

Building Self-Confidence

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National Security Agency

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Google

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Pomona College



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Widening Participation

Christine Edwards: Some story highlights



BSEE



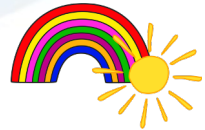
MS ECE



MS ABM



PhD
2021!



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Pamela Gibbs

Wife, mom of 2 humans & a dog.

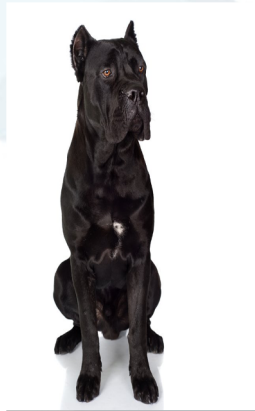
B.Sc (2), MBA, D.Sc.

Lover of travel & all things
Beyoncé.

My career? I'm paid to be nosey.

"My life is dope. I do dope
shhhh."

- Kanye West



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Yuqing Melanie WU

Education

- PhD. University of Michigan
- BS. MS. Peking University, China



Career

- Pomona College 2015 –
Department chair 2017-2020
- Indiana University, 2004-2015



Research

- Database, data representation and management, query language, optimization, ...



Outreach

- ACM-W council
- CRA-WP board



Hobbies

- Traveling, cooking, gardening,



Self-Confidence – Definition

Oxford Dictionary

- A **feeling** of trust in **one**'s abilities, qualities, and judgment.

Merriam-Webster

- confidence in **oneself** and in one's powers and abilities



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How self-confident are you?

High

- Do what you believe to be right even if criticized for it
- Willing to take risks
- Admit your mistakes and learn from them
- Extol your virtues often
- Accept compliments graciously

Low

- Govern your behavior based on what others think
- Stay in your comfort zone
- Work hard to cover up your “mistake”
- Wait for others to congratulate you
- Dismiss compliments



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Balancing self-confidence

Under-confident

- Risk averse
- Fear of failure
- Comfort zones become prison walls
- Stunt growth
- ...

Over-confident

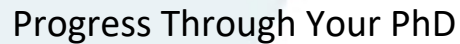
- Too risky
- Mistake confidence with competence and fail badly



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Confidence Level



Want to be self-confident?

- Not born with confidence
 - Culture, gender, environment, peers
- The Good News is that **self confidence can be learned** – and can continually improve
- How?
 - **10 TIPS FOR BUILDING SELF CONFIDENCE**



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Tip 1: Admit the Problem

Admit that

- No one is perfect – even the most confident-looking people have insecurity.
- Life is full of bumps – we will run into some sooner or later.

Evaluate

- Where are you?
- Where do you want to go?
- What are the major huddles?



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Tip 2: Identify the Source

Comparison

- How do you place yourself among your peers on
 - knowledge
 - Intelligence
 - Hard working
 - Luck
 - Personality
 -

Impact

- How long does a “success” or “failure” impact your feeling about yourself?
 - half an hour
 - a day
 - a month
 - six months
 - forever



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Tip 2: Identify the Source

Decision-Making

- How do you make decisions?
 - based on facts and analysis
 - by estimating the impact of the decision on your future
 - depends on how others may think about your decision
 - depends on whether _____ approves of your decision
 - ...



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Tip 3: Establish a Support System



- Find someone **safe** you can talk frankly to
Make sure they are people you trust and who won't judge you in the future based on your current state of self confidence
- Surround yourself with nurturing friends.
Watch out for those who lower the confidence of others to compensate for their own confidence issues
- Be sure to be there to support others when they need it



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Tip 4: Be Extra Prepared

- Go the extra mile to be prepared
 - Study your butt off for that exam
 - Spend more time in the lab running those additional experiments
 - Prepare a few slides for the next group meeting
 - Write, rewrite, rewrite that paper
 - Practice that talk again and again – in front of friends and not-so-friends
- Just beware of perfectionism
 - (or you will never finish)



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Tip 5: Set Reasonable Goals



- Make a list of activities that will get you moving towards your goals
- Identify the first step needed to accomplish each item and have a plan for *making* that first step
- Set dates but be flexible – the date might change for better or worse
- Maintain a research notebook to mark your progress each day
- Develop a plan for revisions and resubmission



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Tip 6: Recognize and celebrate your successes

Recognize and be recognized

- Admit your successes to yourself and others
- Gracefully accept congratulations
- Celebrate your successes

Exercises

- Make a list of your recent successes -- do not leave it blank
- Read the list (out loud if necessarily) to yourself



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Tip 7: Take a Break

A balanced life boosts your creativity and productivity

- Improve your physical well-being: exercise regularly
- Improve your emotional well-being: enjoy some quality time with family and friends
- Reward yourself

Exercises

- Think of three non-academic activities that you enjoy
- Think of three different ways to reward yourself



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Tip 8: Mind-Body Connections Influence Confidence Level

- “Fake it till you make it” – not exactly

But, self-talk & outward expressions impact how you & others perceive you

- Speak slowly/clearly – *your voice matters!*
 - Stand tall
 - Smile
-
- Deep breathing; squash ANTs
 - Don't fake what you don't know; confidently ask questions

*As a woman thinks in
her heart, so is she.*

Proverbs 23:7

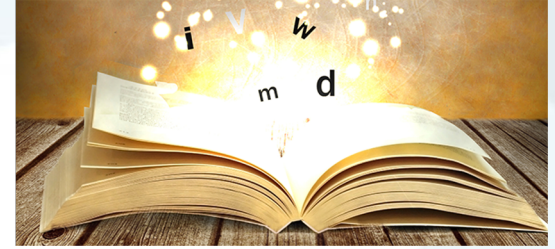


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Tip 9 : Be True to Yourself & Others

- Live your values & story – not someone else's.
- Commit to becoming the best version of you.
- Try new things to discover self & growth areas
- <https://blog.learnlife.com/what-is-your-ikigai>
- Guard against lapses in judgement.
- Live in peace as much as possible, but absence of conflict doesn't mean peace – choose battles wisely.
- Always be humble & kind – but do it w/ confidence!



*“Life is a matter of
choices, and every
choice you make
makes you.”*

– John C. Maxwell



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Tip 10: Navigate Challenges as Opportunities

- Challenges can be springboard for genuine growth
- Adopt 'win or learn' mindset
- Tackling today yields confidence for tomorrow
- Get your hands dirty; much to learn from seeds!



Source: CAE



*Character cannot
be developed in
ease and quiet.*
—Helen Keller



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Bonus Tip: Experience brings wisdom & resilience

- But, beware of the 'Imposter Syndrome'!
- All imperfect, works in progress. Embrace diversity.
- Transform broken pieces into source of strength & purpose.
- This too shall pass. Expect change & adapt accordingly.



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Parting words...



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"Be yourself ; everyone else is already taken"

- Oscar Wilde

"the **best** version of"

"with **CONFIDENCE**"



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Expand!
***You are not small. Your
foremothers did not do what
they did for you to occupy small.***

-Malebo Sephodi



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Confidence

信心

believe

heart



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Thank you!

Questions? Comments?



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Additional Tools and Resources

- How self confident are you?
http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTCS_84.htm
- MindTools: Building Self-Confidence
<http://www.mindtools.com/selfconf.html>
- 25 Killer Actions to Boost Your Self-Confidence
<http://zenhabits.net/2007/12/25-killer-actions-to-boost-your-self-confidence/>
- wikiHow: How to Build Self Confidence
<http://www.wikihow.com/Build-Self-Confidence>



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