
A Call To All Coaches, Mentors, Sponsors and Leaders:



So.

You have a client, colleague, or mentee who is clearly capable, perhaps a high achiever.

They deliver. Others trust them. Evidence of their high achievement is there for all to see.

And still, they don't believe it. They dismiss their capability. Diminish their successes.

In the room, it looks like self-doubt.



But what if self-doubt is not what you're working with?

one

A useful distinction:

What presents as simple self-doubt is often a more complex impostor experience* (aka impostor phenomenon).

Similar behaviour. Different experience. More deeply felt. More profound consequences.

And that difference matters more than most people think.

** Not impostor syndrome - that's not a "thing"*

two

A common trap:

Client questions themselves →

We may respond with reassurance, evidence, reframing →

They stabilise briefly →

Then return with a variation of the same embedded doubt.

Nothing is “wrong” with the coaching, mentoring, support.

But we’re responding to what it looks like,
not what’s driving it and not what’s underpinning it.

And so, the experience and the consequences continue.

three

Rethink:

The impostor experience is not a lack of confidence or self-doubt.

It is a largely misunderstood construct that is mutable, dependent on context, and can be debilitating for some.

It's a cyclical, often long-term misinterpretation of capability shaped by interpretations of complex social learning from context, cues, and identity.

When we collapse that into “self-doubt,” we grossly oversimplify the problem, limit the work, and minimise positive outcomes.

four

A subtle difference:

“I don't think I'm ready.”

“I'm not good enough. I'm lucky I fell into this role...”

One is working through confidence.

The other is navigating an impostor experience.

If we coach, mentor, support them the same way, one of them stays stuck.



How can I learn the difference..?

... attend my small-group, intensive, in-person workshops:

The Impostor Experience:

Coaching High-Capability Clients Beyond Self-Doubt

This is for coaches, mentors, and leaders who want to:

- distinguish between self-doubt and impostor experience (impostor phenomenon)
- understand the complex interpretive process behind it
- work with the experience more precisely in practice for better client outcomes

Small groups. Practical working sessions. Real cases.

Walk away knowing how to recognise impostor experiences and cues in others. Work more effectively with your clients, mentees, or colleagues.

[Who is Dr Terri Simpkin PhD?](#)
[Find out here](#)



The Impostor Experience:

Coaching High Capability Clients
Beyond Self Doubt

Workshops in Australia and the United Kingdom 2026.

[Contact me](#) for in-house sessions for mentors, sponsors and leaders.

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[small groups - limited spaces](#)



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