

What triggers you?

The Imposter Syndrome is latent until triggered by an external event that creates personal uncertainty for us. Because we are unique individuals and have had different upbringing, exposure to culture, religion and education, we all experience and interpret the world around us quite differently. We have different strengths and vulnerabilities. Therefore, what will trigger one individual may be like water off a duck's back to another. It is subjective.

Here are some triggers we have personally experienced and / or found with our clients over the past 10 years.

- Not being Invited to a meeting or event when you felt you 'should' have been included
- Not being Heard; no response to something you've said
- Hearing someone else make the same suggestion only to have it widely accepted instead of rejected or ignored
- Not being sponsored or supported into business opportunities at work
- Not putting yourself forward for them
- Finding diversity of thought and ideas confrontational; feeling wrong-footed
- Having someone knock back your ideas before they've been considered
- Wanting to fit in
- Managing strong personalities
- Handling Push – back for example when someone disagrees with your ideas
- Handling interruptions when you're speaking
- Being micro-managed
- Making a decision and sticking to it in the face of disagreement
- Handling criticism from others
- Being told by colleagues or friends how to do your 'job' as an employee, a parent, a partner
- Experiencing conflict that feels very personal
- Experiencing aggression or bullying
- Receiving feedback that was unsolicited and is not constructive
- Experiencing blame from others for something that didn't work out
- Handling defensive responses from others
- Dealing with feelings of 'not good enough'
- Worrying about currency and value of your qualifications compared with others
- Reporting in to previous colleague
- Wondering when it's your turn to put your ideas forward
- Being at the effect of the Old Boy's Network
- Not able to be true to yourself at work
- No clear understanding of expectations around performance

- Confusion because Unwritten Ground Rules (UGR's) are different from the stated values and you're not sure how to behave
- Politics and game playing are more valued than performance
- Being told what to do, rather than consulted and included
- Finding out others in the team are more qualified
- Seeing others get opportunities that weren't offered to you
- Perceiving that others are getting their message across more easily - they're being heard
- Feeling daunted by the supreme confidence of others
- Having to ask for what I need and want and feeling anxious that I might not get it
- Not understanding why I respond or act in a way that undermines my desired outcomes
- Not being aware of the real agenda for meetings, actions or other situations
- Not knowing the ground rules for success
- Finding out your children have behavioural problems at school
- Experiencing a strong and emotional difference of opinion with someone you normally trust
- Having to sell yourself, your ideas and/or your services to others
- Being expected to deliver a perfect result
- Having done well, experiencing expectations that you will do even better next time.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. To use it effectively, go through the list and tick those that resonate with you. Then think about times in life and/or at work where you have felt uncertain and vulnerable and see if you can identify what caused it. Write those factors below:

Keep an ongoing list of the situations that occur which create that feeling of vulnerability.

These triggers are an indication of a set of beliefs you hold that may be limiting your opportunities at work and in life generally.



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