



* Confidence for Counselling Students:

Overcoming Self-Doubt
on Your Study Journey

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COUNSELLING
TUTOR

* Aims and Objectives

Aims:

- ✓ To recognise imposter feelings in counselling training
- ✓ To understand how identity and social context can shape these feelings
- ✓ To learn practical ways to start the year with confidence

Objectives:

By the end of the session you'll be able to:

- ✓ Spot signs of imposter feelings
- ✓ Know you're not alone - and it's not your fault
- ✓ Use tools to manage doubt and boost self-confidence

* How to Reference This Lecture

If you use this lecture as a source of information for an assignment or other writing, please ensure you include it in the references. Using the Harvard style of referencing, this would appear as follows:

Hughes, J. (2025). *Confidence for Counselling Students: Overcoming Self-Doubt on Your Study Journey* [lecture]. Counselling Study Resource. Counselling Tutor. [Date viewed].


However, there are different styles of referencing and your learning institution or publisher might require you to do it a different way. Please check the relevant handbook/style guide.

* Hi, I'm Josephine

I help counsellors grow their private practice without the pressure to be perfect.

- Host of the **Good Enough Counsellors** podcast
- Coach to the **Therapy Growth Group** community to support therapists in private practice
- Find me in the **Good Enough Counsellors** Facebook community





Imposter Syndrome

What Is It?

* What is it?

- ✓ A sense of intellectual and professional fraudulence
- ✓ Attribute achievement to external factors such as luck, hard work or other people
- ✓ Believe others have inflated opinions of them
- ✓ Fear exposure
- ✓ Discount praise

Matt, K, Kleitman, S, Abbot, M (2019)



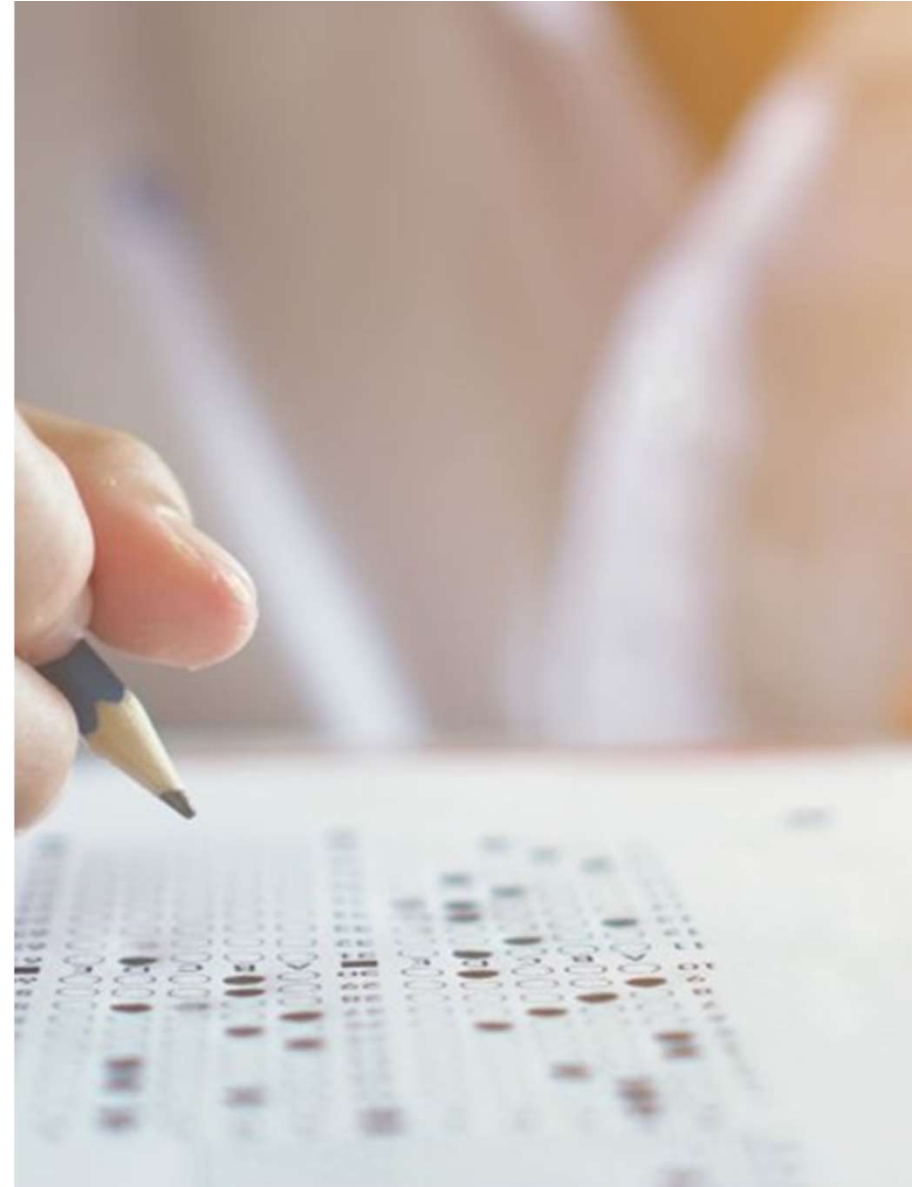


Imposter Syndrome

How Does It Show Up in Training?

* The Expert

- ✓ Time spent on research
- ✓ Delay in handing in assignments
- ✓ Prioritising knowledge over practice



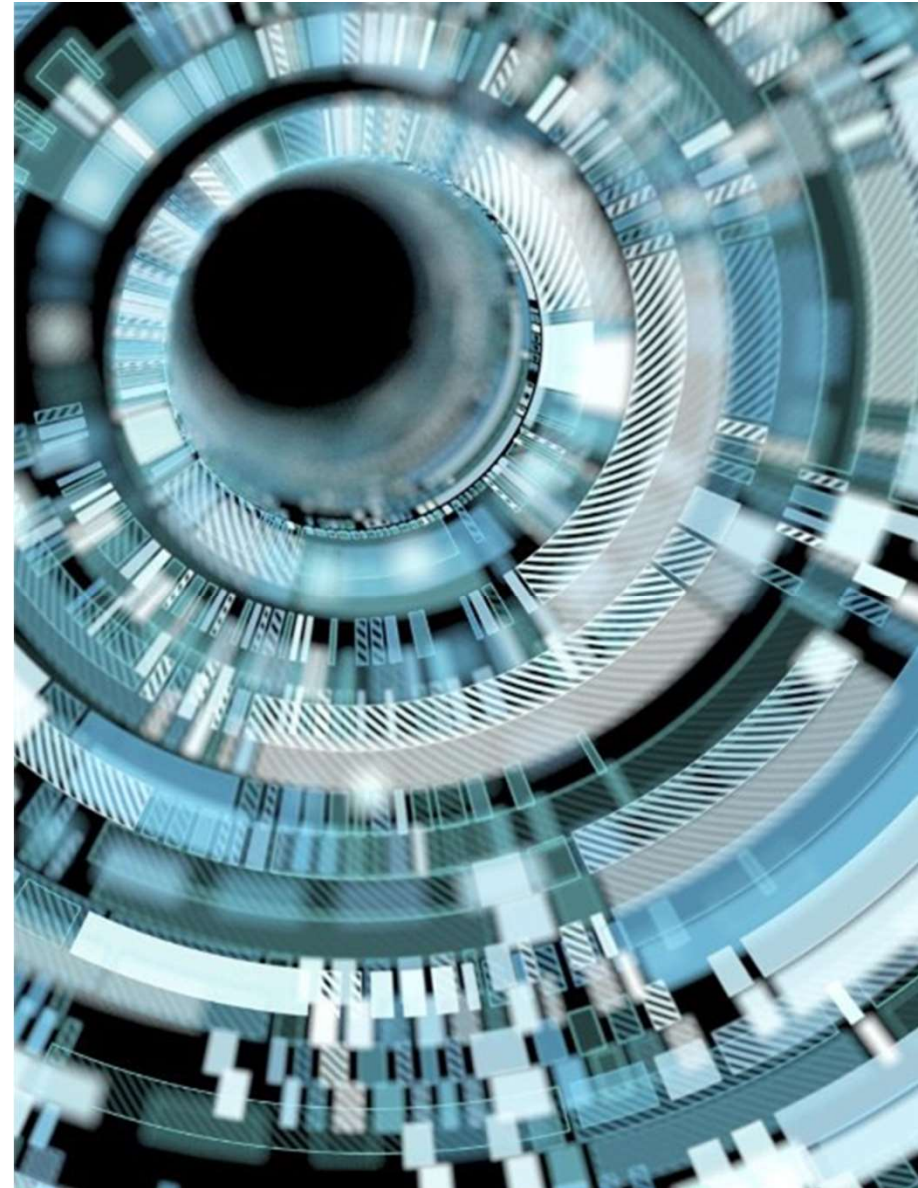
* The Perfectionist

- ✓ Sets unrealistically high standards
- ✓ Focuses on minor errors
- ✓ Feel constant anxiety about being good enough



* The Natural Genius

- ✓ May feel embarrassed or inadequate
- ✓ Tempted to give up
- ✓ Unwilling to practise



* The Soloist

- ✓ Avoids asking for help
- ✓ Feels isolated
- ✓ Risk of overwork and burnout



* The Superhero

- ✓ Takes on too much
- ✓ Neglects self-care and personal life
- ✓ Burnout risk is high



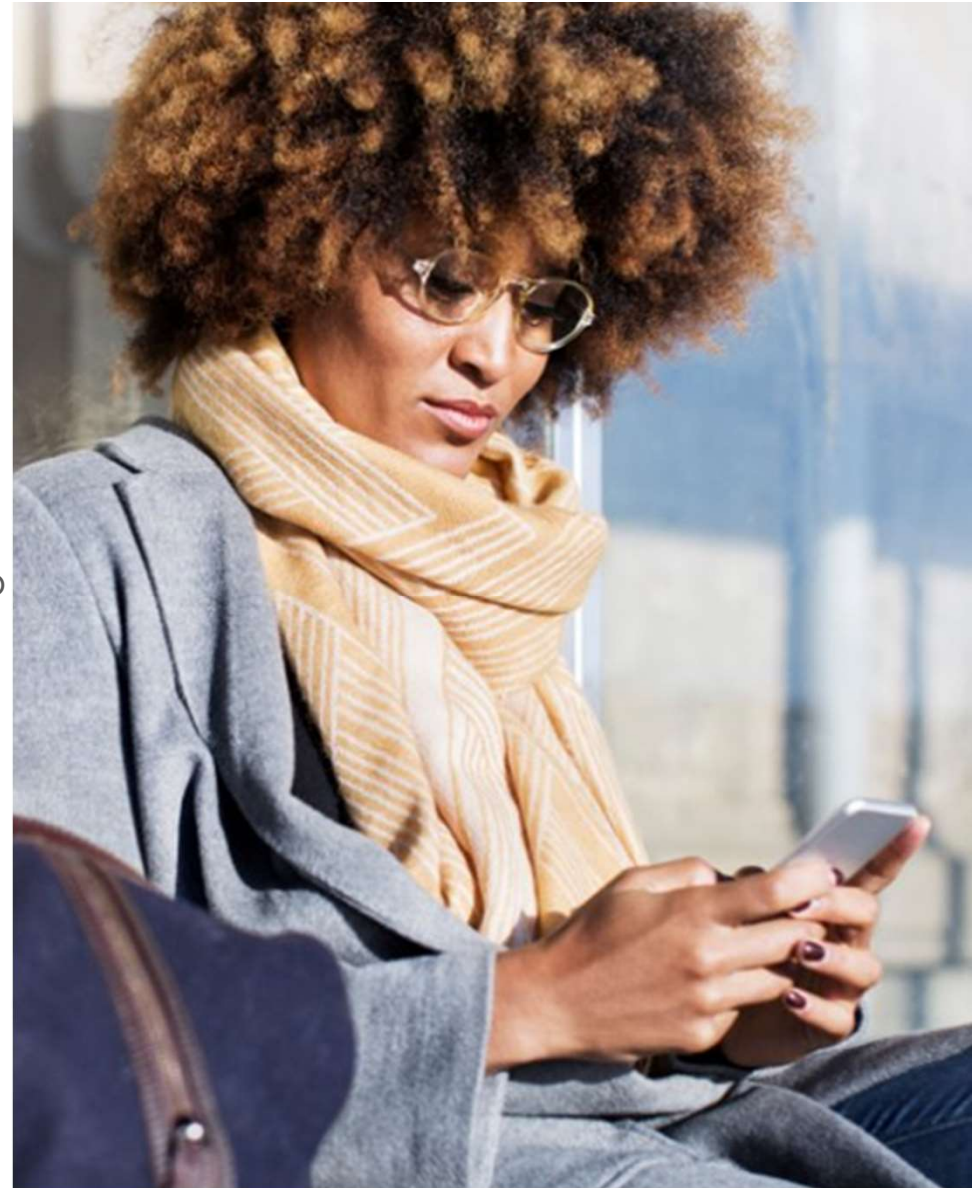


Imposter Syndrome

Why Does It Show Up?

* Risks

- ✓ New Challenges
- ✓ Family Environment
- ✓ Being from a marginalised population group



* An Intersectional Lens

“Imposter Phenomenon presents a form of internalized oppression by which negative societal messages about one's identity group are internalized - leading to thoughts and feelings of inadequacy and fraudulence in the face of success”

Nadal, K et al (2021)

* Factors to Consider

- ✓ Gender
- ✓ Gender Identity
- ✓ Race and ethnicity
- ✓ Sexual orientation
- ✓ Disability & neurodivergence
- ✓ Age
- ✓ Socioeconomic background
- ✓ Religion or belief
- ✓ Migration status/language
- ✓ Body size & appearance



Imposter Syndrome

How Accurate is it?

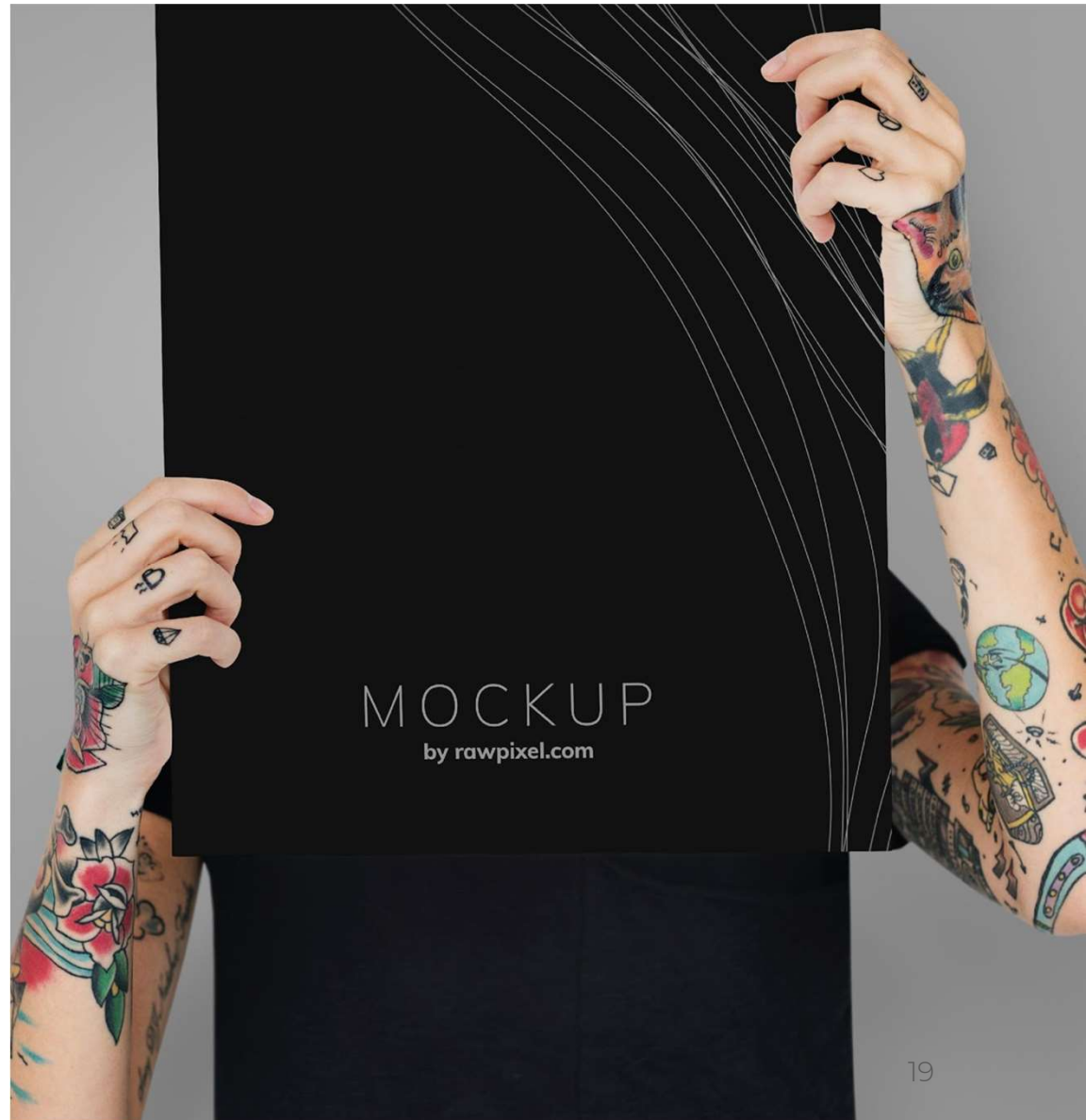
*** How do we
view ourselves?**



“If we all only knew how many of us felt like imposters, we’d have to conclude either:

(1) We’re all imposters and none of us know what we’re doing, or
(2) Our self-assessments are way off”

(Amy Cuddy: Presence)




* Reflection

*Does imposter syndrome show up in your life?
How?*

What kind of people or situations cause you to react?

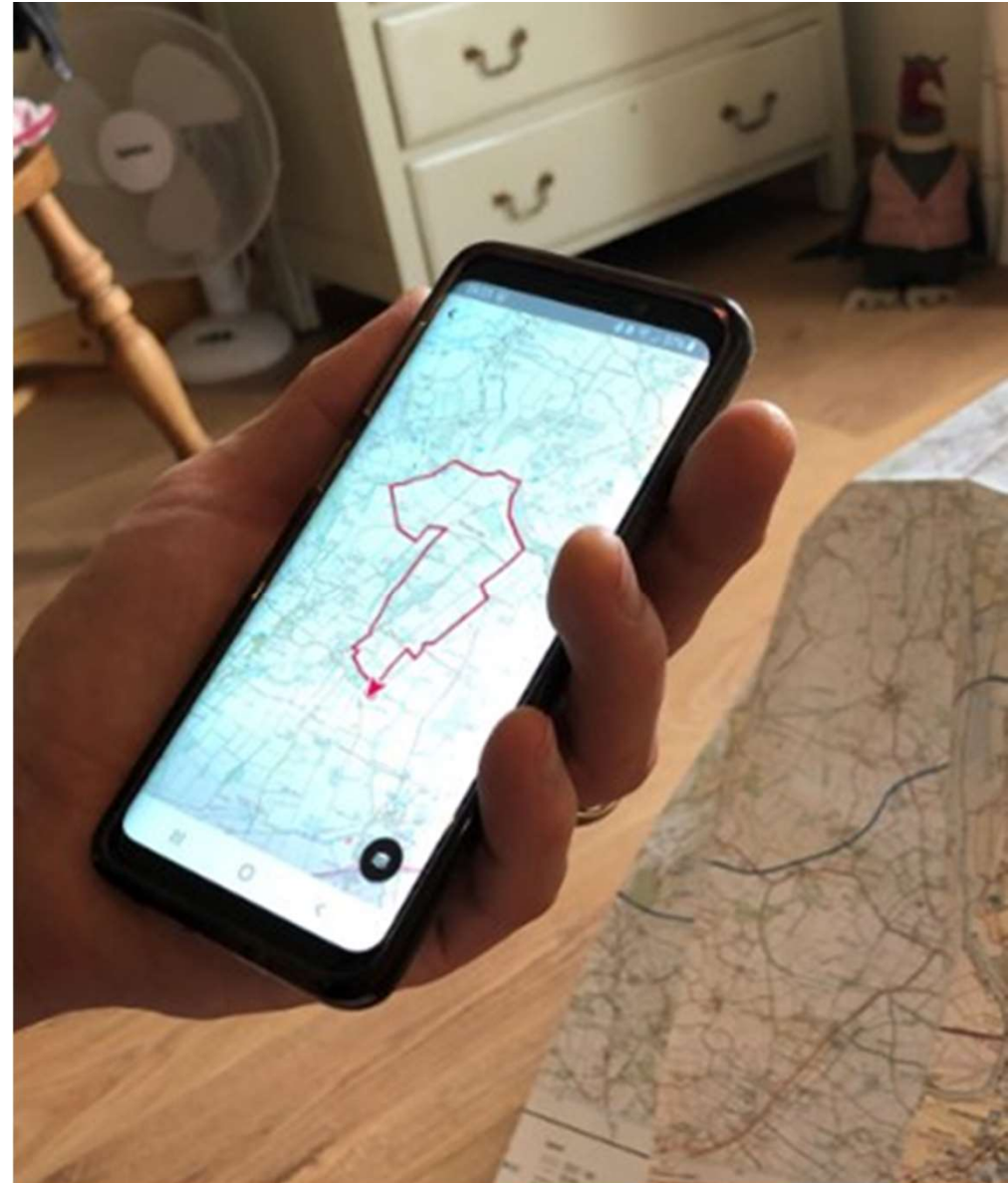




Imposter Syndrome

Helping strategies

* Work with the Fear



* Keep Perspective



* Connect to your *Why*



* Find Support and Connection



* Celebrate Progress



* Your Confidence Action Plan

1. Work with the Fear
2. Keep Perspective
3. Connect to Your Why
4. Find Support
5. Celebrate Your Progress

* Conclusion

- ✓ What is imposter syndrome?
- ✓ How accurate is it?
- ✓ Helping strategies

* Thank You

You can find me:

- ✓ Via my podcast ***Good Enough Counsellors***
- ✓ On Facebook
fb.me/goodenoughcounsellors
- ✓ Or at josephinehughes.com



* References

- ✓ Bravata, D.M. et al. (2019) 'Prevalence, predictors, and treatment of Impostor Syndrome: A systematic review', *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 35(4), pp. 1252–1275. doi:10.1007/s11606-019-05364-1.
- ✓ Brown, B. (2018) *Daring greatly how the courage to be vulnerable transforms the way we live, love, parent and lead*. London: Penguin Books Ltd.
- ✓ Cuddy, A.J.C. (2023) *Presence: Bringing your boldest self to your biggest challenges*. London: Orion Spring.
- ✓ Gilbert, E. (2016) *Big magic: Creative living beyond fear*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- ✓ Mak, K.K., Kleitman, S. and Abbott, M.J. (2019) 'Impostor phenomenon measurement scales: A systematic review', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00671.
- ✓ Nadal, K.L. et al. (2021) 'The legacies of systemic and internalized oppression: Experiences of microaggressions, imposter phenomenon, and stereotype threat on historically marginalized groups', *New Ideas in Psychology*, 63, p. 100895. doi:10.1016/j.newideapsych.2021.100895.
- ✓ Young, V. (2011) *The Secret Thoughts of Successful Women*. New York: Random House.

* References

Videos:

- ✓ Brown, B. (n.d.) *Why your critics aren't the ones who count* [YouTube video]. Available at: <https://youtu.be/8-JXOnFOXQk?si=vEu09RnCm6KVy1ll> (Accessed: 18 August 2025).
(watch from 4:11)
- ✓ Gilbert, E. (n.d.) *Go on a journey where fear is invited* [YouTube video]. Available at: <https://youtu.be/pgKhHeiah80?si=ibiMaw1-mpUkZlFY> (Accessed: 18 August 2025).

Podcast:

- ✓ Hughes, J. (2024) *Turning doubt into growth*. *Good Enough Counsellors Podcast* [Podcast]. Available at: <https://player.captivate.fm/episode/9886bad6-4ca2-434e-b58e-17f86635fa04/> (Accessed: 18 August 2025).
- ✓ Hughes, J. (2024) *Bounce back from marketing setbacks*. *Good Enough Counsellors Podcast* [Podcast]. Available at: <https://player.captivate.fm/episode/f7952348-eea7-477e-9c5b-6f91b3ac2686/> (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

Download:

- ✓ *Feel good enough as a counsellor: A free resource to ease self-doubt and remind you that you're not alone* [Online resource]. Available at: <https://mailchi.mp/c62923ec47e2/good-enough>