

A GUIDE FROM MARIA NASIEDKINA · ICF & GALLUP COACH

Dynamic *confidence*

A coaching map for women who already have a lot — and are ready to take the step they've long been afraid of.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

If you're reading this

Let's be honest.

If you downloaded this guide, you're most likely someone who already has a lot. Experience. Education. Certificates. Results you can be proud of.

But something is holding you back.

- You can't raise your prices, even though you outgrew them long ago.
- You don't dare to start speaking about yourself — because you're afraid of being judged.
- You feel an inner block every time you think about that one step you've needed to take for so long.

If this resonates — you're not alone. And there's nothing wrong with you.

Let me be honest: **this guide is not a lifeline**. It won't make you 100% confident. But I hope it gives you two things:

1. A push toward one small step — toward what you want but fear.
2. A few new insights about yourself that will slowly begin to change how you see yourself.

It's not a magic pill. It's a map.

— Maria

Why confidence “disappears” precisely in the strong

Most people think confidence disappears in those who’ve achieved little. In fact — it’s the opposite.

Confidence most often wavers in women who have **outgrown their previous level**. The old rules no longer work — and the new ones aren’t assembled yet. What brought you here no longer takes you further. And that’s disorienting.

Confidence is not a character trait. It’s the skill of acting in new ways even when you doubt yourself.

To acknowledge fear — and not stop. To try new things without guarantees. To lean on your talents, not others’ judgment. This is what I call **dynamic confidence** — the ability to adapt to any situation while staying steady within yourself.

And the good news: this can be learned. It all starts with seeing where your footing is right now.

Three facts that lift the guilt — and give hope

01 · Self-doubt is a companion of success

The impostor phenomenon was first described by psychologists Clance and Imes (1978) — precisely in **successful women**. Today ~70% of people experience it at least once in life, most often the most competent. A meta-analysis of 100+ studies: women experience it more often and more intensely. Not from less ability — from the stereotypes we grew up in.

02 · Confidence is a skill, not a trait

Albert Bandura (self-efficacy theory) proved confidence is **not innate**. The most powerful way to strengthen it isn't motivation, but **the experience of your own success**: small real wins, repeated again and again.

03 · The fastest path is through your strengths

Gallup research: when a person draws on their talents daily, they are **6× more likely to be engaged** at work and 3× more likely to report a high quality of life. Act from your strength → success comes more naturally → success builds confidence. The circle closes.

What this means for you: your doubts are not proof that something is wrong with you. Confidence can be built. And the fastest path is through your talents, not fighting your weaknesses.

HOW TO WORK WITH THE GUIDE

This isn't a scored test. *It's a short journey.*

- 1 Four questions that start it all
- 2 Proof that you already know how
- 3 Your resource — energy and strengths
- 4 Working with fear — so it becomes your ally
- 5 Defuse the worst
- 6 Your three-step plan + support
- 7 A letter to your future self

Take a notebook or notes on your phone and write down your answers. What's written by hand works in a completely different way than what's merely "thought."

How long it takes depends on the depth you're ready to go to. Don't try to do it all in one sitting. You can (and even should) do it iteratively: return to the questions several times, one block at a time. Give yourself as much time as you need.

01

Four questions that start it all

Take your time. Write honestly — no one will see this but you.

1. What exactly are you NOT confident about?

Not “in general.” Specifically — in your right to raise your price? In having something to say?

2. What do you want to do — but are afraid to?

3. What happens if you DON'T do it?

4. What happens if you DO it?

These four answers are the foundation of the whole guide. Keep them in front of you.

02

Proof that you already know how

You've already done scary things. Many times. And it worked out. You've just gotten used to dismissing it: "oh, it was nothing." Reclaim that proof.

Write down 10 things you did — and they worked, even though it was scary.

The most important question:

What helped you do it?

- Which of these was the scariest — and how did I get through it?
- What is my recurring "engine of courage"?
- How do I switch it on now — for what scares me today?

This is proof: you are a person who knows how to overcome obstacles and fears.

What you lean on

Before working with fear and making a plan — remember what you lean on. Acting from your strength is always easier than from emptiness.

1. Which tasks give you energy? Where do you feel in flow?

2. Which tasks drain your energy?

3. Now look at your challenge. What should you do *more* of in relation to it — and *less* of?

Example. Your challenge — to start speaking about yourself publicly, but it's scary. You notice: energy comes from *explaining complex things simply, one-on-one* — for example, talking about yourself through an interview. It's drained by *trying to sound "expert" and flawless, making reels or long videos*. Conclusion: do **more** — go on an interview as a step toward visibility; **less** — forcing yourself to make reels you can't stand. The answers can even point to the network where it's most natural for you to show up. Where your strength is — that's your easiest path into what you fear.

03

Fear is not your enemy. *Fear is your friend.*

The most harmful advice is “just overcome your fear.” Fear doesn’t need to be overcome. It protects you — it’s the oldest guardian that kept humans safe from danger for thousands of years. It’s on your side.

The problem is when fear turns from a guardian into a jailer. When it doesn’t warn, but paralyzes.

The goal is not to stop being afraid. The goal is for it to be scary — but not paralyzingly scary.

A big step (“launch the whole thing”) scares you into freezing. A small one (“write to one person”) scares you just enough to feel it — and still do it. The same direction. A different dose of fear.

Ask yourself:

- What exactly is this fear protecting me from?
- What is a real threat, and what is an old habit of over-insuring?
- What size of step would make fear a helper, not a wall?

04

Defuse the worst

Fear is strongest while it stays a vague “what if something bad happens.” This exercise is to name that “bad” specifically and build a response to it. When fear has a clear action plan, it stops paralyzing. Go through the three steps below.

Step 1. Describe your WORST-case scenario.

The thing you fear most if you take this step. One. The worst.

Step 2. If it happens — what will you do? Three concrete actions.

Even the worst is not the end, but a situation you’ll handle.

Step 3. Who could support you, just in case?

Neuroscience explains: the brain fears the unknown — it won’t let us into a dark room, to keep us safe. When you name the worst specifically and find a response, you add light to that room. And fear retreats: now you see it’s not an abyss, but a step.

That was a plan for catastrophe. Next we’ll build something different — a plan for moving forward. These are different things.

05

Your plan: three steps at “3–4,” not at “10”

Imagine a fear scale from 0 to 10, where **10 paralyzes** (impossible to move) and **0 isn't scary at all**. The thing you fear most scares you at “10” — that's exactly why it hasn't been done for years. We do NOT take that step. Instead, break your goal into three small steps, each scaring you only at “3–4”: enough to feel scared — but entirely possible. Next to each, write how much it scares you.

Step 1 • fear ____/10

When I'll do it:

Step 2 • fear ____/10

When I'll do it:

Step 3 • fear ____/10

When I'll do it:

Above 5 — the step is too big, break it down. Not scary at all — the step won't move anything. Look for “scary, but I can.”

06

Who will support you

No one makes a breakthrough alone. For each step, name **a specific person** — not “someone,” but a name. And next to it — exactly what you’ll ask for.

Step 1 — who will support me:

I'll ask for:

Step 2 — who will support me:

I'll ask for:

Step 3 — who will support me:

I'll ask for:

Asking for support is not weakness. It's also a step of confidence.

THE MOST IMPORTANT EXERCISE

A letter to your *future self*

Write a letter to yourself — the one you'll become in 6 months. But **as if the challenge is already behind you**. As if you've already done it.

This isn't self-deception — it's a way to let your brain see the result as real and start moving toward it.

Write about:

- what challenge stood before me at the start
- what my self-doubt was back then
- what helped me overcome it
- which three steps I took and who was beside me
- what happened when I dared
- what I understood about myself. Who I became.

“Dear me, six months have passed. I'm writing to you — the one who hesitated so much back then...”

Schedule this letter to yourself 6 months from now at futureme.org — a free service for letters to the future. On the day you've forgotten about this guide, the letter arrives — and you'll see how much you've grown.

Take the first step this week

If you've made it this far and done the exercises — you've already done more than most. You hold three doable steps, people who'll support you, and a plan for the worst case.

This guide is a map. It gives direction and a first push. But a map is not the journey walked. Deep, lasting confidence is easier to build when someone is beside you who sees you more clearly than you can right now.

That's exactly the work we do together in the **"Dynamic Confidence"** program. Over 5 months you'll rebuild your professional identity on the basis of your real talents (with the full Gallup CliftonStrengths34 assessment), gain clear direction, and walk away with a concrete breakthrough — not a "feeling," but a result.

I take only 10 clients a year. Because this work requires depth.

[Book a discovery call →](#)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Maria Nasiedkina

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For eight years I’ve worked with women leaders — helping them rebuild their professional identity and take the step they’ve long been afraid of. In that time I’ve delivered over 1,000 hours of one-on-one coaching with leaders, founders and experts.

My work rests on evidence-based methodology: I’m an ICF-certified coach, a Gallup-Certified Strengths Coach and a brain-based coach (NeuroLeadership Institute). I studied at the University of Geneva and the University of Bristol. But most importantly — I’ve seen hundreds of times how confidence stops being “a trait you lack” and becomes a skill you can build step by step.

I believe you can’t become just anyone — but you can become far more fully yourself. And that’s where real confidence begins.

If this guide resonated with you — I’d be glad to get to know you better.

Book a discovery call →