

Overcoming Impostor Syndrome

[Your name]
[Your title]

[Your affiliation]
[Your email address]

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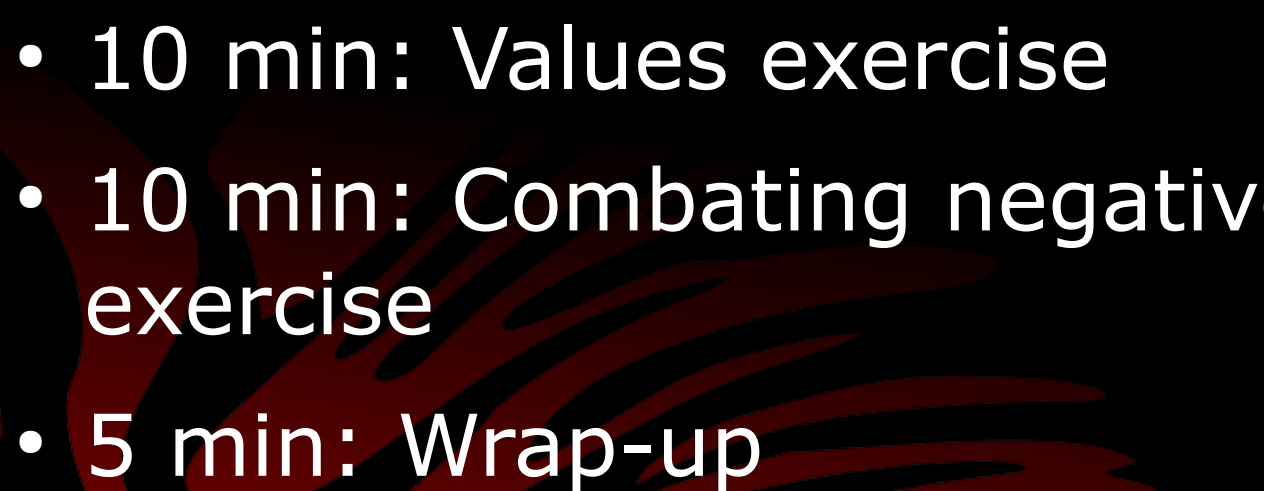
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About me

- [Introduce yourself]

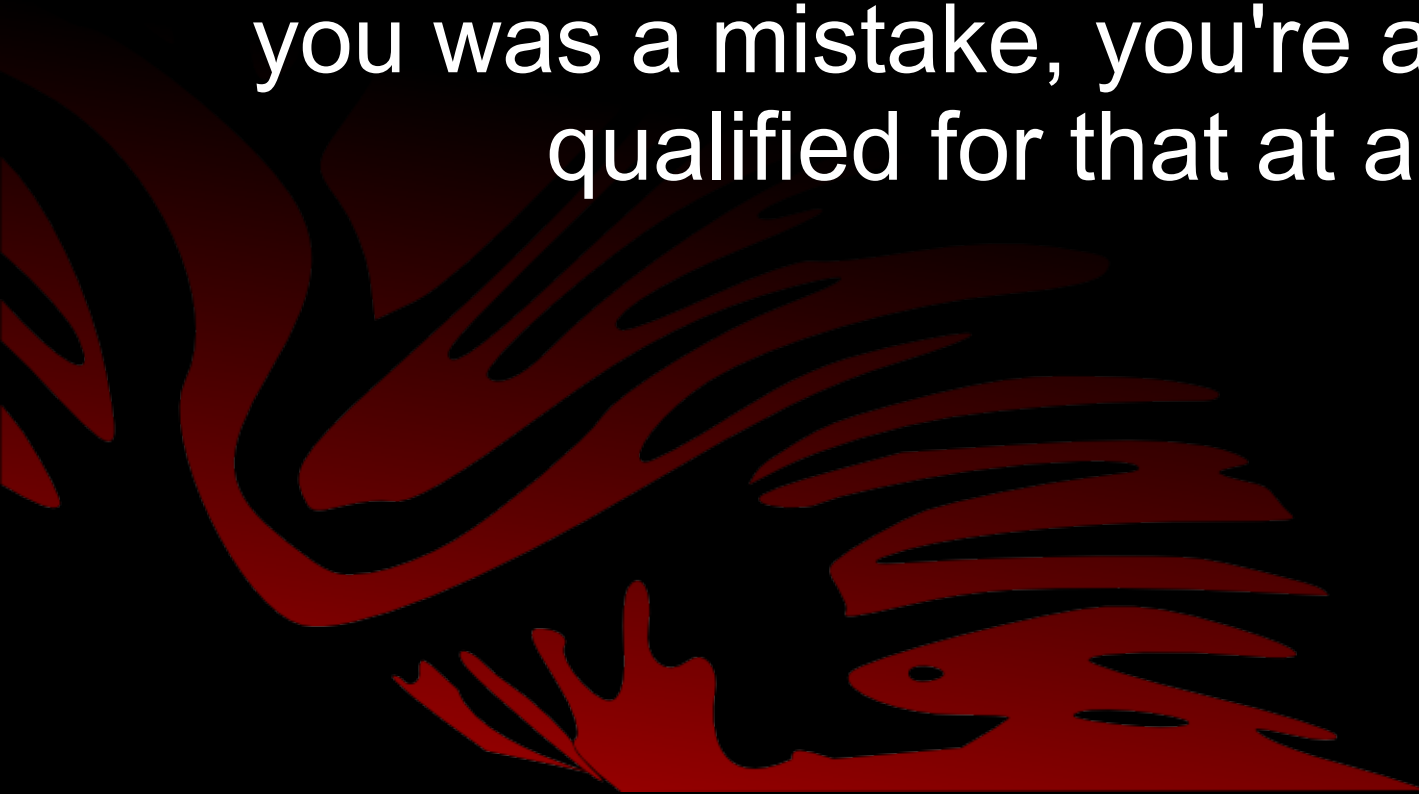


Format of the workshop

- 15 min: Introduction
 - 5 min: Split into small groups
 - 10 min: “Take a compliment” exercise
 - 10 min: Values exercise
 - 10 min: Combating negative thoughts exercise
 - 5 min: Wrap-up
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- A large, abstract, red graphic element is positioned in the lower-left and bottom-center of the slide. It consists of several overlapping, curved, brushstroke-like shapes that resemble a stylized flame or a dynamic, flowing pattern. The color is a deep, dark red, and the overall effect is energetic and artistic.


Is this you?

“I'm sorry, but that acceptance letter we sent you was a mistake, you're actually not qualified for that at all...”



Is this you?

“I'm sorry, but we've reviewed your promotion packet, and you aren't even qualified for the job you're doing right now...”



Impostor Syndrome

The feeling that you are a fraud or unqualified for the work you are already doing - faking it - and may be found out at any moment



Impostor Syndrome

Especially common in fields where work is done privately, a finished product is released publicly, and public criticism is common, such as writing, academic research, computer programming, law, etc.



“In every job I’ve had in the last 25 years, I’ve been the first woman to hold my position —head of computer science and dean of science at the University of British Columbia, dean of engineering at Princeton, and now president of Harvey Mudd College. As my career progressed, so did the intensity of my feelings of failure.”

Maria Klawe, Harvey Mudd president

“I can't do this. I haven't done enough experiments. I haven't got enough data. I can't write the paper well enough yet or give the talk.”

Cherry Murray, dean of Harvard University's School of Engineering and Applied Sciences

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Why?



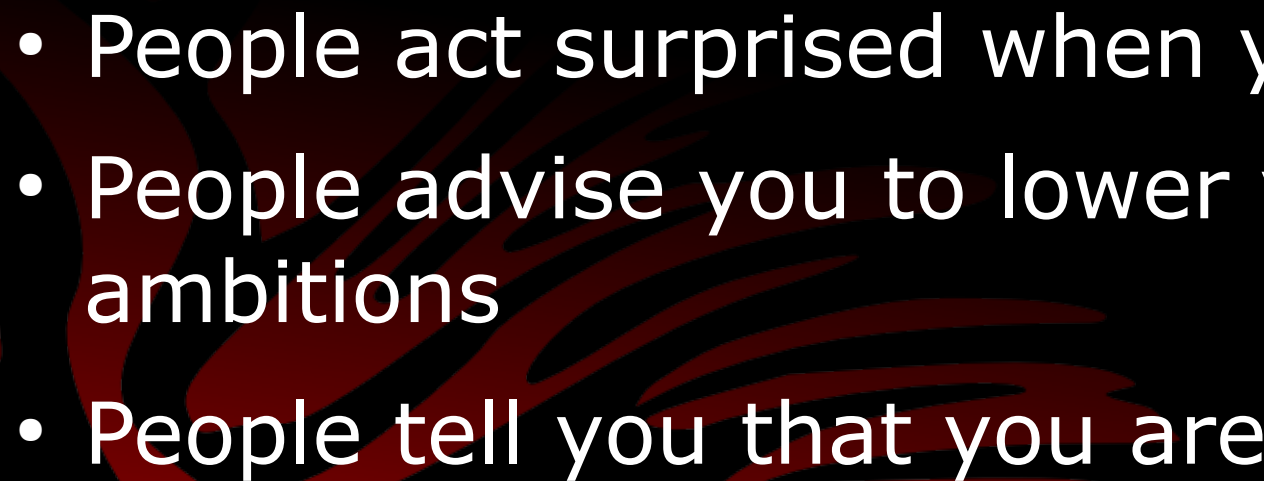
“Did you get invited to that program committee because you are a woman?”



“You aren't a kernel programmer.”



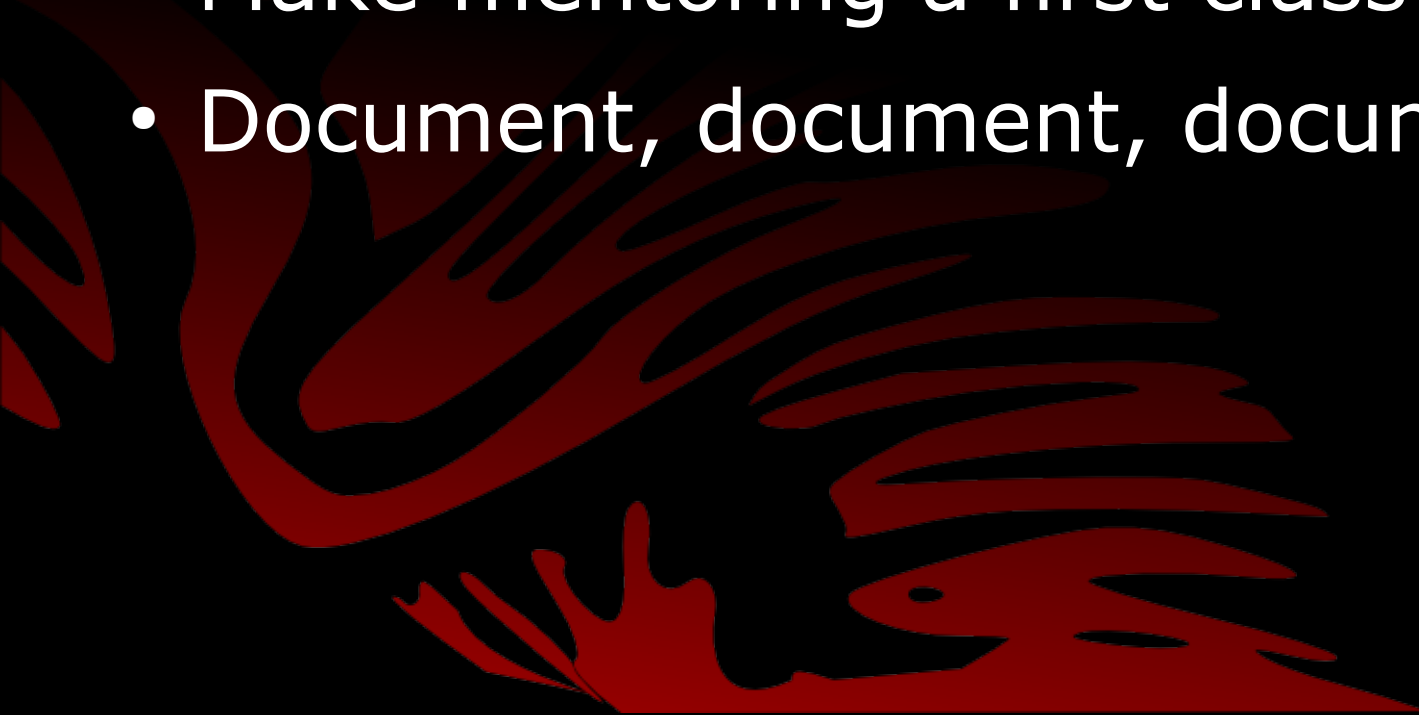
You feel like an impostor because people treat you like one

- Sexism says women can't be good at what it is you are doing
 - People forget facts that don't fit their stereotypes (“prove-it-again bias”)
 - People act surprised when you are good
 - People advise you to lower your ambitions
 - People tell you that you are an impostor
- 

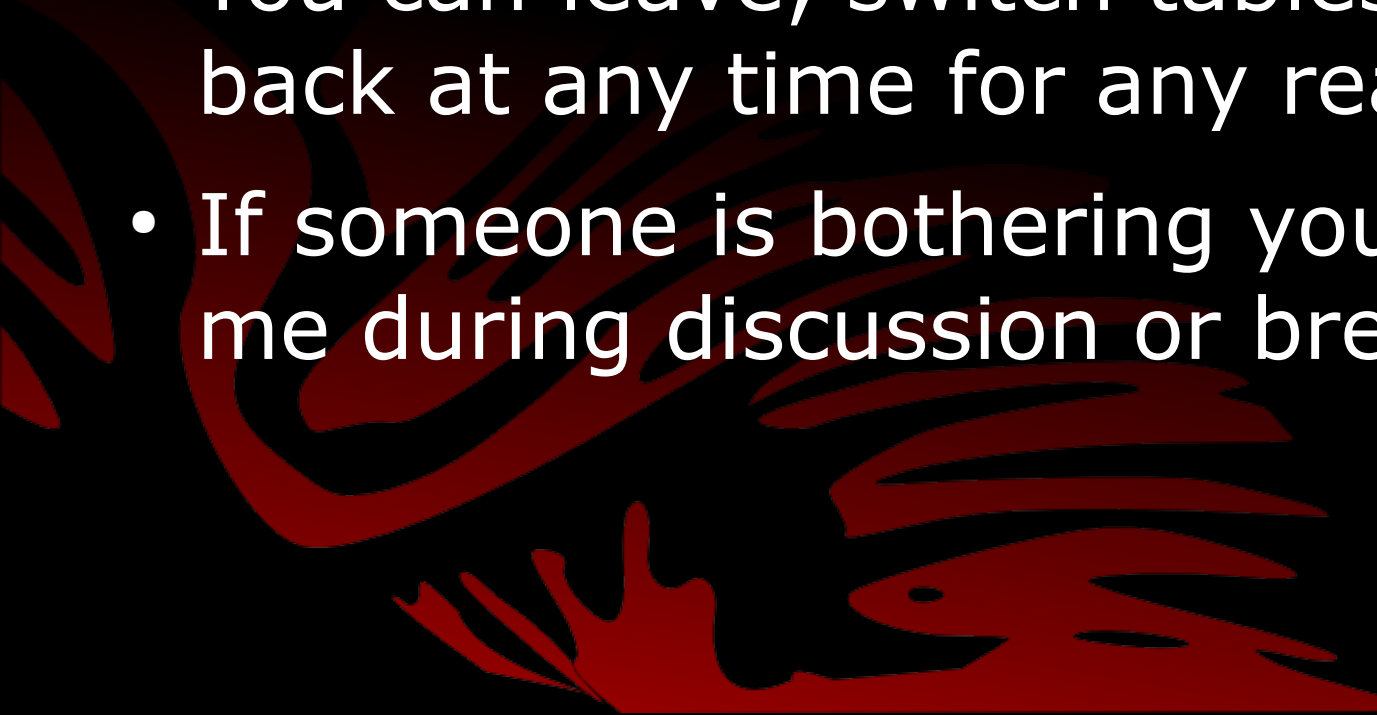
What is the result?

- We have less satisfaction in our lives
- We waste time over-preparing and worrying instead of doing good work and having fun
- We are less effective as colleagues
- We ask for less money
- We don't ask for challenges
- We don't ask for promotions or apply for jobs

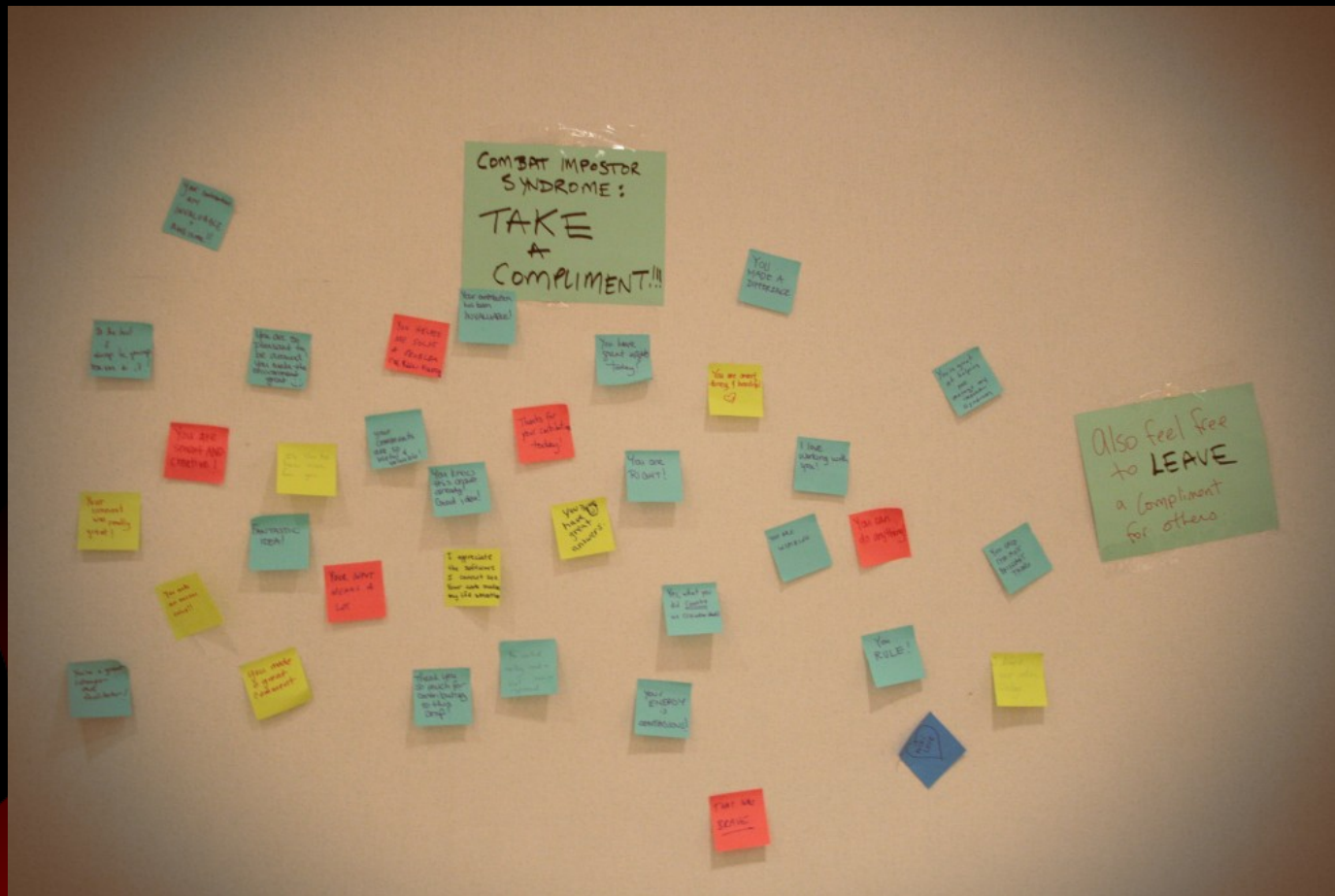
Preventing Impostor Syndrome your community or workplace

- Be encouraging
 - Share your own failures
 - Have a positive and kind community
 - Make mentoring a first class activity
 - Document, document, document!
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- A large, abstract graphic in a dark red color is located in the bottom-left corner of the slide. It consists of several overlapping, curved, brushstroke-like shapes that create a sense of movement and depth. The graphic is semi-transparent, allowing the black background to show through it.

Exercises

- Do exercises with your group
 - No one has to participate
 - No one has to report out
 - You can leave, switch tables, or come back at any time for any reason
 - If someone is bothering you, come find me during discussion or break
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“Take a compliment!”



“Take a compliment!”:
group share



Values exercise



Values exercise: group share



Combating negative thoughts



Combating negative thoughts: group share



More resources

- Denise Paolucci: “Overcoming Impostor Syndrome” (linux.conf.au 2013)
- Julie Pagano: “It's Dangerous to Go Alone” (PyCon 2014)
- Mood Gym:
<https://moodgym.anu.edu.au/welcome>
- Slides, handout, guide for this workshop:
<http://adainitiative.org/continue-our-work/impostor-syndrome-training/>

Thank you!

