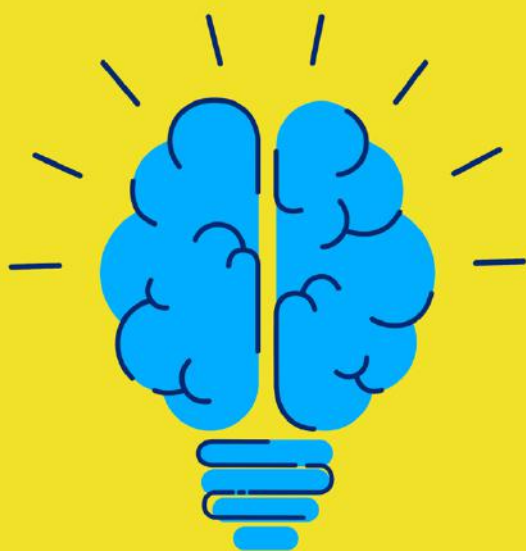


CONFIDENT



HOW TO BE CONFIDENT USING
THE SECRETS AND SUPERPOWERS
OF NEUROSCIENCE

CAROLINE BREWIN

INTRODUCTION

I couldn't believe it – I had done it again! Another stupid mistake, this one sent to all of the Global Senior Leadership Team. I had checked the email so many times because I knew I couldn't make yet another error. How on earth could I have missed it?

I was a few weeks into the biggest role of my life - Chief of Staff to the Head of a 25,000-person organisation. In all honesty, I was still trying to figure out what that actually meant, but I knew I had to take it - it would have been the first job title that anyone outside investment banking would have understood.

I had been in the investment banking industry since leaving university - more by mistake than design. But over the years I had done well, primarily through pure determination, hard work and being different from many of the 'geeky finance people.' This opportunity had been offered after a gruelling (but ultimately rewarding) few years doing two jobs - standard for me - leading two global teams and fixing all sorts of broken people and processes. I was told the new role would be an 'adventure' - working with an extraordinary leader I respected and could have fun with. It was the right step to take.

However, since I had started, I knew I had been 'winging' it. There wasn't a job specification, so I was trying to construct the roles and responsibilities from speaking to others in vaguely similar roles. It was a jack-of-all-trades job in some ways, with a focus on people, strategy, communications and engagement. Oh, and making sure the CEO was up to speed for all meetings and issues that popped up (an enormous task disguised as a footnote). There was so much to do. I was working 15-hour days, trying to get through it, but I was not even close to having my head above water.

I felt 6 feet under.

And I was not getting any feedback on how it was going. My direct boss was a very high achiever - an incredibly bright man with the ability to process and recall information at a remarkable level. He loved the numbers and minutiae, as well as going at 1,000 mph. While I was used to a fast pace, this was something else. I was trying so hard to keep up with both his and my very high standards, my stress levels started to rocket. The only feedback on how I was doing was small eyebrow raises or, worse, silence on the growing mistakes.

In the absence of the feedback that I needed, I assumed the worst. My mind felt wound up in a tight, clenched fist, unable to think clearly and use the skills that I knew I had. I pictured being sat down and told, 'It's not working out.' The humiliation! My head was whirring, my stomach was sinking and I was hardly sleeping, worrying about it. It got to a point where I had to take action - do or die.

So, I asked my boss for a meeting. I told him how I was doing my best but that I was struggling with the volume and pace of work: 'I feel like you are a Japanese high-speed train and I'm clinging on to the side for dear life.'

The response was unexpected: 'Caroline, you're doing an amazing job! We are so happy - keep it up.' The relief was palpable, as if a switch had flicked in my mind.

From that point forward, I stopped making stupid mistakes. I could think clearly and creatively and problem-solve with an attitude of 'give it a go.' My confidence was restored, and I was off and running.

What happened in that scenario is part of why I am here today, and I will explain this puzzle to you in the coming pages. The other reason is that I struggled with confidence in so many different parts of my life. There were times at school when I was bullied (in the horrible, subtle way only girls can do), and it made me miserable, doubting myself and everything I did. In my teens, the wonder of hormones sent my skin on an angry

journey, with horrible pimples a regular and uncontrollable occurrence. I tried to 'carry on', but it was so disheartening when I knew people were talking about me behind my back. I couldn't even bear to look in the mirror because of what would look back at me each morning.

Then, through my career, I would have what I call 'YoYo Confidence' – feeling like I was killing it one day and falling apart the next, being choked with anxiety. I often suffered from terrible imposter syndrome, which would completely strangle me from taking action and turned me into a perfectionist. I struggled so much with saying no that I ran myself into the ground, probably earning less than the minimum wage with the hours I did.

My solution to hiding my fear of being found out was to work harder, have higher standards, and not even let them find out that I didn't know. Don't get me wrong; there were times I knew I was doing really well, but when I look back, my life would have been so different had I understood what I do now.

What would I have done if I had understood the truth about confidence?

Taken control of my career

Believed in myself and my capabilities

Challenged personal and professional relationships that needed tough conversations to be better

Asked for the promotion, pay and roles I deserved

Asked for what I really needed in a relationship

Enjoyed my life more, rather than worrying about what I looked like or how much I weighed

Why didn't I do it?

Because I didn't know how.

Because I doubted my capabilities.

Because I hated conflict

Because I was frightened that I would be rejected

Because deep down, I felt like I didn't deserve them.

But then I got to know myself deeply. I 'did the work' with a coach and eventually decided to train as a professional coach myself, alongside my banking career. I decided to take it further and learned about applied neuroscience for coaching. Whilst this doesn't make me a neuroscientist, nor this book a medical guide, it was like everything just fell into place for me – so much of my life suddenly made sense.

Neuroscience, the study of how our brains work, is the key to understanding why we sometimes doubt ourselves, don't think clearly, or hold back from grabbing life's biggest opportunities. It is the most incredible partner for coaching, understanding relationships, organisational strategy, leadership, and so much more. Understanding the 'brain-why' is a foundation for creating the 'how' to move forward effectively with compelling outcomes. Understanding how my brain worked drove me to have that conversation with my boss, and it is so essential for you to know to enable you to be your best.

I know you, too, have dark thoughts telling you that you aren't good enough. I know you feel total terror sometimes when you walk into a room and have to present. I know you've had that sick feeling when you feel like you've forgotten everything you learned. You feel like everyone else is confident, brilliant, and shining. Why not me?

So, what can you do about it? Whatever stage of life you are at, you can learn to be more confident in a totally authentic way.

In fact, this book aims to create empowered, positive, confident readers, maximising your incredible authentic potential for success in this world. You have so much more to give, and I'm here to help you release it.

However, I bet, like me, you've picked up many books full of promises of transformation but no tools; platitudes but no real punchy substance; or packed full of research but no application. I've felt the same way from years of reading hundreds of books and having some of the best training

money could buy - so often I've been disappointed. The promises didn't materialise with anything **tangible that could** help, or felt like a chocolate fireguard – very nice, but not with any real substance or methodology for the 'how.' It's like being in a dark room, where someone tells you to turn the light on but not how to find the light switch!

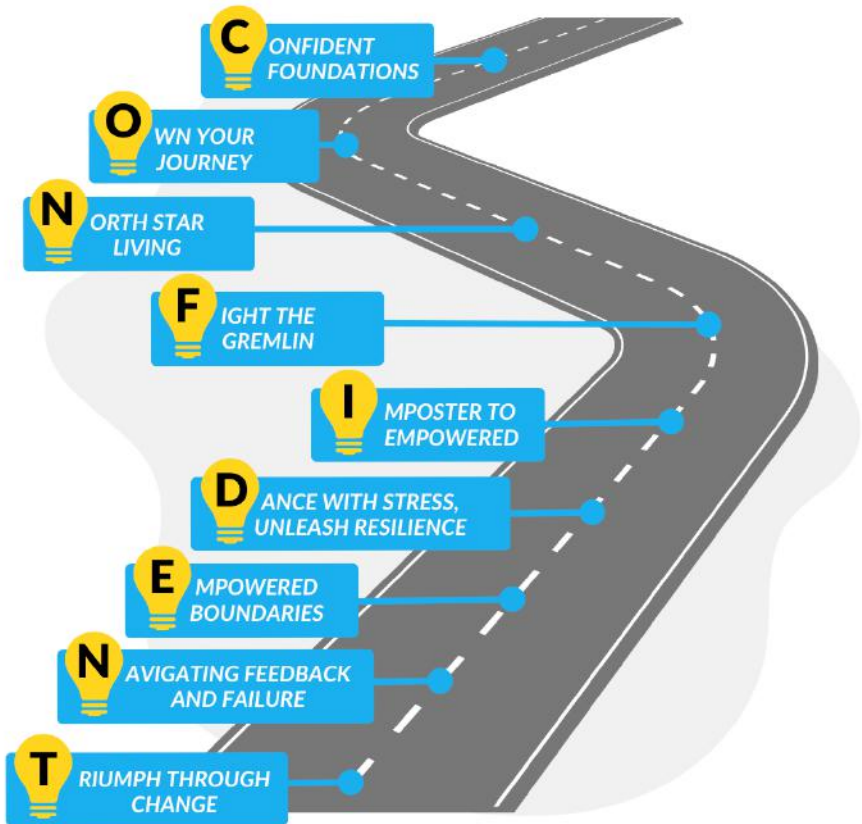
So, instead, this is what I bring you with 'Confident.' Throughout this book, we'll explore together the latest neuroscience insights and research and show you simple, practical ways to apply them to your daily life. I'm not just giving you statements but tools, exercises, techniques and research that you can integrate and apply. You will have lots of different levers you can pull to shift your confidence, and you must try them and **keep using them**. That's because:

Confidence is a muscle – you have to keep exercising it if you want it to grow.

You'll discover how to quiet your inner critic, manage stress more easily, and respond to life's big challenges calmly. We will do this using our 9-step framework: **C.O.N.F.I.D.E.N.T.**

- C** – CONFIDENT FOUNDATIONS
- O** – OWN YOUR JOURNEY
- N** – NORTH START LIVING
- F** – FIGHT THE GREMLIN
- I** – IMPOSTER TO EMPOWERED
- D** – DANCE WITH STRESS, UNLEASH RESILIENCE
- E** – EMPOWERED BOUNDARIES
- N** – NAVIGATING FEEDBACK AND FAILURE
- T** – TRIUMPH THROUGH CHANGE

THE C.O.N.F.I.D.E.N.T. FRAMEWORK



As we go through the C.O.N.F.I.D.E.N.T. framework, first, I'll take you through some of the most critical concepts, exercises, research and tools about confidence and your brain. This information gives you the reason **why** you respond the way you do. That's crucial because when you

understand why, you can break down the judgement of the behaviour itself and, from there, move forward in an entirely different way.

Then, you will learn the fundamental building blocks for living your personal and professional lives in a way that bursts with YOU.

You'll gain a deeper trust in your skills and capabilities, with the confidence to step into new roles and stretch opportunities. You'll better understand the brain and emotions, reducing your stress levels and improving your overall well-being and mental health. We will address the biggest challenges you face in life, the realities of how these show up, and actionable steps to deal with them. These reflections and lessons will allow you to reframe failure, to see opportunity and growth.

With more confidence in who you are and what you have to bring to the table, you will speak up more - raising the issues that need to be discussed at the right time rather than festering. Not pretending, not anxious about what people think, not judging yourself, but enjoying your life in a totally different, joyful, authentic way. With your brain in a positive state, you can drive innovation, perform better and create better outcomes in all of your life, because your brain is operating at its highest level.

This will all be blended with real-life stories, both from the ordinary and extraordinary, as well as my experience in 18 years of global corporate life. At the end of each chapter, you'll get a cheat sheet of the Key Confidence Insights and Power Moves, so you can easily reference the learnings and actions from each.

We aren't here to change who you are. We are here to unlock the confident, resilient version ***already within you***. Imagine having the tools to turn self-doubt into self-belief, to speak up and to step boldly into new roles and opportunities. Imagine if you could approach every moment with genuine, grounded confidence.

With just a little bit of courage, and a sprinkling of trust, let me take

you on a journey to unapologetic confidence.

UNLEASH YOUR FULL POTENTIAL WITH **CONFIDENT**. THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO BOOST SELF-ESTEEM, SELF-BELIEF, AND BUILD UNAPOLOGETIC CONFIDENCE.

Held back by your Inner Critic or Impostor Syndrome? Missing opportunities or not reaching your full potential? **Confident** can help you change that.

This unique book uses neuroscience, backed by exclusive research, to build unshakable confidence through a fresh, entertaining, positive approach. With clear, practical actions and easy steps, you'll break free from self-doubt, manage anxiety, and find your authentic voice.

Featuring real-life stories, actionable strategies, and expert insights, **Confident** is your roadmap to transforming your mindset and living with courage and authenticity.

Inside, You'll Discover:

- ✓ **Neuroscience as Your Secret Weapon:** Leverage brain science to conquer self-doubt, stress, and anxiety.
- ✓ **Proven Tools and Techniques:** Practical methods to beat that impostor syndrome, reduce stress, and excel under pressure.
- ✓ **Master Life's Big Moments:** Tackle challenges confidently—from career pivots and redundancy to motherhood and menopause.
- ✓ **Easy Exercises and Cheat Sheets:** Simple tools to build lasting confidence and positivity every day.

Ready to transform your confidence and live the
life you've always wanted?

Make neuroscience your secret weapon and start
your journey to becoming unapologetically you.

INCLUDES
BRAIN-BASED
TOOLKIT AND
EXERCISES

CAROLINE BREWIN

Caroline, CEO of Brain Powered Coaching, is an Executive and Confidence coach with 18 years of Global Investment Banking experience. A published author, trainer, and sought-after speaker, she's a recognised thought leader in the Neuroscience of Confidence. Through her unique approach, passion and personal journey, she inspires audiences globally to uncover their strengths and lead with authenticity.

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