Hello!

and welcome to my (non) tech talk

who even is this person?

how to co-exist with imposter syndrome and uncertainty

how to be a talentless hack in public

disclaimers

1. I don't always take myself super seriously
2. All of this is just my opinion
3. Like any other advice, take it with a grain of salt

how to co-exist with imposter syndrome and uncertainty

how to be a talentless hack in public

"talentless hack":

- **a confused person in the awkward position of doing something they know nothing about**

- **a person with imposter syndrome**

stuff you likely already know about imposter syndrome

- **most people experience it**
- **a bunch of famous people, including Einstein and Neil Gaiman have said they experienced it**
- **it's all in your head**

my argument:

Being good at handling new and confusing situations in which you are not an expert (and may have no experience) makes dealing with imposter syndrome easier.

why do I believe this?

- I spend a lot of time doing new things I don't know how to do and I've gotten pretty good at not crumbling under pressure
- this has translated to a lot less panic in general

the importance of meta-skills

- **remember the learning skills section in elementary school?**

Your teachers were onto something with these.

Learning Skills and Work Habits | E – Excellent G – Good S – Satisfactory N – Needs Improvement

Responsibility
- Fulfils responsibilities and commitments within the learning environment.
- Completes and submits class work, homework, and assignments according to agreed-upon timelines.
- Takes responsibility for and manages own behaviour.

Organization
- Devises and follows a plan and process for completing work and tasks.
- Establishes priorities and manages time to complete tasks and achieve goals.
- Identifies, gathers, evaluates, and uses information, technology, and resources to complete tasks.

Independent Work
- Independently monitors, assesses, and revises plans to complete tasks and meet goals.
- Uses class time appropriately to complete tasks.
- Follows instructions with minimal supervision.

Collaboration
- Accepts various roles and an equitable share of work in a group.
- Responds positively to the ideas, opinions, values, and traditions of others.
- Builds healthy peer-to-peer relationships through personal and media-assisted interactions.
- Works with others to resolve conflicts and build consensus to achieve group goals.
- Shares information, resources, and expertise, and promotes critical thinking to solve problems and make decisions.

Initiative
- Looks for and acts on new ideas and opportunities for learning.
- Demonstrates the capacity for innovation and a willingness to take risks.
- Demonstrates curiosity and interest in learning.
- Approaches new tasks with a positive attitude.
- Recognizes and advocates appropriately for the rights of self and others.

Self-Regulation
- Sets own individual goals and monitors progress towards achieving them.
- Seeks clarification or assistance when needed.
- Assesses and reflects critically on own strengths, needs, and interests.
- Identifies learning opportunities, choices, and strategies to meet personal needs and achieve goals.
- Perseveres and makes an effort when responding to challenges.

Meta-skills are skills that help you develop other skills.

helpful meta-skills/character traits for a confused person

- **Knowing how to learn**
- **Curiosity + perseverance**
- **Communication**
- **How to take/give feedback**
- **Self-awareness**

1. knowing how to learn

(arguably the most important skill)

why school fails at teaching how to learn

- **School provides you with a structure**
- **All the information you need to know is provided in course materials**
- **Curriculums may be outdated/convoluted/missing critical info**
- **Most classes aren't great at getting you to engage with content in a meaningful context**

learning on your own means:

- **creating your own structure/timeline for learning**
- **knowing where + how to find information**
- **figuring out how to record information so you can access it more easily later**
- **figuring out how to get the knowledge in your system and use it**

where + how to find information

- **Look things up online**
- **Look at / read books (the index is great!)**
- **Ask people for information/advice/demos**
- **Go to a workshop / find a recording of a workshop**
- **Get your hands dirty and try stuff yourself**
- **Take a class**

two pieces of advice

- **Try to get a good mix of background/general knowledge and specific/in-depth knowledge**
- **Do not waste an expert's time by not doing your research beforehand – you want to ask questions only they can answer, not things you can easily google**

2. curiosity + perseverance

(a valuable source of motivation)

3. communication

(important any time someone else is involved)

communication when confused

- **Be honest about your skills**
- **Find out what the expectations are**
- **Ask for help if necessary**
- **Document what you learn so others can benefit**

4. taking/giving feedback

(this is kinda part of communication)

5. self-awareness

(self-awareness → confidence)

some last words of advice

- **Work on personal projects or join clubs! This will help you convince yourself you are able to do stuff**
- **The more you put yourself out there the easier it gets**
- **Imposter syndrome should never be the reason you don't do something**

additional resources

- **Cool article about the history of the term imposter syndrome: https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2023/02/13/the-dubious-rise-of-impostor-syndrome**

- **List of 12 library systems you can access as an Ottawa resident: https://smartlib-bibliogen.ca/**

- **Article on self-awareness: https://hbr.org/2018/01/what-self-awareness-really-is-and-how-to-cultivate-it**

questions?
(this is the end of the talk)