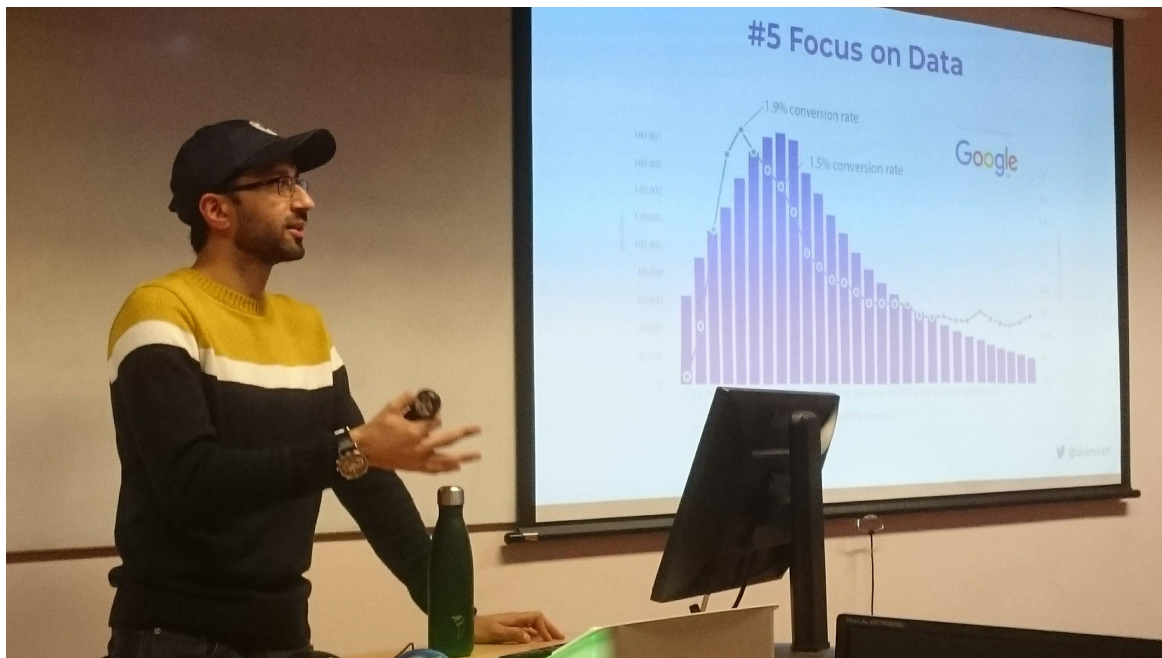


# Overcoming Imposter Syndrome

**Imran Afzal**  
UX Manager  
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**A pattern of disconnect between perceived  
performance and accomplishment**

# Attribution Theory

Attribution Theory states that humans attribute success/failure to both internal and external factors, which then informs future responses

We often attribute our success to external factors such as hard work - and not our own intrinsic ability

# Occam's Razor



Our minds have evolved to trust the simpler explanation

# Imposter Syndrome

**Imposter syndrome is a psychological pattern in which individuals have difficulties accepting their achievements, with a persistent fear of being exposed as a fraud**

The impostor syndrome first described by American clinical psychologists Pauline Clance and Suzanne Imes in 1978

# Triggers



Negative  
Experience

Change

Life  
Pressures

Lack of  
Transparency



# Identifiers

Downplay your  
expertise

Focus on  
small mistakes

Feel anxious  
over feedback

Attribute success  
to external factors

**Can Imposter Syndrome  
affect anyone?**

**7 out of 10 people experience Imposter syndrome at some point in their lives**

# Natalie Portman - Actress



Actress (and Harvard alum) Natalie Portman described the self-doubt she experienced as a Harvard student.

“I felt like there had been some mistake...”

# John Steinbeck - Author



“I am not a writer. I’ve been fooling myself and other people.”

He admired his characters for being “so much stronger and purer and braver” than he was.

# Doug Collins - UX Practitioner



**Doug Collins**  
@DougCollinsUX

...

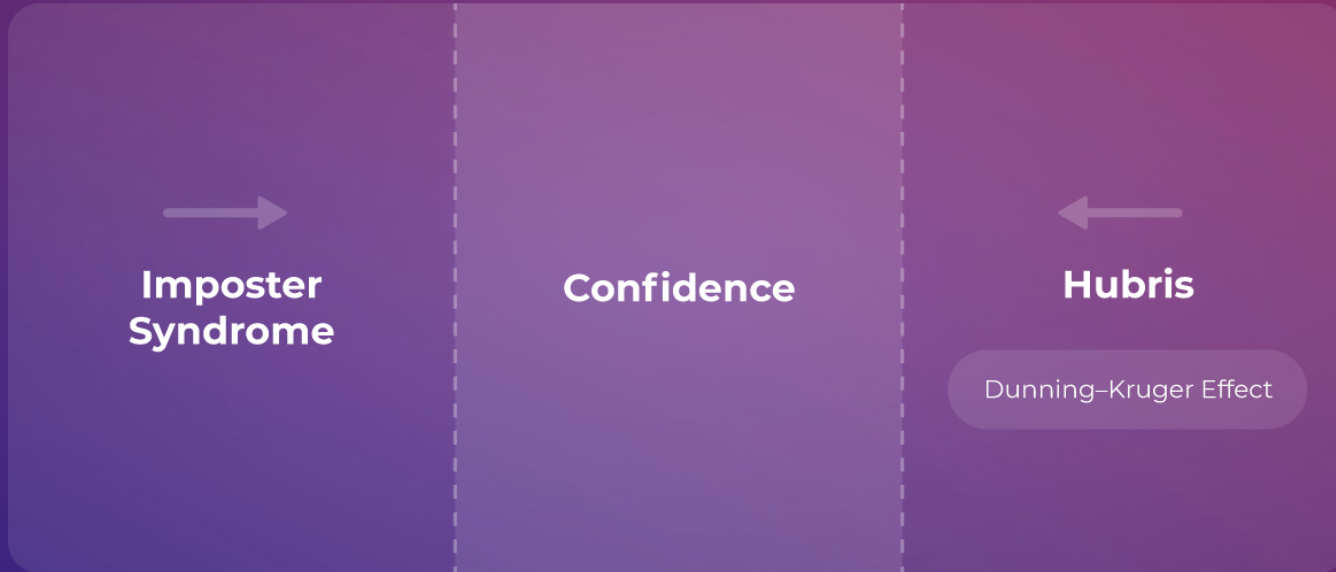
Well, I'm having a day full of [#anxiety](#) and [#ImposterSyndrome](#).

Why am I sharing this? To show those out there struggling with either that many of us who have spent years in the industry still fight this battle. Some of us do it daily.

You are not alone. [#YouGotThis](#)

17:15 · 19/01/2021 · [Twitter Web App](#)

# Finding Balance



# How can you overcome Imposter Syndrome?



# 1. Find a Mentor

Find a mentor that you can talk to and share fears with



## 2. Focus on Learning

Focus more on what you're learning, than on how you're performing



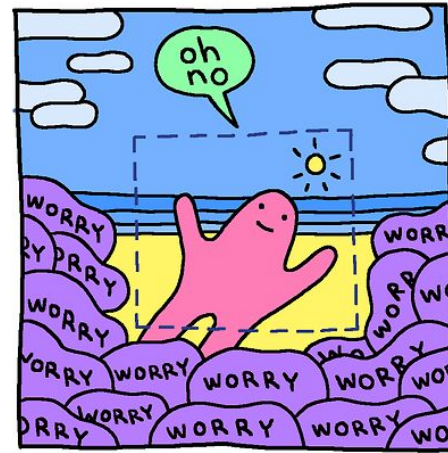
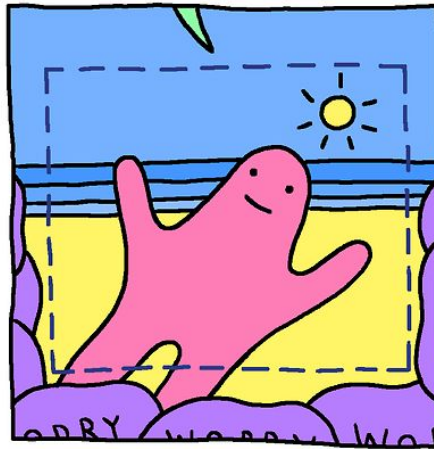


### 3. Accomplishment Journal

Write down what you've accomplished - and keep referring back to it regularly

## 4. Don't Compare

Don't compare yourself to others - your journey, perspective and destination is unique



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## 5. Pause & Reflect

Reflection will help you make meaning of experiences and process your feelings/thoughts

**Can you really overcome  
Imposter Syndrome?**



# A Constant Battle



# We're all Imposters

No one knows how to be a proper adult,  
worker, parent, designer or anything else





“Sometimes the bravest and most important thing you can do is **just show up.**”

**Brené Brown**

Professor/Author/Researcher