



## The PhD Leader Series

### Connecting to the core of the PhD experience

- Finding motivation and know your priorities
  - Confidence, Self-Doubt and the Impostor Syndrome
- Making the most of supervision (and your wider PhD team)
  - Why you procrastinate and how to stop it
- Identify personal strategies to experience the fulfilment of everyday balance
  - Learn from the collective wisdom of the group

How to manage your PhD in a way that brings out the best in you while sustaining your personal resilience and well-being? The PhD experience can pull you in all sorts of directions as you learn more about your field, navigate the desires of your supervisors, grapple with the challenges of fieldwork or struggle with your writing. And there is balancing all that with the rest of life. The PhD experience is varied, with PhD researchers sometimes finding they are overwhelmed, feel a lack of direction, struggle to sustain motivation, lose confidence and don't always know the best way to find support.

While the challenges involved in doing a PhD are varied and reflect the diverse nature of the PhD experience, there are common themes in self-management that interfere with you being at your best. For example, focus, motivation, procrastination, confidence, feeling overwhelmed, anxiety, fear of failure, perfectionism, goal setting, working with supervisors, isolation, career concerns and personal resilience.

The overall aim of the workshop series is to enhance your effectiveness in managing the PhD experience - whether you are at the beginning or near the end. Each workshop starts from your experience now, and through interactive and experiential exercises, engages in how to be more effective in addressing the particular challenges you face in your PhD, now and in the future. By asking different questions, exploring alternative perspectives, and by trying things out, you'll become more aware of what's possible for you, recognise choices you can make, and build trust in yourself in moving forwards.

In addition are the one-day workshops : *The PhD Leader*, *Pause with Purpose*, and *Writehere, RightNow*

Workshop/Webinar	Content
<p><b>Finding motivation and know your priorities</b></p>	<p>Keeping motivated isn't always easy, especially if the challenge is too hard, the work is becoming monotonous, or you're unclear where it is heading. Goal setting is at its best when it enables you to become focused in the present moment, motivated by what you are doing. At its worst the pressure of the goal can be the very source of problems and nurture fear and self-doubt, and limit possibilities. In this session we'll be exploring the use of 'goals' in creative ways to generate and maintain motivation. A key part will be gaining clarity over what's important and how paying attention to your personal values impacts on motivation and enjoyment.</p> <p>Key areas covered will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- keeping balance in your PhD and the rest of life</li> <li>- living your values each day</li> <li>- the relationship between your vision and more immediate goals</li> <li>- getting specific while maintaining the thrill: goal setting for motivation</li> </ul> <p>Previous participants said they learnt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "That prioritising the different aspects of your professional and personal life take more than just planning out each step – makes you really consider your values and what you really want out of the PhD"</li> <li>• "How to refocus from performance to potential, and the important of values and balance"</li> <li>• "Productive- it gave me a specific action and project to take on for my next work step. I've been wrestling with that problem for weeks"</li> <li>• "Motivation comes from within but we also need to be aware of outside pressures and begin to analyse as to whether they are real or imagined"</li> </ul>

**Confidence, Self-Doubt and the Impostor Syndrome**

The University setting is a breeding ground for self-doubt and while having a critical perspective has value, when that turns into undermining your own capability it can be crippling. The infamous 'imposter syndrome' – "I shouldn't be here" – is one version of this, though there are also others. The effects can range from feeling anxious to being bored, procrastinating, feeling fear, and wondering what the point of it all is! The good news is there are strategies you can use to manage self-doubt in its various forms. Employing these strategies and tapping into the possibility of being confident – including being confident with your vulnerability – you'll find more clarity, more motivation and even feel more relaxed.

Key areas covered will be:

- learning to spot your own saboteurs and develop strategies to challenge them
- finding confidence from within (and not other people!)
- experimenting with approaching your research as if you were confident

Previous participants learnt:

"It is inspiring and motivating, it has also made me evaluate myself, it has made me feel good about my PhD work"

"I learnt that my performance is basically dependent on how much I tap into my potential and manage interference in my head. I also learnt I can drive internal energy to keep me going by always remembering my inspiration"

"I've learnt how to process why I've been holding back and not asking for help"

"Fear of failure - I have learnt why I hold back from being confident and how that protects me from failure"

**Making the most of supervision (and your wider PhD team)**

The relationship with your supervisor can really impact on your PhD experience and in this session we explore that relationship to help you identify how to make the most of it. As a PhD student you will carry lots of assumptions about your supervisors, assumptions about what is expected of you and assumptions about what you want from supervision.

Key areas covered will be:

- understanding your assumptions and the nature of your relationship(s) with your supervisor(s)
- identifying what you need from the relationship and how to make the most of it
- looking beyond 'supervision' to think about your wider PhD team

Previous participants learnt:

"Changed my perspective on how I see my supervisors and how to make the most supervision, as well as other ways to get feedback on my PhD"

"Enjoyable. It made me think about the supervision process in a more understanding manner."

"To look at my supervisor's perspective more consciously and not become so absorbed in my own worries/concerns/assumptions."

"Be more honest and tell my supervisor what is on my mind instead"

**Why you procrastinate and how to stop it**

There are many different reasons people procrastinate in their PhD, there are many different things people do when they procrastinate, and there are different ways you can learn to manage procrastination, if you want to. Search the web and you'll find heaps of top ten tips. Some will work, some won't and some you'll put off trying. In this workshop we look more closely at the role procrastination takes in your PhD life – the different forms it takes, the impact it has, what you gain from procrastination and strategies you might use to either stop procrastinating or use procrastination more effectively!

Key areas covered will be:

- being clear on the impact of procrastination and what you gain from it
- managing the relationship between urgent and important
- identifying strategies you can use to address procrastination

Previous participants learnt:

- "Good in identifying my pattern and what I'm afraid of."
- "The session has been invaluable. It has forced me to ask myself some very searching questions"
- " That I'm sometimes too hard on myself and that I should trust myself more: things that seem useless can actually be quite important."
- " It's all about training yourself to get things done little by little, and procrastination is just a way to get away from doing important things."
- " I feel as if the facilitator gives us 1 – 1 coaching time as part of the session and I find this hugely beneficial."
- "Enjoyed it – well thought out and planned – went to the deeper causes of procrastination"
- "The session has been invaluable. It has forced me to ask myself some very searching questions"

## About Will Medd

- highly qualified coaching skill set uniquely combined with an intimate understanding of academic life.
- A track-record demonstrating expertise in delivering coaching to an academic A audience, including specialist development of effective group coaching
- A collaborative approach to co-design which ensures learning from an integrated process of evaluation and review.

As professional certified coach, coach supervisor, and meditation trainer, and a former academic with an international research reputation, Will brings a highly qualified coaching skill set uniquely combined with an intimate understanding of the experience of academic life. Will is passionate about enabling people to be at their best while recognising the need to balance academic work with the rest of life.

### **Will's Coaching**

A Professional Certified Coach (PCC) with the International Coaching Federation (ICF) and Certified Coaching Supervisor (Coaching Supervision Academy):

- Private coaching practice – 1000+ hours logged having coached over 100 clients across the UK, Europe and North and South America, and from a range of professional backgrounds, including: lecturers, professors, PhD students, undergraduate students, teachers, neuroscientists, medical researchers, care-workers, counsellors, writers, consultants, youth workers.
- Group Coaching – has worked with over 50 groups, including undergraduates, PhD students, academics (at all stages of career) in University and NHS settings.
- Coaching programmes – designing and delivering commissioned programmes utilising coaching methodologies and training in coaching skills. Programmes include face-to-face workshops, on-line group coaching, writing workshops, on-line group coaching, peer2peer coaching, coach supervision, 1-1 coaching, 'train the trainer' and team coaching. Clients have included: the Universities of Lancaster, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Lincoln, Leeds, Manchester Metropolitan, Goldsmiths, Essex, Newcastle and Sheffield, Northern Advanced Research Training Initiative (NARTI), VITAE, ESRC North West Doctoral Training Centre, North West Enterprise School, Striding Out, Modernising Local Government, Unilever, North West NHS R&D.
- Publishing - coaching training material for VITAE (including report on coaching for research, report on coaching for leadership, two training manuals on peer2peer coaching, two coaching books (Your PhD Coach (2013) and Get Sorted! (2015) and resource FailuretoLearn ([www.failuretolearn.com](http://www.failuretolearn.com)))
- As a Professional Certified Coach he works within the code of professional ethics of the International Coaching Federation. He also has regular supervision.

### **Will's Academic Background**

As PhD Student (1995-2000), contract researcher (2000-2006) and Lecturer (2006-2013) Will was a REF active researcher, well versed in the challenges of interdisciplinary and cross-institutional research. As a social scientist often working in collaboration with scientists in the field of water management, Will had a reputation for developing high-impact research involving strong stakeholder involvement. As a Principal Investigator and Co-Investigator funding bodies included European Commission, National Research Councils (ESRC and EPSRC), UK Water Industry Research, Government Departments, Private Sector Companies, and Local Authorities. Two of his projects as Principal Investigator were evaluated as 'Outstanding' by the ESRC, one being awarded second place in the ESRC Celebrating Impact Awards (May 2013).

Will was also passionate about students learning and the student experience. As a Lecturer he engaged developing group and experiential learning where possible. As a coach he's continued to

work with undergraduates and post-graduates in workshop and group coaching formats. This included publishing two co-authored books two coaching books (*Your PhD Coach* (2013) and *Get Sorted!* (2015)), developed a series of videos to support student resilience (available on youtube) developing resources around fear of failure ([www.FailuretoLearn.com](http://www.FailuretoLearn.com)),

### ***Will's approach to workshops***

Will is deeply committed to ensuring all participants gain from the experience, offering an appropriate balance of professionalism, emotional sensitivity and humour to develop the right conditions of challenge and support conducive to participant engagement and learning. His sessions are regularly scored as 'excellent' by participants and comments have included: "respectful, sensitive to needs of the group", "Fantastic, created really safe atmosphere to expose the issues raised", "Excellent. Very patient when dealing with quite a few of us, kept us on track ", "Exceptional – humane, forgiving, thoughtful and able to bring out the best in a diverse group" and "Excellent, professional, honest and inspiring".

### ***Qualifications***

**IRest Meditation Teacher (Level 2) Teacher**, Integrative Restoration Institute, October 2018

**Diploma in Coaching Supervision**, Coaching Supervision Academy, November 2017

**Advanced Group and Team Coaching Practicum**, Potentials Realized, June 2016

**Professional Certified Coach (ICF PCC)**, International Coaching Federation, April 2016

**Mindfulness Teacher**, Teach Mindfulness, October 2014

**Accredited Certified Coach (ICF ACC)**, International Coaching Federation, February 2013

**Co-active Professional Certified Coach**, Coaches Training Institute, November 2012

**Organisation and Relationship Systems Coaching Fundamentals**, CRR Global, October 2011

**Post-Graduate Certificate of Achievement in Coaching and Mentoring**, Lancaster University, June 2009

**Post-Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice**, Lancaster University, June 2009

**Ph.D. in Sociology**, Lancaster University, 1995-1999. Awarded 21<sup>st</sup> March 2000.

**B.Sc. (Hons) 2.1, Sociology and Social Policy**, University of Southampton, 1992-1995