

The Power of Failure

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An example of someone who fails



Paulo Coelho, The Alchemist

“The secret of life, though, is to fall seven times and to get up eight times.”

“There is only one thing that makes a dream impossible to achieve: the fear of failure.”

What do you need to become and excellent guitarist?

- Aptitude (talent)
- Drive
- Focus
- Time management skills
- Self-discipline
- Self-confidence
- Resilience
- A good teacher
- Supportive environment
 - Family, friends, peer group
- A growth mindset
- Luck

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The Fear of Failure



Cheryl Frances-Hoad: Failure CV

“Almost hackneyed”

The Guardian

“Hackneyed”

Bachtrack

“Consistently overwrought”

The Telegraph

“...failed to convince”

The Guardian

www.cherylfranceshoad.co.uk

The Power of Failure

- To fail is deeply human; everyone, no matter their background, skillset, or life story, will fail spectacularly at least once in their life. Its commonplace nature, however, doesn't mean that experiencing a major loss or setback is easy or fun—or that it's widely accepted in a winner-takes-all culture that prioritizes success at all costs.
- But learning to be okay with making mistakes, big or small, is a critical skill—one tied not only to resilience but also, perhaps, to future success. One recent study, for example, found that young scientists who experienced a significant setback early in their [career](#) actually went on to greater success than scientists who had seen early wins

The Powers of Failure

- Resilience
- Facing up to the fear of failure
- Navigating vulnerability
- Recognising the dangers of perfectionism
- Understanding ‘the randomness of all things’
- Separating your ‘self’ from your ‘work’
- Perseverance

Resilience

How do I improve my resilience?

- Get connected
- Make every day have meaning
- Learn from the past
- Stay hopeful – The Expectation Effect, David Robson
- Take care of yourself
- Take action

Recognising the dangers of perfectionism

- Poor productivity level
- Missing deadlines
- Inability to take risks and fear of testing new ideas
- Chronic fatigue syndrome and burnout
- Anxiety and depression
- Weak creativity
- Inability to delegate

Understanding the randomness of all things

‘Noise’ by Daniel Kahneman, Olivier Sibony and Cass Sunstein

Judgements are chaotic and random

If your trial is early in the day or just after a scheduled break such as lunch a [2011 study](#) of more than 1,000 rulings by eight judges found that those times coincided with the greatest leniency in judges’ rulings. Those who fared worst were heard at the end of the day or just before lunch, when there was about a zero chance of receiving a favourable ruling. How hungry or tired a judge is should have no impact on their ruling, and yet the data says it does.

Understanding the randomness of all things

‘Noise’ by Daniel Kahneman,
Olivier Sibony and Cass Sunstein

Judgements are chaotic and random

“Noise is the unwanted variability of judgments, and there is too much of it.”

Separating your 'self' from your 'work'

MUCH easier said than done

We identify ourselves in relation to our work, but we are not what we do

The PhD viva

Achieving critical distance

Perseverance

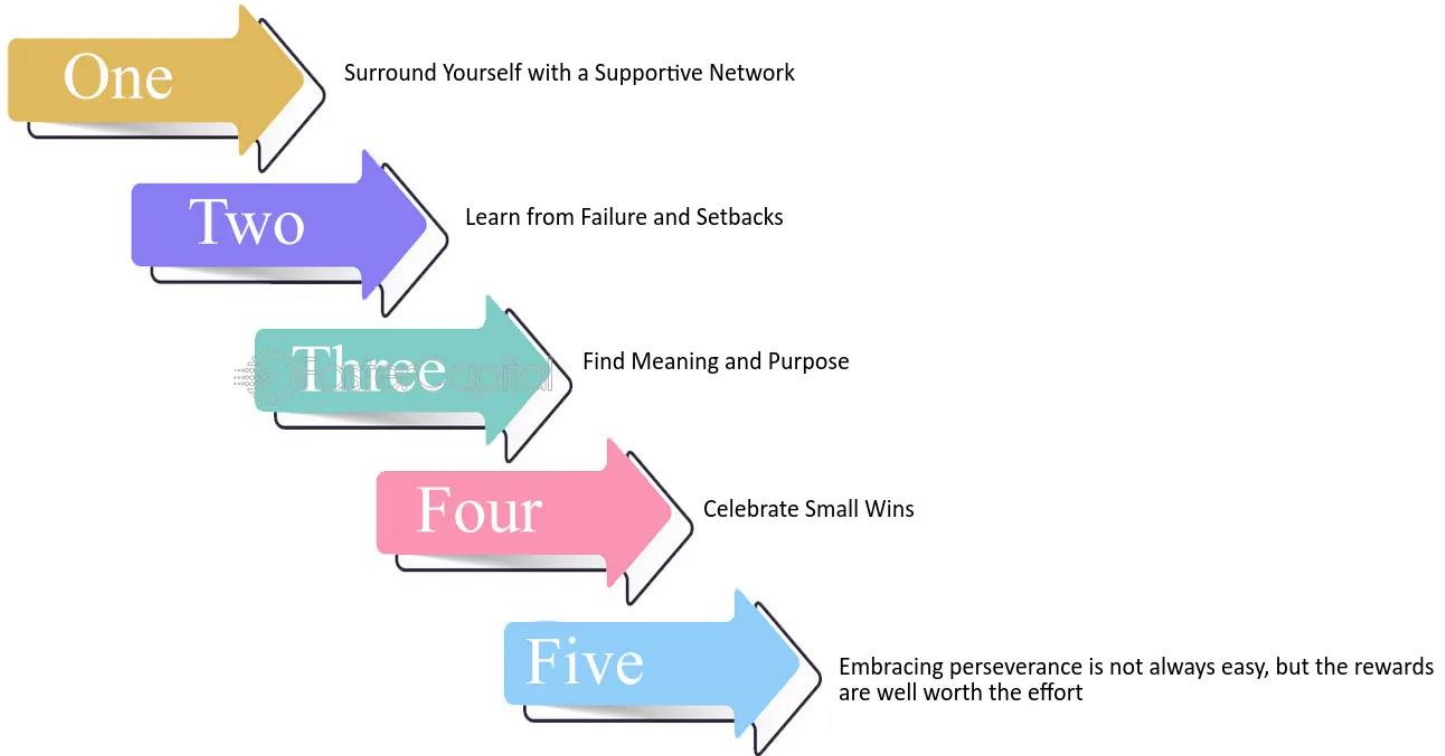


Perseverance



Perseverance

Embracing Perseverance for a Resilient and Fulfilling Life



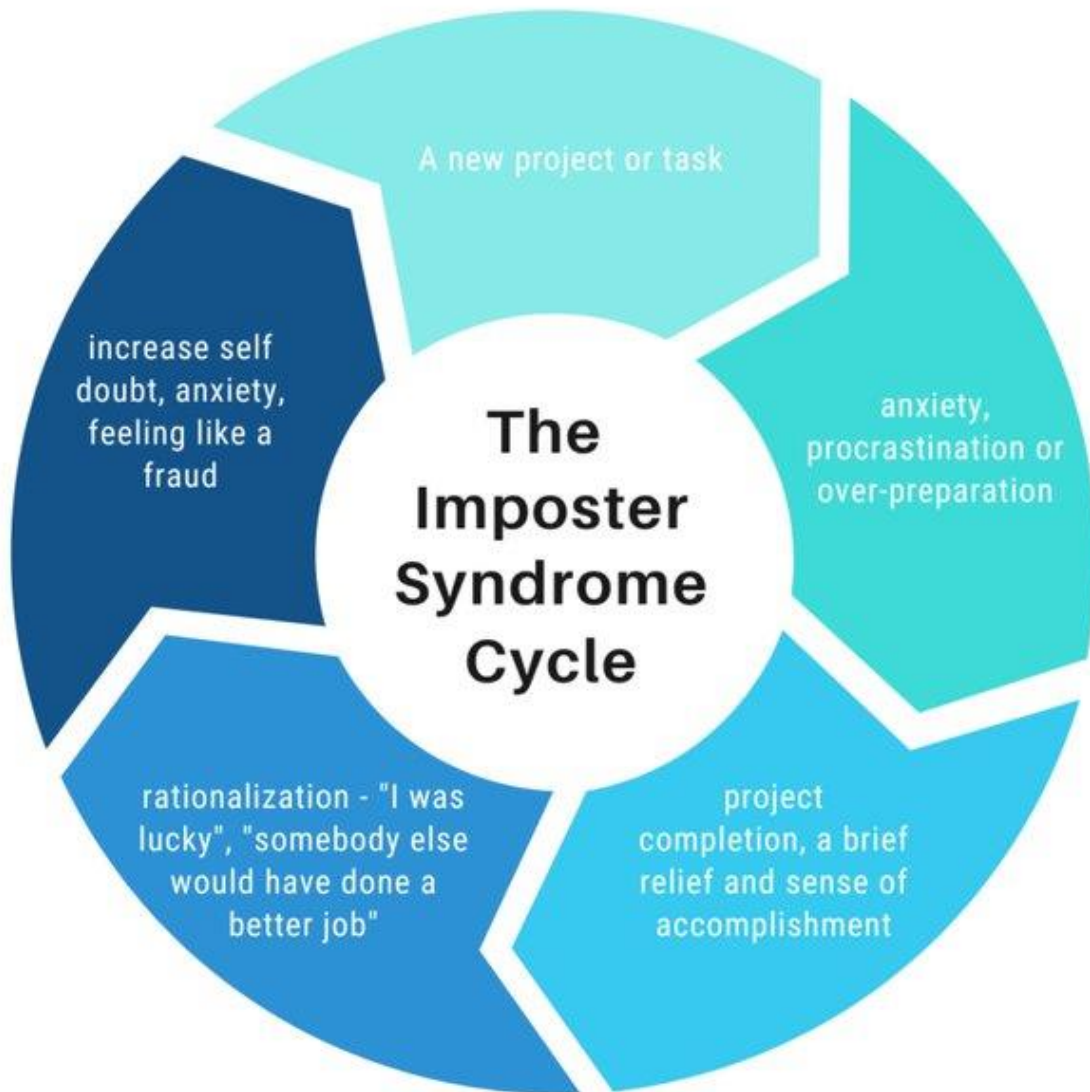
Podcast

How to Fail with Elizabeth Day

How To Fail with Elizabeth Day is a podcast that celebrates the things in life that haven't gone right and what we might learn from them along the way. Every week, Elizabeth's guest explores three failures, and what these failures have taught them about how to grow and succeed, better.

<https://open.spotify.com/show/4m7U7kNne0iu35HK571Ui8?si=5f692402566f43f3>

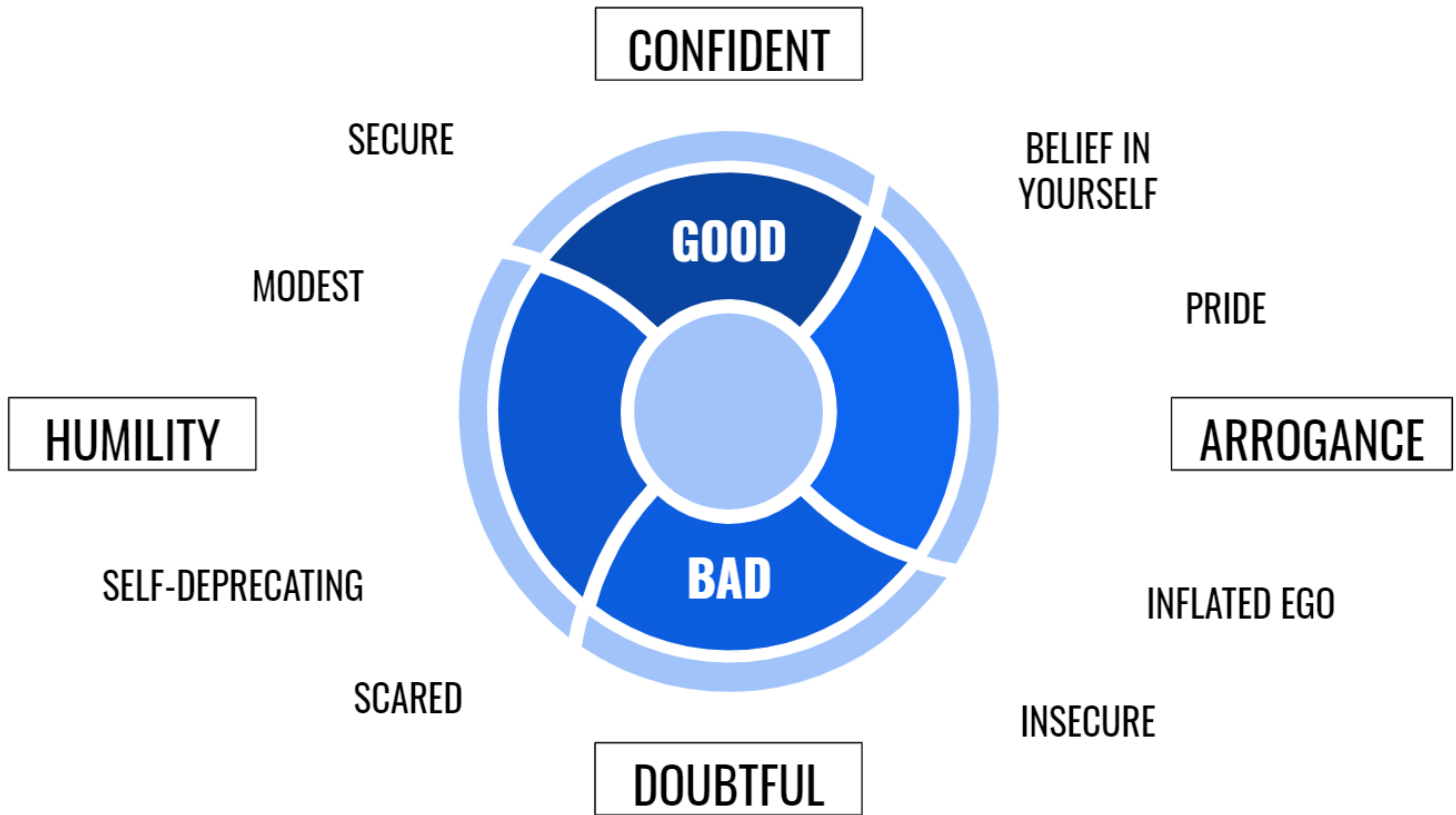
Imposter syndrome



Imposter syndrome

If you don't have imposter syndrome,
maybe you're an arrogant charlatan?

Humility and Arrogance



Mindset and Failure

"Failure is an
opportunity to grow"

**GROWTH
MINDSET**

"I can learn to do anything I want"

"Challenges help me to grow"

"My effort and attitude
determine my abilities"

"Feedback is constructive"

"I am inspired by the success of others"

"I like to try
new things"

Mindset and Failure



Some reading...

- Curran, T The Perfection Trap: The Power Of Good Enough In A World That Always Wants More (Penguin, 2023)
- Dweck, CS Mindset - Updated Edition: Changing The Way You think To Fulfil Your Potential (Random House, 2006, 2017)
- Edmondson, A Right Kind of Wrong: Why Learning to Fail Can Teach Us to Thrive (Cornerstone Press, 2023)
- Robson, D The Expectation Effect *Canongate (2021)*
- Southwick, S
(et al.) Resilience: The Science of Mastering Life's Greatest Challenges (CUP, 2023)
- Hibberd, J The Imposter Cure: How to stop feeling like a fraud and escape the mind-trap of imposter syndrome (Auster, 2019)

The Powers of Failure - Recap

- Resilience
- Facing up to the fear of failure
- Navigating vulnerability
- Recognising the dangers of perfectionism
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Questions?

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