



# Overcoming Imposter Syndrome and Building Your Professional Identity

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

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Assistant Clinical Professor

# My Professional Journey

Like science,  
math, and  
people

Worked 2 jobs  
in college –LMU  
and UCLA

First-Gen  
College Grad

UC Davis  
Interview

Bottom of Med  
School Class

Entered  
Residency  
struggling intern

Asked to be a  
chief resident

Battled with  
imposter  
syndrome

Finding hope  
and joy

# My Professional Journey

It takes a village



# My Professional Identity



Latina



General Internist



Director  
Postbaccalaureate  
Program



Medical Educator



Innovative Thinker



Clinical Operations

## Academician

# Polling Question - How do you see yourself being involved in health care in the future?

- Physician (MD/DO)
- Nurse (RN)
- Advance Practice Practitioner (NP/PA)
- Other healthcare provider
- Public Health Officer
- Unlicensed (no MD/DO/RN/NP/PA) Hospital Administrator
- Other

# Objectives



Define imposter syndrome



Describe the importance of professional identity formation in health professions

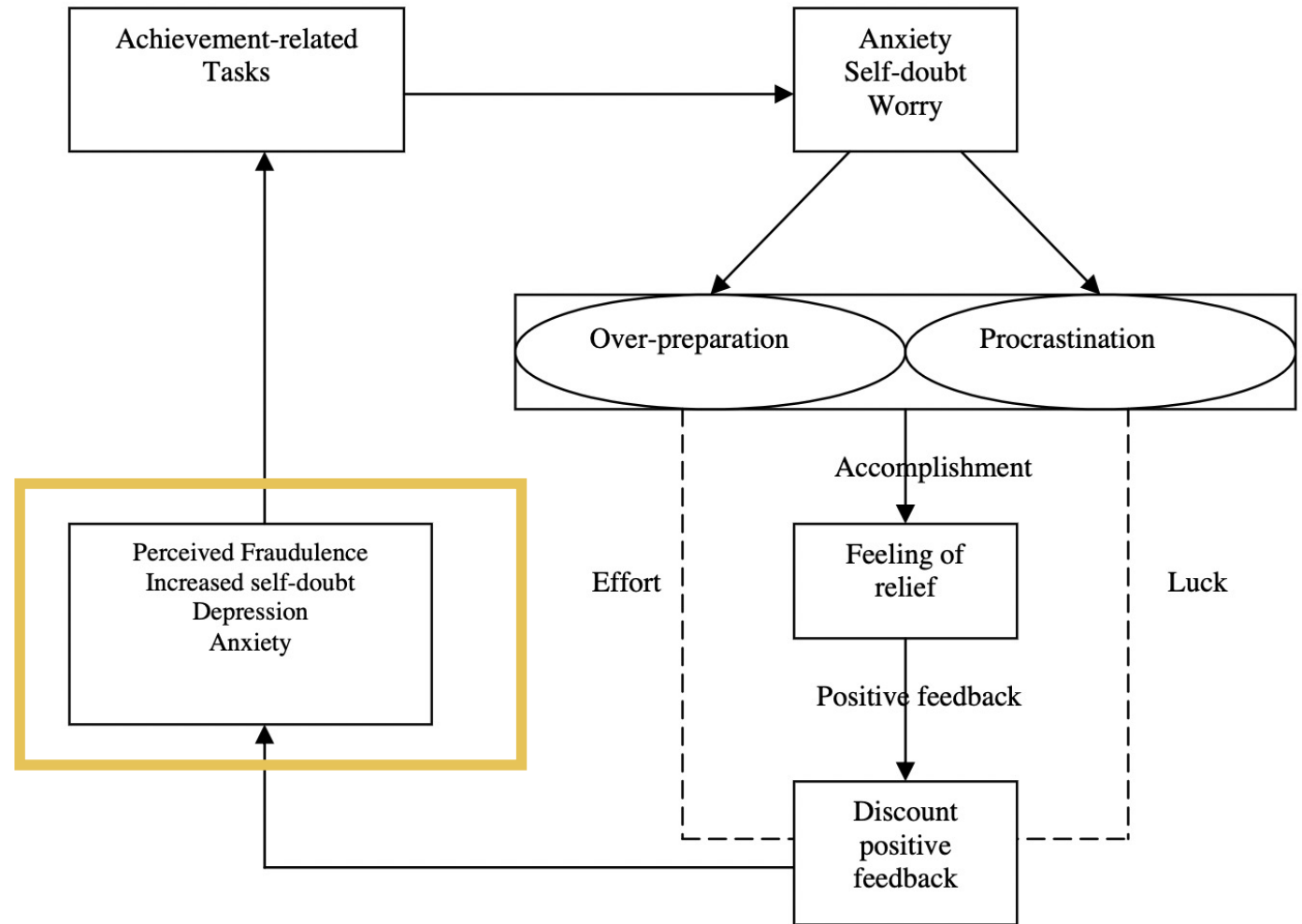


Outlines tips for overcoming imposter syndrome

# Imposter Syndrome

- Intense feelings that achievements are undeserved and the feeling that it is just a matter of time before they are going to be exposed as a fraud (Dr. Pauline Clance, 1985)
- High prevalence – estimated 70% of people will experience imposter syndrome in their lives

# Imposter Cycle (Clance 1985)





# Effects of Imposter Syndrome on Performance

- Increase in depression, anxiety
- Decreased sense of belonging
- Decreased performance

Sakulku 2011

# Polling Question - Who has experienced imposter syndrome?

- Yes
- No

# Belonging and Imposter Syndrome

Feeling of being an imposter can be heightened if there is a concurrent feeling of not belonging





# People of Color in Higher Education

## Medical School Matriculants

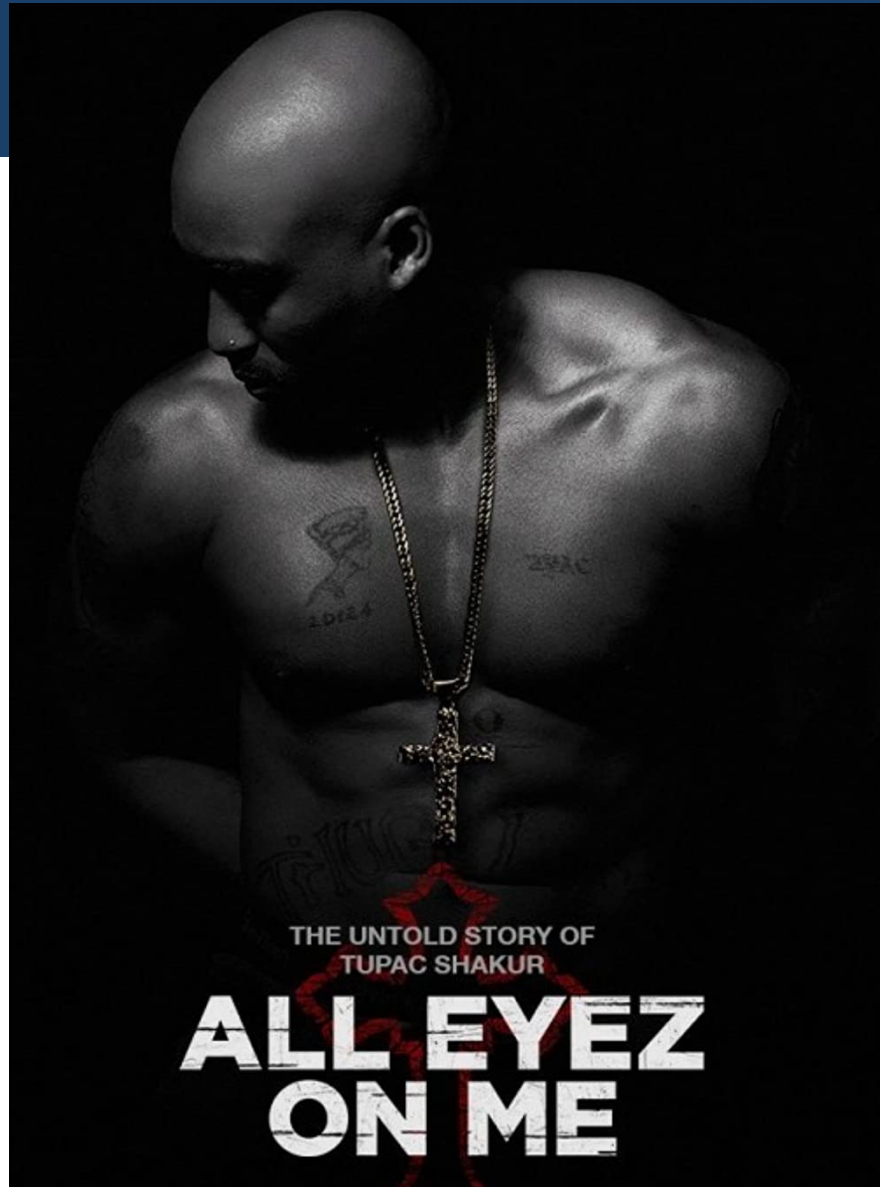
- Black or African America students – 10%
- Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin – 12%
- American Indian or Alaska Native – 1%

## US Population

- Black or African America students – 13.6%
- Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin – 18.9%
- American Indian or Alaska Native – 1.3%

AAMC Applicant and Matriculant Data 2022

<https://www.aamc.org/data-reports/students-residents/interactive-data/2022-facts-applicants-and-matriculants-data>



# Defense Mechanisms

Displacement

Denial

Repression

Suppression

Sublimation

Projection

Intellectualization

Rationalization

Passive-aggression\*

Reaction formation

Altruism

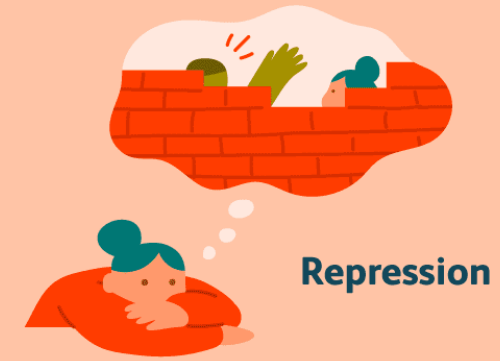
Avoidance\*

Dissociation\*

## Common Defense Mechanisms



Displacement



Repression



Sublimation



Regression

verywell



What Do I Do  
About All of  
This?



Find a Community

LMSA

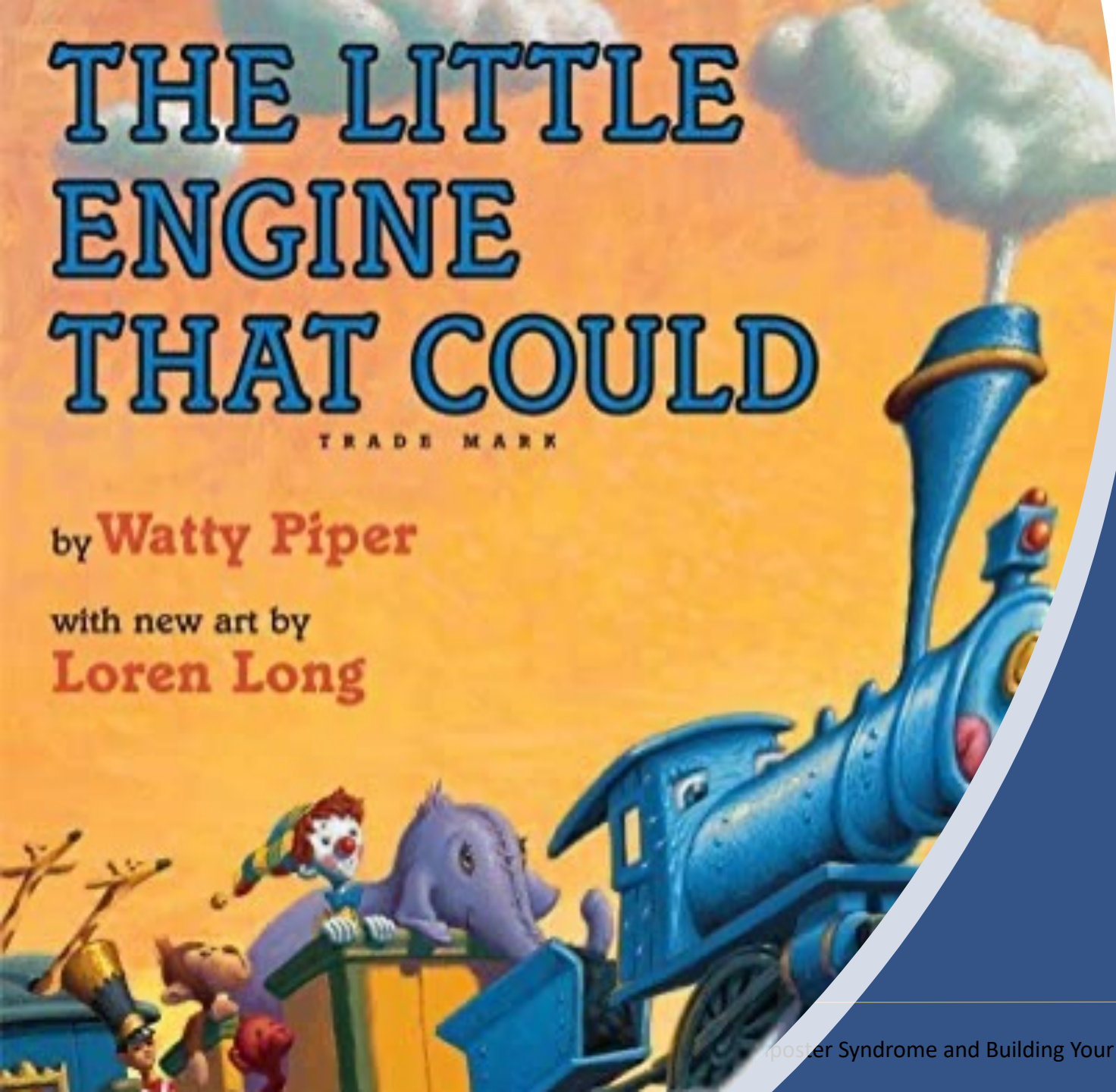


# THE LITTLE ENGINE THAT COULD

TRADE MARK

by **Watty Piper**

with new art by  
**Loren Long**



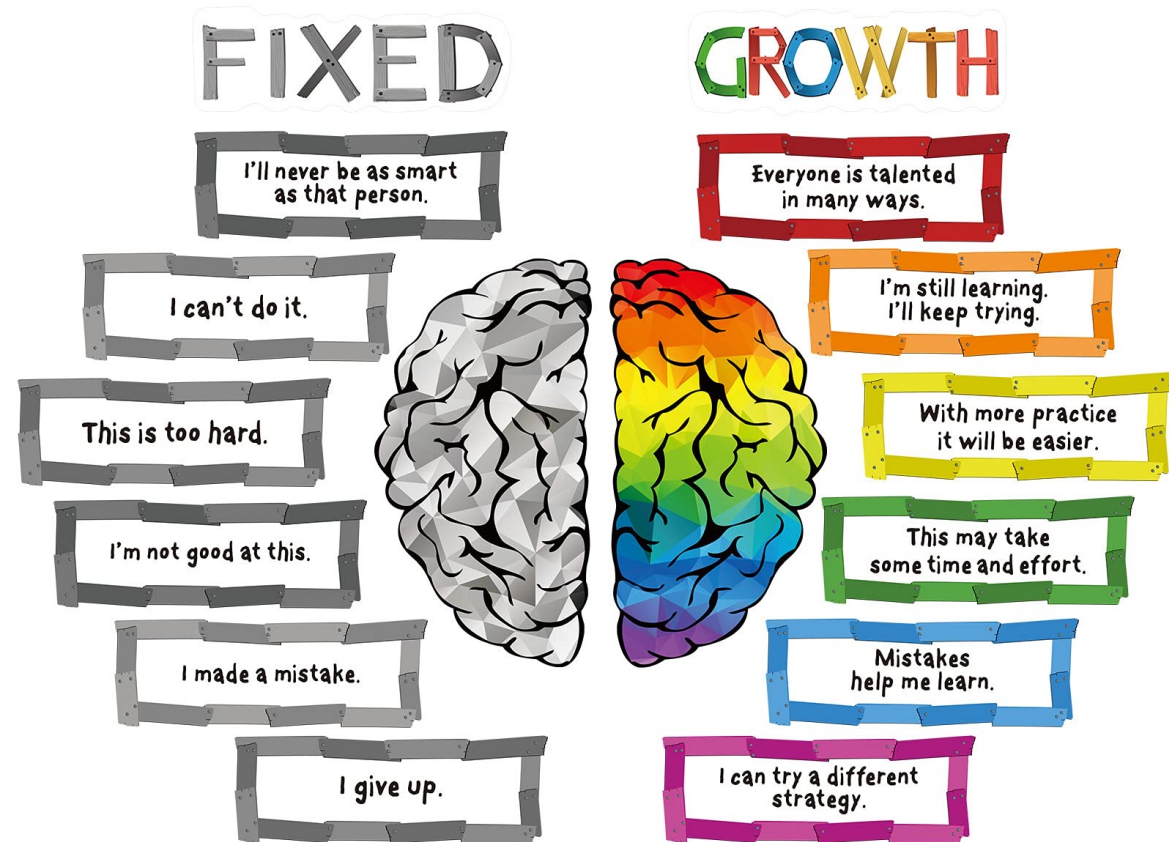
Keep Moving  
Forward



Work With People Who Lift You Up

Be Willing To  
Change

# CHANGE YOUR WORDS; CHANGE YOUR MINDSET.



# Known When To Take A Break





Become Influential!

# Do what you love



# Summary



FIND A COMMUNITY



KEEP MOVING FORWARD



WORK WITH PEOPLE WHO  
LIFT YOU UP



BE WILLING TO CHANGE



KNOW WHEN TO TAKE A  
BREAK



BECOME INFLUENTIAL AND  
CHANGE THE  
ENVIRONMENT YOU ARE IN



DO WHAT YOU LOVE

# Professional Identity and Professional Identity Formation

DESIGN

RESEARCH

B

A



# Professional Identity Formation



Preston-Shoot M, McKimm J. Prepared for practice? Law teaching and assessment in UK medical schools. *J Med Ethics*. 2010 Nov;36(11):694-9. doi: 10.1136/jme.2010.036640. Epub 2010 Jul 26. PMID: 20663756.

What a  
doctor is  
versus who  
am I?



# Well Who Am I?



Latina



General Internist



Director  
Postbaccalaureate  
Program



Medical Educator



Innovative Thinker



Clinical Operations

But I am  
also...

Softball player

Lover of sports

Lover of travel

Fierce advocate for diversity and inclusion in  
healthcare

Love to laugh



# A Few Public Service Announcements

**The UC Postbaccalaureate Consortium Application is Open!**

**Start your free application today!**

**A Pathway to Medicine**

The UC Postbaccalaureate Consortium is a partnership of postbaccalaureate premedical programs at the Schools of Medicine at Charles R. Drew University, UC Davis, UC Irvine, UC Los Angeles, and UC San Francisco.

**Programs intended for:**

- ✓ California Residents (including undocumented, DACA, & AB 540)
- ✓ Applicants seeking academic enhancement
- ✓ Applicants committed to serving underserved communities
- ✓ Applicants from disadvantaged backgrounds

**Don't Miss Out!**

- ✓ [Check out program requirements](#)
- ✓ [Attend our free webinars!](#)
- ✓ [Visit our website](#)

**Scan the QR code to start your application!**

Send your questions to [pbcentraladmin@ucdavis.edu](mailto:pbcentraladmin@ucdavis.edu)



<https://health.ucdavis.edu/postbacc-consortium/>

**AvenueM Information Session & Application Overview**

**Open to all interested students**  
**Location: Zoom**

**Tuesday, February 21, 2023**  
**3:00 pm - 4:00 pm**

Register Here - [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_jvGZwNHLQ-OZcd7QsNm5PA](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_jvGZwNHLQ-OZcd7QsNm5PA)

AvenueM focuses on increasing diverse physicians from community colleges to serve Northern California, particularly medically underserved communities. Part of this focus is recruiting a diverse group of mission-focused students.

Contact the AvenueM team via email at: [avenuem@ucdavis.edu](mailto:avenuem@ucdavis.edu)





<https://avenuem.ucdavis.edu/>

**Prep Médico** | **UC DAVIS HEALTH** | Office for Health Equity, Diversity and Inclusion | **KAISER PERMANENTE**

## Prep Médico Eligibility Requirements:

We welcome all applicants that meet the eligibility requirements outlined below!

- First- or second-year college student (or community college)
- Resident of the Central Valley or Northern California
- Completion of English Composition AND one semester/quarter of General Chemistry OR General Biology
- GPA of 2.85 or higher
- Demonstrated interest in becoming a physician and serving Latinx communities

**For questions on eligibility requirements please email us at [hs-prepmedico@ucdavis.edu](mailto:hs-prepmedico@ucdavis.edu)**

[https://health.ucdavis.edu/diversity-inclusion/prep\\_medico/Prep\\_Medico.html](https://health.ucdavis.edu/diversity-inclusion/prep_medico/Prep_Medico.html)

A large, glowing pink question mark graphic is centered on the page. The question mark is composed of a thick, neon-like line that forms the shape of a question mark. The glow is brightest in the center and fades towards the edges. The background is solid black.

Questions??