Marissa Levin (00:02)

Hello everyone and welcome to this episode of Motivational Mondays. For those of you tuning in just for the first time or haven't been with us in a while, I am the new host, Marissa Levin. I am also the Chief Human Resources Officer and Chief Culture Officer of NSLS and the ability to actually host this podcast and bring you experts in leadership is such an amazing opportunity for me. So I am so glad that you are here.

And we have a wonderful guest lined up today. And before I get to that, I just wanted to remind you that at the end of every episode, we invite you to visit our website and provide input about how you felt about the episode and any ideas that you have for us to do a better job. We are always looking for feedback from you so that we can create the best experience for you, our listeners.

So now let's get to our wonderful guest. Today we have Melody Wilding. She is a human behavior professor, executive coach, and she's the author of a wonderful book called Trust Yourself. I don't know about you, but sometimes I have difficulty trusting myself. Even though I have 35 years of leadership experience, there are times where I wake up and I actually feel like I don't know what I'm going to be doing during the day.

because I am not connected to my own trust. So experts like Melody that are out there that have books such as Trust Yourself, they are such great resources to remind all of us that we have everything that we need internally to rise and be our best versions of ourselves. I know that this ⁓ interview with Melody is gonna be very inspirational because she's talking about a topic that is universal, imposter syndrome.

where we all feel like we're faking it and that people are going to see through us in any moment. It's very common among high achievers. I know that I have struggled with it in the past, and I'm grateful that there are resources like Melody out there that help us to navigate this very common condition.

Melody Wilding (02:19)

What imposter syndrome is, psychologically speaking, this is not a disorder, it's a phenomenon. So it's kind of this configuration of different emotions and reactions that tends to show up for people. But I wanna put it out there that this is not a diagnosis, it does not mean something is wrong with you. The most successful people struggle with this. And that's the irony of it, is it does disproportionately affect people who are accomplished and seasoned in their careers, but they don't.

feel that way. so imposter syndrome is really about an inability to internalize your successes because it doesn't match your self image. So you don't see yourself as someone who has done great things, who is competent, who has a lot of value to offer. Your self image is more, I'm going to be found out at any second, right? I'm just trying to get by every day or I'm figuring it out. flying by the seat of my pants and

So when you get information that's, you did great. ⁓ that was so wonderful how you helped us out today, or you get a positive performance review. All of that just runs off of you. Like water off a duck's back. It does not sink in. It does not get integrated into your identity. But the bad stuff about how your colleague was picked ahead of you, or you didn't get as many likes on your social media posts, whatever it is, you start to make that mean.

That is evidence of your incompetence that you are not capable. And you think, see, here it is. My number one suggestion is to develop your brag file. You can call this whatever you want. If the term brag file doesn't resonate with you, that's fine. Maybe it's your smile file or your, you know, a pluses book, whatever you want to call it. This is a place where you are capturing, you're capturing the positive praise that you're getting. For example, I have an entire.

folder in my email that is just emails to make me feel good on rainy days about how I have helped people or how they've enjoyed my books, for example. And I can go to that when I'm having a down moment, when I'm doubting myself. And it reminds me of, okay, I can do this when I put things out into the world, it does have positive ripple effects. And so your brag file can also just be a place where you're reflecting on a weekly basis about

What's gone well? What am I proud of? What have I learned from that? And this reinforces your confidence. It starts retraining your brain to look for what is working instead of what's not working. And it comes in really handy whenever you need to do your performance review or you want to update your LinkedIn. You have all of that right there. You don't have to sit and rack your brain and think, my gosh, I haven't done anything worthwhile. You have it all right there for yourself.

I think for many people who are listening, it's like, I did A, I did B, I did C, I expect to be successful, right? And that sort of, that gold star mentality carries over into how we approach our careers where we think, I need to study, I need to prepare, I need to be ready and feel ready before I take on some sort of a challenge. So for me, it may be speaking to a bigger audience, for example, or working on a new book project or

I have to put myself out there in front of a lot of other people, generally speaking. And every time that fear comes up, can I do it? What will people think? I'm not an expert enough to do this. Who am I to say X, Y, Z? And so a couple of things that help me is when I hear myself saying that, who am I question, I turn it around on myself and I say, who am I not to do this? Who am I not?

to do this. Or if I ask myself, well, what if this happens? What if this bad thing happens? I forced myself to take it out to the absolute worst case scenario and actually picture that. How would I handle that? All right. I get up on stage. I completely forget what I'm going to say. How would I handle that in that moment? Right. And so I, I confront the worst case. I also flipped the what if and think about, well,

What if it works out? Right? Cause we don't often think about that. We've, think a lot about the worst case and trying to develop contingencies, but we don't often think about what's the best case scenario. And that can be a very valuable, perspective to take on as well. And I have to realize if I am, if I am telling myself, well, I need to do X before I do Y that's my signal. I need to dump, jump in and just do the thing.

Because if you wait until you feel 100 % ready, you're going to be waiting forever. You will always be moving the goalpost on yourself and say, well, just one certification, just one more course, just one more networking conversation, just, and you'll, you'll keep moving that forward. You'll never actually take that leap.

Marissa Levin (07:33)

That's it for this episode of Motivational Mondays. I hope you were inspired by Melody as much as I was learning about self-trust and imposter syndrome. We would love to hear your feedback on this episode and any suggestions that you have for making this experience even better. Please visit nsls.org backslash mm dash survey and share your thoughts.

Thank you for tuning in to Motivational Mondays and we look forward to being with you again. Have a wonderful week.