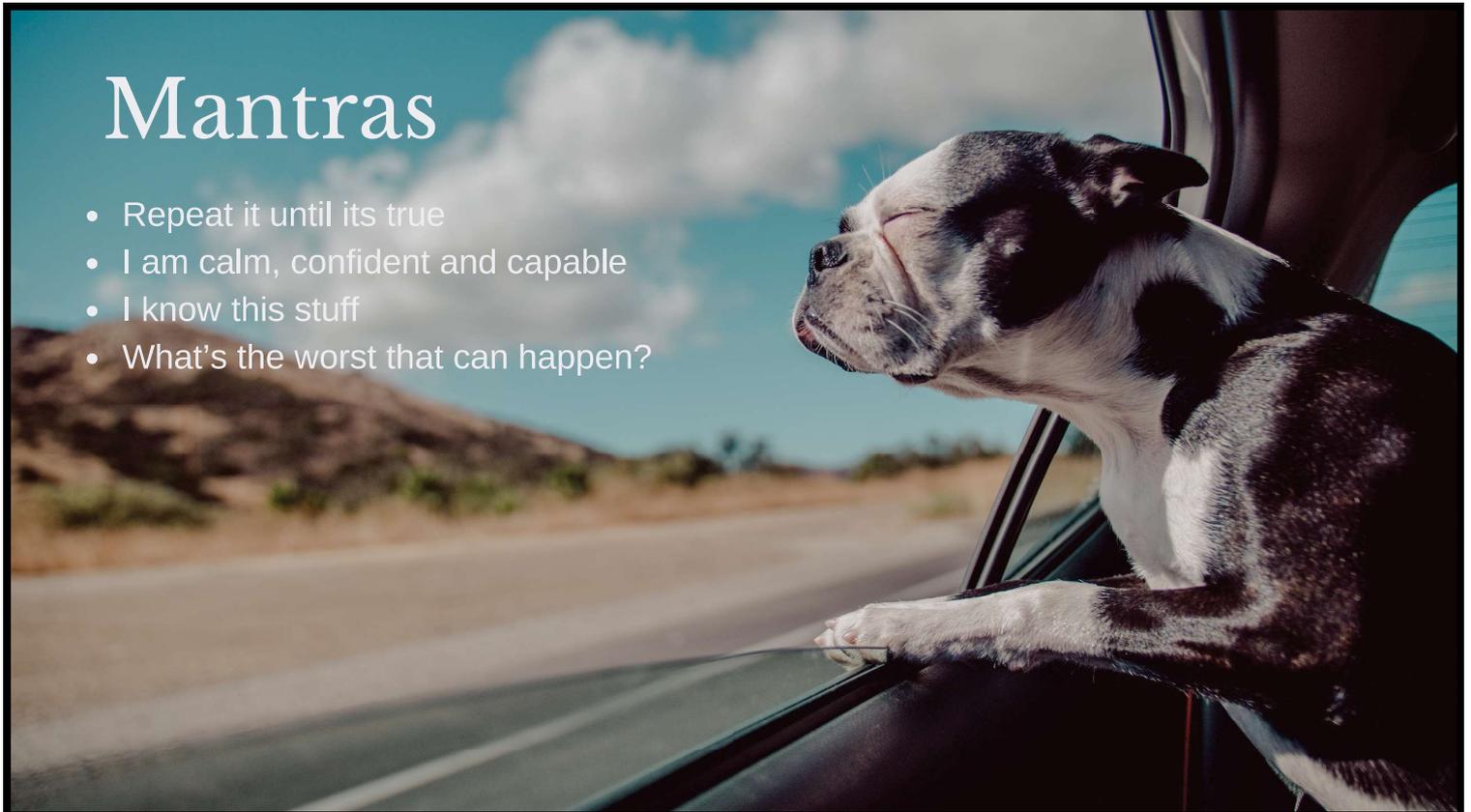
# Labeling

- Awareness
- Reduces power
- Increases understanding
- It exists only in the mind



# Mantras

- Repeat it until its true
- I am calm, confident and capable
- I know this stuff
- What's the worst that can happen?



# Reframing

## **I'm unqualified**

I may be inexperienced but I'm fully capable of growing into the role

## **I've no idea what I'm doing**

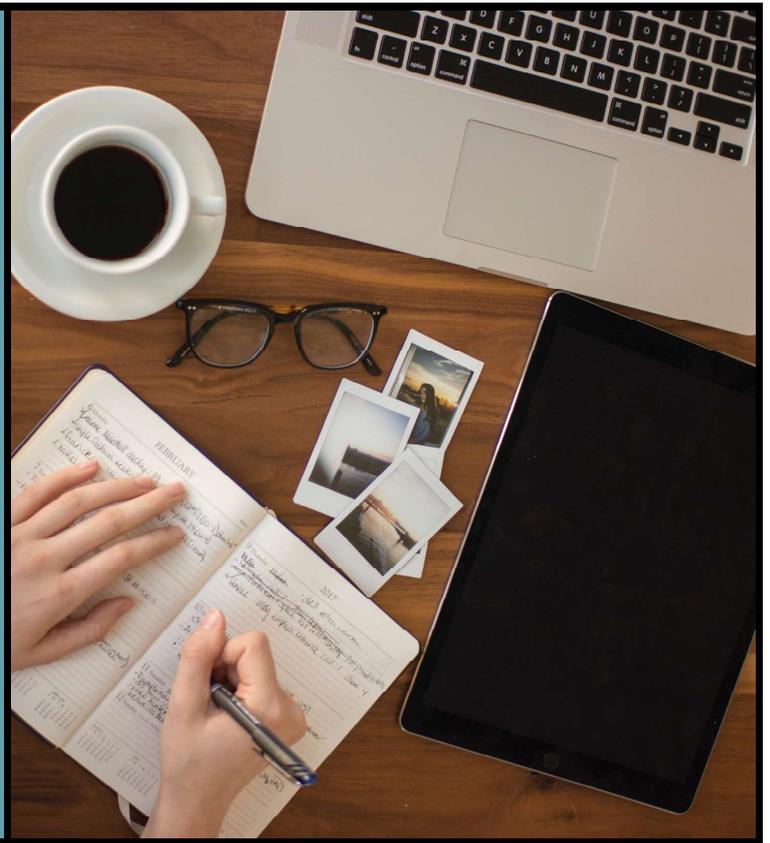
I'm going to learn a lot

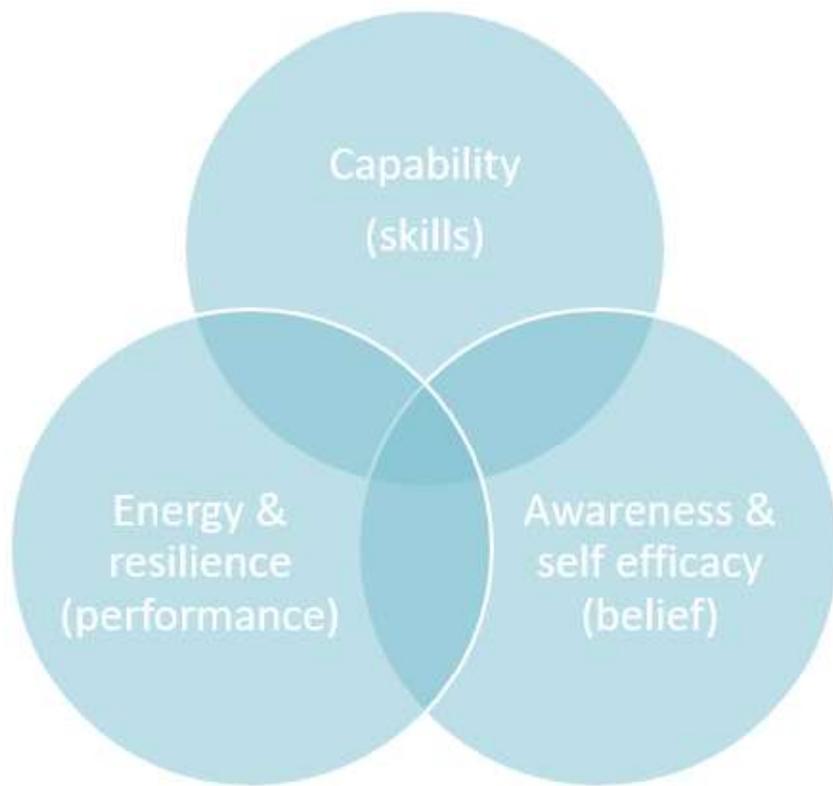
## **Asking for help**

Not a weakness but an understanding of what is required to get the job done

## **I'm fearful of the unknown, of failure**

I'm excited





Hi! I'm...

So busy

To Do List

① So

② Many

③ Things



priority

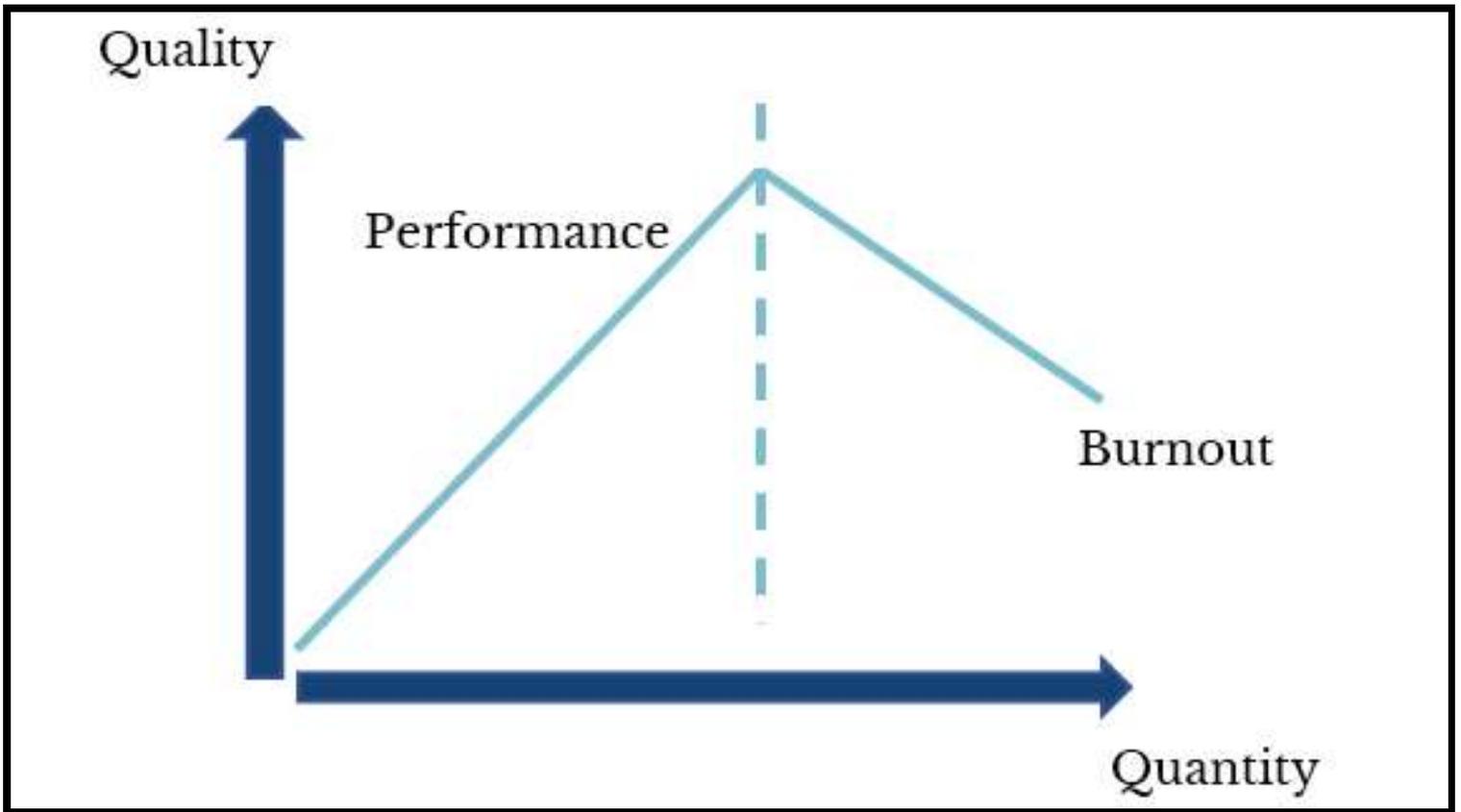
/prɪˈɒrɪti/

*noun*

the fact or condition of being regarded or treated as more important than others.  
"the safety of the country **takes priority over** any other matter"

Similar: [prime concern](#) [first concern](#) [most important consideration](#) 

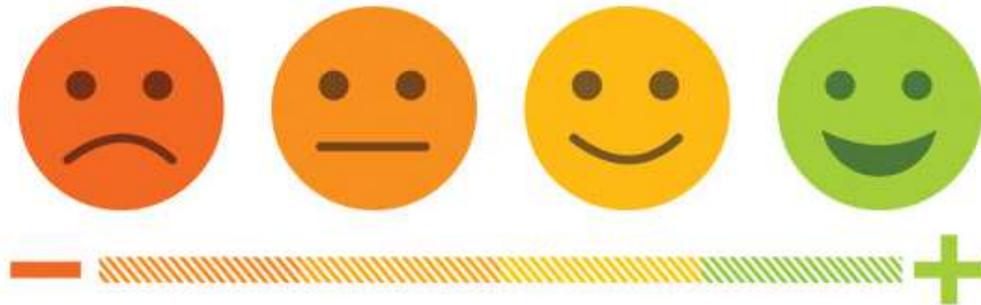
- a thing that is regarded as more important than others.





**72 x 20**





It's ok not to be ok, in fact it's normal  
Meet yourself where you're at



5	Loss of hope, withdrawal, detachment, illness, depression
4	Checked out, discontent, loss of motivation, noncommitment, exhausted
3	Frustrated, lack of results, resentment, guilt, anxiety, not coping, struggle sleeping
2	Overwhelm, lack of focus, working long hours
1	Loss of energy, too busy to take breaks



Triggers

Warning signs

Amber zone

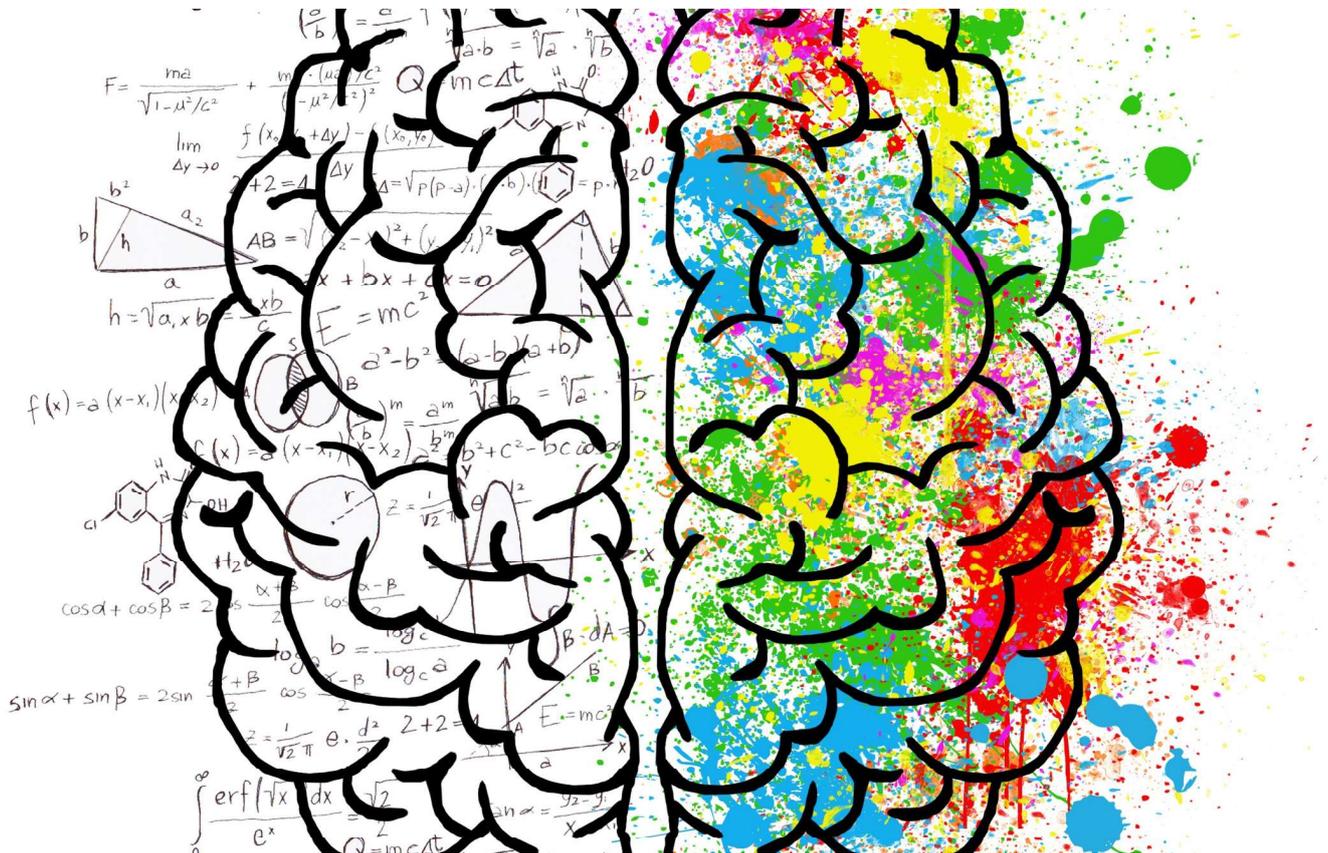
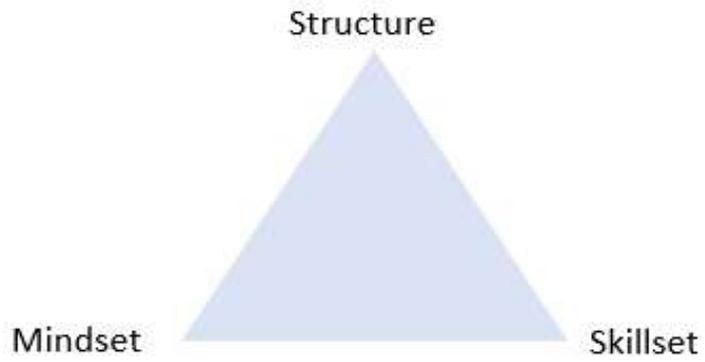


Sustainability

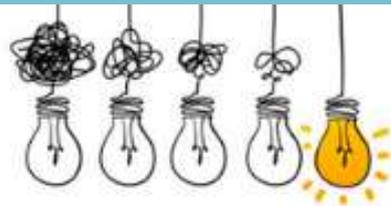


Slowing down to speed up





- Know your strengths
- Celebrate the successes
- Back yourself
- Slow down to speed up: sustainability
- Know your triggers
- Refuel yourself
- Align your schedule to your priorities
- Make space



# BURNOUT TO BRILLIANCE

REDEFINING PEAK  
PERFORMANCE



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# Do I have Imposter Syndrome?



Imposter syndrome is a concept describing high-achieving individuals who are marked by an inability to internalise their accomplishments and a persistent fear of being exposed as a “fraud.” It’s that voice of self-doubt that, despite our successes, keeps us feeling like we might fail, we might not be good enough, and we might get found out. According to the International Journal of Behavioural Science 70% of us experience it, do you?

**Take this quick quiz to find out if Imposter Syndrome is impacting you:**



1. I find it hard to accept praise
2. I focus on the things I’m not good at rather than my strengths
3. I think people overrate me and worry they’ll find out I’m not as good as they think
4. I often succeed despite being convinced I’ll fail before I begin
5. I tend to think those around me are better
6. I hate asking for feedback on my performance
7. People have called me a perfectionist
8. There have been jobs I’ve not applied for because I don’t think I’m ready yet
9. I’m working hard but still feel like I’m falling short
10. I have an inner critic that makes me doubt myself
11. I’m a bit of a procrastinator at times
12. I sometimes think my achievements have been a fluke or just good fortune

Count up the ticks and see your results over the page.

## Is Imposter Syndrome impacting you?

### 0-4 boxes ticked

This might resonate for you but it's not at the stage where it's eroding your confidence. You are good at what you do but sometimes your inner critic may have you doubt yourself. You may find this gets worse when you get out of your comfort zone or challenge yourself, like a new job. Prepare for that and understand this topic better by watching my [TEDx talk](#).

### 5-8 boxes ticked

Imposter Syndrome is at play for you and may have held you back in the past. It makes you second guess yourself, play it safe and miss opportunities. Get to know your strengths and celebrate your successes to help build your confidence. Take action before this self doubt worsens and view these [free resources](#) for more support.

### 9+ boxes ticked

Take action immediately, this is likely to be eroding your confidence and impacting your health. You'll be prone to overwork and often feel overwhelmed but overcoming imposter syndrome can help alleviate this. It's critical you get some tools and strategies in place to manage these feelings of self-doubt. I'd recommend taking the online course or coming along to a workshop but in the first instance download the [free mini course](#) and get instant tips to help.

### Find out more

If you want to know more or would like to register for the Imposter Syndrome Workshop, please get in touch.

### Jess Stuart, Author & Coach

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JESS STUART

AUTHOR • COACH • SPEAKER

# Guide to Navigating Imposter Syndrome



According to the International Journal of Behavioral Science, 70% of us think we're not as good as others believe we are - it's called Imposter Syndrome.

It's exacerbated by our fear of failure, trying to please everyone around us, striving for perfection and worried we're falling short! It's particularly prevalent in high achievers and is often the underlying reason we're driven to over achieve - to ensure we're not found out and to prove ourselves capable.

Imposter syndrome is a concept describing high-achieving individuals who are marked by an inability to internalise their accomplishments and a persistent fear of being exposed as a "fraud." It's that voice of self-doubt that, despite our successes, keeps us feeling like we might fail, we might not be good enough, and we might get found out.

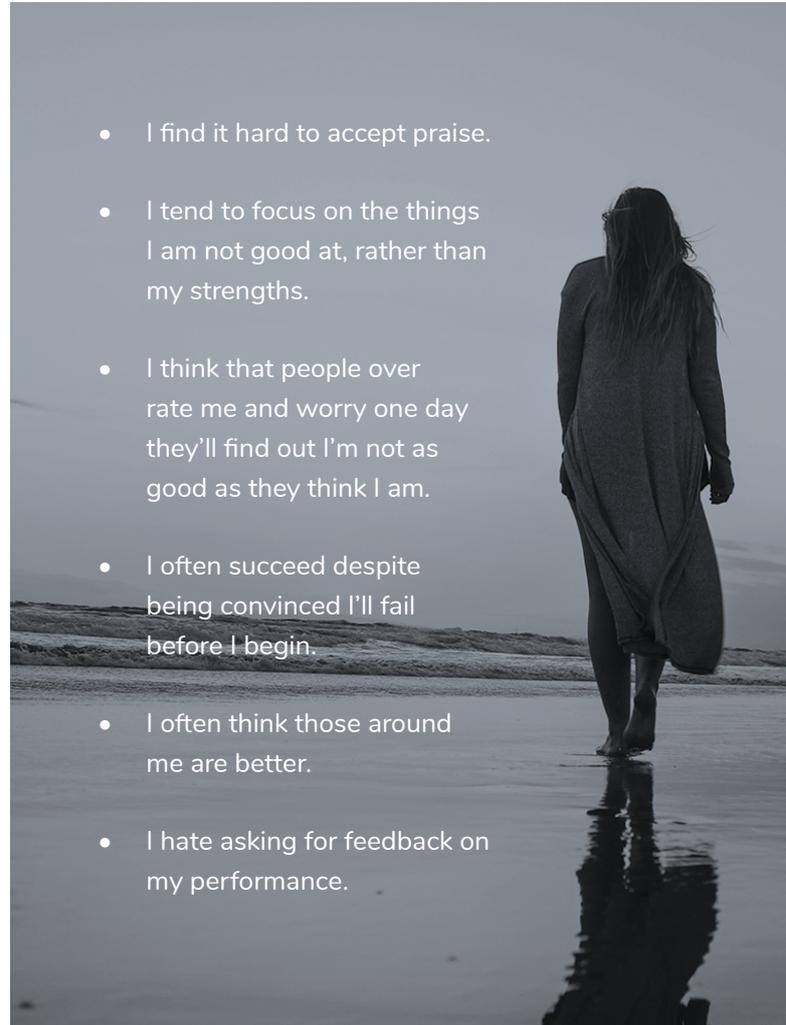
Those with imposter syndrome have a tendency to attribute their success to external factors - like luck, or the work of the team. It takes courage to take on challenges and pursue dreams that leave you open to the risk of failure, falling short, losing face, and being "found out."

It's not something that we overcome, rather we navigate it as it appears in our life. It may always be there but have varying degrees of impact on us given how loud we turn the volume up. It can be different at various times of our life or in different

areas of our life. For some it surfaces at work, for others it's in relationships. It can be dormant for years and rear its head when we start a new job, get a promotion or return to the workforce after having children.

Check below and see if this sounds familiar?

- I find it hard to accept praise.
- I tend to focus on the things I am not good at, rather than my strengths.
- I think that people over rate me and worry one day they'll find out I'm not as good as they think I am.
- I often succeed despite being convinced I'll fail before I begin.
- I often think those around me are better.
- I hate asking for feedback on my performance.





It can feel like we're the only ones experiencing this as it's not much talked about, particularly in the workplace, we therefore assume it's a character flaw in us and a weakness we must overcome – further evidencing these feelings of Imposterism.

However, we're not alone, many people experience Imposter syndrome, especially high achievers and even those we look up to and aspire to be.

It can come from many places, particularly our culture and upbringing. Consider 'Tall Poppy' in NZ and the impact this has on us claiming our successes or talking about the things we're good at.

We'll all have examples of teachers, parents, peers, leaders who have nurtured our intellect or fed our insecurities and this can play into Imposter Syndrome. As can our quest for approval. We also don't value our strengths as we believe if we're good at it so is everyone else so it's nothing special.

Imposterism can lead to us playing it safe to avoid failure and having to work twice as hard to prove ourselves wrong and not get 'found out'. Perfectionism can often be driven from a place of Imposterism and it can impact our brand and credibility if we're constantly downplaying our achievements and not owning our successes.

We may also struggle to delegate or ask for help assuming that to be successful we must do it all by ourselves, or that we need to have all the answers, more training, further experience to be capable – all often in a bid to offset our Imposter Syndrome.

Sadly, it's not something we can easily overcome - but we can learn to navigate it and succeed anyway.

## 1 Own your successes.

You didn't get lucky, it wasn't by chance. We tend to be modest when it comes to our achievements, and have been brought up not to boast about our strengths. We feel uncomfortable accepting praise and our negativity bias in our brain means we're wired not to think of the positives so much.

The most important thing to remember is that if we're getting praise or positive feedback, it's because we've earned it and deserve it. Own it and let it help counter some of those moments of self-doubt. If all you can say is 'thank you' it's a lot better than anything that'll downplay or wave away the acknowledgement.

## 2 Give it your all and know it's enough.

Sometimes our imposter syndrome is due to our fear of failure and our perfectionism manifesting to give us this fear of not being good enough. We fail to meet our own unrealistic ideals of perfection - either in the way we look, our abilities in life, or our achievements at work. Perfectionism often sets us up to fail and feeds these feelings of self-doubt.

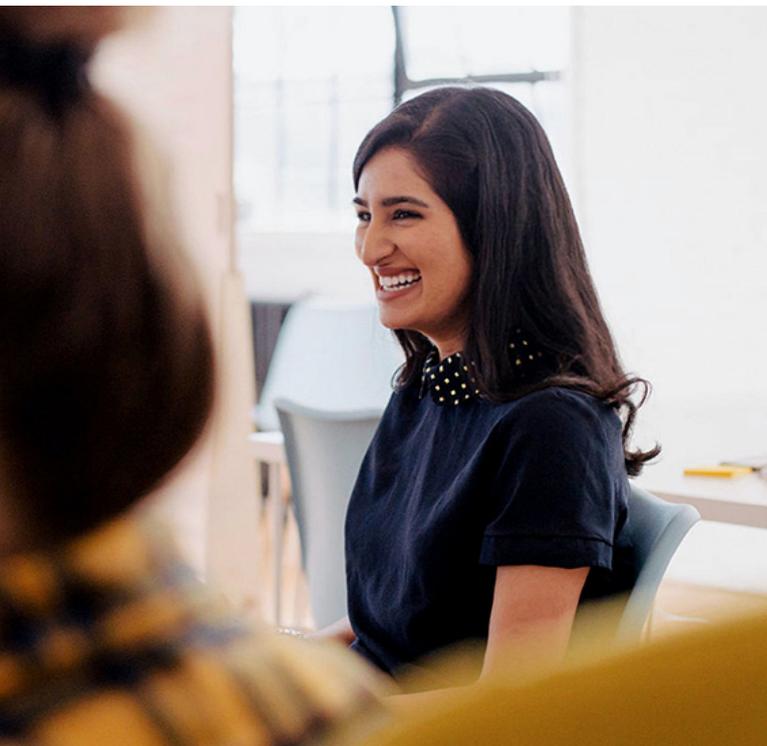
Overcoming imposter syndrome requires self-acceptance: you don't have to attain perfection to be worthy of success. It's not about lowering the bar, it's about resetting it to a realistic level. You don't have to be Einstein to be a valuable asset. Nor do you have to attain perfection to share something with the world.

**3**

### **Don't let your doubt and fear stop you.**

We need to continue to take risks and challenges even though we might not think we're ready. Too often, we stand back and let the opportunities pass us by because we doubt our abilities. The best way to see if you're ready is to dive in and take on the challenge!

There will always be a feeling of fear and the risk of failure - we grow and develop by facing these fears and getting outside of our comfort zone. One of the ways we can navigate these feelings is by proving we're capable, this capability brings with it confidence and lessens the power of self-doubt, increasing our confidence by proving we have the competence.

**4**

### **Remember: your thoughts are not common knowledge.**

I know how it feels to be gripped by imposter syndrome - we spend all our energy trying to prove our worth to everyone else to make it go away. The funny thing is, only we believe that we're not capable. For example, we wouldn't have been offered the job if people didn't think we were capable. Often the only person we need to prove anything to is ourselves.

**5**

### **Acknowledge it and know it's not just you.**

We need to be mindful that the voice in our head is often swayed. We are wired to see the glass as half empty, to focus on the negative. This comes from evolutionary times when it was helpful for us to scan the horizon for the worst that could happen in order to survive.

What this can translate to in our modern world is a constant focus on what we're not good at, things that went wrong, and why we're not enough.

This negativity bias can leave us feeling like we'll never be good enough. So to counter the bias, we need to focus on what we have, not what we haven't, to direct our energy toward the things we're good at rather than what might go wrong and where we might fail.

Know that it's not something we experience alone. Some of the most successful people I know who seem to have mastered life admit that underneath, they feel the opposite some days. Even famous people earning millions and excelling at what they do admit to having moments of self-doubt.

**6**

### **Stop comparing yourself to others.**

It's the fastest way to feel inferior and feed our self-doubt. Unfortunately there will always be someone more beautiful, clever, talented, or stronger than you. However, the reverse of this is also true. So instead of comparing yourself to others, look to see if you're fulfilling your own potential and celebrate the things you have.

## Practical tools to try

- **Affirmations or mantras.** What would your best friend say to you when you're having these thoughts? Be your own best friend and say that to yourself. A phrase you repeat in your head until it becomes true. I always use "I'm calm, confident and capable" before I go out on stage and it helps me step into my speaking persona.
- **Reframing and labelling.** Often the things we experience are tainted by how they appear in our mind. For example fear can just as easily be excitement – physiologically they are the same in the body. The next time you take on a challenge and you're telling yourself, I'm unqualified and I've no idea what I'm doing, reframe that to – I may be inexperienced but I'm going to learn a lot and am fully capable of growing into this.
- **Success wall / diary / folder.** This is my favourite and started because I had a bad memory and wanted to prepare better for my annual performance reviews. By writing down the successes throughout the year I got a lift each time I reflected on them, provided evidence to offset my Imposterism and a place I could go to each time I doubted myself. These days it's an icon on my desktop but chose what works for you.
- **Permission to make mistakes.** We are all so keen to avoid failure, we see it as a negative and proof our Imposterism is right. However as humans we all fail at some point, we make mistakes and this is ok. Often it's how we learn and grow, it can be the stepping stone to success and therefore a positive. Those we aspire to be have made mistakes too and often that's why they've got to where they are. Seeing failure as a learning opportunity and natural on the pathway to success is key to helping us get out of our comfort zone.

Pick a few to try and stick with the one that works for you, we're all different so treat the above list as a menu and chose your favourites.

We are all capable of more than we know, and we can do amazing things if we're not busy doubting our abilities. Next time that negative voice in your head starts to speak, turn down the volume.

What matters most is not whether we fear failing, looking foolish, or not being enough; it's whether we give those fears the power to keep us from taking the actions needed to achieve our goals.





## Where to go next

Visit the Imposter syndrome resources page at [www.jessstuart.co.nz/imposter-syndrome](http://www.jessstuart.co.nz/imposter-syndrome) for videos, blogs, animations and more.

- Available for [workshops](#) in your business or [speaking](#) at your event
- Download the [online course](#)
- Visit the [YouTube channel](#) full of free videos
- Sign up to the [mailing list](#)
- Connect on social media



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“

Jess's exercises of helping people recognise their accomplishments was very helpful and motivational.

”

“

This has helped me override my natural tendency to criticise or focus on the negative and 'retrain' my brain.

”

“

My confidence has grown so much in just who I am and what I have to offer.

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## WORKING WITH



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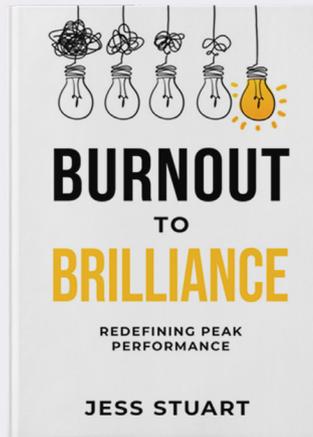




# JESS STUART

AUTHOR • COACH • SPEAKER

## Burnout to Brilliance



Brilliance can mean many things. In the dictionary it's defined as cheerful, happy, lively, optimistic, bright, clear, dazzling, light, positive, smart, intelligent, sharp, quick, talented, inspired, skilful, excellent. These are the things we aim for with peak performance and the things we experience when we're at our best.

When we're brilliant we shine and so light is an intrinsic part of this concept of being brilliant. In fact it feels light to live this way and when we're closer to burnout we know it's a heavy load to bear, a darker place to be.

It's why I love the lightbulb metaphor here and for me it also represents energy, which is key to us sustaining our brilliance. When we're at our best we have more energy and like a light bulb we always shine brighter when we have more energy. We also know what happens when we leave the light on too long, it dulls and eventually goes out.

Brightness is also synonymous with intelligence and of course when we're being brilliant our intellect is at its sharpest and our brains are functioning at their full capability.

Yet in 2018 Gallup found that of nearly 7500 full-time employees internationally, 23 per cent feel burnt out at work very often or always, while another 44 per cent feel burnt out sometimes.

Research out of AUT suggests 11 per cent of New Zealand workers might be experiencing burnout – physical or mental problems due to stress or overwork. That's more than one in every ten New Zealanders.

Productivity	Performance	Brilliance
Flow	Resilience	Potential
Busy	Overwhelm	Burnout

# Busy and Burnout



Once we know what drives our busyness the next question to ask is; are you busy or productive? The two are very different and we understand this by further exploring the difference between quantity and quality.

It's an interesting question because most of us have been conditioned to believe, the busier we are the more productive we'll be. We live in a world that prioritises quantity over quality – more is always better.

Since the industrial revolution we've measured performance in a way that suggests more is better, the harder we work the better employee we are and the more valuable we are. We are paid for every hour we work and not a penny more or less regardless of the quality of what we produce during those hours. It's an outdated model we used to run our factories during the industrial age. It's a model that rewards time spent not quality achieved and it's out of date by a long way.



I'd like us to flip the narrative on this and understand more is not necessarily better, especially where performance is concerned.

We can work hard but only to a point. Without the necessary balance and down time the hard work starts to become ineffective.

# Burnout

The World Health Organisation predict burnout will be a global pandemic in less than a decade and The World Economic Forum estimates an annual burnout cost of GBP 225B to the global economy. We know there's an organisational cost of burnout too with increased turnover, absenteeism and of course the obvious impact on performance.

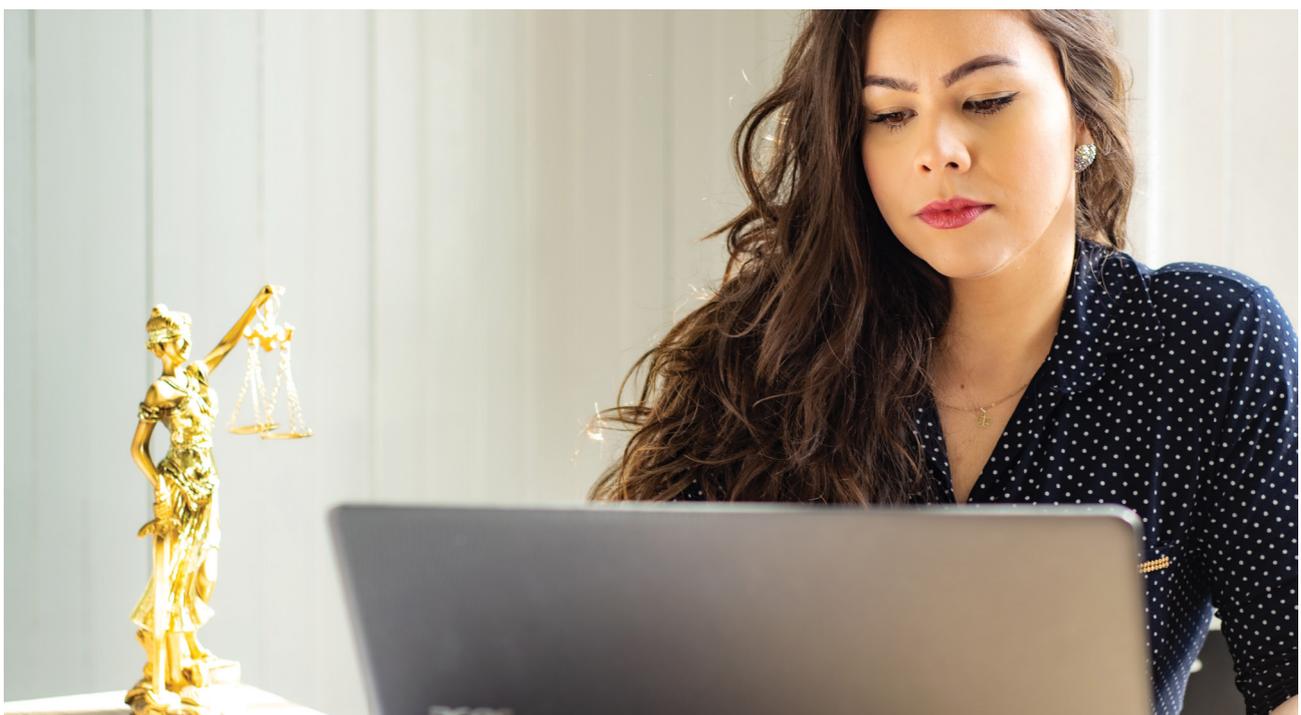
The most common indicators burnout is at play are;

- exhaustion
- a feeling of lack of control
- disengaging
- trouble focusing
- a sense of dread about work and
- frequent feelings of cynicism or irritability.

Burnout is not just about quantity but the quality of what we're doing not just how much of it we're doing. According to Psychology today; burnout is not simply a result of working long hours or juggling too many tasks, though those both play a role. The cynicism, depression, and lethargy that are characteristic of burnout most often occur when a person is not in control of how a job is carried out, or is asked to complete tasks that conflict with their sense of self.

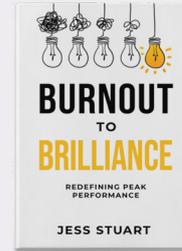
## 5 Stages of Burnout with symptoms

- 5 Loss of hope, withdrawal, detachment, illness, depression
- 4 Checked out, discontentment, loss of motivation, non commitment, exhausted
- 3 Frustrated, lack of results, resenting others, feelings of guilt, anxiety, not coping, struggle sleeping
- 2 Overwhelm, lack of focus, working long hours
- 1 Loss of energy, too busy to take breaks





# Sustainability



Sustainability is our resilience, it's our energy to be our best and our ability to bounce back from the tough times. It's like a bank account we pay into over time, so we can withdraw funds when we need them, when the tough times hit. The way we pay into our resilience account is by prioritising our self-care.

Self-care is often viewed as a nice-to-have, something to do when we get a spare few minutes or when the to-do list is done. It's something we leave until we've got time and don't prioritise when we're busy. The irony is this is the time we probably need it most.

## Traffic lights – know your triggers

What do you notice about yourself when you're at your best and on green? What about when you're at your worst and close to burnout on red? And what about that bit in between, what are the early warning signs you get at amber?

	When I'm in the green zone I
	When I'm in the amber zone I
	When I'm in the red zone I

## Energy audit – how full is your cup?

What fills your cup?	What drains your cup?







