



February 8, 2024

You know that feeling when you are so excited about something, you can't wait to tackle it and totally crush it, and then all the nerves and negative self-talk show up to just RUIN the vibe?

Yeah, me too.

I had a recent experience where I had to MAJORLY confront some inner gremlins, and I want to share with you the tools I used to fight them (I picture myself as Sporty Spice playing [Katrina Highkick](#) in the "Say You'll Be There" video). #iykyk

Months ago, when I was asked to speak at this January's annual Media Insights and Engagement Conference, I couldn't believe it.

Organizers wanted me to address the crowd on resilience in a shifting media industry, offering insights on navigating career disruptions and redefining success. They believed my extensive industry experience and coaching tools would resonate.

I felt excited, and I quickly agreed.

And then...

Oof. 🙄

My saboteur showed up over and over again.

Below are some examples of what my inner voices told me - and how I fought them off, one by one...

## Inner Critic 🧠

After accepting the gig, my initial excitement decreased while self-doubt and second-guessing myself increased. Standing in front of a room full of industry leaders - including former colleagues - and telling them about my journey, which includes all of the struggles I faced as a leader as well as what I went through when I was laid off, felt waaaaay too vulnerable.

I deeply considered turning down the offer to speak.

## How I Fought It 🦊

I recognized the voices for what they are: ways to keep me safe and stay in my comfort zone.

I started to see the potential impact my story could have on a broader audience, both familiar and unfamiliar, and I realized that this was an opportunity I was meant for.

## Imposter Syndrome 🤖

Just a few weeks before the conference, I was unexpectedly asked to contribute to a Media Insights publication and join a conference panel about it. I deeply doubted my relevance and questioned if they had the right person.

"Are you sure you want *ME* for this? I left the business over 3 years ago!"

I was convinced they had the wrong Tracy, yet the organizers assured me that yes, my perspective on the landscape and disruption is in fact valuable, in part because I have a unique perspective in my new field.

## How I fought it 🦊

I realized that just because I'm no longer in the industry does not negate the fact that I am an expert in the field. In fact, I was able to offer up additional insights coming from a consumer's and executive coach's perspective.

Even though I was the only panelist who is no longer in the industry, I made meaningful contributions, learned from esteemed executives, and thoroughly enjoyed myself.

My impostor was telling me I didn't belong, when in fact, quite the opposite was true.

### **Negative Self-Talk** 😡

When it came time for my speech, I felt pressure to both deliver and to make sure that the audience connected enough to share *their* stories.

I was nervous. Who was I to be delivering a speech in front of all these industry leaders, some of whom I'd actually worked with for years? And what if what I said fell flat? Or worse, if the audience thought it was stupid?

### **How I fought it** 🧑🏻

I remembered all the evidence I have that proves I make an impact. I knew that even if what I shared only resonated with one person in that room, then I had done my job.

And guess what? It went great.

Was I perfect? Hell no. (Good thing I know there's no such thing as perfection!) Yet I was very happy with how I showed up and delivered. I was even able to engage with the audience enough that they shared their stories, too.



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## Learnings 📖

Looking back, I understand that the voices in my head that could have stood in the way of pulling all of this off were just noise.

✅ My former colleagues didn't judge me as I feared they would. In fact, some of them were my biggest cheerleaders! One even told me how happy she was to see *me* so happy.

✅ I also received so many wonderful responses from folks I've never met, including this from an industry veteran:

*"In the current landscape, so many of our colleagues live each day wondering if their career is on the path to high fives or hospice, so your presentation was incredibly timely, and your openness and empathy made for a stellar and impactful session. Well done."*

✅ I've made a multitude of new connections with so many impressive people.

✅ My doubts that arose because I'm "no longer in the industry" are, to put it bluntly, bullshit. My past informs my present and my future.

When your inner critic, impostor, saboteur, or whatever you call it, rears its ugly head, what evidence do you have to remind yourself that the voice is simply doing its best to hold you back? What can you do to push past it?

If I can get past it, I know you can, too.

Cheers, Tracy

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I offer 1:1 coaching, group coaching, team facilitation, and public speaking, and tailor offerings to the specific needs of you/your workplace. [Contact me to learn more.](#)

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Are you an emerging or established leader looking for support? Do you long to show up as your most confident self? Do you dream of the day when leadership feels effortless? If any of this describes you, [schedule a FREE 30 minute clarity call with me here](#) and make your struggles a thing of the past!