**Understanding the Relationship Between Imposter Syndrome and Self-Confidence**

In this presentation, we will be examining the link between the mental affliction known as “Imposter Syndrome” and one’s own self confidence. Imposter Syndrome is a pattern of thinking that usually involves one very specific emotion: The feeling that you do not deserve to be, have, or become what you are.

There are a few big ways and a few small ways that this emotion relates to one’s ideas of self-worth and displays of self-confidence. Feeling like you don’t deserve to be where you are is just the conclusion Imposter Syndrome brings you to. There are a lot of things you have to convince yourself of to arrive at that point.

To begin with, imagine a design meeting at any large tech firm. Design is a good field of expertise to use as an example, because even if you are not qualified to have an expert theory on design, everyone is qualified to have at least some kind of opinion on the subject.

If you found yourself in one such meeting and were asked your opinion on a design element, whether or not you answered would be heavily dependent on your self-confidence. Even if you have an education on the subject, you are not going to be able to speak in front of people unless you feel you have something to say.

And that is the most immediate way by which Imposter Syndrome cripples you.

If you believe that you do not even deserve to be in that meeting, that you secretly know nothing about design, that to ask your opinion on the subject of the meeting would be to sabotage the whole thing… Well, then it does not really matter whether you have an expert opinion or not. You’ll convince yourself to stay quiet.

This is a big, obvious way Imposter Syndrome effects your self-confidence. But what is a smaller way? What about a way that you might not notice?

For the last example, I suggested imagining being in a meeting. That is because the biggest, most obvious downside of Imposter Syndrome come out when you are immediately faced with a situation. The smaller downsides, however, come out in idleness. When you are alone.

I’m going to ask a difficult question. You don’t have to answer if you don’t want to. It is not about how you answer, it is about how you feel about giving an answer or not. Here is the question: What is the worst thing you have done due to your Imposter Syndrome?

Have you lied? Skipped or delayed eating dinner? Stayed late at work and missed hanging out with friends? And how do you feel about making these choices? About prioritizing work over these things?

You do not need to overthink the meaning of your answers to these questions. The most meaningful thing about answering the question “What is the worst thing you have done due to your Imposter Syndrome?” is whether or not there *is* a worst thing.

No matter how tame or how bad it is, if there is anything that you consider a “worst” thing, then that means it is a bad thing. It is a thing for which you feel shame. And shame will crush your self-confidence.

If your Imposter Syndrome has you taking actions you are ashamed of, then your Imposter Syndrome is slowly, silently weathering away at your confidence. Like termites eating away at a treehouse, you won’t feel things getting weaker immediately, but when they go they will go all at once.

Imposter Syndrome is its own affliction, but it is also a sign of depression. If you are worried that the problem is becoming serious, seek help. Don’t let yourself be caught in a downward spiral.