

Mirror Mirror on the Wall

Ways On Debunking
Impostor Syndrome

Nice to meet you

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WP&UP

**Mental health will be talked about as a
topic.**

**I am not a mental health professional, these are only
my opinions and personal experiences I am sharing.**

Quick Story



Do You



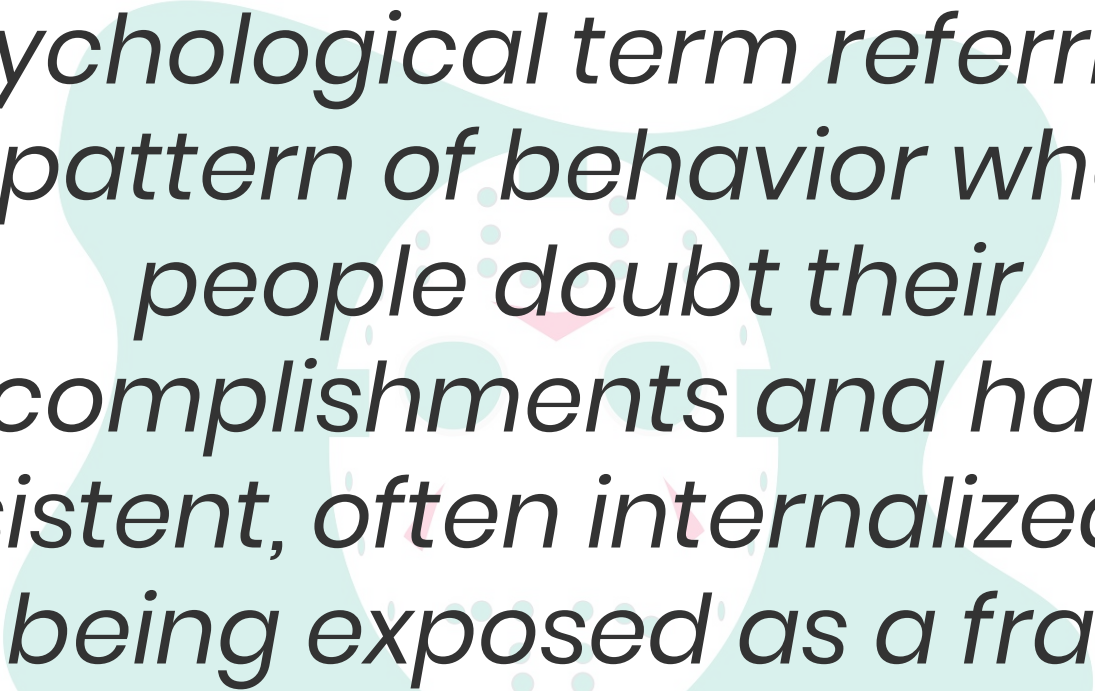
- Credit your success to chance, connections or some other external factor?
- Deflect responsibility for your actions?
- Feel you have something to prove?
- Avoid challenging yourself?
- Struggle with being flexible and are a perfectionist?
- Have a hard time receiving constructive criticism?

These are all **warning signs** of Imposter Syndrome





**So what is
Imposter
Syndrome?**



“...psychological term referring to a pattern of behavior where people doubt their accomplishments and have a persistent, often internalized fear of being exposed as a fraud.”

– Psychology Today

Exploring the Impact



- If you don't get your head around it, **it can cripple you.**
- If you let it get ahold of you, it can **add psychological distress**, increased **self-doubt** and persistent **fears of failure.**
- It can negatively **impact your career.**
- It can **destroy relationships.**
- You can miss opportunities because you **don't feel worthy or capable**, despite being competent.

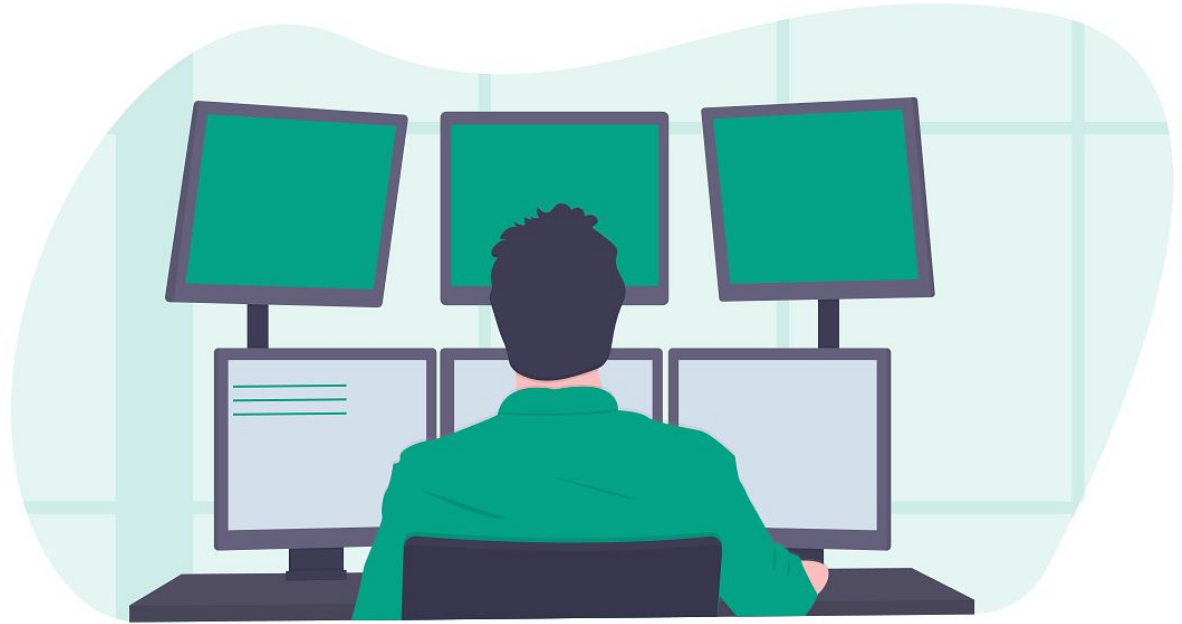
5 Symptoms of Imposter Syndrome



#1

*You're not
good
enough.*

Perfectionism



Questions / perfectionism

- Have you ever been accused of being a micromanager?
- Do you have great difficulty delegating? Even when you're able to do so, do you feel frustrated and disappointed in the results?
- When you miss the mark on something, do you accuse yourself of "not being cut out" for your job and dwell on it for days?
- Do you feel like your work must be 100% perfect, 100% of the time?

First 5 Years of Marriage

Why am I so angry all the time?

My identity became

Someone who struggled controlling anger and attitude. Trying to perfect getting it all right.



How I've navigated **perfectionism**

What I did about it

- Finally understood I can't change overnight. The change has to come from me.
- Set up an accountability plan with guy friends.
- Sought out professional help and counseling.

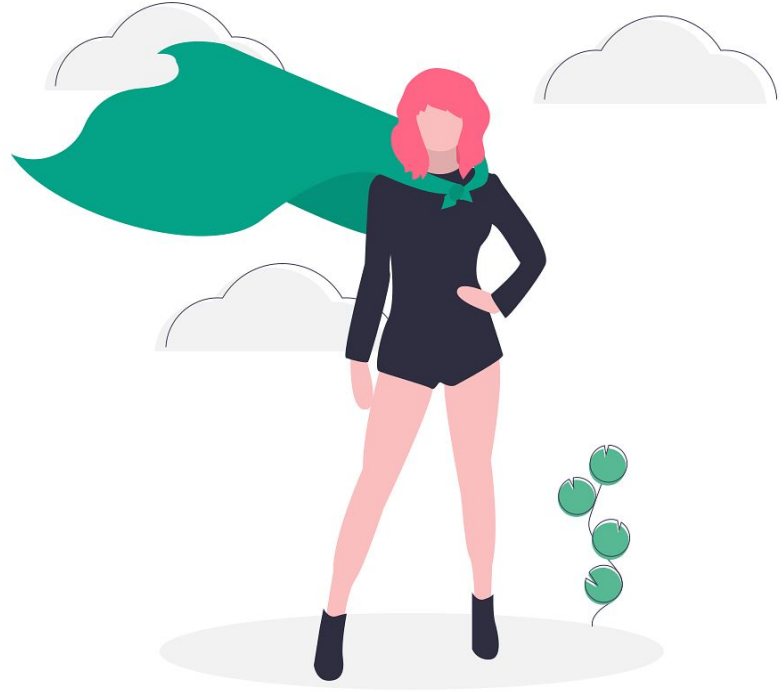


**Learn to take your mistakes
in stride, viewing them as a
natural part of the process.**

#2

***“Work
Harder to
Measure
Up.”***

Superhero



Questions / superhero

- Do you stay later at the office than the rest of your team, even past the point that you've completed that day's necessary work?
- Do you get stressed when you're not working and find downtime completely wasteful?
- Have you left your hobbies and passions fall by the wayside, sacrificed to work?
- Do you feel like you haven't truly earned your title, so you feel pressed to work harder and longer than those around you to prove your worth?

Being Let Go from Jobs

Am I good enough?

My identity became

A failure, someone who second guessed themselves in the professional world. Wanting to work more and more to provide for my family, which became my idol.



How I've navigated **superhero**

What I did about it

- Started putting more focus on what I was doing right instead of wrong, training in multiple areas.
- Created a schedule for my family to block out time during the week.
- Realized my value wasn't in my work, it was in me.

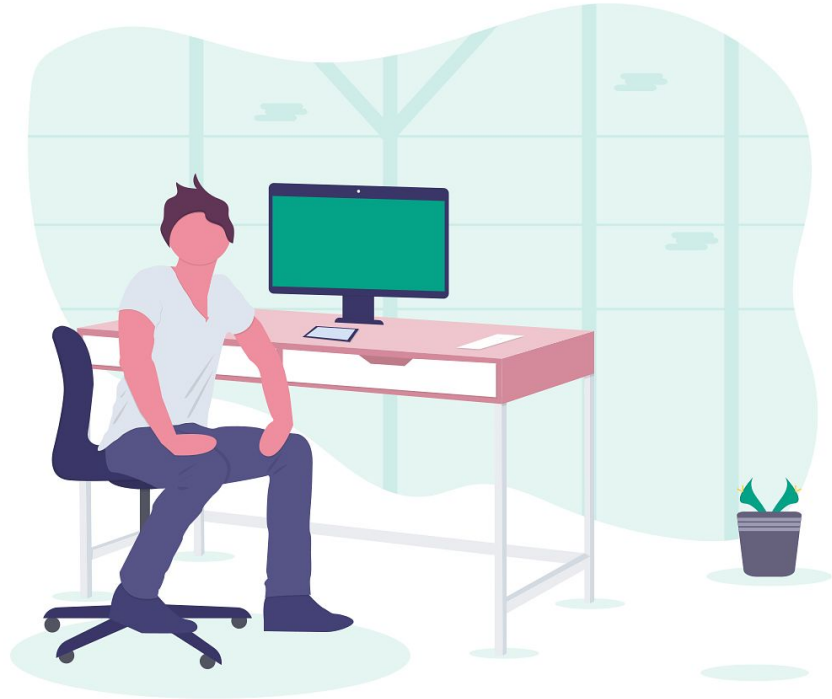


No one should have more power to make you feel good about yourself than you.

#3

*“Get things
right on the
first try.”*

Natural Genius



Questions / natural genius

- Are you used to excelling without much effort?
- Do you avoid challenges because it's so uncomfortable to try something you're not great at?
- When you're faced with a setback, does your confidence tumble because not performing well provokes a feeling of shame?
- Do you dislike the idea of having a mentor, because you can handle things on your own?

Going to Jail

Is this all there is to life?

My identity became

Helpless and wanting to be someone that didn't depend on others for happiness and get rid of this void. This setback changed my life moving forward.



How I've navigated **natural genius**

What I did about it

- Got sober and started learning how to pursue true confidence in myself and not through substance.
- Realizing I'd never been mentored, I joined a local support group to started meeting with other people.
- Worked out more which helped clear my mind.

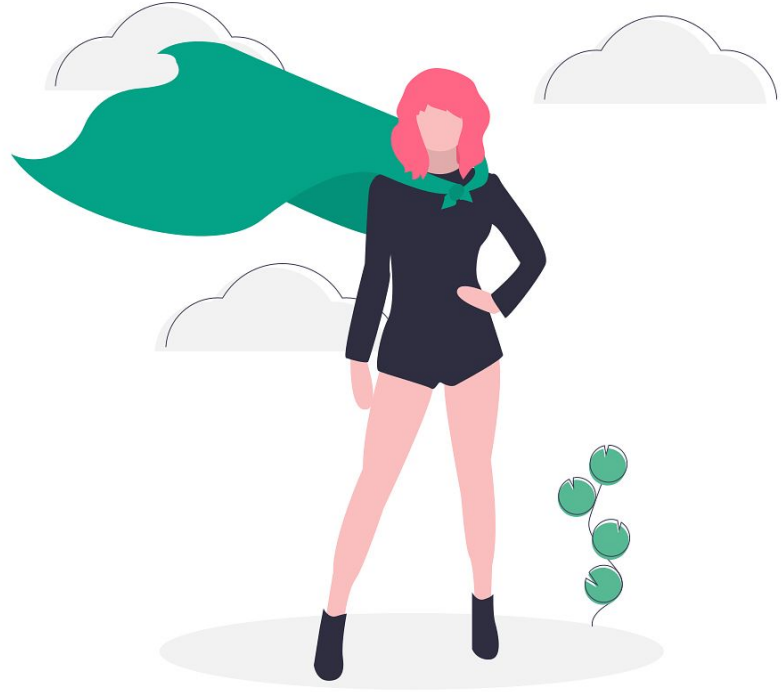


**Accomplishing great things
involves lifelong learning
and skill-building—for
everyone, even the most
confident people.**

#4

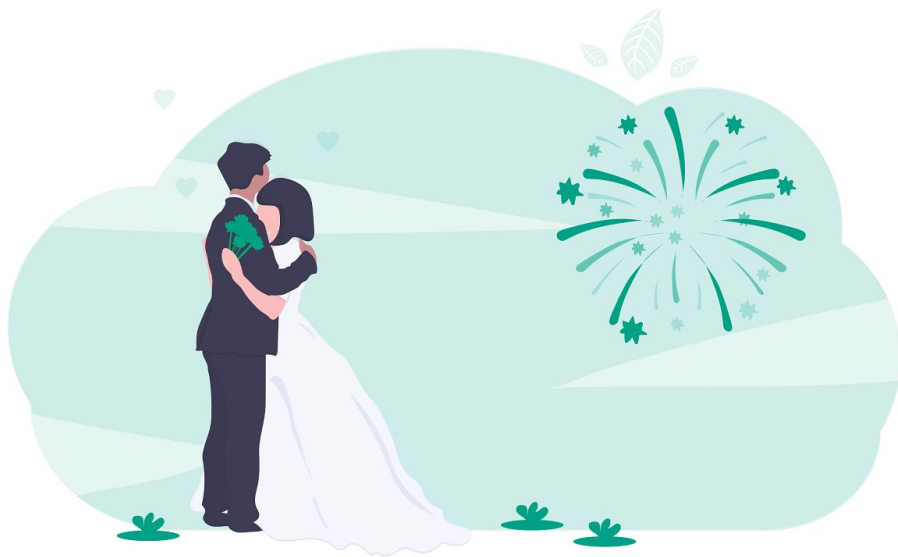
***“What will
others
think?”***

Embarrassment



Questions / embarrassment

- Do you feel that you need to accomplish things on your own?
- Do you frequently have the attitude of, “I don’t need anyone’s help.”
- Do you frame requests in terms of the requirements of the project, rather than your needs as a person?



Meeting My Wife

Am I a changed man?

My identity became

Someone who questioned to allow others into my life and love me. Will my wife judge me for my past? Will she love me for me?

How I've navigated **embarrassment**

What I did about it

- I spent 6 hours on the phone with her on our first phone call and told her about my past.
- I was intentional and honest about what I wanted, not just what she wanted to hear.
- Told her that I had taken a break from dating and was ready to open up my heart again.



**Don't be afraid to be yourself,
it will only help weed out
those who don't accept you
for who you really are.**

#5

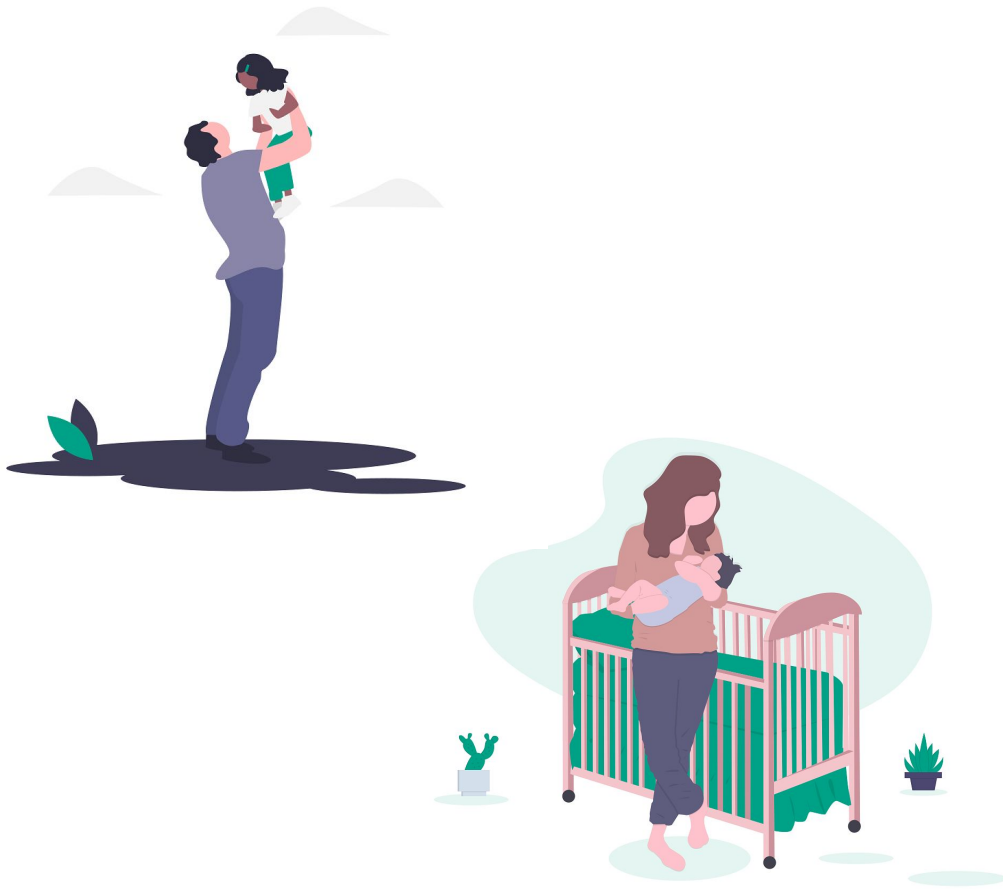
***“You are a
fake.”***

Unworthiness



Questions / unworthiness

- Do you shy away from applying to job postings unless you meet every single educational requirement?
- Are you constantly seeking out trainings or certifications because you think you need to improve your skills in order to succeed?
- Even if you've been in your role for some time, can you relate to feeling like you still don't know "enough?"
- Do you question when someone says you're an expert?



Daughter is Born

**Am I a good husband,
father?**

My identity became

Someone who didn't deserve this, couldn't provide, caused too much pain to my family. Am I going to be a good Dad? Will I be able to provide care for them?

How I've navigated **unworthiness**

What I did about it

- I was tired of giving into the lies, I forced myself to constantly say “there is nothing to be afraid of.”
- I sought medical service to help manage my mental health and understand things clearer.
- My family is everything to me, I took control over my own actions to be able to love on them.



Realize there's no shame in asking for help when you need it. You only miss out when you are silent and no one hears you.

5 Tips to Improve Your Reflection



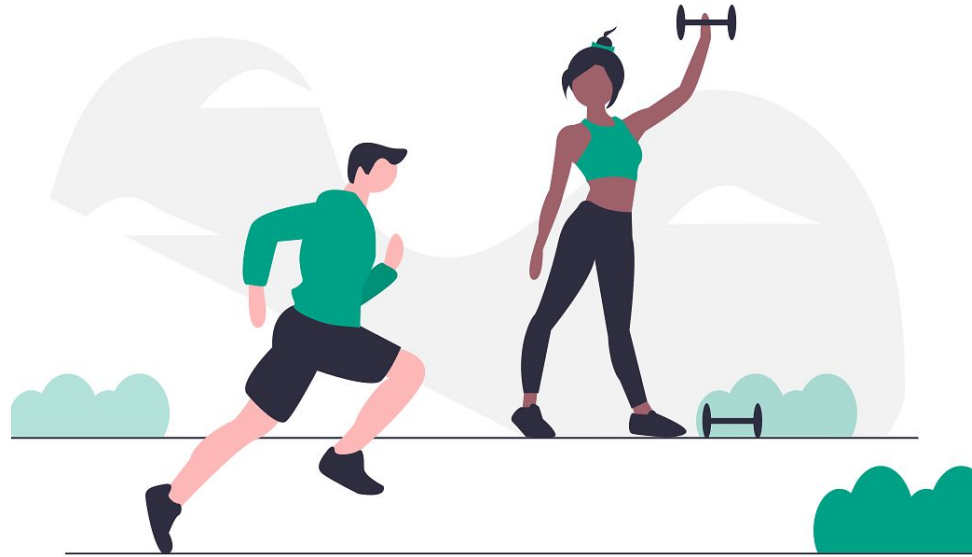


Most Important **Talk to people**

Self-identify with some, but reach out to others personally or professionally.

Understand Strengths & Weaknesses

Build up your confidence by becoming more aware of your strengths and weaknesses. Once you have a deeper understanding of yourself, you won't have to spend so much time worrying that you're not "qualified" for a particular task, project or role.



Acknowledge Your Feelings



The initial step in overcoming Impostor Syndrome is the acknowledgement of how you are feeling. Remember, though, that acknowledging an emotion isn't giving in to it.

Talk to Others

Find a safe person or group of people to open up to, in a trusted environment. You might be surprised by how many of your friends and colleagues can relate to how you feel.



Overcome Perfectionism

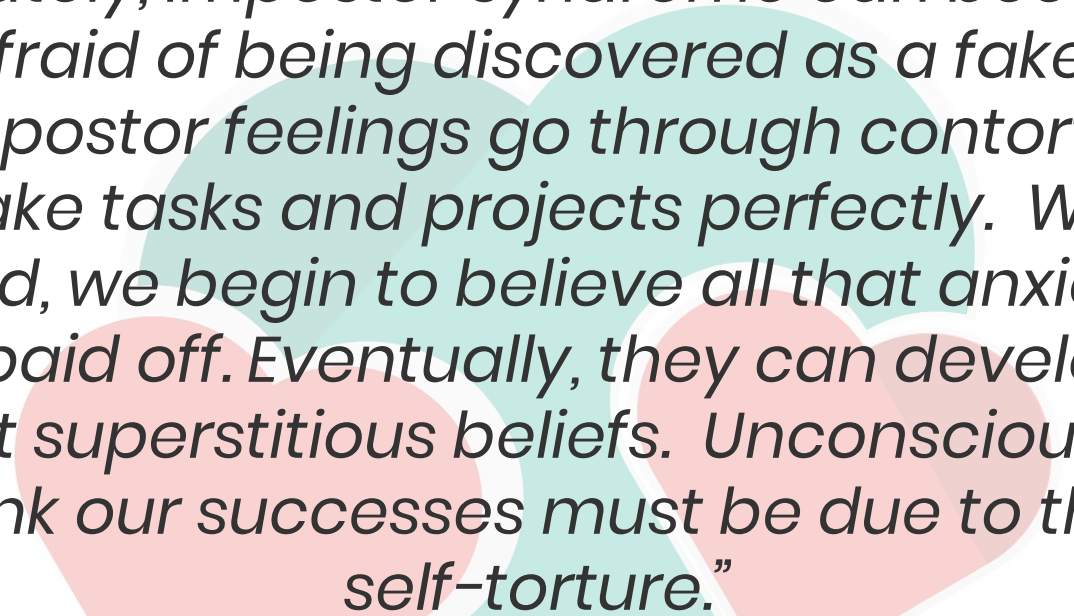
Set yourself the assignment to learn how to set yourself realistic, challenging and achievable goals. Embrace failure as a learning tool.



Own Your Successes

Take responsibility for your achievements. When you meet a goal or finish an important project, acknowledge that it was your skill and talent that made it happen.





“Ultimately, impostor syndrome can become a cycle. Afraid of being discovered as a fake, people with impostor feelings go through contortions to undertake tasks and projects perfectly. When we succeed, we begin to believe all that anxiety and effort paid off. Eventually, they can develop into almost superstitious beliefs. Unconsciously, we think our successes must be due to that self-torture.”

– **Dan Maby**
Founder of WP&UP

Online Mental Health Resources

WP&UP: WP&UP is a UK registered non-profit charity that supports and promotes positive mental health within the WordPress community. Their Health Hubs are designed to provide holistic support for the individual. Need help with a business issue? Stuck on a technical problem? Looking for inspiration? Lonely? In some kind of emotional pain? Need to get fit? Just want to talk to someone? All of their services are completely free.

OSMIHelp: Open Sourcing Mental Illness is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation dedicated to raising awareness, educating, and providing resources to support mental wellness in the tech and open source communities.



Thank You

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If you ever want to talk, please contact me anytime.

WPUP
and