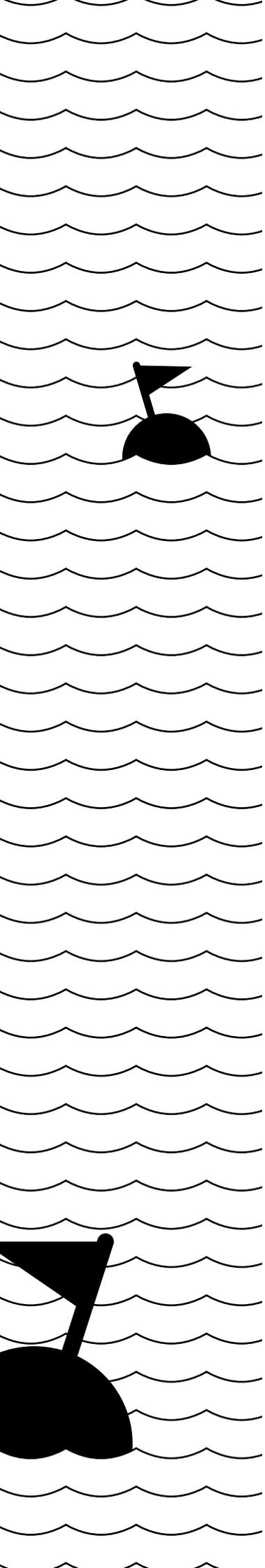




Buoyancy Series:

**From 'Faking it
Till you Make it'
to Creating Space
for True Joy**





An overload of stress and anxiety can make it hard to stay positive. And you'd have to be completely off the grid not to be affected in some way by the world's COVID-19 malaise. As we go about our day, at home and at work, you may be feeling a level of pressure to “put on a brave face”, and stay “up” or buoyant for your teammates, family and friends. However, forced positivity is more likely to erode feelings of true joy and just add to the overall levels of strain.

At Performance Frontiers we often talk about our ability to choose our mindset in order to show up with greater levels of buoyancy. However, this is not an endorsement to “fake it til you make it”. Buoyancy is not about cracking jokes, having boundless energy, or an ever-ready smile. Buoyancy is better thought of as mindfulness and growth in the face of adversity.

Think about a buoy bobbing in the sea. Storms may bring great waves that crash down and submerge the buoy for a time, before it rises back above water. Buoyancy is not about denying this period of submersion, rather, it is embracing your innate ability to rise again.

“Negative” feelings, such as despair, turmoil, and grief are natural in times such as these. Sometimes we need to allow these emotions in – open the door, sit with them, and try to understand them, before bidding them farewell, clearing the space needed for you to rise again or grow to even higher states. It's why some researchers call these “edge emotions”: you experience them at the precipice of growth.

Edge emotions can also offer deeper insight into our core values and purpose. When we feel a sense of loss, it's often because who we are and what we value is threatened. By reflecting on these, we're reminded of what really matters to us and what we truly need in life to find a sense of fulfilment and joy.

While it may feel easier to “Grin and bear it”, or ignore what's going on around us – this response may actively interfere with our ability to remain truly buoyant. Buoyancy through mindfulness and a frame for growth can deliver authentic joy through shoring up our inner certainty. I know who I am. I understand why I feel this way. I have belief in my ability that I can adapt. I will find moments of joy again.

“Joy is not in things; it is in us.”

- Richard Wagner

Found this article interesting? You might find the following links insightful:

- ▶ HBR's "[That Discomfort You're Feeling is Grief](#)"
- ▶ Chronicle's "[Why You Should Ignore All That Coronavirus-Inspired Productivity Pressure](#)"

If you want to know more about edge emotions and buoyancy through crises, feel free to contact us and we'll put you in touch with one of our team specialising in this area.