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| Summary NotesImposter Syndrome: 5 tips for overcoming it |

## Open up and feel less alone

The first thing you need to understand about imposter syndrome is that you’re not the only one struggling with it, in fact you’re so far from unique it’s not funny… but people tend not to talk about. If you reach out to colleagues or online networks and let them know you’re feeling a bit wobbly about the return, you might be surprised about who else is feeling the same way. Even highly experienced teachers get first day nerves.

* Talk about it, you’ll feel less alone and people will be supportive
* Acknowledge that whilst it’s hard, it’s quite normal!
* Remember that we get worried because we care… which makes us good at our jobs!

Where could you get the conversation started?

## keep a log of the good bits

Make a habit of keeping a log of all the little bits of evidence that you’re good at your job. Nice things people say to you, a note of a lesson that went well, thank you notes you get sent. Evidence of the impact you had on a particular child. Anything that inspires a momentary warm glow is worth keeping hold of. Being able to look back on this mounting pile of evidence in the wobbly moments can be super helpful.

* If you’re old school or crafty, a scrapbook can be very pleasing
* Alternatively, keeping track on your phone can be good on the go (I use apple notes)
* You don’t have to share the content, but share the idea – get someone started with a compliment

How could you keep track of the good bits? What could you add right away?

## Plan for the worst

As we nervously think about the first day back, our head is often full of all the things that could go wrong. I’ve found that the most effective way to quiet these gremlins is to write a list of all the things that could go awry and briefly plan for each in turn. You’ll feel more in control and if something does go wrong you’ll be less likely to lose your cool, nipping the spiral of descent in the bud.

* Name your worries to tame them
* When written down some will seem utterly unlikely, can you dismiss them?
* Rank your worries with the worst / most likely at the top of the list
* Do if…. Then… planning from the top
* Brainstorm with a buddy and have each other’s backs if that feels helpful
* Afterwards, reflect on how much actually went wrong – make a note to remind yourself next time

What are your three top worries? How can you plan for them?

## take a breath and stand tall

Simple strategies like breathing exercises and power poses can help us to change how we feel in the moment. Practicing ahead of the return feeling cool, calm and in control by taking a deep breath, planting our feet on the ground and standing tall can help us find the feeling we might need to search a little harder for as we approach the classroom.

* Practice at times of calm – add an affirmation if it helps you
* Return to this pose, breath and words when you need them most
* Any time you feel the panic rising, take a breath, stand tall and connect with the feeling of calm and control
* This is a great brain hack well worth learning to use!

What would you say to a colleague to build courage and confidence?
Say these words to yourself

## Keep a child in mind

Finally, a useful hack can be to have a single child who you’ve really enjoyed working with or caring for, and keep them in mind. Teaching a whole class or giving an assembly to a whole school can feel super daunting, but imaging that we are doing this for one child usually feels fine. Imagine them, reconnect with your purpose and the rest will follow…

* Consider a child you can bring to mind
* Stop to remember why you’re doing this
* Bring the individual child to mind, picture them in your mind’s eye
* When you get it right for this one child, you’ll get it right for everyone

Think of a child can you keep in mind to anchor you

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