

OVERCOMING IMPOSTER SYNDROME IN THE WORKPLACE: EMPOWERING WOMEN TO TAKE OWNERSHIP OF THEIR WORK IN HIGHER EDUCATION



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OVERVIEW OF SESSION

1. Define Imposter Syndrome

- Imposter/Impostor Syndrome
- Imposter/Impostor Phenomenon
- Imposter/Impostor Experience

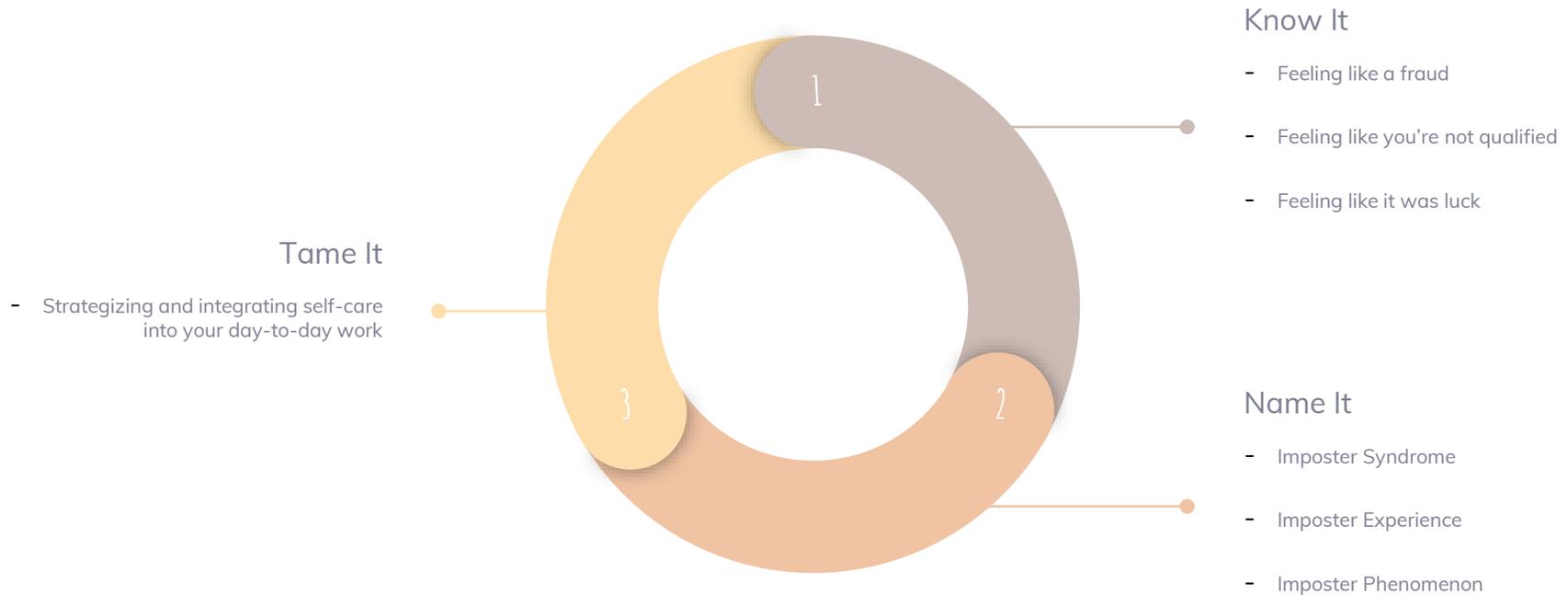
2. Reflect on personal & professional experiences

- Work
- Academic
- Personal

3. Strategies and commit to addressing imposter syndrome

- Implementing strategies in personal & professional life
- Developing an intentional plan for accountability

UNDERSTANDING & ADDRESSING IMPOSTER SYNDROME



COMMUNITY STANDARDS FOR SESSION

- What's said here, stays here. What's learned here, leaves here.
- Speak from your own experiences, not others'.
- Challenge by choice, share at your level of comfort.



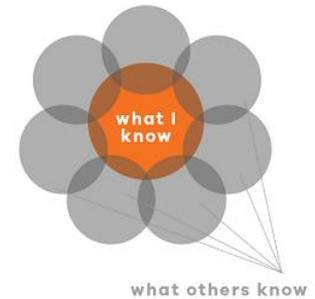
SO... WHAT IS IMPOSTER SYNDROME?

Define imposter syndrome

**IMPOSTOR
SYNDROME**



REALITY



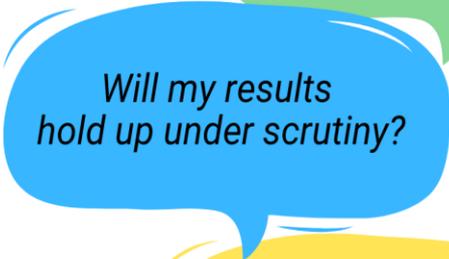
BUT... WHY?!

Many factors may influence one's imposter syndrome including (but not limited to):

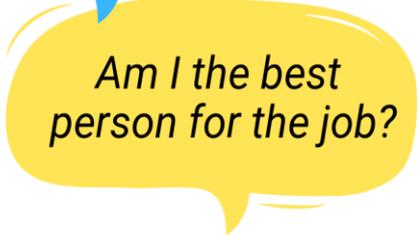
- Childhood memories/pressure/expectations from family and/or guardian
- Individual personality traits
- Identity-based experiences
- Anxiety, depression, mental health challenges



Am I doing enough?



Will my results hold up under scrutiny?



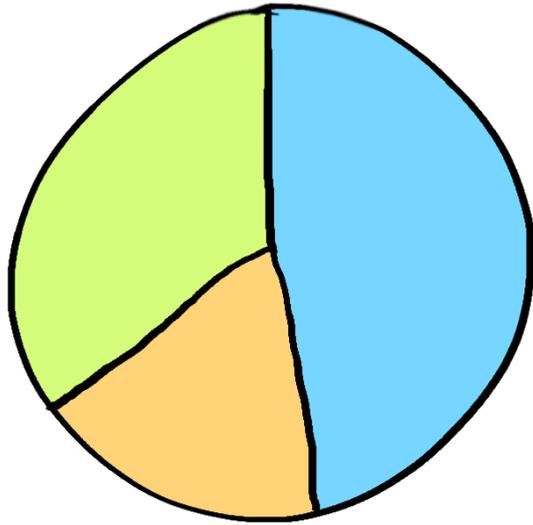
Am I the best person for the job?

LET'S LEARN MORE!



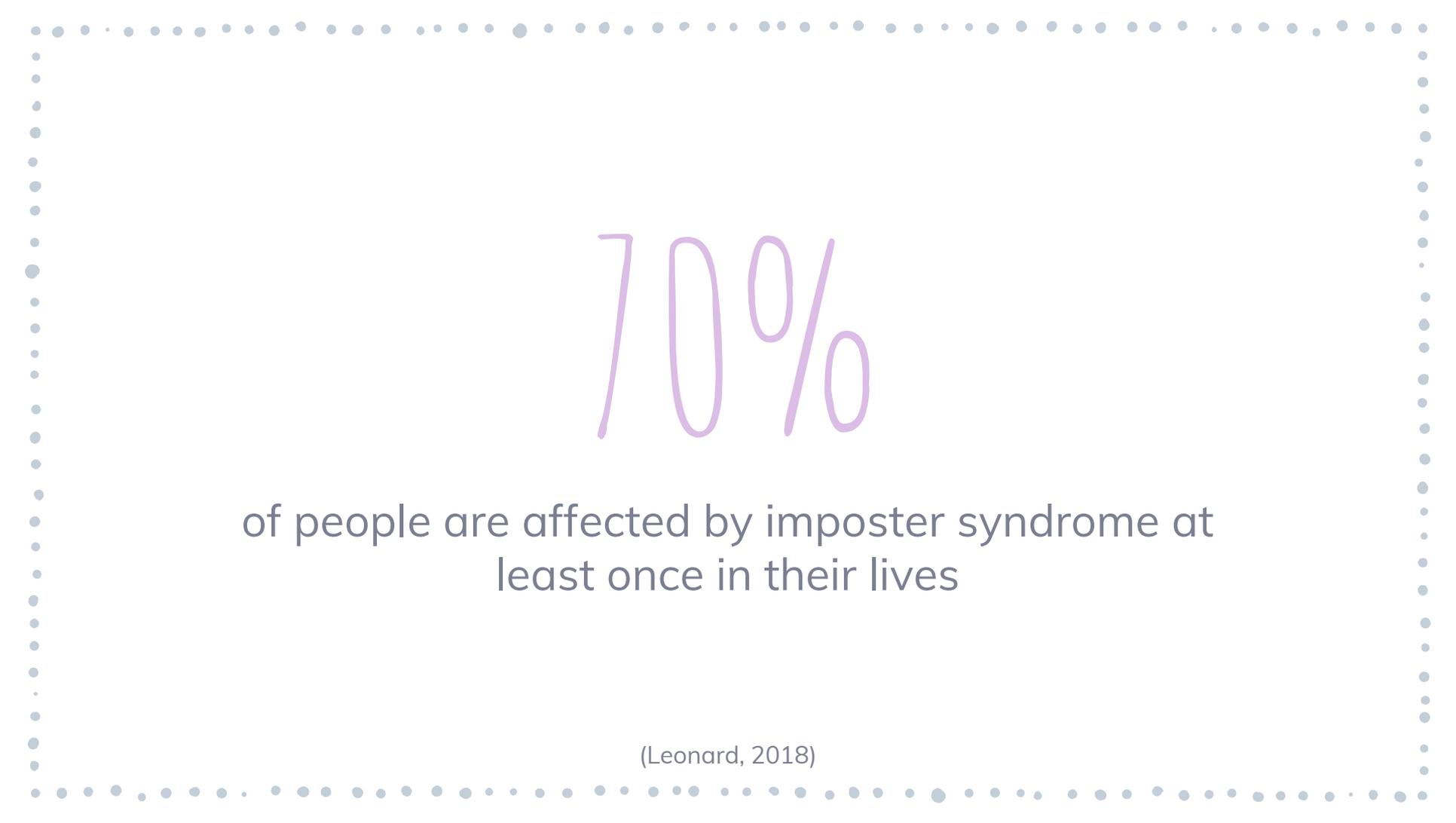
IP SCALE ACTIVITY

Please complete the scale survey and look up
when you are finished.



-  PEOPLE WHO GET IMPOSTER SYNDROME
-  OTHER PEOPLE WHO GET IMPOSTER SYNDROME
-  LITERALLY EVERYONE ELSE
(THEY ALSO GET IMPOSTER SYNDROME)

EVERYONE FEELS LIKE AN IMPOSTER
SOMETIMES, AND THAT'S OKAY



70%

of people are affected by imposter syndrome at
least once in their lives

(Leonard, 2018)

1.

TYPES OF IMPOSTER SYNDROME



THE PERFECTIONIST

Examples

- “This needs to be perfect/flawless”
- “I felt like I was micromanaging that situation”
- “I don’t feel like I actually did that well, I feel like they were just trying to be nice”
- Inability to achieve success because of feelings of not meeting potential
- Strategy: evaluate how far you’ve come, not how far you have to go

THE SUPERWOMAN

Examples

- “I get to work early/stay late to ensure that everything is done”
- “I don’t have enough time to relax/engage in hobbies”
- “I don’t know how I got this job/opportunity”
- Pushing yourself hard to try to “keep up” with others on your team
- Strategy: set attainable, timely goals – then reward yourself

THE NATURAL GENIUS

Examples

- “I rely on my intelligence to get me through situations”
- “I felt like I sounded stupid when I said that”
- “I’m used to relying on past experiences to maintain credibility”
- Maintaining an idea that you must be the expert at everything you do
- Strategy: develop relationships with others to utilize their knowledge when necessary

THE SOLOIST

Examples

- “I don’t want to burden others by asking for help when I know I can figure it out on my own”
- “I pride myself on being self-sufficient”
- “It diminishes my confidence when I feel like others think that I can’t handle a task on my own”
- Not being interested or willing to accept help from others/having concerns about not being self-sufficient
- Strategy: block times in your schedule to balance working independently and collaboratively

THE EXPERT

Examples

- “It makes me really frustrated when I don’t know how to do something”
- “I don’t know why they thought I was a good person to ask that question”
- “I don’t meet one of the ten requirements for that opportunity, so it doesn’t pay to apply”
- Validates competence based on how much is known, not what is known
- Strategy: mentor someone new to your organization

2.

STRATEGIES TO OVERCOMING IMPOSTER SYNDROME



BREAK THE SILENCE

- Be vulnerable with colleagues about challenges that you are facing with a focus on working through these challenges
- Consider students that may also be feeling imposter syndrome
- Recognize environments and contexts that may be influencing your experience of feeling like an imposter
- Name that you're speaking from your experiences and that you always have room to learn and grow
- Tell someone how your imposter syndrome manifests, what it looks like, and how it affects you

ADAPT PHYSICAL REACTION

- Take a deep breath, meditate, or practice mindfulness however you choose to do so
- Review posture, facial expression, hands, etc.

SEPARATE FEELINGS FROM FACT

- Reflect on what made you feel the way you're feeling and actively work to eliminate those experiences
- Maintain a journal of scenarios that caused you to feel imposter syndrome
 - Where were you?
 - What did you feel?
 - What was said or done that created this reaction?
 - How did you manage your emotions?

STOP COMPARING YOURSELF TO OTHERS

- Reframe the use of this time to seek out additional support from others
- Remove yourself from conversations that may unintentionally lead you to comparing yourself



FAKE IT TILL YOU MAKE IT

- Consider the context and recognize that your feelings right now are not representative of who you are as a person
- Remind yourself to reflect on “failures” as lessons learned and utilize your experiences to improve in the future

REWARD YOURSELF

- Acknowledge and take ownership when you accomplish something
- Keep a record of your accomplishments for performance reviews
- Save positive feedback in a place to reflect when you're experiencing self-doubt
- Surround yourself with small, tangible, daily reminders

VALUES ACTIVITY

Name your top 5 values.

2.

HELPING OTHERS OVERCOME IMPOSTER SYNDROME



ENCOURAGE OTHERS

- Encourage your peers, colleagues, friends, etc. to seek out opportunities to thrive
- Compliment others on development of skills

ELIMINATE BARRIERS

- Minimize any barriers to others'/students' success to ensure that they are provided an equal opportunity
 - Often identity-based systemic barriers

AWARENESS IN GIVING FEEDBACK

- Demonstrate objectivity when providing feedback
 - Name the challenge as a specific issue, not a person
- Recognize sensitivities in people you manage and address needs in feedback

REFLECTION

What is the last topic someone asked you for your advice on?

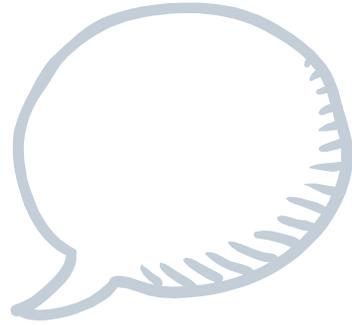
YOU CAN ALSO SPLIT YOUR CONTENT

White

Is the color of milk and fresh snow, the color produced by the combination of all the colors of the visible spectrum.

Black

Is the color of coal, ebony, and of outer space. It is the darkest color, the result of the absence of or complete absorption of light.



THANKS!

Any questions?

Feel free to contact me at

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REFERENCES

Clance, P. R. & Imes, S. A. (1978). The imposter phenomenon in high achieving women: Dynamics and therapeutic intervention.