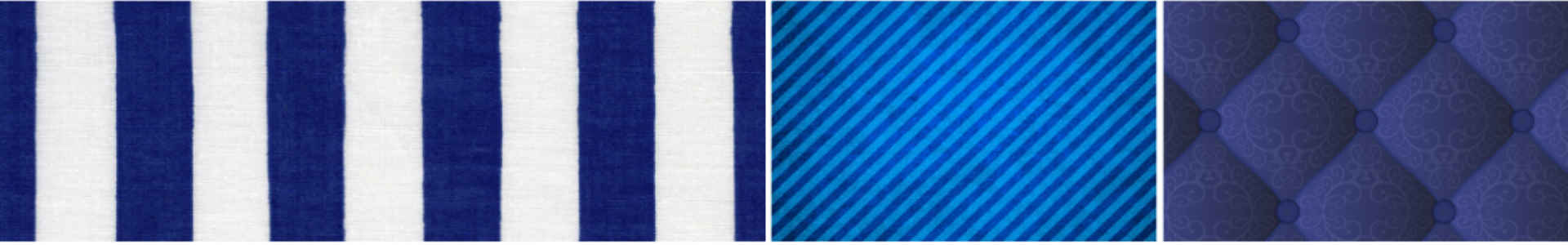


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The Confidence Gap

WIMWA September 2014

megandallacamina.com

Have you ever felt like this?

Monday
again. . . .





MONDAYS

You're telling me they will happen every week?

Think
Happy
thoughts



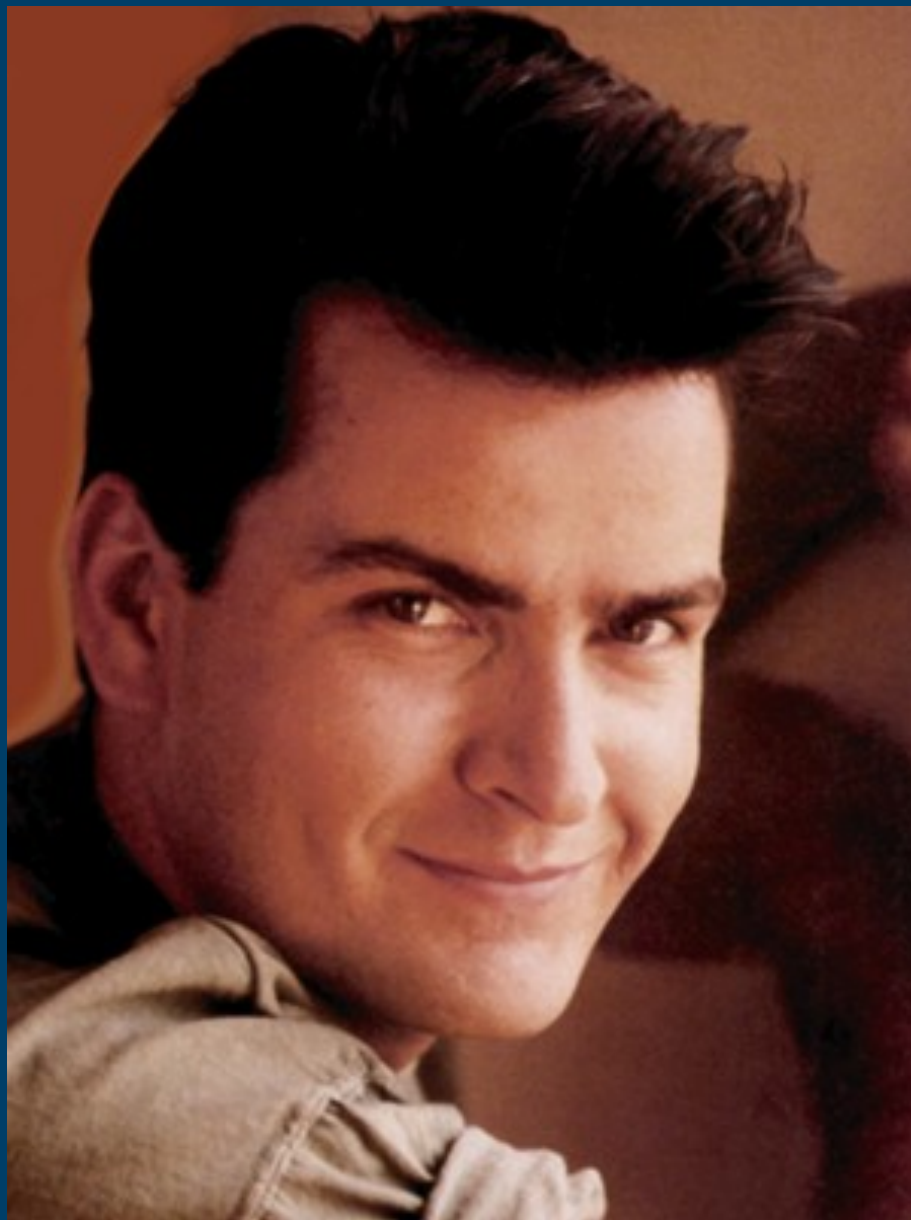
Gardening, yoga,
bubble baths, medication,
and I still want to
smack somebody!



Confidence...

The word "confidence" is written in a blue, cursive script font. The letters are connected and have a fluid, elegant appearance. The word is positioned on the left side of the slide, with a soft shadow effect behind it.

Confidence is one of those things that can either **propel you forward** to achieve your dreams, or **hold you back** for fear of failure.



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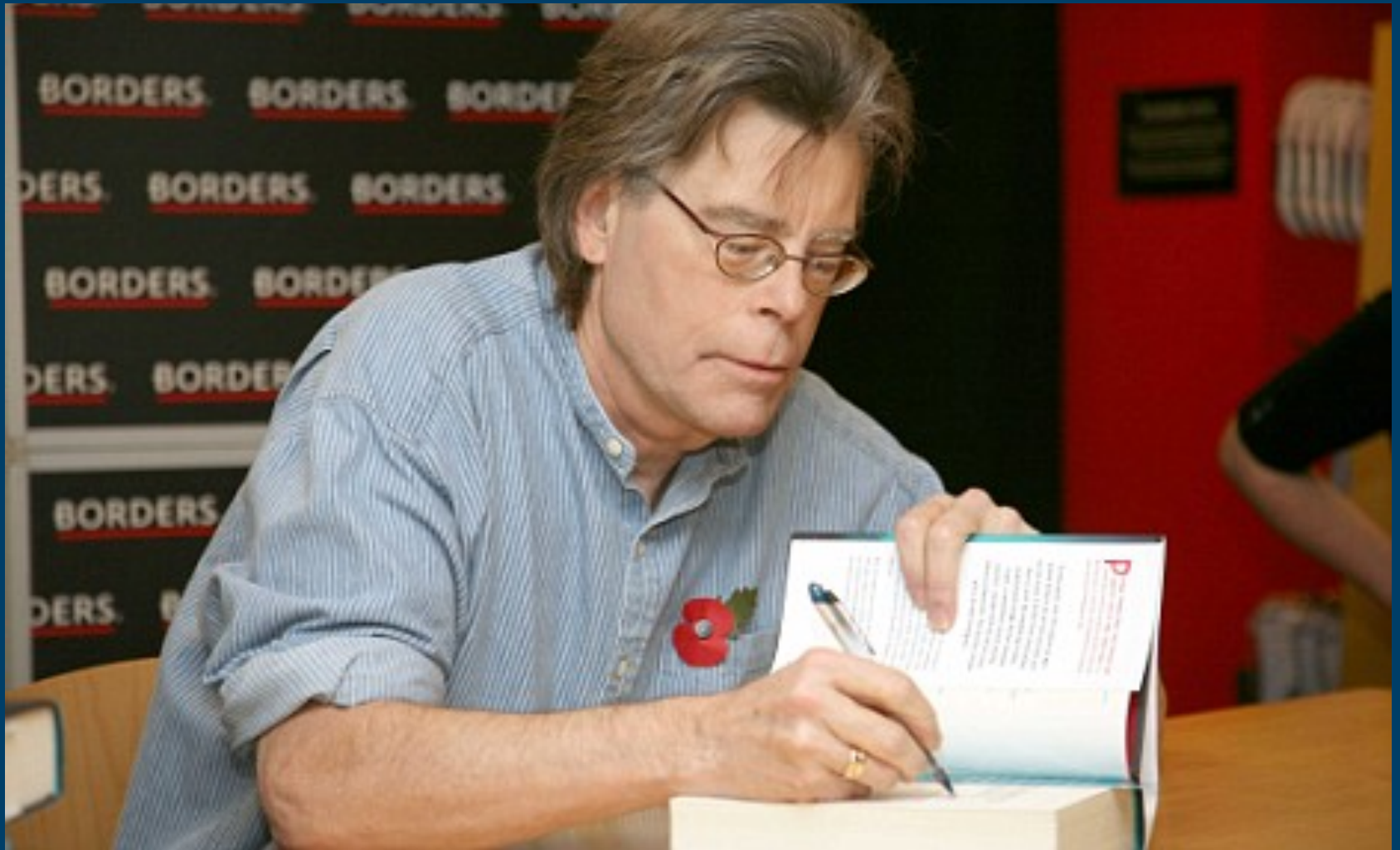


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Everyone deals with confidence issues, in some context, at some point in time.



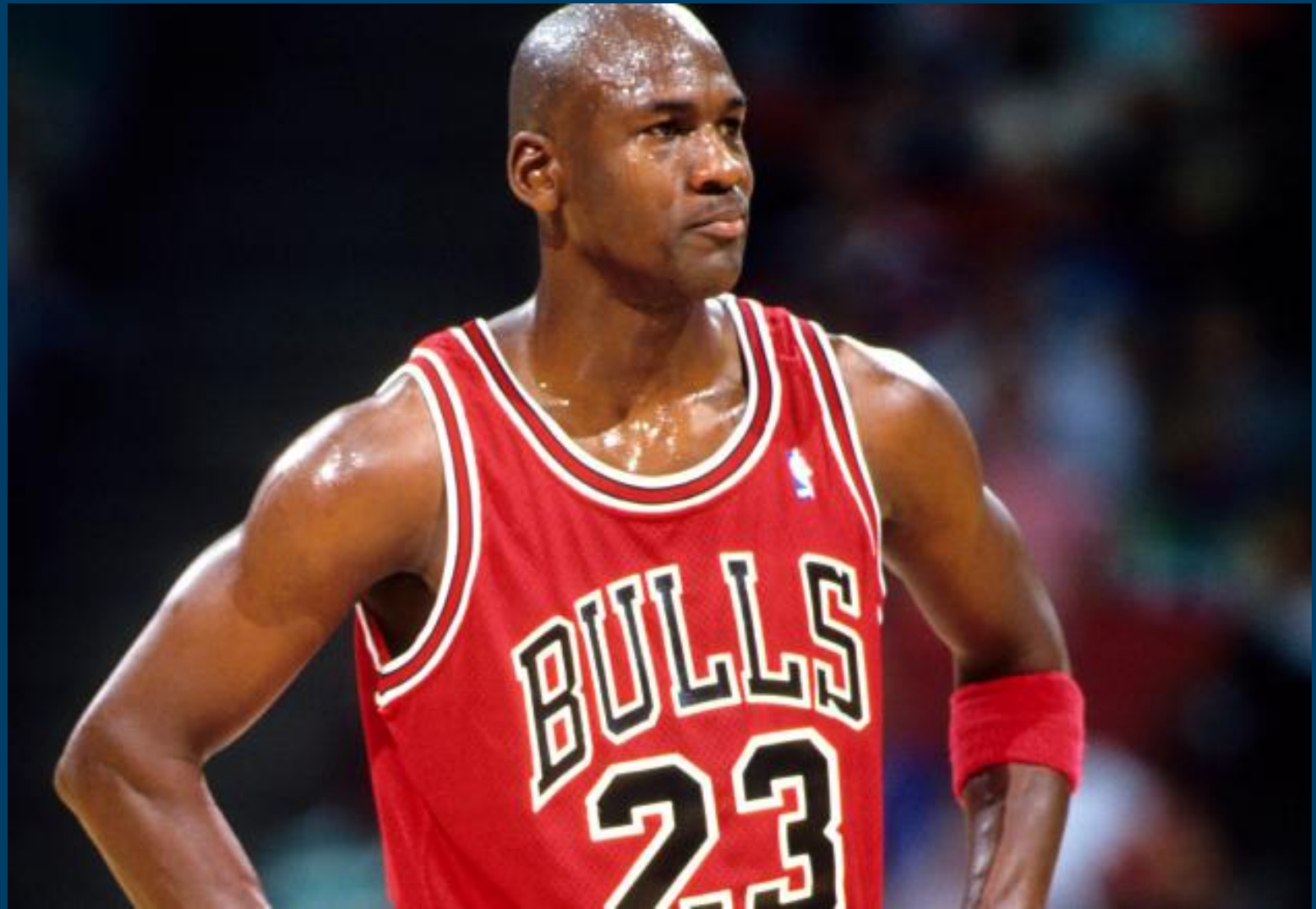
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So what do we need to know?

- The questions to think about are:
 - What is confidence really?
 - How confident are you?
 - How can you build that confidence muscle?

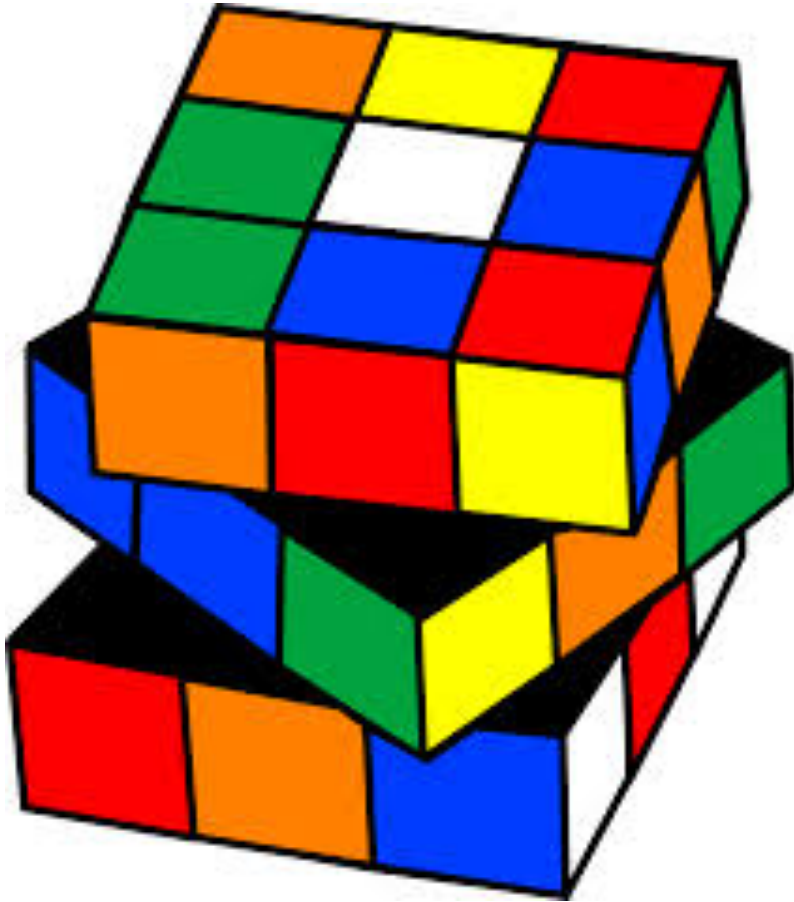
What is confidence?



- Confidence **isn't simply feeling good about yourself**, or saying you feel great when you don't.
- It's the stuff that **turns thoughts into actions.**

(Kay & Shipman, 2014)

Why are women less confident?



- **Women hesitate more often and ask less often**, be it for fear of failure, a desire to do it perfectly or the need to please and be liked.
- Genetics, schooling, our upbringing and society are all factors that affect our confidence, but it's also **a result of our own choices**.
- Improving women's confidence has **a direct impact on performance and wellbeing**.

(Kay & Shipman, 2014)

Why is this an issue for women?

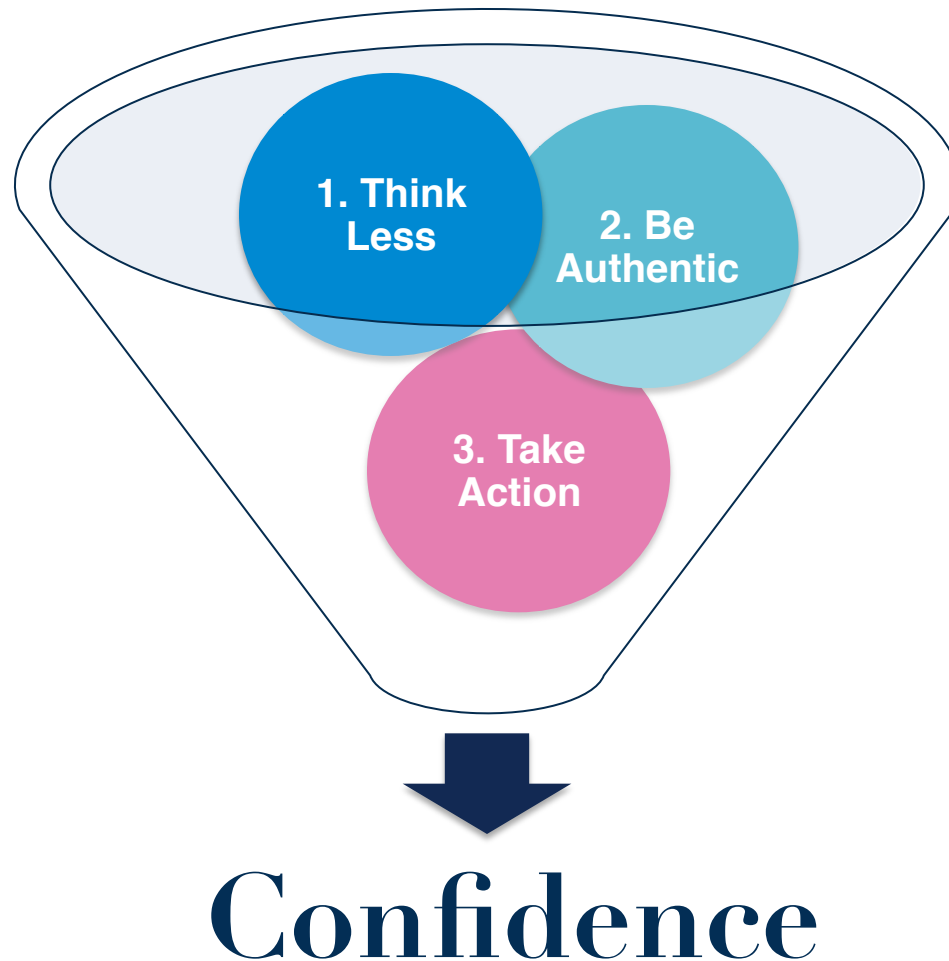


Scientists have discovered the female brain:

- **Has 30% more neurons** firing at any given time especially in the pre-frontal cortex and limbic areas making it hard to turn off our thoughts.
- **The cingulate gyrus** – helping us to weigh options and recognize errors – **is larger.**
- Has more estrogen causing us to **avoid conflict and risk.**

(Kay & Shipman, 2014)

How can you improve your confidence?



#1 Do you need to think less?

- What are the thoughts you play over and over and over again?
 - Is it a mistake you're afraid of making?
 - Is it something unfair that's happened?
 - Is it a critical comment someone made?
 - Is it an action feel guilty about taking?
 - Is it fear of losing something?

How do thoughts create your reality?



- When we think we've encountered an **adversity** it challenges our feelings of safety in the world.
- Triggering our **beliefs** and stories about “why this is happening” and “what might happen next”.
- Causing **consequences** about how we feel and act.

(The Resilience Factor - Reivich & Shatte)

The formula to think less

1. Catch the story

“I’m not worthy of that promotion” *or* “I’m not good enough”

**2. Ask:
“Is that true?”**

“Maybe. But perhaps I can grow into the role with the right support.”

3. Build a better story

“There is every chance I can figure this out and no matter what happens it’ll be a great learning opportunity.”

#2 Can you be authentic at work?

Can you name your top five strengths – the things you like doing and are good at?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

What is a strength?

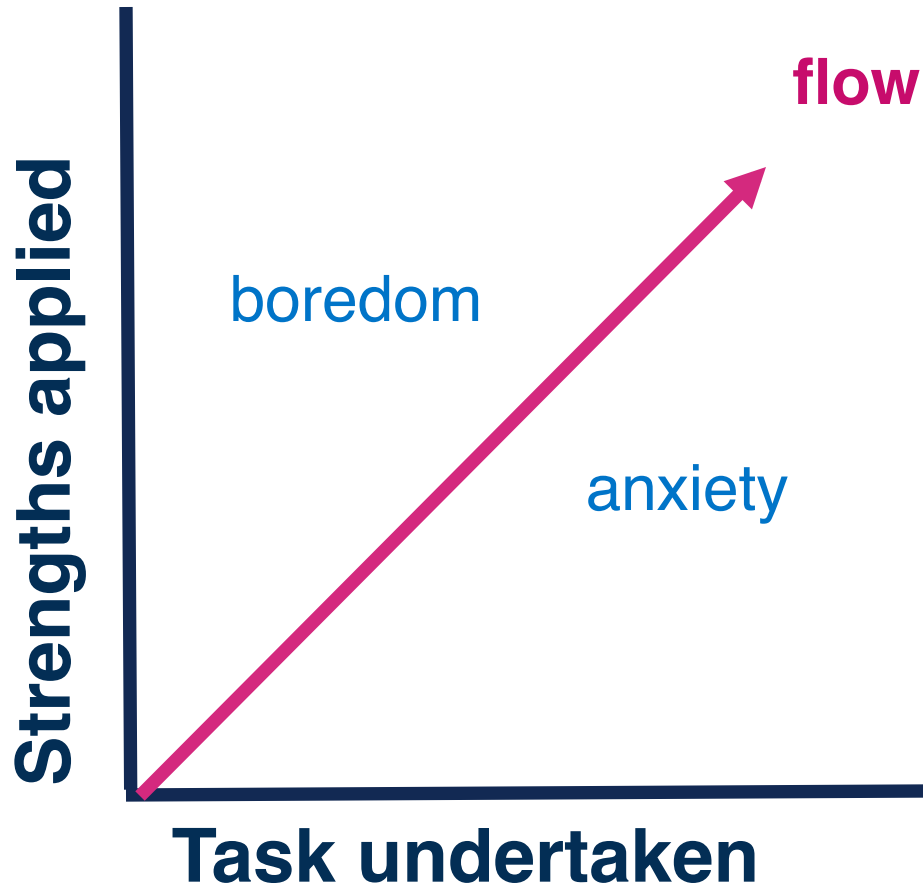


Strengths are:

- Well-developed **neural pathways** in our brain.
- They are things we **like doing** and are **good at**.
- They make thoughts, feelings + behaviours **more engaging, energising and enjoyable**.

(Buckingham & Clifton, 2001)

What happens when we use our strengths?



In moments of flow:

- We feel **involved in life**
- We **enjoy activities**
- We have a **sense of control**
- We enjoy a **strong sense of self**

(Lyubomirsky, 2008, p 183)

You can discover your strengths



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#3 Can you take action?

What stops you from making the changes you really want at work and in your life?

- Not sure where to start?
- Too scared of failure?
- Too busy?

What's holding you back?



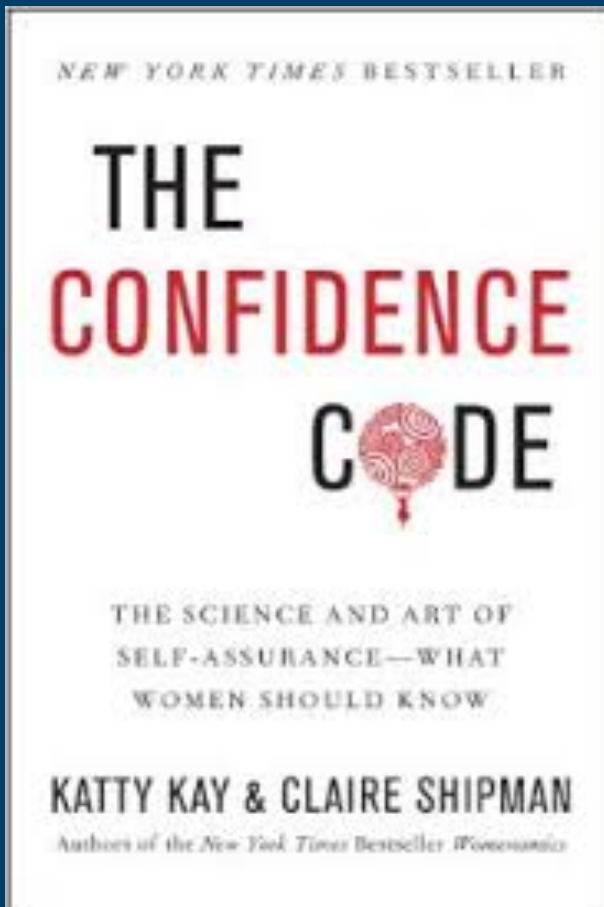
- Acknowledge what you're afraid of and **challenge yourself** about the **real costs of “comfortable inaction”**.
- **Action is the most potent antidote to fear.** By doing the things you think you can't do, you realise how much more you can do.
- **Invest in self-compassion** instead of self criticism.

(Stop Playing Safe - Warrell)

Six strategies to work with

1. Take stock of skills, experience & accomplishments
2. Focus on your strengths
3. Watch out for your triggers
4. Challenge and change unhelpful stories
5. Build your support network
6. Integrate your confidence boosters

If you want more...





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