Imposter Syndrome: overcoming yourself to succeed

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While we’re getting started...

• Think about one thing you didn’t put yourself forward for/ hesitated about in the past.
• Make a note on your worksheet
Welcome!

- Introductions:
  - Pairs
  - Name
  - An interesting fact about yourself that is NOT related to work

Switch and speak to someone else
Welcome!

- Switch partners
- Why are you here?
- What are you expectations?
Feedback

• Why are you here?

• What are your expectations?
What this workshop is:

• A safe space

• A place for connecting
• A place for normalising
• A place for sharing
• A place for reflecting
What this workshop isn’t…

• A source of gossip
• Therapy!
• Unicorn transformation
Who am I?
Professional Roles

• Chief Resident
• Grant-holder
• Researcher
• Past Vice-President of national surgical trainee association
• Award winner
• Advocate
• Trainee Representative
But........

THERE MUST BE A MISTAKE!!!
Imposter Syndrome

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQUxL4Jm1Lo

• “A persistent belief in one’s lack of skills, competence or achievement”

• “An inability to recognise (and own) one’s success.”

• It is NOT someone trying to be someone else.
• It is NOT fraudulent cheating to the top.
Alternative explanations of your success

• I got lucky...
• I was in the right place at the right time
• It’s because they like me
• If I can do it, anyone can
• I had a lot of help
• They’re just being nice
• There was no one else
• They just felt sorry for me
Quiz

• Worksheet 1-15

• Tick beside each number if you agree with the statement
Question 1

• I worry others will find out I’m not as smart or competent as they think I am.
Question 2

• I don’t take on new challenges or tasks for fear I may fail.
Question 3

• I rarely share my fears or insecurities with others.
Question 4

• When someone criticizes me, even constructively, it can take me days or longer to recover emotionally.
Question 5

• I believe that most people can do what I do.
Question 6

• I fear making a mistake, believing that others will think less of me.
Question 7

• I feel uncomfortable when others praise me, often saying it’s not a big deal.
Question 8

• I am relieved when I succeed, but inside believe that I have somehow fooled people.
Question 9

- I spend excessive amounts of time preparing for fear I will not do things perfectly.
Question 10

- I don’t let others know what is really going on with me.
Question 11

• People look to me as an example of someone perfect, without problems.
Question 12

• Other people are smarter or more capable than I am. Sometimes I am just luckier.
Question 13

• I am afraid that people can see right through my façade to the flawed and inept person inside of me.
Question 14

• I don’t feel that I deserve what I have achieved in my life.
Question 15

• I become anxious when others expect things of me despite being able to easily do them.
Quiz

- 5 or more?
- 10 or more?
- 15?!
Five types of Imposter Syndrome

Feedback

• How does imposter syndrome manifest itself in your life?
  - are you lucky?
  - are you the one that had loads of help?

• Where does imposter syndrome manifest itself in your life?

Take 5 minutes to consider and note some of these reflections

Share with the group
What strategies are you currently using?

- Over-preparing/ working hard
- Witholding
- Using your (female?!) charm
- Putting it off
- Deliberate failure
Why do I feel like this?

• Upbringing (parents sometimes suck)
• You are a learner (feedback sometimes sucks)
• Academia in medicine (Reviewers always suck)
Reflection

• List your qualifications and achievements (professional and personal)
Strategies

• Re-wiring our thinking patterns
• Actively challenging I.S. thoughts
• Mindfulness techniques
• Folder of achievements
10 WAYS TO OVERCOME ‘IMPOSTOR SYNDROME’

- Keep a journal
- Set some goals
- Build a professional support network
- Get 360° feedback
- Update your CV
- Get a coach
- Recognise learning & failure are okay
- Keep a positive feedback file
- Do things outside of work that make you feel good
- Say it out loud to someone you trust: “I feel like a fraud…”
  They’ll put you right!

Sketchnote by Hayley Lewis @haypsych
Rationalise
In the future....

• Think about the first box you completed. How might you behave in such a circumstance in the future?
Overcoming 'Imposter' syndrome

I'm a fraud and everyone will find out

Self-efficacy - if we learn & work hard we'll succeed

How to build SELF Confidence

Confidence is a state of mind
It can be learned & built on!

The domain of the high achiever
Humility is not thinking less of yourself but thinking of yourself less. C.S. Lewis

Confidence comes from feelings of wellbeing, acceptance of self & belief in your ability, skills & experience

1. Take Stock
   - Write down your achievements so far & well done!
   - Think about your strengths - what are you good at?
   - Do a SWOT analysis
   - Think about what is important to you & what you want to achieve

2. Get Started
   - Set goals
   - Leverage strengths
   - Minimise weaknesses
   - Realise opportunities
   - Control threats

3. Keep it up!
   - Celebrate your successes
   - Find quick wins
   - Focus on basics
   - Keep positive
   - Carefully analyse mistakes

4. Commit to action
   - Take control of your thinking
   - Use positive affirmations
   - Quash negative talk
   - Experiment

TIP
- Focus on the value you provide - not on perfection
- Don't set yourself up for disappointment
- Don't dismiss positive feedback!
- Don't let your fear sabotage or stop you
- Don't "settle" for less - you may not discover something else you can do!
- Stop comparing yourself to that person
- Loads of people feel like you - clever & famous
- Everyone has internal struggles

TIP
- Accept that you had something to do with your success so far
- It wasn't luck!
- Write down your key achievements of last 5 years
- Keep a file, write them down
- Don't dismiss positive feedback!
- Reset the bar to a realistic level
- It can be learned & built on!
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Thank you
What Great Leaders say to HIGHLY ENGAGED TEAMS:

Thank you.

What do you need from me to make this a success?

Sorry my fault!

I value your contribution.

What did we learn from this that we can use next time?

What do you think?

You’ve done a great job!

Do you have the capacity to do this now?

How could we do this better?
If at first you don't succeed, try two more times so that your failure is statistically significant.