



IMPOSTER SYNDROME

causes and detriments of feeling like a fraud and ways to combat it.



I feel like a fraud

I don't deserve this...

My success is just due to luck

They are going to see right through me.

What if they find out I don't know what I'm doing?

I shouldn't have gotten credit for that.

Other people are much smarter than me.

Imposter Syndrome: Overview for Today



WHAT EXACTLY
IS IT?



WHY DOES IT
HAPPEN?



HOW CAN I
CONQUER IT?

Middle school woes...

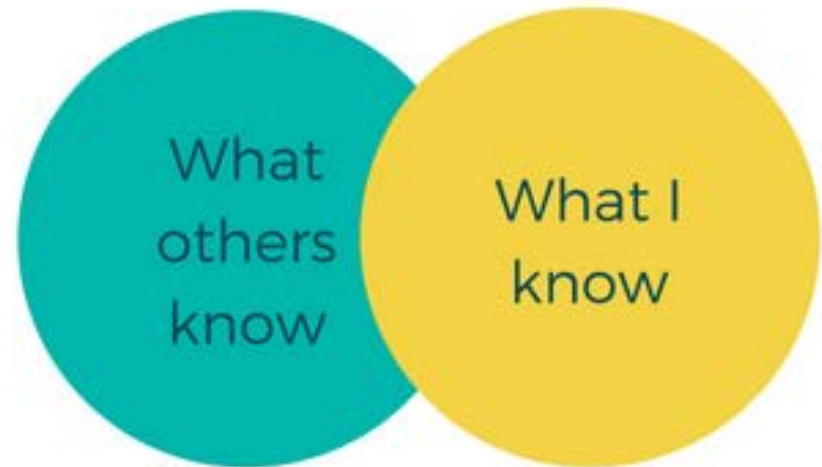


The Imposter Syndrome

Assumption



Reality





DEFINITION

Understanding Imposter Syndrome

- Phenomenon that occurs among **high achievers** who are unable to internalize and accept their success
- Often attribute accomplishments to **luck** rather than to ability, and fear others will eventually unmask them as a **fraud**
- A belief that one is **inadequate and incompetent** and will fail despite evidence that indicates one as skilled and quite successful
- There are about **5 different categories** of imposter syndrome....

NOTABLE FACTS:

Term first coined in 1970's by Suzanne Imes, PhD, and Pauline Rose Clance, PhD

Studies show that 70% of people have experienced an episode of Imposter Syndrome

Not a disease or a permanent condition

More common in women

The perfectionist.

- Set very high goals for themselves
- Worry about measuring up
- Have severe self-doubt
- Often labeled “control freaks”

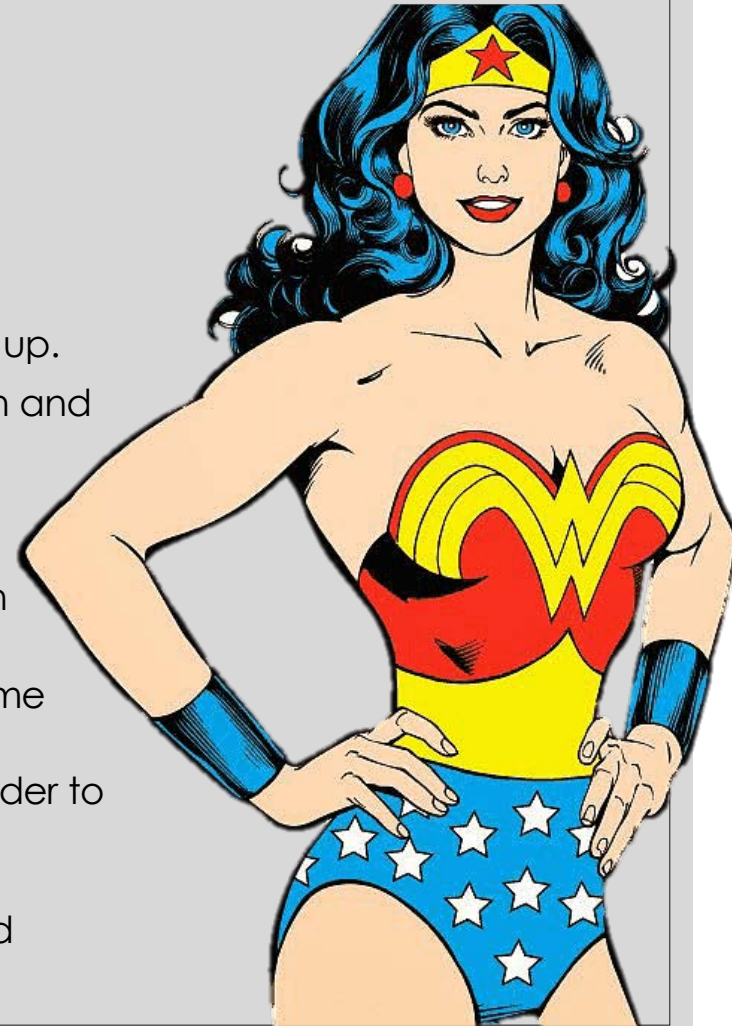


Is this you? Ask yourself:

- Have you ever been accused of being a micro-manager?
- Do you have a hard time delegating?
- Do you feel disappointed in other's results?
- When you miss your goals do you accuse yourself of not being “cut out for the job?”

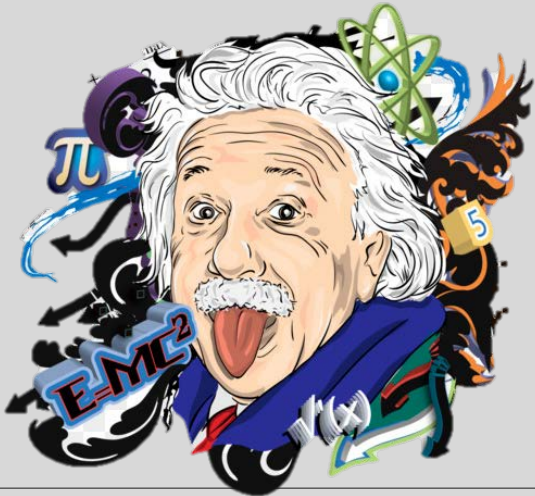
The Superhero.

- Convinced they're phonies amongst real-deal colleagues
- Often push themselves to work harder and harder to measure up.
- Can end up in work overload harming their own mental health and relationships with others.
- **Is this you? Ask yourself:**
- Do you stay later at the office than the rest of your team, even when it's not necessary?
- Do you get stressed when you're not working and find downtime completely wasteful?
- Have you let your hobbies and passions take a back seat in order to work more?
- Do you feel like you haven't truly earned your title (despite degrees/achievements), so you feel you must work harder and longer than those around you to prove yourself?



The Natural Genius.

- Judge competence based on ease and speed as opposed to efforts
- If they take a long time to master something, they feel shame
- Set their bar impossibly high, just like perfectionists. But don't just judge themselves based on ridiculous expectations, they also judge themselves based on getting things right on the first try.
- When unable to do something quickly or fluently, they feel failure



Is this you? Ask yourself:

- Do you have a track record of getting “straight A’s” or “gold stars” in everything you do?
- Were you told frequently that you were the “smart one” in your family or peer group?
- When you’re faced with a setback, does your confidence tumble because not performing well provokes a feeling of shame?
- Do you often avoid challenges because it’s so uncomfortable to try something you’re not great at?

The Soloist.

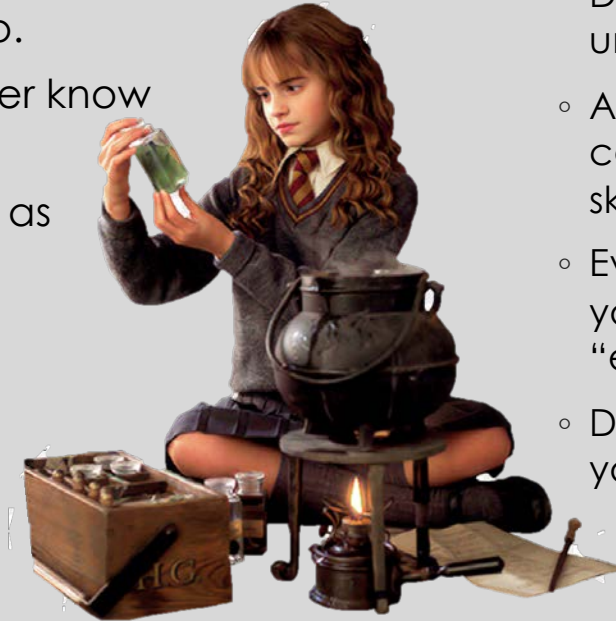
- Asking for help reveals their phoniness or weakness
- Often refuse assistance in order to prove their worth
- Put the needs of a project or accomplishment far above their own needs as an employee/person/leader
- Find pride in taking on hard tasks without others



- **Is this you? Ask yourself:**
- Do you firmly feel the need to accomplish things on your own?
- Do you often use the term “I can do it myself”?
- Is it hard for you to share the glory of an accomplishment with others?
- Do you find satisfaction in completing difficult tasks to prove it can be done without help?

The Expert.

- Often measure their competence based on “what” and “how much” they know or can do.
- Believe they will never know enough
- Fear being exposed as inexperienced or unknowledgeable



Is this you? Ask yourself:

- Do you avoid applying to job postings unless you meet every single requirement?
- Are you constantly seeking out trainings or certifications because to improve your skills in order to succeed?
- Even if you have years of experience do you feel as though you still don't know “enough?”
- Do you shudder when someone says you're an expert?

Quick Poll!





WHY DOES IT HAPPEN?

Causes and detriments of Imposter Syndrome

One or even several factors including....

- **Personality:** a natural tendency toward perfectionism
- **Family dynamics:** families that emphasize achievement to an unhealthy degree
- **Minority status:** African-American, Latino-American, and Asian-American (2013 study)
- **Gender:** more women, especially among women working in male-dominated industries
- **Cultural Norms:** women and young people are often expected to downplay their abilities



It can cause...

- Debilitating stress
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Isolation
- Low self-confidence
- Low self-worth
- Shame
- Guilt

Limits our courage

We shy away from new opportunities

We stick to what is "safe"



HOW CAN I CONQUER IT?

Tools and Mindsets to help combat Imposter Syndrome

Some helpful practices & mindsets



ASSESS



OWN IT



MENTOR



GET REAL

ASSESS



- Take an inventory of YOU
- Look over the course of your life and write down your accomplishments, skills, successes and maybe even failure
- Can you really chalk that all up to *luck*?
- Keep a journal and keep it handy



OWN IT



- Celebrate yourself
- You've worked hard, you've put in time, you are as good as you look on that piece of paper
- Monitor your self-talk – would you tell your closest friends some of the things you say to yourself?
- Talk openly about your struggle with Imposter Syndrome - open the dialogue for others to share their stories too



MENTOR



- You have something to offer!
- Share it with others
- Help someone grow
- Surprise yourself with what you are able to share with others in their journey
- When you share your story and expertise with others, you share it with yourself again



GET REAL



- Change your perspective on what is realistic
- Take an honest look at others around you
- Be real about failure...
- Give yourself some space to learn, grow, and try out new things
- Realistic expectations are crucial for not just you, but those you work and live with



Wrapping Up.



NOT A DISEASE
NOT PERMANENT
IMPACTS WOMEN
5 CATEGORIES



PERSONALITY
FAMILY
MINORITY
GENDER
CULTURAL
NORMS



ASSESS
OWN IT
MENTOR
GET REAL

QUESTIONS? THOUGHTS?

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