

Beyond “Fake It Till You Make It”: A Lawyer’s Guide to Building Real Confidence

Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers / Jennifer Riggs, JD, PCC



Photo by [Mike Santos](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Confidence & the Law

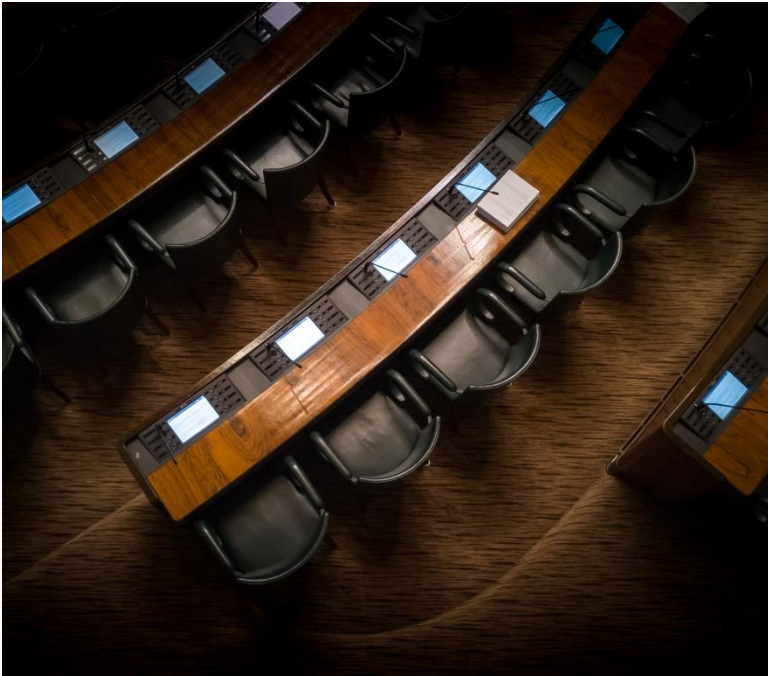


Photo by [Joakim Honkasalo](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Photo by [David Veksler](#) on [Unsplash](#)

My Story



Photo by [Pablo de la Fuente](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Photo by [William Cittadin](#) on [Unsplash](#)

A Roadmap

1. What is Confidence?
2. 3 Don'ts / Do's
3. Fake It Till You Make It?
4. 2 Coaching Tools



Confidence Is...

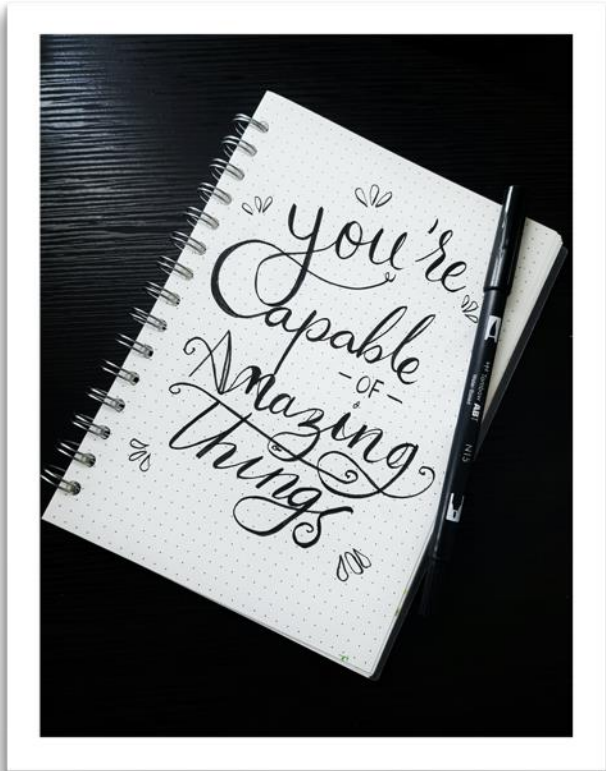


Photo by [Alysha Rosly](#) on [Unsplash](#)

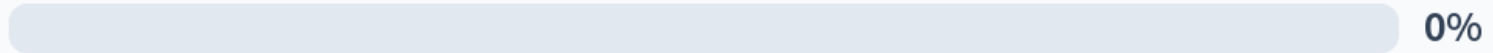
- a feeling or consciousness of one's powers
- "I've got this"
- Specific vs. General

On a typical day in your practice, how confident are you that you can handle whatever comes your way? (Scale 1-5)

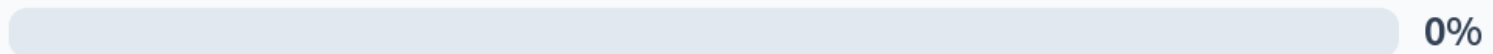
1- Not at all



2- Slightly



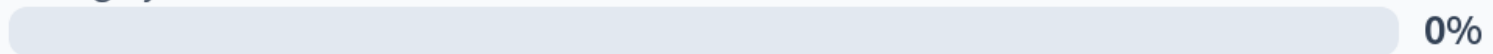
3- Somewhat



4- Mostly



5- Highly



A Common Struggle - *including...*

- Smart
- Successful
- Highly experienced
- More women than men



© en.wikipedia.org

Don't #1: Believe the Critical Thoughts



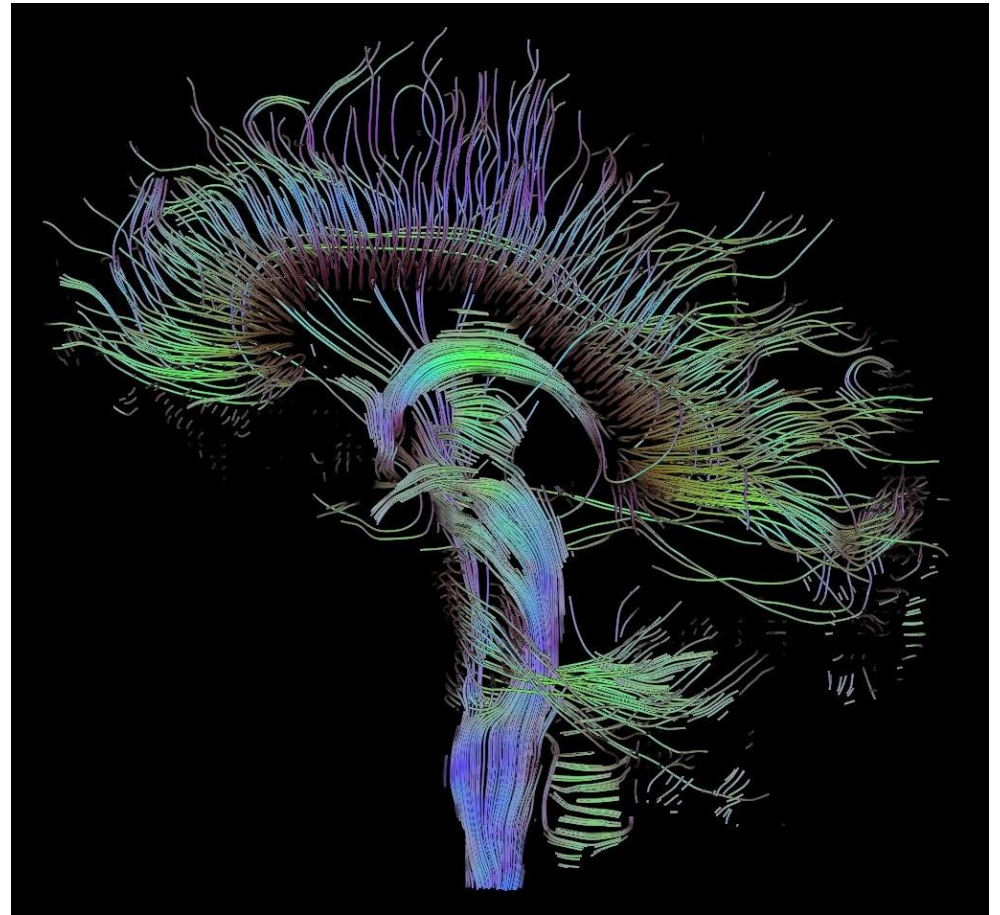
Photo by [Towfiq barbhuiya](#) on [Unsplash](#)

- I could/should have...
- never good enough
- catastrophizing
- perfectionism

Do #1: Rewire Your Thinking

Neuroplasticity

The ability of our brains to make new neural connections throughout our lives



Do #1: Rewire Your Thinking

Practices

1. Present-moment Awareness
- connects to prefrontal cortex

2. Non-judgmental

Acceptance

3. Self-Compassion

4. Support with

Sleep/Diet/Exercise



Don't #2: Compare to Others



Photo by [kevin turcios](#) on [Unsplash](#)

- X is a better attorney
- Y is much more confident
- Z would've handled it better

Comparison & the Brain

- IQ scores dropped 17 points
- Amygdala activated (fight/flight/freeze)

2012 CalTech study

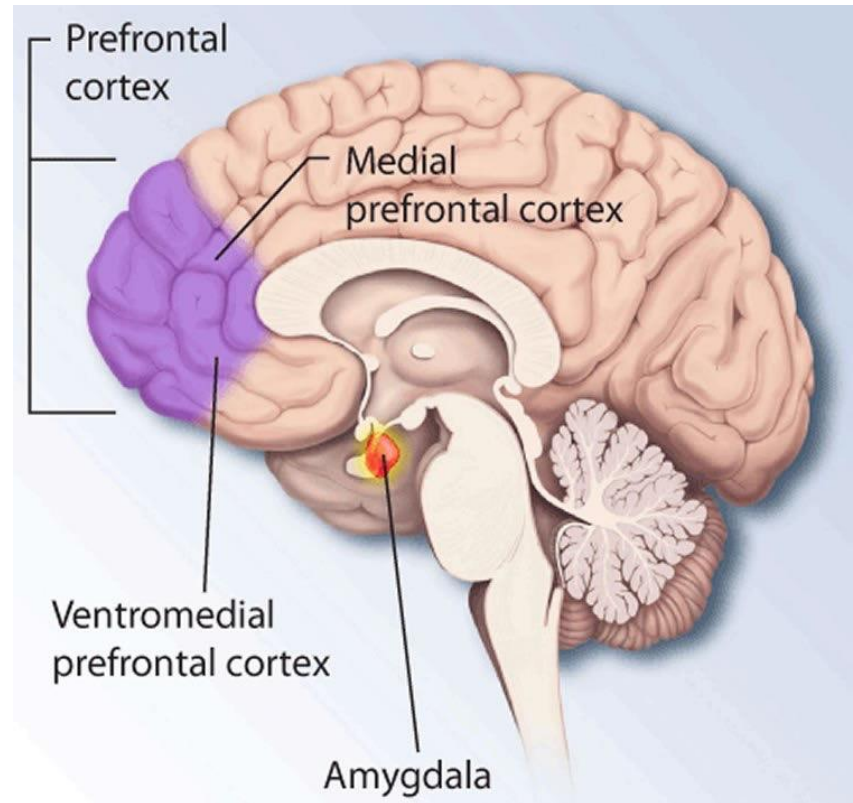


Image credit: NIMH Medical Arts (bulleted text added)

Do #2: Focus on Your Growth



Photo by [Gabin Valle](#) on [Unsplash](#)

- Growth Mindset = resilience
- Set-backs as Opportunity
for Growth
- vs. Fixed Mindset = setback
is proof of not good enough

Don't #3: Isolate Yourself



@CanvaPro

Do #3: Share/Seek Support



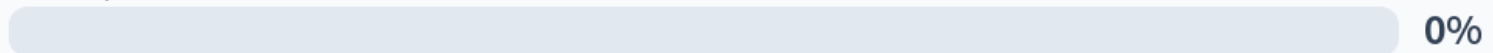
Photo by [@Christina](https://www.unsplash.com/photo/Christina) on [Unsplash](https://www.unsplash.com/)

Do you believe you can "fake it till you make it"? (1-5 scale)

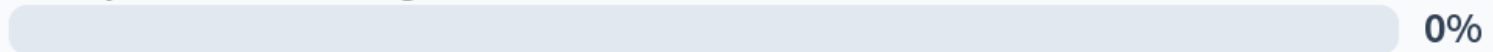
1- Definitely not / I tried and failed



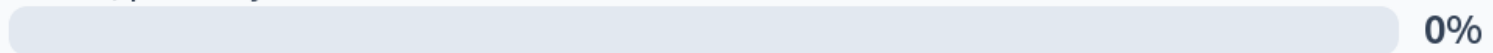
2- No, I doubt it



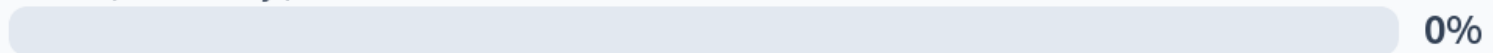
3- Maybe - if I tried enough



4- Yes, probably



5- Yes, definitely / It worked for me



“Fake It Till You Make It”?

Taking Action



Photo by [Dámaris Azócar](#) on [Unsplash](#)

“Fake It Till You Make It”?

But Faking Is

Often...

- Stressful
- A Self-fulfilling prophecy
- Exhausting
- Noticed by others



Photo by [Jon Tyson](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Tap Into Confidence:

Take Action with Courage - Start Small

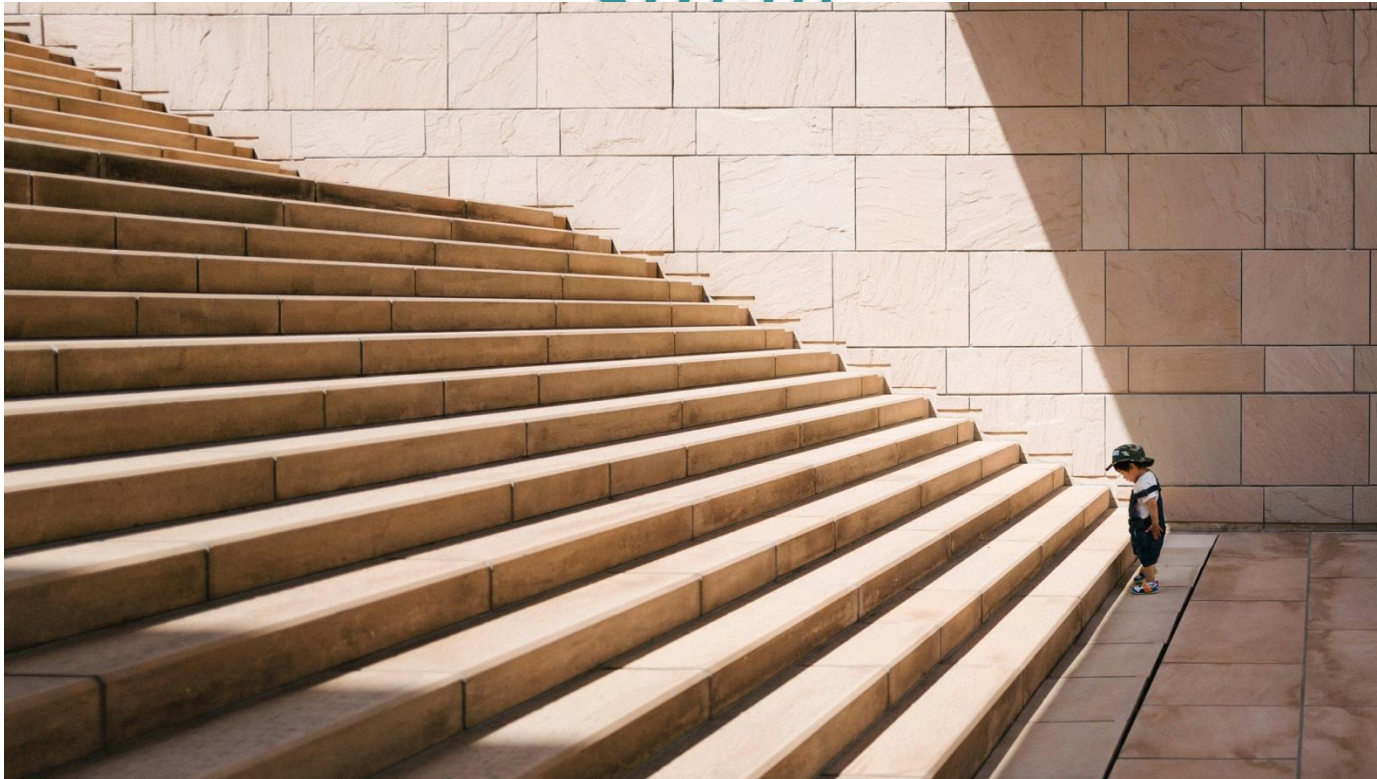


Photo by [Jukan Tateisi](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Who Is Feeling Confident?



Photo by [Resume Genius](#) on [Unsplash](#)

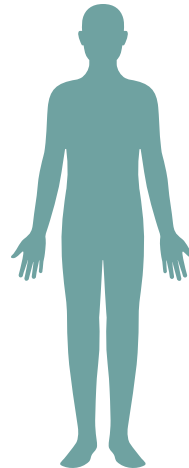


Photo by [MD Duran](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Use Body to Change the Mind



Bottom-
Up

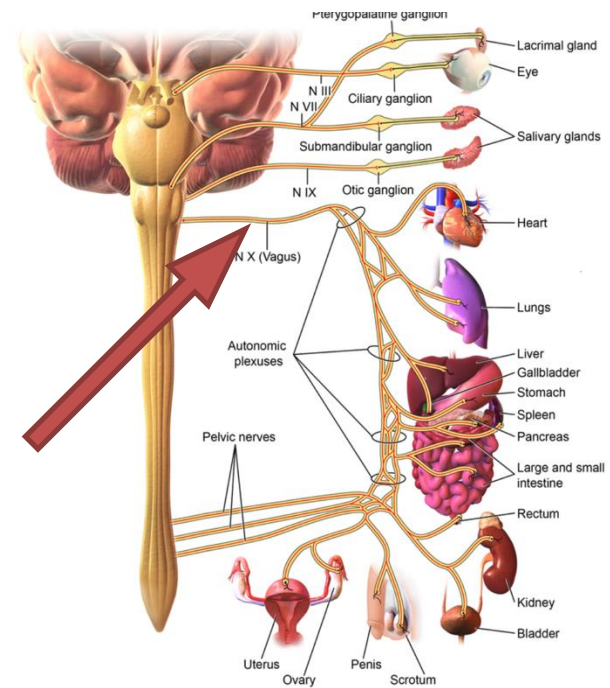
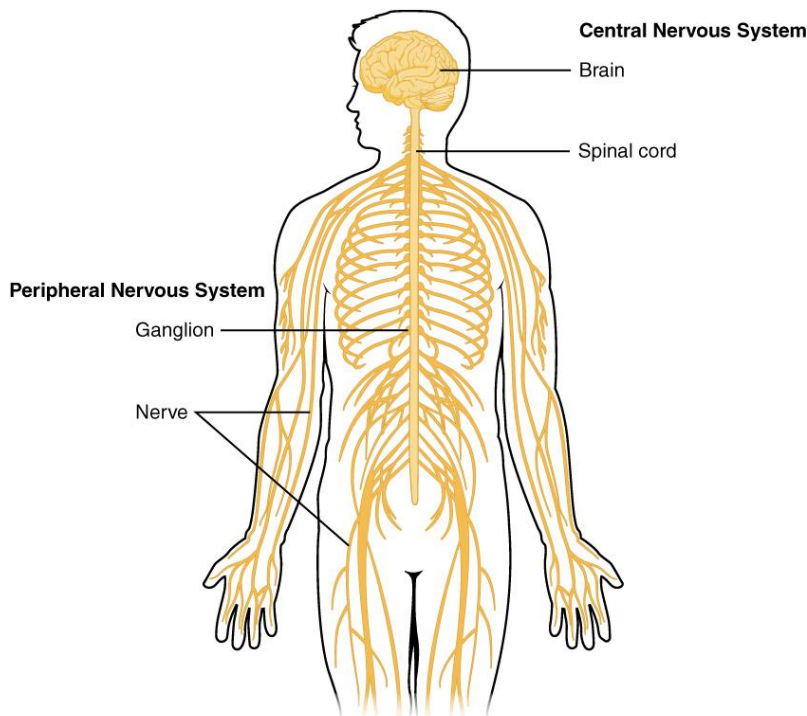


Top-
Down

Interoception

Awareness of the body's signals

Nervous System & the Vagus Nerve



By OpenStax - <https://cnx.org/contents/FPK1zmmh@8.25:fE13C80t@10/Preface>, CC BY 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=30147907>

Author: [Bruce Blas](#) Blausen.com staff (2014). Source: [Parasympathetic Innervation - Medical Gallery of Blausen Medical 2014 Wikiversity](#); [CC BY 3.0](#) (blue arrow added).

Tool #1: Expand Your Posture

1. Expansive
2. Upright
3. Open
4. Take Up Space



@CanvaPro

Tool #1: Expand Your Posture

Powerful postures improve:

1. Self-reported feelings of power
2. Task persistence behavior

*APA, Dominance and Prestige Meta-Analysis
(2022)*



Photo by [King Lip](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Tool #1: Expand Your Posture

Posture expansiveness:

1. Caused people to think and act in a more powerful way
2. Independent of rank or role in the organization

Huang, Powerful Postures vs. Powerful Roles, Association for Psychological Science (2011)

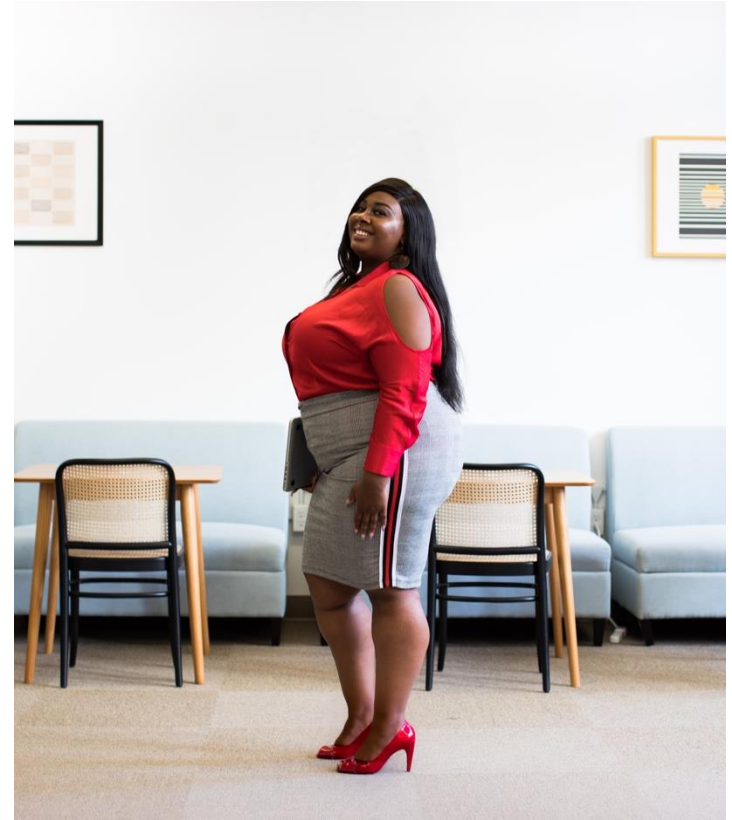


Photo by [AllGo - An App For Plus Size People](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Upright, expansive posture - taking up space

Tool #1: Expand Your Posture



@Canva Pro

“Expanding your body...prepares you to be present; it overrides your instinct to fight or flee, allowing you to be grounded, open and engaged.” - Amy Cuddy

Try It: Collapse then Expand



Photo by [Resume Genius](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Photo by [MD Duran](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Tool #2:

Meaningful, Courageous Actions

Purposefully bring attention to when you:

1. Honored your Values
2. Took Action with Courage

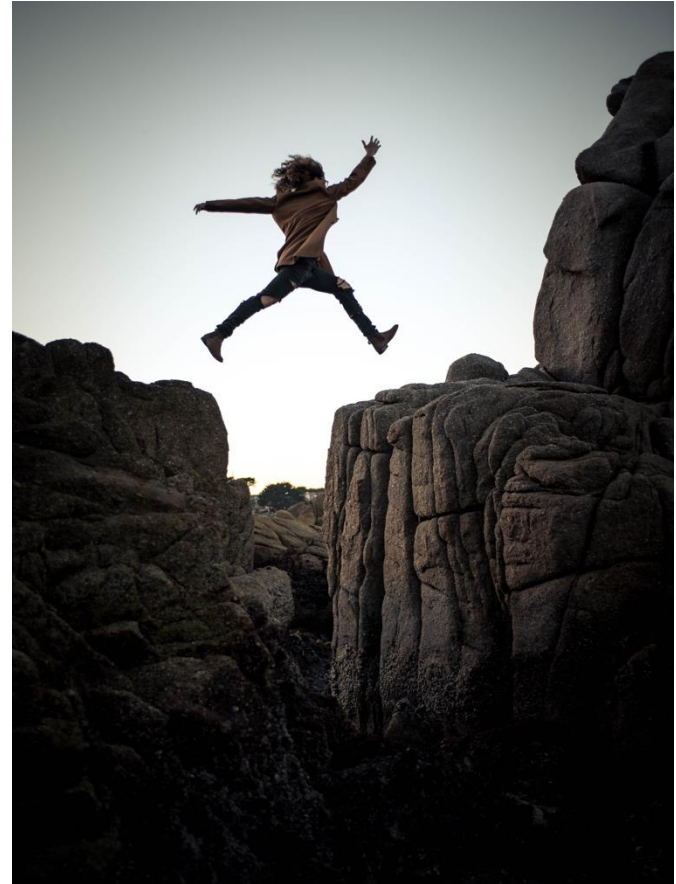


Photo by [Sammie Chaffin](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Tool #2: Meaningful, Courageous Actions - Values

Focusing on Authentic,
Meaningful Values:

1. Lowered cortisol levels
2. Improved problem-solving performance

Creswell, et al. (2005)(2013)



Photo by [Kelly Sikkema](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Authentic, Meaningful Values

Justice	Perspective	Teamwork
Fairness	Perseverance	Hope
Leadership	Love	Zest
Bravery	Compassion	Joy
Curiosity	Care	Prudence
Growth	Humility	Self-regulation
Learning	Honesty	Forgiveness
Hope	Kindness	Social Intelligence
Wisdom	Humor	Beauty
Judgment	Gratitude	Creativity

See viacharacter.org Character Strengths (Values in Action) - Take Free Survey

Tool #2: Meaningful, Courageous Action - Past Action

Bring attention to:

Times when you took
meaningful Action with
Courage - i.e. it was hard or
scary, and you're proud you
did it



Tool #2: Meaningful, Courageous Action - Prompts

(1) What was hard about it?

(2) Why did you do it? What mattered to you? (Values)

(3) What did you learn about yourself?

Take Meaningful Action: *Start Small & Use the Body*

Make a Commitment:

- What is one small, courageous action I will take?
- When will I do it?
- Identify the Value(s)

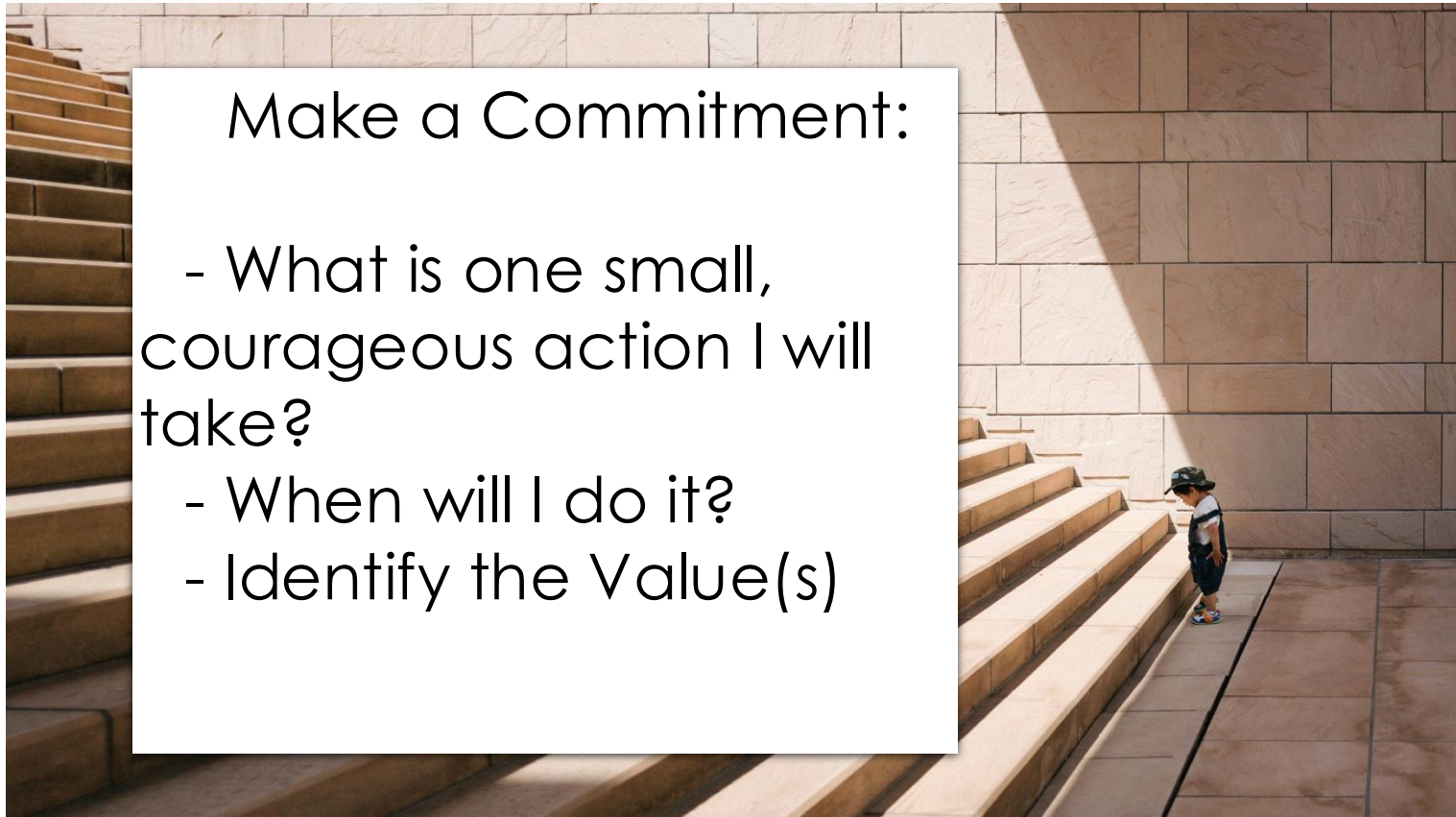
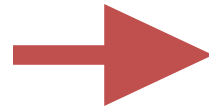


Photo by [Jukan Tateisi](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Let's Connect!

Book a Consult (free)



@jenriggscoach



jenriggscoach@gmail.com



jenriggs.com