



Episode 37: Imposter Syndrome, Conversation with Craig Anderson

Liz Higgins (00:02):

Hey, y'all! Liz Higgins here, and welcome to the Millennial Life Podcast, where my main goal is to share conversations that will inspire you and drive you toward the life and relationship you desire. I'm here to share what I've learned as a licensed therapist and relationship coach specializing in millennial relationships and wellness, as well as transformative conversations with other professionals. Thanks for listening and enjoy today's episode!

Liz Higgins (00:34):

Well, hello everybody! I'm excited to share another wonderful conversation for you. I swear - when I started out this podcast again after the holiday break, I was putting out quite a few individual episodes. And I don't think I've done an individual episode for - gosh - five months at this point, or four months. I've just had so many incredible guests joining me. And today is no exception! I have Mr. Craig Anderson, who is a leadership confidence coach, joining me today for a talk on Imposter Syndrome. I wish I had, like, a way to make that echo all creepy-sounding, because we all know the dreadful Imposter Syndrome. So Craig, hello!

Craig Anderson (01:21):

Hello, Liz! Thanks for having me on today. I appreciate it.

Liz Higgins (01:26):

Yes! I'm so excited to have you on here, because this is really your arena - helping, helping high-level professionals deal with the plague that is this Imposter Syndrome. And I know, certainly in the mental health field as well, we, we talk about this term and we hear it from our clients. So I'm excited to hear from you and just learn today! So, maybe just tell listeners a little bit about you and who you are.

Craig Anderson (01:57):

Sure. So, yeah, as you said, I'm a leadership confidence coach. I'm a veteran of corporate America. I ran national sales teams for Fortune 500 companies, national divisions for Fortune 500 companies for about 25 years. And did all that on the back of an English degree. How I ended up in banking with an English degree is a very long story, suffice to say that... Yeah. That's, that was not the path I envisioned for myself. And it was great. I, it added a lot of value to my work - (but, but we'll get to that). It was, so I did that for about 25 years. And I found that what I really enjoyed the most about my jobs

was developing people and helping people on my team see what they could actually achieve; what they themselves couldn't see that they could achieve. So I, for awhile, I, all these companies I worked for, I was in student lending.

Craig Anderson (02:48):

I was a student loan salesperson (and everybody can kind of roll their eyes at that, 'cause I know it's not always the most exciting profession that people love.) But I did, at the end of that, spin out a company from another not-for-profit where we help schools, help students repay their loans. So I balanced my karma out, uh, towards the end of my corporate career. And yeah... So we, so we did that and then that business sold and that's when I said, 'You know what? I really want to go out and help people who were like me - what I call accidental executives. Those people who never had a plan to go into corporate America, never had a plan to climb a corporate ladder. And then they find themselves there.' And my, what I like to do is help accidental executives and, you know... From entrepreneurs to corporate people, to executives... Become confident leaders. To really see in themselves what is possible for them to do without kind of this idea of, (you know, so much of it comes back to Imposter Syndrome, but everything else too) but really help them see what it is that they can bring to the table and how to leverage their strengths into a place of confidence, from a place of insecurity.

Craig Anderson (03:55):

So that's what I've been doing for the last few years.

Liz Higgins (03:59):

Oh my gosh! What a wild ride you have been on. And, I can only imagine for people that fall into that place that you're describing as accidental executives, I can only imagine the kind of internal battles they must have with themselves around their success and becoming great, leaving their impact and all that stuff when they haven't necessarily gone through certain levels of support or training to really develop themselves into that role. Like... It must be - just to go into my therapist mode for a second - like a, a fear-based state a lot of the time.

Craig Anderson (04:40):

Yeah. Uh, fear. Mostly insecurity. I mean, you find yourself, especially when you're in that Fortune 500 world sitting across the table from people who started their career in finance and banking, they got an MBA from a really prestigious school. And then, you know, here I am, sitting there across from them... You know, from time to time, I would go to New York to the corporate office and I'm sitting there in the corporate office, 14th floor. And it's intimidating when, you know, you don't have the background that these people have in business. And it's, it can be a very intimidating to sit across that table. And even if you manage to communicate an air of confidence (which you can do), inside every utterance, you're saying, 'Oh, I can't believe I said that', or, 'Oh, should I have said that a different way?' And then someone will inevitably come up with some term at the table and you have no idea what they're talking about. I don't know how to calculate loss curves, you know? What, what is EBITDA? All of these things that people just throw out because that was their background. And you're sitting there going, you know, nodding your head, trying to look intelligent and hope you don't get called on the carpet.

Liz Higgins (05:47):

Oh yeah, oh yeah. Feeling an imposter for sure. For sure. So can you just define that for us? Because I, I, people listening probably have a sense of what that is, but I would just love to hear from your perspective - how do you define Imposter Syndrome and what it is?

Craig Anderson (06:04):

Sure. Imposter Syndrome was defined way back in the seventies, believe it or not. So, 50 years ago this came about. And, and studies show something like 70% of people in business feel Imposter Syndrome at some point or another during their career. And to me, Imposter Syndrome is really that idea that you are just waiting to be found out. That you're waiting to be exposed, that you feel this level of insecurity in your own capabilities, your own knowledge. And no matter what external feedback you get to show you that you are really confident - or really competent - you can't see it in yourself. So you're constantly coming from this position when you have Imposter Syndrome of 'I'm not enough, I don't know enough. I don't deserve to be here.' And that feeling of insecurity and insignificance is really what I think you can boil Imposter Syndrome down to in its essence.

Liz Higgins (06:59):

Hmm. Well, and with hearing what you shared about some of your own journey, and coming from that English degree background... I imagine that this was a piece of your experience. Can you tell us a bit about like, how, how did that experience manifest for you? And when did you kind of realize that that's what that was?

Craig Anderson (07:21):

I... It took a long time to realize what it was. It's something that, in my experience, you know, I started out working in higher education and then made the transition to the corporate side. And, you know, it's different at different areas. But it's really sitting across the table, as I kind of rose up from just being a sales rep where it was really good. I could talk the talk of the people, the clients, and I was really good at doing that. And that was easy for me! It was in my neighborhood. I felt really confident when I was doing that aspect of it. It was when I got into leadership roles - like that director level, a manager, director, VP level - that it started to manifest. Because now I'm getting... It started for me when I started getting out of my element. When I started having to get into discussions around legal, and compliance, and finance. My background in school, I think I got a D in marketing, a D in accounting and a C in some other business class I took, right?

Craig Anderson (08:22):

So I, I struggled to understand some of the terms. And that's where it started to creep in, because I was hearing these conversations and not understanding every aspect of it. It was only, you know, so... But you don't want to show you, you know... Nobody wants to raise their hand and say, 'Could somebody please explain to me what that term is?' S you're trying, you know... Because you don't want to look like you don't know what you're doing and you don't deserve to be at that table. So that's where it really started to come out, was when I got around the table with people who weren't sales and weren't my client base. It was when I had to start talking at a different level, and understanding the business at a deeper level, to understand getting into the financial aspects of why this deal made sense, why that deal didn't make sense.

Craig Anderson (09:03):

Those are some of the ones that's where I really started to struggle with it. And, and it's hard because you don't want to go ask the question. You don't want to go ask your boss, because you don't want, you don't want your boss to know that you don't know what that is. You don't want your peers to know it. So, and I'm old enough that there wasn't some massive internet that I could go dig all this stuff up at that point in my career, you know? That... It was a lot of work to kind of find those things out. So it was, some of it became over time. Just, I would kind of understand it by proxy. I would just start to absorb because it was in the context of the conversation. I'd start to understand some of those things. Uh, but it was difficult. And it really, for me, it started to weigh on me, because I was afraid I was going to make a fool of myself. So I was happy to kind of sit in the back of the meeting and not be called upon. I was happy to not be the main presenter during the presentations. 'Cause I didn't want to be asked those questions. So it started to kind of, you know, hurt my career a little bit 'cause I wasn't willing to get out in front of people early on.

Liz Higgins (10:03):

Yeah. And, back to that main point of like being found out, being found out. Which makes me want to ask, like, do you think there's a component here of Imposter Syndrome being even more intense when you kind of look at it from a relational perspective? Like, because... I think about my own experience too, of starting out like as a therapist and kind of being a solo practitioner by myself - have my little, my little office, my little cubby - and then expanding to a group practice. Getting into that phase of people management and being, you know, kind of indebted to the team to show up and be a leader. And I have to say, like, that phase of my world, that's when I can really probably pinpoint that the Imposter Syndrome got just way worse. 'Cause it was this (for me, it revolves around this like being found out and what, what are people going to think about me? Like, how's this gonna look to others?), like very relationally-based fears - I'm calling them - but you know, anxieties or insecurities.

Craig Anderson (11:10):

It is absolutely worse once you start having people reporting to you, because now, there's just kind of an implied knowledge that if you're in a leadership role, people think you know the subject matter of your business at a deep level. They think you know how to lead people. And chances are, you know, if, if you know the subject matter part, chances are you probably don't know how to lead people, because they don't teach you those skills. Even with an MBA, honestly, you don't have classes in leadership, or a lot of classes in leadership. It's just assumed you get promoted. What we do, what we do is we look at high performers, individual performers, and we say, 'We're going to make you a manager' and you get placed in that role. And companies do a terrible job training you, so you're trying to figure this out on your own.

Craig Anderson (11:56):

And you're back in that same place I was talking about before is you don't want to go to your boss and say, 'Geez, I'm really struggling dealing with this issue with Bob, or with Mary, and how to handle it well.' Because I don't want to look like you mistrusted me. I was a top performer and you've trusted me with this. So now, I don't want to ask for help. And I have to figure out how to do these things on my own. And so I'm winging it. And you know, worry that at some point Mary or Bob is going to go to complain to my boss and I'm going to be found out for what a terrible leader I am. So... yeah.

Liz Higgins (12:29):

Well, the cycle almost makes you isolate even more because the risk involved in taking that (I guess) seemingly vulnerable step of saying like, 'Hey, I would like some guidance here. Hey, can we like explore some better ways of structuring this? Or I want to make sure I'm doing X, Y, Z.' Like there's, there's a risk of, they're going to see that I'm not who they thought that I was. And I can't let them, I can't let that show.

Craig Anderson (12:59):

Right. It's you know, if you ever saw those - I don't know it was in the circus or whatever - the people spinning all the plates, and they add more and more plates. And you just feel like you're spinning all these plates, trying to be someone you don't, someone externally, you don't feel that you are internally and you just want to keep throwing one more plate up there to keep everybody focused on that. So, they don't see inside that you're just struggling greatly. And if you, over time, this just gets worse and worse, right? So even in conversations, you're second guessing what you said. Then it starts to grow, because now it's that 3:00 AM wake up call that you get that, you know, 'Oh, it's three in the morning. And my head's going to spin about all these things,' you know? And, and that's really, the fear is you have so much insecurity about it that you you're just constantly find yourself worrying about it more and more.

Craig Anderson (13:50):

It's probably not all day every day, but it's always hanging out there. And you're always waiting for that other shoe to drop, or they're suddenly going to sit in a meeting and everyone's going to turn and look at you and go, 'What the heck are you even doing here? You know, how did you get to this role?' That was, you know, at the bank that was always my thing. Sitting there with these folks with, you know, Harvard MBAs and ME. And, you know, with my English degree from the University of Florida. Right? And so it was just, it was constantly this feeling that they were going to be like, 'God, we inherited this guy in an acquisition. What the heck did they ever hire him for? And why is he sitting here with us?' And that's the struggle. And, and what's funny is, that you will have your reviews with your boss and you'll get all this positive feedback and you don't actually believe it. Because you're just thinking they're just being nice.

Liz Higgins (14:43):

Oh my gosh. Yeah. I'm just like... Everything that you're saying is so spot on. And I personally relate to what you're experiencing. And I also know I've heard clients that have been in that space and they are, I mean, it's so important to point out this isn't necessarily an experience. I mean, everybody could have this experience, right? Craig, like, people at the top! And they're getting these great reviews, and these strong performances, and all this stuff. And they just, like you're saying, it's so hard for them to receive it and believe it. Um, and there's such a misalignment with who they're kind of putting out to the world, and who they actually feel internally that they are. And I'm just, I'm almost wondering, like... To ask you more about when somebody is in that space of just real misalignment and that Imposter Syndrome is so strong, how do you see that kind of affect them? Maybe on multiple levels? Like, are there typical physical symptoms, or relational issues? Or, like, what are kind of the consequences when you're dealing with the like severe Imposter Syndrome for a long time?

Craig Anderson (15:57):

I think one, it's just that it's... One, it's that constant wearing of that anxiety that's just kind of always humming in the background. And it can become very exhausting, right? It's energy draining. And you're constantly trying to put on this front of confidence, which is energy draining. So one, I think you start to see that you're just exhausted all the time, because you're, you think you're putting on this front. You compound that if it kind of works out to where you can't sleep at night, or you wake up in the middle of the night and your head starts churning on all these things. And so you start, you know, so it starts feeding on itself, right? Uh, so I think over time, it's just all those pressures of, of the workplace compounded with this insecurity that you feel - creating a heightened level of anxiety.

Craig Anderson (16:42):

And so you've got, you know, um, cortisol, you know... If you're going into that big meeting, right? The cortisol starts flying because you're stressed out. Uh, and where I think then that manifests for you in the real meetings is you're slow to be, to make decisions. You don't want to commit to anything. You, you don't want to be very decisive in your words, because just in case you're wrong, you want to have that back door to slide into. So now, it starts to affect your work because you don't want to make decisions because you're afraid that you might be wrong. And that's where that's where people are going to start to notice, right. That's where it becomes self-fulfilling because now it's actually impacting your performance. And that's when you, you know, that's the point where if you've gotten to that point is where you really need to say, I've got to do something about this.

Craig Anderson (17:30):

I've got to figure out a way to deal with this. And... Otherwise it's just going to put you in a place where you're just gonna stay where you are. You're not going to get promoted. Or you might even find yourself, you know, saying, 'You know, I gotta go do something less stressful.' Even though you've got this high level of competency, right? So if you don't want this job, why? Well, I'm not qualified. Well, nobody thinks, well, we'll talk about it if we talk about solutions, but those are the questions - why do you want to leave this job? And if it really revolves around this anxiety, and pressure, and stress, where's that coming from? There's a lot of jobs that are inherently stressful, but if you're adding on 'I don't feel good enough. I'm not enough for this job.' that can really be what puts it over the top.

Liz Higgins (18:10):

I'm so glad that you're talking about that right there. And we definitely will get to solutions, but I think what you're getting into right now is the red flags of Imposter Syndrome. And, um, that really struck a chord with me just then, where people can be incredibly qualified to do their role. Like, they have what it takes to do that thing, but they're literally talking themselves out of it because of this experience that's not being addressed. And I hear so much hope, I guess, in what you were saying there. Because it's almost like... I'm assuming maybe what we're going to get to is that that doesn't have to be the way that the story ends for you. It doesn't have to be you talking yourself out of an incredible experience. And yes, it might be stressful. And yes, it might be challenging and you might, you know, really push yourself and grow a lot. But it doesn't have to cost you you in the process. So I almost want to check in on, like, what are some of those other red flags, I guess? Or, what would you tell somebody that's like, you know, I don't know... Ways that you can identify if you are having this experience. You know?

Craig Anderson (19:23):

I would say if you find yourself avoiding making decisions because you're worried you're going to be wrong, that's a big red flag. If you are, you know, if you're going into meetings with other executives and you're starting to want to just not be noticed, and kind of shrink into the background, and just quickly get through whatever you've got to get through and then shrink back into the background after that, not weighing in on controversial topics... When you see yourself stepping away from your role, that's a big red flag to me. And, you know, as we've already touched on some of these feelings of anxiety, loss of sleep, you know... Just churning over issues in your head at night, when you really can't leave work behind because you're so worried about what things are going to happen. I mean, I remember one of my big red flags.

Craig Anderson (20:14):

It was an email that hit at 11 o'clock at night. And I was dumb enough to look at my email at 11 o'clock at night. And it was just, it was, it clearly signaled to me (at least in my own head, I don't think actually in reality) that, 'Oh my God, I've been found out. This guy is going to expose me and I'm doomed.' And that's where it got to the point where it was, wow, this is, you know? And then the next day, of course, after no sleep, I go to work and it wasn't that at all. That's where I think you start to realize, 'Am I having outsized reactions to small situations?' And those are some of the things. I think you have to say to yourself, 'Alright, I'm not functioning well, I'm not sleeping well. I'm overreacting and I'm not, I'm shrinking back.' If somebody says to you, 'Craig, you just don't seem like yourself anymore.' Right? Those are the warning signs that maybe I need to take a look at this and figure out what actually is going on.

Liz Higgins (21:07):

Yeah. And I'm wondering, like, even in your work with your clients who are dealing with this experience, do you find that if ever, when you're trying to address it with them, like, 'Hey, you know, are you okay? Let's talk about what's going on.' do they try to deny that it's, there is Imposter Syndrome? Something that, you know, really tries to push away that, uh, being put into the spotlight?

Craig Anderson (21:34):

Yes. It's hard to get your mental self over the hurdle to say this isn't actually reality. Because you've convinced yourself that you are the imposter at the table. And you've done that against any real experience that tells you, you know, the opposite case, right? These are all just people being nice or whatever it is. So when you start to kind of deal with it in the coaching situation... There's a couple of different ways, coaching is just one of the solutions. But the questions to really ask are, you know, what are the external proofs that you don't deserve to be at the table? Let's go through and give me specific examples which really showed what, you know, that you were an imposter. Let's go through those scenarios. And that's an important piece. The, another important piece is to sit down and say, okay, let's kind of scale it back and say, what is the value that you're bringing?

Craig Anderson (22:34):

What value do you think you're bringing? What input do you get on the value that you're bringing? And start saying, okay, if that's a piece, let's start building on that piece of the value that you're bringing when you are at the table. So it's really... To kind of beat back that Imposter Syndrome is to really start

- interrogating is not the right word - but kind of building the case against it, to say, what's the external... What are the external things that are kind of independent, third party that have been said specifically to you that showed that this is going on? Then move into, okay, where are you bringing value? And let's talk about where that value is being brought. What's the impact of the value? You know, where are you moving it forward? And another piece is, are those things that you feel insecure about really the value you're expected to bring to the table?

Craig Anderson (23:23):

I, you know, in my role, one of the things for me was right, I was in sales a lot. And I had a long history in the industry, different from many of the other people around the table. So the value I brought was the perspective, the long-term perspective of the industry. I brought the voice of the customer to the table. They weren't looking to me to help them understand how to underwrite a loan. They weren't looking to me to understand how to finance the loans. What they were looking for me to say is, when we figure out how we want to finance and how we want to underwrite it, what's the impact of the customer? What's the voice of the customer going to be and what have you seen before? And so when I started to understand that it wasn't my role to understand certain (I mean, I needed to kind of have a working knowledge of them, but I did not have to be able to sit and go back to my cube and run a big spreadsheet and figure these things out) -

Craig Anderson (24:08):

I needed to bring where I was core to bringing value to the organization. And that's to say, okay, that's when you're going through this kind of healing of the Imposter Syndrome is, okay, let's dive into that. Where are you bringing value? How can you bring more value in those areas? And then, you know, maybe you want to learn enough about some of these other things to put some of the pieces together. You can't, but those are really things... It's beating back the, you know... Bringing in objectivity to the situation, understanding your value, and then really highlighting what that is. That's where you can start to push back against what's going on with the Imposter Syndrome. Yeah.

Liz Higgins (24:43):

And that, that's really cool to hear you say! Because that piece there of really testing the internal thoughts and beliefs that you're making up about yourself has a very cognitive behavioral approach to it. And I know that that's worked wonders for lots of people. I think one of my favorite questions from the Cognitive Behavioral Realm is like, if you took this belief you have about yourself to a jury, how can you prove without a shadow of a doubt that this is a fact about you? And so many times you just, you just can't. It's, you didn't do anything to screw it up. You know, if anything, it's kind of like you're saying, you're maybe not pulling on your unique self, your unique strengths that bring so much to the table, so much to the role. This will be different from the person next to you, but harnessing those strengths and owning who you are is kind of the route to take with this stuff. So that's really cool.

Craig Anderson (25:43):

Yeah, that was, that was the big breakthrough. And I find when I'm working with my clients, that's the big breakthrough for them too, is to say, 'You know what? You know, I've built this thing in my head and I've kind of validated the case for it in my head, but I actually don't have the external validation.' And that is where you can get the first break in the wall - when you realize there's no real external validation to this. And then the rest of it just kind of flows from there. Uh, the beauty and insidiousness

of Imposter Syndrome though, is right. I've broken it down in this role. I'm in, then you get a new role and it can actually come all flooding back because now it's a new role, a new scenario, and you start to feel it again. So maybe you've got it here. Now you get promoted and you can, that will just start coming back. It's not something... It's something that you always have to be kind of alert to and have some self-awareness about, because otherwise, it'll just come sliding back in when you least expect it. So it's, it's a great little thing in that way. I say that with all sarcasm, it's terrible. But it can do that.

Liz Higgins (26:53):

But you're kind of saying that Imposter Syndrome is not an experience to be cured. It's not something that you should try to never feel ever again. I mean, with growth, with expansion, with shifting into new positions and arenas, you can almost anticipate that it's going to show back up again.

Craig Anderson (27:14):

I think you are vulnerable to it again. It's... If we're talking 70% of people experience Imposter Syndrome, it's clearly something that can come back around a lot. So you get a hold of it and you get control of it in the situation you're in, but then the situation changes. Maybe you take a new job in another company and everything, all that foundation you built is no longer underneath you. I'm not saying you're going to be incapacitated by it again, but you definitely are going to want to be on alert for it. To say, all right, when I start feeling insecure again in this new role, is it real? Or is this just my friend, the Imposter Syndrome creeping back in? So hopefully, when it comes around again, you have some self-awareness and you catch it before it becomes problematic. But it doesn't mean it won't become problematic. Or it could manifest differently. Maybe you were worried before that it was I didn't have the financial knowledge or banking knowledge, but over in this role, now I'm actually leading a team of 200 people. I've never done that before. So now there's a whole new vector of entry for it to come in and hit you from. Right? So you've got to kind of start over and be very wary of it, or it can come back and get you again. So I think it's very situational and role-based, so it can come back.

Liz Higgins (28:34):

I was just thinking, as you were talking, I'm like, you know, us millennials... there is a reason why our generation has been deemed the most anxious generation. And I think, just historically and economically, we can look at different things that we have experienced around us. 9/11. I mean, all sorts of very impactful things as, as every generation has, um, you know, their, their fingerprints, I guess, on what influences them. But I am curious to ask you, like, do you see kind of an uprise in this experience of Imposter Syndrome in the millennial demographic as compared to like gen X or boomers? Like this isn't a new thing. It's a part of being human, I guess. But have you seen any shifts or transitions just through the different demographics?

Craig Anderson (29:27):

I think that that's a great question. You know, the boomers were just raised to be stoic, right? So, you know, if it was there, they were just going to grind their way through it and just make do, right? Um, my generation is gen X, you know, I think we, we suffered from it. I think the millennials, the challenges you guys have actually had... You guys it's... You're like a whole different people group. Um, but the millennial generation, I think you've had some pretty big worldwide events and nationwide events that you've seen. Things get torn down very quickly. You've seen people get torn down, you've seen, you know, economies get torn down. So the, the idea of things kind of falling apart is very real. So you have

that kind of external experience and then you can, you probably internalize that experience. I mean, that's more of a therapeutic question probably than coaching, but I could see where that, you know, it all seems much more real to you because you guys had so many more of those experiences than, I think, the boomers. Well, boomers had World War II. So that was kind of devastating, but, you know. I think it was just different for you. And so, yeah, I think some of these things could seem bigger because you've seen things get bigger before. If that makes sense.

Liz Higgins (30:46):

It does make a lot of sense. It does. And I think just even more reason to be aware of this experience! And that, you know, it's, it's almost like normalizing to a certain extent. Like, everybody's probably going to go through this. And you just have to look at the greater context. We're not born into a vacuum. Nothing's wrong with you because you feel Imposter Syndrome. I mean, I do sort of see it as a very relational experience based on your progression in, like you're saying your, your field, your positions and who you are to the company or whatever you do. We're always going to be up against these experiences. And you don't have to suffer your way to the top, I think that is incredibly important. Um, so yeah, just, just hearing you talk through some of this, it's really enlightening. Because I bet a lot of people listening are like, 'I have so felt that way, this is me.' Um, I certainly know I've had that experience. So I don't know, just as we kind of wrap up, like, what would you say are maybe some of the quote unquote solutions? How do you see people really make that shift from being plagued by this Imposter Syndrome to navigating, um, their life and their work from a healthier state of being?

Craig Anderson (32:03):

Yeah, it's, it's a good question. And there's a couple of different ways you can do it, because so much of this is in your head, right? That you want to get that external validation. So depending on where you're at and what you're comfortable doing, you know, if you can just find that one friend who can, who is willing to be brutally honest with you, and you're willing to be brutally honest with them, and you can hold yourselves accountable. So maybe you find, you know... Maybe you're an executive or a business owner over here, and you have a friend who's an executive or business owner over there. Can you guys just meet and bounce these things off each other? Find that trusted friend who can help you deal with some of issues. Uh, so that, I think, is one way. And that's in some ways the easier way. And also harder. Because you have to be vulnerable out of context within a friendship.

Craig Anderson (32:48):

Yeah. Then there's also kind of group coaching opportunities, where again, you kind of in an accountability group where you can have that whole group around you that kind of supports you and builds you up. Or if you're not comfortable in that group setting, you're not comfortable with finding a friend who you're willing to have these conversations with. Then coaching is an excellent opportunity to do it. And having that coach who can really hold you accountable and really ask you these questions to drill into it. So I think you can really go to any of those three levels, depending on where your comfort level is just your own personality. And a lot of people prefer the relative anonymous anonymity of having a coach, right? So you're kind of completely separated from their life and you can be very objective. So that's the piece that they're most comfortable with.

Craig Anderson (33:32):

So those are the three areas where I think you can do the best is to try and find... It's really just finding, finding that person who you can be vulnerable with, who you can be confidential with, and who can help you get some objectivity in your life to get out of your head and get into more of an objective world. I think those are really the three areas. And it's going to take a while to really kind of beat these things back. And if you can recognize it early, that's great. And if it's kind of ingrained, it's going to take a lot of work to get yourself out from behind it and start to see that value.

Liz Higgins (34:07):

Absolutely. Well, and I can attest to, I guess, a couple of those experiences. Because I've now worked with a few coaches and therapists personally, that I think I was in that realm of. 'I'm not exposing this part of me to anybody else.' So individual because it's confidential and it was great. It was great. And I think helped get me to that next level where like... This past year I did a small, small coaching group mastermind with other clinicians that were group practice owners. And it was such an incredible experience to, you know, yeah, it's vulnerability. You have to be like, 'Dude, I'm struggling with these thoughts. And I find myself worried about what people are going to think about this.' And when you're in a group format, that's so powerful! Because everybody else just starts coming up with their, 'Oh yeah, me too. Oh, that's me as well. Like I dealt with that just last week!' And, um, it's a very powerful experience to help you get out of your own way when you're seeing other people push past that imposter stuff.

Craig Anderson (35:10):

Yeah, absolutely. You're right. It's, it's just getting... Finding that place where you feel confident and safe, that you can have the conversations to get really to the bottom of it. And someone who's going to hold you accountable and, and speak boldly to you. That's what you really need, because this is beating up and you've got to break through the wall. And that's not going to happen if somebody has taken a real soft hand. So, I mean, it's not abusive, but it is... I think there is a need to have some real honest conversations. So if you're going to a friend to do that, or a group to do that, make sure that's what they're going to do. Otherwise you don't want it to descend into where you're just kind of reinforcing it for yourself.

Liz Higgins (35:46):

Absolutely. So Craig, tell us what you have going on in the way of, you know... People who are interested to look you up and learn more about what you do, working with you, where can people find you?

Craig Anderson (35:59):

Sure. I... you can find me all kinds of places. You find me at my website, clearpathcoaches.com. And every week I do a weekly training on a lot of leadership topics - including Imposter Syndrome and some of those other things. And if you just shoot me an email at craig@clearpathcoaches.com, I'll get you connected with that. And we'll get you into our group where you can see those live, or you can see those (if you can't make it live), you can see them at any time. We have all those out there for people to check out. So those would probably be the two best places.

Liz Higgins (36:30):

Awesome. And we will put links to all of that, including your website, in the Show Notes. So, for anybody interested to follow Craig and see what he's up to, definitely check that out. And, don't let your Imposter Syndrome get the best of you! Because, as we are hearing today, there is a process out of those murky waters and into a better, a better way of being with yourself through success and growth. So thank you, Craig. I so appreciate this conversation!

Craig Anderson (36:56):

Thank you, Liz. It was great to be here!

Thanks again for listening to the podcast. If you like the show, leave us five stars or write a review. If you're interested in learning more, sign up for my free e-book "The One Barrier to Commitment All Millennials Face" at millenniallifecounseling.com.

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