



It's lonely at the top...



Dr. Deb Carlin
Psychologist

George is the CEO of a successful company. He has all the characteristics of a great leader – smart, charming and cool headed. He has a strong conscience and the ability to be vulnerable while maintaining his strength and position. He is impressive.

He recently negotiated a business deal that is exciting and promising. During our meeting, I'm observing that he is uncomfortable and tense. I ask him why he looks tired and seems edgy. He deflects my observations as allergies coming on. In fact, he's terrified that this deal might be beyond his company's skill set. ***He's questioning everything, including himself, and hoping no one notices.***

Freud was actually correct when he said that people leak. There is no way to fake anything about how we think and feel. In her classic work, ***The Imposter Phenomenon: Overcoming The Fear That Haunts Your Success***, Dr. Rose Clance explains that 70% of successful Americans doubt that success is genuinely theirs, they claim it's luck or connections or timing but never just their own skill and intelligence.

This habit of negative self-perception can be used to keep a person motivated but only if it is contained and not to the point of panic. Panic is very often quelled with recognition and controlled, directed, clear thinking that accompanies a smart plan of action.

Our conversation lasted about 20 minutes. George and I developed a blueprint of action, including which experts he could recruit to add to the talent base needed for the project. Panic dissipated. With a vision of the team he'd put into place, ***suddenly it wasn't so lonely.***

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