

Feeling like a Fraud

FIGHTING IMPOSTOR SYNDROME



What is imposter syndrome?

A psychological pattern of behavior where **people doubt their accomplishments** and have a persistent, internalized fear of being exposed as a fraud. [1]

Originally thought to apply only to high-achieving women, it has become widely recognized as **applicable to anyone**. [2]



70% of people will experience imposter syndrome at least once in their lives [3]

People who've experienced imposter syndrome



Albert Einstein
(Scientific Genius)



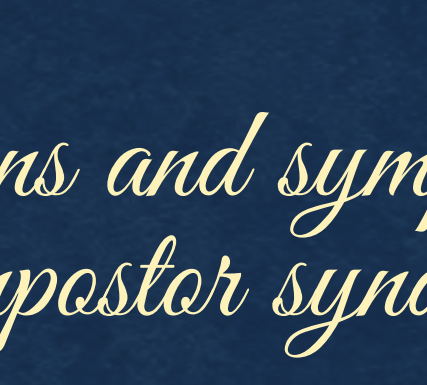
John Steinbeck
(Nobel Prize-Winning Author)



Meryl Streep
(Oscar-Winning Actress)



Sheryl Sandberg
(Technology Leader)



Tom Hanks
(Award-Winning Actor and Director)



Serena Williams
(Tennis Champion)

Signs and symptoms of imposter syndrome



Why does it matter?

If unaddressed, imposter syndrome can:



All of which has a negative impact on health, well-being, relationships and career prospects.

How to beat imposter syndrome

Acknowledge and accept it

Recognize your feelings and remember you're not alone. Read articles or watch videos about how others have coped with imposter syndrome.

Manage your inner critic

Be aware when your internal voice starts highlighting your shortcomings. Shut it down by choosing to focus on facts rather than fears.

List your achievements

Keep examples of your good work or great feedback to give yourself a boost when you're feeling low.

Learn to accept compliments

Say a simple 'thank you', rather than deflecting the praise.

Adopt a growth mindset

There's a big difference between 'I can't do that' and 'I can't do that yet.'

Ask for help

Share your feelings with trusted friends and co-workers. There's truth in the cliché that 'a problem shared is a problem halved'.

Embrace it

Channel the fear to drive you out of your comfort zone. Take on new challenges and learn as you go.

[1] The term 'imposter syndrome' was first introduced by psychologists Dr Pauline Clance and Dr Suzanne Imes in their article, 'The Impostor Phenomenon in High Achieving Women: Dynamics and Therapeutic Intervention' published in Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice, Vol 15 (1978).

[2] Shana Lebowitz, 'Men are suffering from a psychological phenomenon that can undermine their success, but they're too ashamed to talk about it', Business Insider (12 January 2016). Available at: <https://www.businessinsider.com/men-suffer-from-imposter-syndrome-2016-1?r=US&IR=T> (accessed 13 November 2019).

[3] Jaruwan Salkuku & James Alexander, 'The Impostor Phenomenon', International Journal of Behavioral Science, Vol 6, No.1 (2011) pp75-97. Available at: <https://www.tci-thajjo.org/index.php/IJBS/article/view/521/pdf> (last accessed 4 October 2019).