



Status – external source, inner confidence

Do you measure your worth by how others perceive you, or do you draw strength from within? Are you already balancing healthy external validation with quiet self-assurance?

Understanding 'status' and how it influences your confidence can provide powerful insights into your relationships, decisions, and personal growth.



This worksheet will help you if you:

- Want to stop being overly concerned with what others think and recognise when you are doing it
- Want to shift from seeking validation to building quiet, inner confidence
- Want help with setting boundaries to honour your time and energy allowing you to move forward with authenticity and resilience

Status – why we care about what others think

As social beings, we naturally care about status. Our position in the eyes of others influences how we see ourselves, whether it's respect at work, recognition in relationships or a sense of value within our community. But, there's a fine line between valuing external validation and grounding ourselves in inner confidence. How do we walk that tightrope? When does it matter what others think, and when should we simply let it go?

Our perceptions of status often take root in childhood, shaped by early experiences and relationships. How we were treated by parents, teachers, peers, and partners throughout our lives creates patterns that can influence our behaviours well into adulthood.

You may be able to recognise yourself in the following scenarios:

Childhood: Foundations of Self-Worth

- If a child grows up in a household where achievements are heavily scrutinised or compared with those of siblings or peers, they may come to believe their worth is conditional on outperforming others. This can lead to a fear of failure and a constant need for external validation in later life.
- A child who is overshadowed by a more extroverted sibling or peer may internalise the belief that their achievements are insignificant or undervalued. This can make it difficult for them to advocate for themselves as adults or lead to feelings of invisibility in professional and personal settings.
- When a child's efforts are met with unconditional encouragement and appreciation, regardless of the outcome, they are more likely to develop a strong internal sense of self-worth. This foundation helps them focus on intrinsic goals rather than relying on external markers of success as they grow older.

Teenage Years: Navigating Social Hierarchies

- A teenager who is bullied or excluded for being different might internalise feelings of inadequacy or inferiority. In adulthood, this can result in overachieving or constantly seeking approval as a way to compensate for those early experiences of rejection.
- If a teenager gains popularity by suppressing their individuality and conforming to group norms, they may carry the habit of prioritising others' opinions over their own into adulthood. This can lead to challenges in maintaining authenticity or a strong sense of self.
- Teenagers who find validation in their unique talents, interests, or leadership roles often develop confidence in their individuality. This can help them pursue status through self-expression rather than conforming to external expectations, fostering a strong sense of self-worth

Relationships: Testing Boundaries and Self-Perception

- In a relationship where a person's opinions are consistently dismissed or belittled, they may begin to doubt their ability to make decisions independently. Over time, this can lead to over-reliance on external validation and a hesitancy to trust their own judgment.
- Repeated experiences of rejection or betrayal in relationships can cause someone to question their self-worth, leading them to overcompensate by becoming overly accommodating or people-pleasing in future relationships to avoid further rejection.
- When relationships are built on mutual respect and encouragement, they help foster confidence and self-worth. Partners who support and value each other's goals create a foundation for authenticity, trust, and emotional growth.

The following exercises will help you ascertain your attitudes towards 'status'.

Practical Steps to Achieve Balance

Values Check-In

Write down your top five values and assess whether your recent actions align with them. **Values are what is important to you.** Are you driven by your priorities or others' expectations?

Your values are the principles and beliefs that guide your decisions, behaviours, and sense of purpose. They act as your internal compass, helping you determine what truly matters in life. Examples of values include honesty, family, creativity, independence, growth, compassion, and success.

To get started, think about what motivates you and brings you fulfilment. For example:

If you value **family**, you might prioritise quality time with loved ones over long work hours. If **creativity** is important, you might feel energised by activities like painting, writing, or innovative problem-solving. If you value **growth**, you might feel most alive when tackling challenges that push you out of your comfort zone.

Reflect on whether your daily actions honour these values. Are you living in a way that aligns with what matters most to you, or are you being swayed by external pressures?

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Define Success For Yourself

Success is deeply personal—what feels fulfilling to one person may not resonate with another. Too often, we adopt society’s or others’ definitions of success without stopping to reflect on what it truly means for us. Taking time to define success on your terms allows you to focus on goals that align with your values, passions, and aspirations, rather than chasing external expectations.

Here are examples of personal definitions of success;

Family-Oriented Success	Spending quality time with loved ones and maintaining meaningful relationships.
Career Fulfilment	Pursuing a career that aligns with your passions, even if it doesn’t come with a big title or salary.
Financial Independence	Feeling secure and in control of your finances, regardless of wealth level.
Personal Growth	Constantly learning, growing, and challenging yourself to be better.
Balance and Well-Being	Creating a life where work, relationships, and self-care coexist harmoniously.
Making a Difference	Contributing to causes or communities that matter to you.

Here are some prompts and examples to help you get started:

- What makes you feel truly fulfilled or happy?
- Which achievements have brought you the most pride or satisfaction in the past?
- What do you want your life to look like in 1, 5, or 10 years?

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Handling Feedback – other's judgement

How do you handle feedback – both positive and negative? By applying my **Feedback Cocktail**, it will help you respond to someone's judgement of what you have said, done or produced.

1. Taste the mix
2. Separate ingredients
3. Decide
4. Respond



Not every cocktail will suit your palate. It's natural to feel emotional when receiving feedback, but it's important to recognise the difference between constructive input and personal attacks. Detaching feedback from your sense of self can help you approach it with clarity and confidence.

By being mindful of your emotional triggers, you become adept at noticing the feelings that arise, pausing, then handling the feedback by engaging logic - the non-emotional part of your brain.

Step 1: Taste the Cocktail – What’s in the Mix?

Pause and assess the input to identify its ingredients:

Is it feedback ?	A well-measured ingredient focused on improving your performance or outcomes.
Is it opinion ?	A splash of personal preference that may or may not align with your goals.
Is it advice ?	A suggested recipe for what to do next.

“Your slides were visually cluttered; try simplifying them.” → A mix of feedback and advice.

“I didn’t like the colours you used.” → Opinion.

Step 2: Separate the Ingredients – Is It Helpful or Loaded?

Once you’ve identified the ingredients, decide which ones serve your goals:

The Good Ingredient (Helpful)	Constructive and actionable input that enhances your growth or aligns with your values.
The Bitter Ingredient (Loaded)	Emotional or biased components that don’t offer useful insights or conflict with your priorities

Ask yourself:

Does this come from someone I trust or respect?

Is it specific, constructive, or actionable?

Does it align with my goals or values?

Helpful Feedback: “The presentation was strong, but fewer slides would have more impact.” → Good ingredient.

Unhelpful Opinion: “I just didn’t like it; it wasn’t my style.” → Bitter ingredient.

Step 3: Decide – Blend, Adjust, or Discard

Now, decide how to respond to the cocktail:

Blend It	If the input is constructive, absorb it, and use it to improve.
Adjust It	If it's partially useful, take what works and leave the rest.
Discard It	If it's unhelpful or irrelevant, let it go without internalising it.

If you're struggling to decide, it may help by asking for clarity:

"Just so that I can understand what you are saying - can you provide an example of what you mean?"

"Thank you for your comments, what would you suggest that I do differently?"

Step 4: Respond with Strength and Kindness

Craft your response to reflect your poise and confidence:

For Helpful Input	"Thank you for your insight; I'll incorporate that."
For Opinions	"I appreciate your perspective."
For Unhelpful Criticism	"Thanks for the feedback. I'll reflect on it."

If necessary, stand firm:

"I hear what you're saying, but this approach works for me."

"Thanks for your input, but I'm happy with the direction I've taken."

"I appreciate your perspective, but I feel confident sticking with my plan."

Handling Compliments

If you've become accustomed to playing down a compliment or 'batting' it away, it is doing you, and the other person a disservice. Absorbing compliments is important because:

- It allows you to build confidence by acknowledging your efforts and strengths.
- It shows respect for the person giving the compliment by accepting it fully.
- It helps you cultivate a positive and gracious mindset, reinforcing your self-worth.

Here are ways you can respond to positive feedback:

Keep it Simple and Grateful	<p><i>"Thank you! I really appreciate that."</i></p> <p><i>"That means a lot to me—thank you."</i></p> <p><i>"I'm so glad you think so—thank you for saying that."</i></p>
Acknowledge Your Effort	<p><i>"Thank you! I put a lot of thought into this, so it's great to hear it's appreciated."</i></p> <p><i>"I worked hard on that, and I'm glad it stood out."</i></p> <p><i>"It's nice to know the effort paid off—Thank You."</i></p>
Show Gratitude for Their Recognition	<p><i>"I'm so grateful you noticed—Thank You!"</i></p> <p><i>"It's wonderful to hear that. I'm so glad it resonated with you."</i></p> <p><i>"I appreciate you taking the time to say that—it means a lot."</i></p>
Reflect It Back	<p><i>"Thank you! I couldn't have done it without your support/input."</i></p> <p><i>"I really value your opinion, so that means a lot to me."</i></p> <p><i>"I appreciate that—it's great to hear coming from someone I respect."</i></p>
Own the Compliment and Be Proud	<p><i>"Thank you! I'm proud of how it turned out, too."</i></p> <p><i>"That's so kind of you to say—I'm really happy with it as well."</i></p> <p><i>"I'm thrilled you think so. It's something I'm really proud of."</i></p>

Status and Boundaries

In a world where status often equates to how much we achieve or how available we are to others, it's easy to overcommit and stretch ourselves too thin.

Setting boundaries is essential to protect your time, energy, and well-being. It helps you create space for the things that truly matter to you, rather than getting caught up in obligations or expectations that don't align with your values.

Without clear boundaries, you risk burnout, resentment, or losing sight of your priorities. On the other hand, learning to say “no” or set limits can empower you to maintain balance and live authentically—anchored in your own sense of worth, rather than external demands.

This is particularly important when navigating status because boundaries enable you to:

- Define what success looks like on your terms.
- Protect your confidence from being undermined by overcommitment or unnecessary stress.
- Focus on meaningful goals without being distracted by the expectations of others.

By identifying areas where boundaries are needed, you can reclaim control over your time and energy, ensuring they're invested in ways that truly serve you.

Identify an area where you feel stretched too thin, however small, and set a boundary:

Case Studies

Here are examples of where working on defining goals, success and boundaries can help achieve inner confidence:

M, the Over-Accommodator - from accommodating everyone to valuing her own energy

M was the classic “yes person,” saying yes to any request, no matter how inconvenient. While her actions were appreciated, they left her feeling drained and invisible. She discovered that her behaviour stemmed from a fear of rejection. She practised pausing before agreeing to requests and evaluating whether they aligned with her values. Over time, she grew comfortable with saying, “no.” without guilt. By setting boundaries, it gave M the space to focus on what truly mattered. She became more present in her relationships and finally felt seen for who she really was.

J, the Status Chaser - from seeking validation to creating purpose

J measured success by the accolades he received. Promotions, awards, and material achievements were his markers of self-worth, yet he felt unfulfilled. J began redefining success on his own terms. Through reflection, he uncovered a passion for mentoring others and pursuing projects aligned with his values. He started asking, “If no one else were watching, what would I do?” Letting go of external validation allowed J to experience a deeper sense of purpose. His quiet confidence grew as he became more focused on meaningful contributions than external applause.

P, the Balanced Achiever - from overanalysing criticism to trusting her intuition

P often internalised criticism and dismissed compliments, leaving her in a constant state of doubt. She learned to filter feedback and practised discerning whether criticism was constructive or useful. She focused on accepting compliments as a form of positive reinforcement. P embraced her strengths and gained the freedom to trust her instincts. This newfound clarity helped her feel more grounded and self-assured in her decisions.

Closing Thoughts

Balancing the desire for external validation with inner confidence is a nuanced journey. It's about knowing when to listen to others and when to trust yourself. Whether you resonate with M's people-pleasing tendencies, J's status-chasing, or P's sensitivity to feedback, remember that small steps lead to profound change.

So, where do you see yourself on the spectrum? What's one action you'll take today to nurture your quiet, inner confidence?



Written by Suneeda Maruthiyil – www.cognitive-calm.com

