



17 TIPS TO OVERCOME IMPOSTOR SYNDROME

by Ella Mesma

Last month Ella hosted a workshop for artists in the early stages of their careers and shared her tips on how to overcome impostor syndrome. If you missed it or need a refresher here is a recap.

1. STOP OVERWORKING

2. JOURNAL, MEDITATE DO YOUR GRATITUDES

3. FOSTER GROWTH MINDSET

Rather than seeing yourself as failing, see it as learning. Know where you can improve, and keep growing. Recognise that you have a choice.

Learn to hear your fixed mindset “voice”. Talk back to it with a Growth Mindset voice. Take the Growth Mindset action.

Brainstorm and write down as many as possible thoughts about yourself that are unhelpful. How many of these thoughts stem from a fixed mindset? How can you change these thoughts using a growth mindset?

4. REFRAME FAILURE

An important part of changing our toxic perfectionist habits and beliefs is learning to redefine failure. Not every failure leads to success, yet success is hardly possible without failure. The more we fail, the more likely we are to succeed.

Mistakes help us grow, become braver,

and stronger. Overcoming them means learning from them and growing as people.

5. FACE AND REFRAME NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

Difficult thoughts can be challenging. That’s why we often neglect them, put them aside. Take a moment and allow these thoughts to exist in your mind.

What do they sound like? How can you be kinder?

Very often, the only difference between people who don’t have this syndrome and people who do is the way they approach challenges.

6. CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESS

Many people are much harder on themselves than they are on others in relation to expectations, recognition and mistakes. Does looking at your achievements more objectively help you to accept your contributions?

Completion Process:

What have you created?

What have you learnt?

What are you over?

What are you bringing forwards?

Acknowledge Yourself.

7. GATHER EVIDENCE OF YOUR GREATNESS

Take some time to reflect on any positive feedback you have had about your work.

Make your own “bouquet file” in whatever format suits you. As you compile it, take some time to work on fully accepting and absorbing it. Do your best to stop yourself from challenging or denying the positive.

8. PRACTISE INTUITION: THIS IS TRUE GENIUS

It’s true that there’s always more to learn but sometimes intuition is better. What if you are already a genius?

Innocence, Play & Creativity

9. PRACTISE CREATIVITY

Get in the zone where you are not trying to resolve your identity. Creativity is not thriving when we are judging and criticising!

Creative brain: whole brain active (fear is not in the creative brain)

Imagination is more important than knowledge. You can’t buy or learn that - you practise it!

10. YOU ARE WHOLE

Overcoming Impostor Syndrome requires self-acceptance; you don’t

have to attain perfection to be worthy of the success you’ve achieved and any accolades you earn along the way. It’s not about lowering the bar, it’s about resetting it to a realistic level that doesn’t leave you forever over-reaching and feeling inadequate.

How do your unrealistic aspirations or expectations contribute to feelings of anxiety or failure? (The Perfectionist).

Try seeing yourself as a work in progress.

Accomplishing great things involves lifelong learning and skill-building – for everyone, even the most confident people. Rather than beating yourself up when you don’t reach your impossibly high standards, identify specific, changeable behaviours that you can improve over time.

What does our name mean? Step into it!
We love you for YOU!

11. KNOW YOURSELF AND BE YOU TO THE FULL

Meaningful work is essential for people’s well-being and is integral to their identity.

Know yourself: what are your stress factors? What are your normal behaviours? What is true in your highest self? Be you to the full!

Confident leaders also own it by bringing their true selves to the workplace. Rather than disguising a secret impostor self, they present their authentic selves, being exactly who they are. Of course, they will emphasise different aspects of themselves at different times, because they too want success, but they will remain their true selves.

Do what you love:

It is not necessarily conquering the feelings, but rather accepting you feel out of your depth, seeing it as a chance to learn more and especially to not freeze.

12. STOP COMPARING

Impostor Syndrome thrives on inaccurate comparisons between self and others.

How might comparisons between ourselves and others be more acute when we check social media? How can we best avoid falling into this trap?

There is a gap between knowing our internal selves intimately with all of our doubts and insecurities and only seeing the public selves of others.

We don't know what others are thinking. How can that change our thoughts & behaviours?

13. SHARE

In a world where we are all supposed to be perfect can you share your vulnerability to empower others?

There's no shame in asking for help when you need it. If you don't know how to do something, ask for advice from a friend or a coach.

Take up opportunities to work with others, so that goals and achievements become shared ones. Working collaboratively demands conversation and the interdependence of knowledge and skills exchanges. It builds trusting relationships that lower barriers to sharing real or imagined vulnerabilities.

Rather than expecting yourself to know everything, ask others to share their knowledge and skills with you (admit when you don't know: it is much easier!)

14. SAY NO (OR YES)

Some people who suffer from impostor syndrome tend to say "yes" to everything, as a way of devaluing their time, effort, or expertise, while others shy away from new and unfamiliar opportunities.

Learning when, why, and how to deliver a polite “no” when necessary is what helps you build self-respect.

At the same time, accepting new opportunities gives you a chance to learn new things, reinvent yourself, and prove to yourself once again that you can do it.

Which is your go-to? Try balancing the two.

15. CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM ONLY

Use the Liz Lerman technique:

Step 1. Statements of Meaning

Responders state what was meaningful, evocative, interesting, exciting, and/or striking in the work they have just witnessed.

Step 2. Artist as Questioner

The artist asks questions about the work. In answering, responders stay on topic with the question and may express opinions in direct response to the artist’s questions.

Step 3. Neutral Questions

Responders ask neutral questions about the work, and the artist responds. Questions are neutral when they do not have an opinion couched in them. This step is one of the most fundamental,

challenging, and misunderstood steps of Critical Response Process.

Step 4. Opinion Time

Responders state opinions, given permission from the artist; the artist has the option to say no.

Differentiating constructive criticism from toxic criticism can be crucial for the way you perceive yourself, as it leaves you enough space to choose if you want to react to it or move on.

When opinions are important be mindful of whom you ask. The worst form of advice is an opinion.

16. ENNEAGRAM

How can we learn to continuously experience the beauty and depth of our lives without closing off to that which initially might not seem beautiful or deep?

How can we be present with powerful emotions without denying them or acting them out?

What would it mean to feel the full joy of existence in each moment?

Think often: "I am a loved child of the universe and the universe takes care of me."

Study the scenario of the “Perfectionist” to understand this side of our behaviours.

17. HOW DO YOU REFOCUS YOUR ENERGY ON WHAT YOU WOULD LOVE?

Creative Genius
Ego (Belief that keeps you safe)
Bridge

READING LIST

The Secret Thoughts of Successful Women, Valerie Young
Mindset: The New Psychology of Success, Carol Dweck
Journal To Joy, Maya Gandaia
Pleasure Activism, Adrienne Maree Brown
Existential Kink, Carolyn Elliot
The Spiritual Dimension of the Enneagram, Sandra Maïtri
No matter what!, Lisa Nichols

Creating, Robert Fritz
Emotions and the Enneagram, Margaret Frongs Keyes
Discover Your Greatness, Darren Eden
The Creative Habit, Twyla Tharp
The Only Thing That Matters, Neale Donald Walsh
Sacred Instruction, Sherri Mitchell
The Artist's Way, Julia Cameron
The Director's Draft, Katie Mitchell
The Multi-Hyphen Method, Emma Gannon
Evolve Your Brain, Joe Dispenza
Secrets of Natural Success, William Whitecloud
Breaking The Habit Of Being Yourself, Joe Dispenza
Clance Impostor Phenomenon Test
TEDxTucson George Land The Failure Of Success



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