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## Conquering Imposter Syndrome Through Confidence

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1

### LET'S START WITH SOME QUESTIONS

How many people in this room have ever felt like one or more of your achievements was just a lucky fluke?

How many of you have ever sat in a high-level meeting, looked around the room to see which "expert" would answer the question, and then realized that was supposed to be you?

Raise your hand if you've ever hesitated to make a big decision - not because you didn't have the data, but because you were afraid a mistake would make your leadership doubt you belong there?

2

## IMPOSTER SYNDROME

A feeling of self-doubt that makes people question their accomplishments

3

## YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

"I've always felt like I'm just a guy who got lucky." – Tom Hanks

"I have written 11 books but each time I think, 'uh oh, they're going to find out now. I've run a game on everybody, and they're going to find me out' – Maya Angelou

4

## YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

"You think, 'Why would anyone want to see me again in a movie? And I don't know how to act anyway, so why am I doing this?'" –Meryl Streep

"When I won the Oscar, I thought it was a fluke. I thought they'd come to my house, knocking on the door, "Excuse me, we meant to give that to someone else. That was going to Meryl Streep." – Jodie Foster

5

## YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

Struggling author  
High school teacher, writing nights and weekends  
Wrote a couple of novels and put them in a drawer  
Wrote another one he thought was so bad he threw it in the trash  
His wife took it out of the wastebasket  
That novel:  
**Carrie**  
The author:  
**Stephen King**

6



**HOW DO WE CONQUER IMPOSTER SYNDROME?**

**CULTIVATING CONFIDENCE!**

7



**WHAT IS CONFIDENCE?**

- Feeling of belief or trust that a person or thing is reliable
- Self-confidence is that belief and trust in yourself
- A positive belief that you can accomplish what you want to do, in your life and in your career.

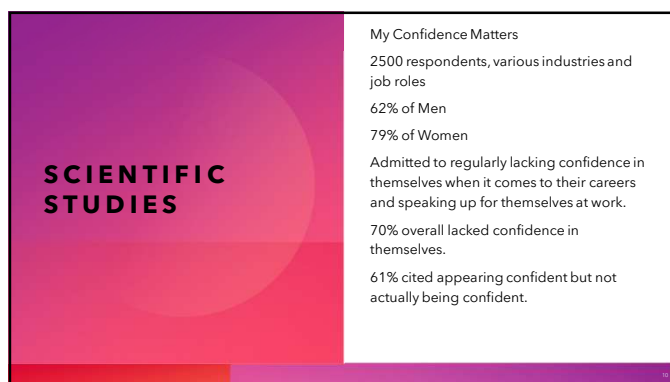
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**WHAT IS CONFIDENCE?**

Belief in your own capabilities, and the conviction that you can succeed

9



**SCIENTIFIC STUDIES**

My Confidence Matters  
2500 respondents, various industries and job roles  
62% of Men  
79% of Women  
Admitted to regularly lacking confidence in themselves when it comes to their careers and speaking up for themselves at work.  
70% overall lacked confidence in themselves.  
61% cited appearing confident but not actually being confident.

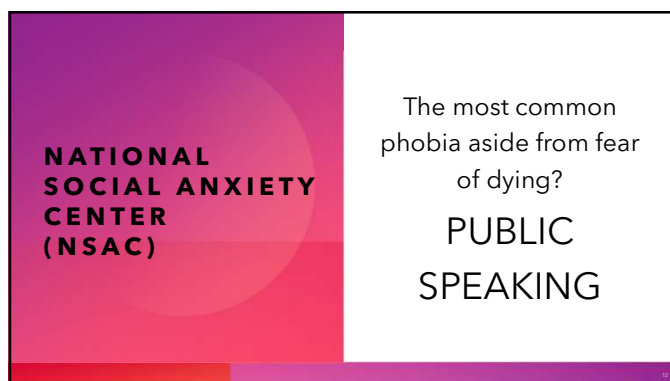
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**WHAT ACTIVITY MADE EVERYONE THE MOST NERVOUS?**

ASKING FOR A PAY RAISE

11



**NATIONAL SOCIAL ANXIETY CENTER (NSAC)**

The most common phobia aside from fear of dying?  
**PUBLIC SPEAKING**

12

**PARENTHOOD**

THEY JUST LET  
YOU TAKE THE  
BABY

13

**CULTIVATING  
CONFIDENCE**

OVERCOMING  
YOUR FEARS

UNLOCK YOUR  
FULL POTENTIAL  
AND ACHIEVE  
YOUR GOALS

14

**CONFIDENCE  
IS NOT  
ARROGANCE**

Confident people have a realistic understanding of their strengths and weaknesses

Arrogant people often fail to recognize their limitations

Confident individuals are also open to feedback and strive to grow

Arrogant individuals have an exaggerated sense of self-importance.

15


**HOW  
CULTIVATING  
CONFIDENCE  
CHANGED MY  
LIFE**

16

**ONCE UPON A  
TIME...**

The year is 1984

My dream is to anchor  
the 5 O'Clock news




17

**COULD I  
ACHIEVE MY  
BROADCASTING  
DREAM?**



18


**USAF  
MEDIA AND  
BROADCASTING**



AIR FORCE TELEVISION

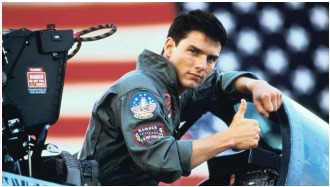
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**USAF  
MEDIA AND  
BROADCASTING**



20

**FIELD TRAINING  
1986**



21

**TRAINING  
OFFICER**

- Too few women are accepted
- You have to be better than all the men
- Top 5% on the AFOQT
- Can't have a liberal arts degree
- You're probably too short

22

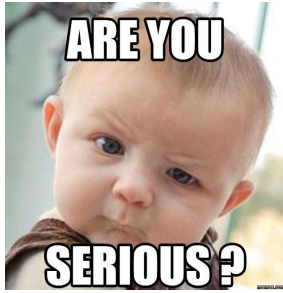
**TRAINING  
OFFICER**

Doing me a favor

I shouldn't set myself up  
for disappointment

23

**UNINTENDED  
OUTCOME**



24

**MADE ME MAD!** "He doesn't get to tell me not to try!"

25

**WHAT DID I DO?**

- I buckled down
- Studied hard
- Took the AFOQT
- Did NOT change my major

26

**BY THE END OF THAT YEAR**


Accepted for pilot training:

Men: 1,000

Women: 16

27

**ONE OF THOSE 16**



28

**DON'T LET ANYONE TELL YOU NOT TO TRY!**

- Flown upside down
- Pulled over 7 G's
- Flown formation 3 ft wingtip to wingtip at 500 MPH
- Broken the sound barrier (twice)

29

**MINDSET MATTERS**

How do you change your mindset to one of confidence?

30

**POSITIVE SELF-TALK**

Look in the mirror

Talk to yourself as you would a friend

31

**PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT**

If you don't feel confident, act like it anyway

Fake it 'til you make it

I've got this!

32


**PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT**



33


**Actual quote from episode:**

Make sure the scanner select limiter matches the Visor output range. Now, place the neural output pods in contact with the tricorder scanner heads.



34

Try talking to strangers



35

Try talking to strangers


Strike up a conversation in the coffee line

Compliment someone on their shoes

36

**PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT**

My favorite - embarrass your teen kids in the grocery store




37

**BODY LANGUAGE**

- Amy Cuddy - researcher and social psychologist
- Our body and posture significantly influences the release of certain hormones

38

**POWER POSE**



39

**POWER POSE**

- Striking a power pose for 2 minutes
- Increase in Testosterone, hormone associated with confidence
- Decrease in Cortisol, the "stress" hormone

40

**POWER POSE**

- You'll feel silly
- Job interview, presentation, performance review
- Posture straight, take up space
- Don't make yourself small!

41

**VISUALIZATION**

- Activates the same neural pathways
- The more you practice, the better you get
- Get used to the thing that gives you anxiety

42

**VISUALIZATION**

- Pilot training - visualization daily
- When the real emergency happened, we didn't panic because we'd already done it 100 times

43

**VISUALIZATION**

Visualize the thing that makes you the most nervous

44

**BUILD A SUPPORT NETWORK**

- Find a mentor
  - Be a sponge
- Engage a hype-man (or woman)
  - To get positive feedback

45

**BREAK OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE**

Challenge yourself on a regular basis

Eleanor Roosevelt said "Do one thing every day that scares you."

46

**BREAK OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE**

- Take a deep breath
- Ask for that promotion
- Train for that marathon
- Say yes to that speaking invitation

47

**BREAK OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE**

If it doesn't work out,  
**IT'S OKAY!**

48

**TAKEAWAYS**

- Many well known and successful people still struggle with imposter syndrome
- Confidence is a belief in yourself
- Say "I've got this" and MEAN IT!

49

**TECHNIQUES**

- Positive Self-Talk
- Practice Makes Perfect
- Body Language
- Visualization
- Building a support network
- Breaking out of your comfort zone

50

**HOW TO BEGIN YOUR CONFIDENCE JOURNEY?**

We're starting right now!

51

**YOUR MISSION, SHOULD YOU CHOOSE TO ACCEPT IT...**

- Find a private place, perhaps the restroom, to do your power pose for 2 minutes
- Look in the mirror and say 5 times, "I've got this!"
- Now go do the thing

52

**LET ME KNOW HOW IT GOES**

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53

**FINAL NOTE**

"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear."  
 – Nelson Mandela

54



55



56