

What Imposter Syndrome Feels Like



Imposter Syndrome / Perceived Fraudulence

What is it?

Imposter syndrome is an internal belief system in which a person feels they are incompetent, despite external proof of achievements and success.

- It involves feelings of self-doubt and personal incompetence that persist despite your education, experience, and accomplishments.
 - ↳ Impostor feelings are generally accompanied by anxiety and, often, depression.
 - ↳ To counter these feelings, you might end up working harder and holding yourself to ever higher standards.

What causes it?

- Imposter syndrome is likely the result of multiple factors, including personality traits (such as perfectionism) and family background.
 - ↳ Theory: that imposter syndrome is rooted in families that value achievement above all else



Common situational examples

1. Starting college or university might leave you feeling as though you don't belong and are not capable.
2. Every grad student knows about Impostor Syndrome: the belief that, despite your achievements, you're not as skilled or intelligent as others believe you to be, and the accompanying fear of being “found out” as a fraud who works twice as hard as everyone else to make up for her deficits
3. In a romantic relationship, impostor syndrome can cause persistent worries that your partner will soon discover you're not “as great” as they might think you are and break things off. If unaddressed, these insecurities can lead you to experience great distress, and sometimes, it can cause the end of a relationship.

It appears that imposter syndrome is often the most common when people are going through transitions and trying new things.

Imposter syndrome can be linked to job performance

- In the end, impostors are left depleted, unable to leverage their skills and talents to advance their careers. Because impostors struggle with their perceived inadequacies in everyday work settings, they can sometimes enter a negative resource spiral with a tangible decline in career success

Studies show that about 70% of people in the United States will experience impostor syndrome at some point in their lives

How do you comfort someone with imposter syndrome?

- ✓ affirm your mentees as human beings
- ✓ acknowledging their inherent worth
- ✓ accepting them without condition
- ✓ affirm them as professionals, persistently calling out their achievements and celebrating them.

Dunning-Kruger Effect

What's the opposite of imposter syndrome?

➤ Dunning-Kruger Effect

↪ a cognitive bias whereby people with limited knowledge or competence in a given intellectual or social domain greatly overestimate their own knowledge or competence in that domain relative to objective criteria or to the performance of their peers or of people in general.

↪ They tend to

- (1) overestimate their own skill levels,
- (2) fail to recognize the genuine skill and expertise of other people, and
- (3) fail to recognize their own mistakes and lack of skill.

↪ Example: an amateur chess player overestimates their performance in the upcoming chess tournament compared to their competent counterparts



Dunning-Kruger Effect



Dunning-Kruger Effect



*“These smug pilots have lost touch with regular passengers like us.
Who thinks I should fly the plane?”*