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Managing Imposter Syndrome in the workplace

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CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF

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Screening questions

Q		
1	Ever thought you don't deserve your success?	Y / N
2	Worried that people will find out that you don't really know how to do your job?	Y / N
3	Thought that someone else would be better at your job than you?	Y / N
4	Been grateful that luck got you that new promotion or pay rise, rather than your own skills?	Y / N
5	Wondered when someone will wake up and realise that you are just getting by?	Y / N

Congratulations!

Defining it

What it is not

Imposter Syndrome is **not a defined mental health illness** in DSM/ICD

What it is

It is a psychological pattern - corrosive form of low self-esteem

Why?

Evolution is partly responsible

We are all the descendants of worriers. Any strain of homo sapiens who were not would have died out millennia ago. **Survival of the fittest** means all humans live with degrees of anxiety – including the kind that can cause impostor syndrome



Cardinal features

- Pervasive feeling of **fraudulence**
- Unwarranted sense of **insecurity**
- **Inescapable nagging doubt** of not having really earned accomplishments
- Background **negative internalisation**



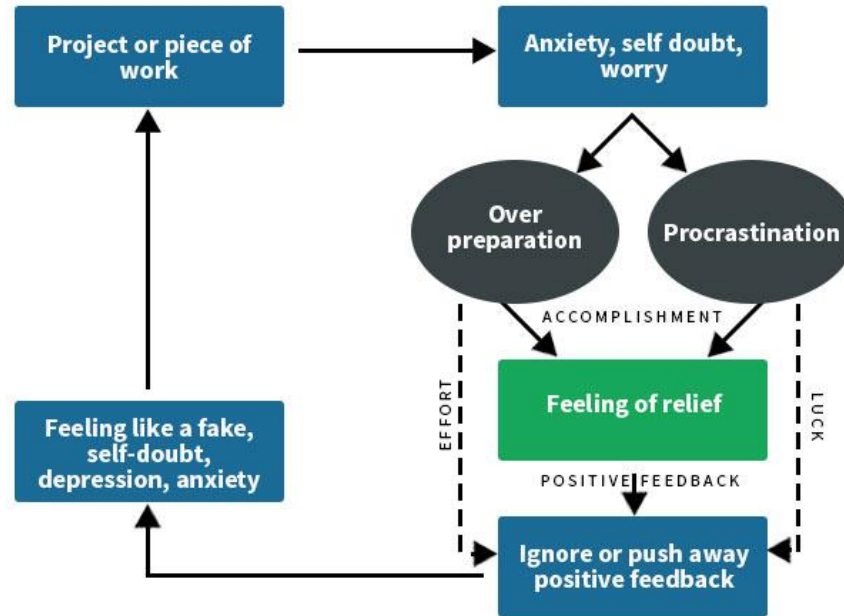
Cardinal features

- No threshold of accomplishment that puts these feeling to rest.
- External positive feedback fails to remedy the thoughts



Over-preparation / procrastination

The Imposter Cycle



Pluralistic Ignorance

We each doubt ourselves privately, but think we are alone because **no one else shares their doubts**, even though they are behaving similarly.

Internally **insular** existence



Does your corporate culture allow expression of esteem concerns? Where would an individual in your organisation turn to?

Five tips to remedy

- Accept that you have had some role in your successes
- Focus on providing value – the fastest way to get over feeling like a fraud is to genuinely try to help someone else
- Keep a file of people saying nice things about you
- Stop comparing yourself to ‘that’ person
- Realise that when you hold back you’re robbing the world of the benefits of your experience

Sports psychology analogy

- Develop an unshakable belief in the ability to achieve an outcome
- Determination to bounce back from performance set backs



Why must it be overcome?

The impostor syndrome mind-trap prevents people from believing in themselves, to the detriment of us all.

Impostor syndrome can be a gift if you use it to create more helpful, mindful, less toxically stressful ways of living. When people share with others who know how they feel, the sense of isolation and shame falls away, and self-awareness, connection and empathy grow. Then we can step forward.

Self-disclosure

- Protective mechanism against complacency
- Checking strategy
- Encouraged continual professional learning
- Fostered an open culture



Questions



PACIFIC LIFE RE

LUCID 2019

Quiz

— October 2019 —

Quiz Question 1...

According to data from the Protection Platform, what age group has the most mental health disclosures?

a) 30-34

b) 35-39

c) 40-44

Quiz Question 2...

How many working days were lost in the UK due to work-related stress, depression or anxiety in 2017/18?

- a) 12.8 million
- b) 15.4 million
- c) 17.9 million

Quiz Question 3...

What percentage of women with mental health problems are parents?

a) 42%

b) 68%

c) 82%

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/statistics/mental-health-statistics-family-and-parenting>

Quiz Question 4...

What % of working millennials have experienced suicidal thoughts?

a) 62%

b) 49%

c) 12%

<https://www.cnbc.com/2019/10/11/mental-health-issues-cause-record-numbers-of-gen-x-z-to-leave-jobs.html>

Quiz Question 5...

According to data from the Protection Platform, women in which profession have the highest mental health disclosures?

- a) Civil Servant
- b) Nurse
- c) Teacher

Quiz Question 6...

What percentage of mental health conditions start before the age of 18?

a) 25%

b) 55%

c) 75%

Quiz Question 7...

What percentage of people with diagnosable mental illness receive no treatment at all?

a) 55-60%

b) 70-75%

c) 80-85%

<https://mhfaengland.org/mhfa-centre/research-and-evaluation/mental-health-statistics/>

Quiz Question 8...

What percentage of the UK population has had a mental illness in the last year?

- a) 10%
- b) 25%
- c) 50%+

Quiz Question 9...

What percentage of applicants that have applied for life cover via the Protection Platform had a mental illness?

- a) 10%
- b) 30%
- c) 50%

Quiz Question 10

What is the average number of units of alcohol per week declared with a depression disclosure via the Protection Platform in 2019?

- a) 15 units
- b) 9 units
- c) 4 units

Tie Breaker



Tie breaker question 1

What year was Pacific Life Re formed?

a) 2006

b) 2008

c) 2010

Tie breaker question 2

What year was UnderwriteMe formed?

a) 2008

b) 2012

c) 2014

Tie breaker question 3

What % of employees have been touched by mental health challenges?

a) 40%

b) 60%

c) 90%

<https://newsroom.accenture.com/news/nine-in-10-uk-workers-touched-by-mental-health-challenges-accenture-research-finds.htm>

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