

BUILDING SELF CONFIDENCE

Chandra Krintz

Professor, Computer Science Dept.

UC Santa Barbara

CRA-W Cohort 2015



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

Self Confidence

A feeling of trust in one's abilities, qualities, and judgment

- Too little can lead to not taking on enough risk, a lack of success, decreased self confidence
- Too much can lead to taking on too much risk, frequent failure to deliver, letting down colleagues/collaborators



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

Self Confidence

Defn: A feeling of trust in one's abilities, qualities, and judgment

- **Two primary contributors**

- Self efficacy

- Belief in your capacity to produce an achievement
- To exert control over your motivation, behavior, and social env

- Self esteem

- Your overall evaluation of yourself and **your right to be happy**



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

How self confident are you ?

High Self Confidence

- Do what you believe to be right, even if criticized for it
- Willing to take risks
- Admit your mistakes and learn from them
- Extol your virtues often
- Accept compliments graciously: “Thanks, I really worked hard on that paper.”

Low Self Confidence

- Govern your behavior based on what others think
- Stay in your comfort zone
- Work hard to cover up your mistakes
- Wait for others to congratulate you
- Dismiss compliments: “Oh that paper was nothing really, anyone could have done it.”

Take The Quiz

- How self confident are you?

http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTCS_84.htm



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy

- **Four sources** (How you see your abilities)
 - **Mastery experiences** – things in the past that you have succeeded at ---- **continuing evidence!**
 - ...



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy

- **Four sources** (How you see your abilities)
 - **Mastery experiences** – things in the past that you have succeeded at
 - Success begets success
 - 1) Believe that **your hard work/effort** brought about the success
 - If it comes too easy however, it contributes nothing
 - Take some risk
 - 2) Believe that **you are responsible** for it
 - Versus your success being due to luck or fate



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy

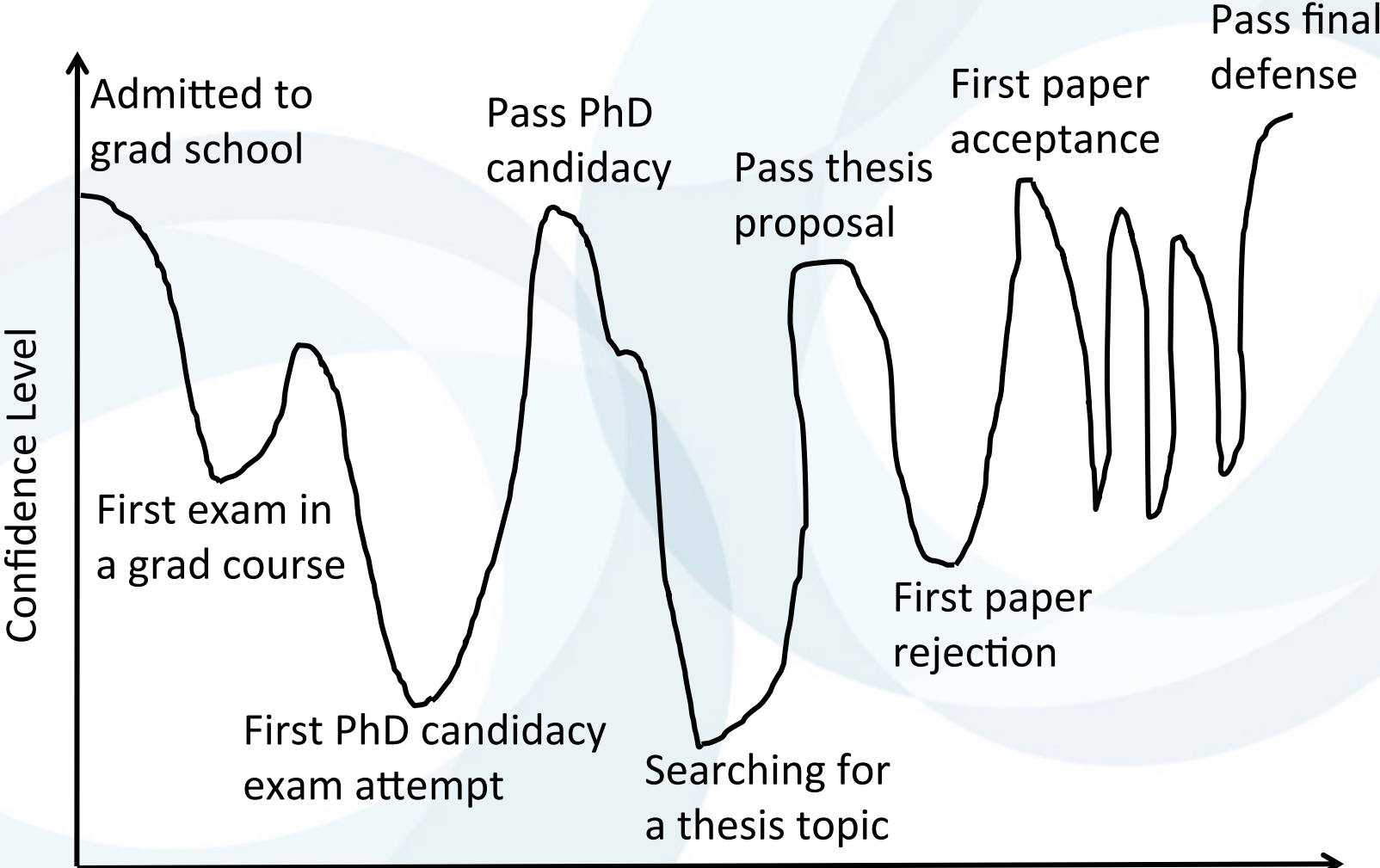
- **Four sources** (How you see your abilities)
 - **Mastery experiences** – things in the past that you have succeeded at ---- **continuing evidence!**
 - **Vicarious experiences** – seeing people similar to you succeed
 - **Social persuasion** – hearing from others that you are capable
 - **Emotional status** – staying positive, managing your stress



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

Grad Student Confidence Over Time



Progress Through Your PhD

“Every CS PhD student I have seen, including myself, had at least one period during which they are convinced that their dissertation topic is utterly worthless.”

Gerald Estrin, Professor Emeritus, Computer Science,
UCLA



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

**The good news is that self confidence
can be learned and developed.**

It's something you must work on.



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

10 TIPS FOR BUILDING SELF CONFIDENCE



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

#1: Admit The Problem

- **Take stock of where you are**, think about where you want to go, and recommit yourself to getting there
- **Remember that no one is perfect.** Even the *most* confident people have insecurities and fail often.
- **Accept that life is full of bumps** in the road and have faith that things will be better tomorrow



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

#2: Find Support

- Find someone **safe** you can talk frankly to
 - People you trust, who won't judge you in future based on your current state of self confidence
- **Role-play for upcoming situations**
- **Surround yourself with nurturing friends.**
 - Watch out for those who criticize others to compensate for their own confidence issues – **Micro-aggressions** from Session I!
 - Notice and **stop** yourself when/if you do it to others!
- **Be there to support others when they need it**
 - Let them know that you think they are capable! **Micro-affirmations!**



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

#3: Establish Reachable Goals

- **Make a list of things that will get you moving towards your PhD goals**
- **Identify the first *small* step needed to accomplish each item on the list and have a plan for *making* that first step**
 - For that rejected paper, let the reviews “age” for awhile
 - Then, reread them. Ask yourself what was good about the paper and what needs improved.
 - Develop a plan for revisions and resubmission



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

#4: Recognize Your Successes

- **Do not ever, ever put yourself down**
- **Try to avoid obsessing about your failures**
- **Make a list of your recent successes, then read the list (out loud if necessary) back to yourself**
 - Think about your strengths and what you've achieved so far
 - Give yourself permission to take pride in those achievements



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

#5: Take A Break

- **Take some time off to refresh, reflect, and enjoy**
 - Find time to exercise regularly – go for a run, bike, hike, swim, ...
 - Shut off all devices for a time
 - Have a nice meal and/or cook with friends/loved ones
 - Treat yourself to something nice
 - Help someone else



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

#6: Beware Of The “Triple Low”

- **Your experimental results don't support your great hypothesis;** your great paper was just rejected; ...
- **You just saw that person** you have such a crush on with another date; you and your partner had a huge fight this morning; ...
- **It's the first day of your period** and that pimple just erupted ... again; those 5 pounds are back; ...



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

#6: Beware Of The “Triple Low”

- **Your experimental results don't support your great hypothesis; your great paper was just rejected; ...**
- **You just saw that person** you have such a crush on with another date; you and your partner had a huge fight this morning; ...
- **It's the first day of your period** and that pimple just erupted ... again; those 5 pounds are back; ...
- Don't
 - Make big decisions, do something risky, decide to quit, **react**
 - At least, give yourself 48 hours



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

#7: Exhibit Self Confidence

- **Speak slowly and clearly and loud enough**
 - A person who thinks they aren't worth listening to will often speak quickly and/or softly
- **Stand tall and proud**
 - Don't slouch, don't walk around with your head held low
 - Shake hands with strength and energy
 - Look your conversation partner in the eye
- **Accept greetings and complements gracefully**
 - When asked how you are doing, say with enthusiasm "Just great." Don't roll your eyes, groan, and say "I'm just swamped".



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

#8: Be Extra Prepared

- **Go the extra mile**
 - Study like crazy for that exam
 - Spend more time in the lab running those additional experiments
 - Prepare a few slides for the next group meeting
 - Write, rewrite, rewrite that paper
 - Practice that talk again and again – in front of friends and not-so-friends
- **Just beware of perfectionism**
 - (or you will never finish)



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

#9: Take A Risk A Day

- **Challenge yourself everyday**
 - Don't be afraid to push yourself, a little bit of pressure is good for you
 - Remember: If it comes too easy, it will not contribute to your self confidence
- **Make it a habit**



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

#10: Stick To Your Principles

- **Know your principles**
 - The **Golden Rule**
 - Your passion
 - Your lines in the sand (integrity, honesty, work ethic)
- **Then actually *live* them**
- If you don't have something you believe in, you don't have anything. If you don't stand for something, you will fall for anything. - *Unknown*



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

Beware of the Imposter Syndrome

- **Regardless** of success achieved or proof of competence, you are sometimes convinced that you do not deserve it
 - Proof is dismissed as luck, timing, or a result of deceiving others into thinking you are more intelligent/competent than you are
 - It is particularly common among successful women and typically associated with academics. It is also widely found among graduate students and first generation college students.



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

Instead... Believe In Yourself

No one will believe in you until you believe in yourself

“Somehow I can’t believe that there are any heights that can’t be scaled by a [person] who knows the secret of making dreams come true. This special secret, it seems to me, can be summarized in the four C’s. **They are curiosity, confidence, courage, and constancy, and the greatest of all is confidence.** When you believe in a thing, **believe in it all the way, implicitly and without question.**”

- Walt Disney



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

Instead... Believe In Yourself

No one will believe in you until you believe in yourself

“I will not be someone other than who I am. I will fight to make my stand. Cause what is livin’ if I can’t live free? What is freedom, if I can’t be me?”

Bonnie Raitt, I Will Not Be Broken



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

Instead... Believe In Yourself

No one will believe in you until you believe in yourself

And, smile often 😊



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women

Credits

- CRA-Women (especially Julia Hirschberg, Carole-Jean Wu, Esin Saka, Maria Klawe, Janie Irwin, Mary Lou Soffa) presenters at previous Grad Cohorts
- Usefulweb sites
 - wikiHow: How to Build Self Confidence
<http://www.wikihow.com/Build-Self-Confidence>
 - MindTools: Building Self-Confidence
<http://www.mindtools.com/selfconf.html>
 - 25 Killer Actions to Boost Your Self-Confidence
<http://zenhabits.net/2007/12/25-killer-actions-to-boost-your-self-confidence/>



CRA-W

Computing Research Association
Women