

#1 Do what you love scared and the confidence will come

Welcome to the 1st episode of From Stuck to Unstoppable podcast. I am your host Wambui Mburu and I am so thrilled to have you here.

Last week in the trailer, I talked about taking action even when you are scared. I believe that action is the antidote for fear. I hope you have been taking action on the things that matter to you. The things that you have promised yourself to do.

I wanted to share an event that woke me up to realize that life is too short and we must take action and do those things that scare us. The things that we were meant to do.

In April 2021, my family and I took a vacation to Sedona, Arizona. If you have never visited Arizona, it should be on your bucket list. As we were hiking on one of the beautiful Sedona trails, one of my daughters, Njeri, couldn't climb up the rocks anymore and she needed help to go down. We had not worn the right gear and had the wrong shoes. I grabbed her hand to bring her down. As we were descending, we reached a rock that was over a cliff. Its surface was smooth and I could feel my shoes sliding.

Thankfully Njeri was able to sit and anchor herself on the rock but my legs kept sliding. Trembling at the thought of sliding down the cliff, I squatted on the rock quickly gripping its edge as Njeri screamed for help for what seemed like a lifetime. Thankfully, by God's grace, a couple, who must have been professional hikers, you just could tell; and were in proper hiking gear and trekking poles- quickly rushed to us and brought Njeri and I to the bottom.

My friend, I was terrified, to say the least. This near-death experience made me realize how fragile and short life is. This incident gave me the ammunition to share my God-given talents with the world because as we all know life is a gift and it is fragile and the worst we can do to ourselves and others is to dim our light.

When I returned home I made it my mission to pursue my purpose unapologetically. I started coaching professional women and aspiring entrepreneurs who desired to thrive in their careers and life but were stuck in limiting beliefs of fear, self-doubt and low self-confidence. These are women who knew there was something more to what they were doing but we're stuck and didn't know where to start. I used a framework that helped them to break free from fear to be unstoppable and start thriving.

You may or may not know that I am passionate about the topic of imposter syndrome and I am always looking for ways to squash it and it's only fitting that I start this podcast with it.

Maybe you've struggled with self-doubt, fear of rejection, and comparison. Maybe you compare yourself to other entrepreneurs on social media or you think "who would ever want to hear what I have to say, or you have an inner critic that tends to be a little harsh, then this episode is for you.

Imposter syndrome is a feeling of self-doubt, and like you're not good enough despite evidence of high achievement. Imposter syndrome involves questioning achievements and blaming them on luck. At its core, it involves feeling like a fake or a fraud.

Let me give you an example of how imposter syndrome can creep in and make you stuck. Here's an email I received from one of my students:

"I'm a career lady who has reached the glass ceiling. As we speak, I am applying for a job posted in my organization, and imposter syndrome keeps telling me I don't have the right qualifications. I am stuck in this fear-filled rut and need a guiding hand to get myself out. I know I am qualified but I'm stuck because I know my comfort zone and it is safe."

I have struggled with self-doubt in my life and business and I think as much as you don't want to hear this, imposter syndrome is something that will not go away completely. Because as we grow in our businesses and move on to new levels in our careers there's always going to be a new devil as they say, so it's something that needs to be worked on daily. If you have experienced imposter syndrome, just know that you are not alone.

Imposter syndrome can be influenced by a deficiency within. Like a belief that you hold, or some things; such as the communities that you have grown up in whereby from an early age, one can be conditioned to believe that they are less than others. It can also be a result of the schools that we have attended or the jobs where we work or have worked, especially those environments that tolerate microaggression.

Imposter syndrome can also be exacerbated by discrimination or colonialism. When we experience discrimination or colonialism, people may explicitly or implicitly communicate to us that we do not belong because of groups that we belong to i.e our race, gender, ethnicity, sexual identity, ability, skills, age, social class, or your accent. These types of prejudices cause a lot of stress on an individual and can affect

their performance making one feel more like an imposter. While these types of prejudices are not a syndrome by themselves, they are external factors that need to be addressed by not just the afflicted person but by society as a whole.

One of the biggest challenges for me was a lack of belief in myself and my abilities because I did not feel like I fit in, especially being a foreigner in the US. That held me back because I would create something that I thought would be helpful to others, but just when it came to sharing with the world I would self-sabotage. I give an example of how a while back I created an online marketing course all about teaching aspiring entrepreneurs step-by-step how to start an online business and how after doing my first webinar I started doubting myself and felt not qualified in teaching the course and I put that course on the shelf and never sold it.

I am going to give you strategies on how you can overcome this monster.

1. Acknowledge you're not alone. Many people including Michelle Obama have suffered from Imposter syndrome. She talks about it in her autobiography. So it's ok to feel these insecurities but refuse to let them stop you.
2. Track your success. These are things that you have done that you've been successful at. What have you done that you've been successful? I have done a couple of things that I feel I was successful in. I was a Mary Kay, consultant for about three years. My children were about 2 years old at that time but I was not afraid to approach women so I could help them with their skin care needs. Within 2 years I had earned a career. You don't have to have done earth-shaking things; it could be something you did in middle school and you were successful. That's something that you should always go back to and say if I did it. I can do this.
3. Get therapy. As I mentioned earlier, imposter syndrome can be a result of deficiency within. You may need to talk to a therapist to heal any wounds that you may still have from a childhood experience.
4. One of the things that I do to overcome imposter syndrome is when I hear that inner critic coming into my thoughts asking me, who do you think you are, I always say "I'm not thinking about that" I have also built a toolbox filled with cards of Bible verses and quotes of things that I can always fall back to. When I feel that negative voice creeping into my thoughts I take out my card and read about what God says about me and why am here and why I'm doing what I'm doing.

5. As far as discrimination, is concerned, we really can't change people's attitudes, but there are ways to practice taking discrimination less personally. Knowing that you are not the cause of discrimination but that it is the biases of other people can make it weigh less on you. In my experience knowing that people were not treating me poorly because of something I had done, but because of society's biases toward people of certain groups has helped me not internalize discrimination and know that I am not less than just because I have an accent or I am a black woman.

The other thing you can do is affirm your identity and see what's great about you and your group. I know that this does not stop discrimination but it helps shift our focus from these negative experiences to how we want to show up. Now, for those of us who may not experience discrimination, I encourage you to take some time and understand how it is for other people who experience it. That will give an understanding that allows us to create inclusive environments for everyone. Because if individuals were made to feel welcomed, validated or listened to, they would not feel like they didn't belong, and racism-related imposter syndrome might disappear.

6. Surround yourself with a community of people who share the same ideals. Imposter syndrome makes us want to hide and not share our feelings with others. But being in a community with other entrepreneurs or other people who share the same goals and who are supportive can help you feel that you belong and that you are not alone. Vent to people who are safe and who can validate your feelings.
7. Take action. Action is the antidote to fear so when feelings of unworthiness come up take the best next step and the opportunity that you have to use your innate gift to share with others. Did you know that leaders don't lack fear? I read a book called Believe It, by Jamie Kern Lima. She's the founder of a billion-dollar cosmetic company called IT, and she says that she struggles with imposter syndrome.

Jamie says that she used to struggle with rosacea; a skin condition that made her feel unworthy but she used her condition to change other women's lives. So, even a billion-dollar company founder struggles with imposter syndrome. I want you to know that leaders also don't lack fear. What they do they just focus on what is possible.

I hope you got something valuable from this podcast. Deep down you know that you were made for more. Stop doubting yourself, be kind to yourself and keep taking action.