The Imposter ~~Syndrome~~ Phenomenon and Psychological Courage

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Overview

What is the imposter syndrome & why it is really a phenomenon

Strategies to reduce imposter feelings for self and others

How to harness psychological courage

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Whether you *think you can*, or *think you can't*, ~~you're right~~ you may be wrong!
Henry Ford

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NOT a real Imposter
NOT a syndrome

A feeling of phoniness
Feeling fraudulent despite successes

Worrying you will be found out

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Imposter thoughts

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Imposter Feelings

Can prevent people recognising their knowledge, skills and capabilities

Can stop people putting themselves forward for promotion or new tasks

Can create high levels of stress and anxiety

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70-80%

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Self Doubt is NORMAL

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When things go well I am afraid I won't be able to replicate the success

I find it hard to accept compliments or praise when I have done something well

I dread being evaluated

I worry others will discover how much I don't know

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I don't speak up in meetings unless I am sure of all of the facts

I sometimes feel intimidated by the presence of senior people in meetings

I may avoid challenging other people's points of view

If I don't have authority, I avoid trying to influence the discussion

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Where does it come from?

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Childhood messages / Parenting styles
Societal / Organisational messages
Lack of like role models
Feeling 'other'
and
Who you see yourself as being

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"When you plant lettuce, if it does not grow well you don't blame the lettuce

You look for reasons it is not doing well

It may need fertiliser, or more water, or less sun

You never blame the lettuce"

Thich Nhat Hanh

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How to manage imposter feelings

self and/or others

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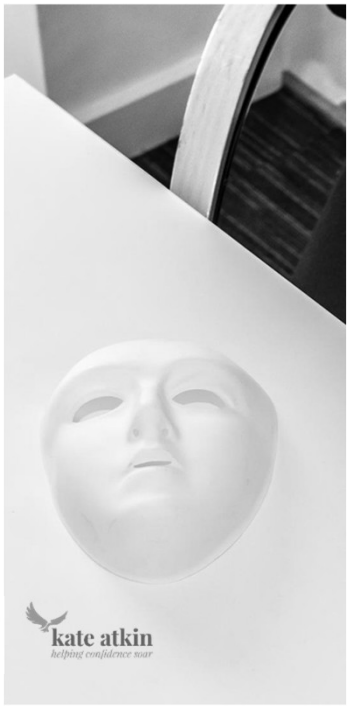

Talk about them to someone who will listen

- not fix

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"I got lucky"
"They were just being kind"
"They've made a mistake"

Challenge your self-talk

"It's because I worked really hard"
"I'm just doing my job"
"Anyone could have…"

"I could still have done it better…"

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Note your positive feedback

Review it (regularly)

Stop “ah, but…”
Start “yes, and…”

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Know and use your Strengths

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Find a Mentor

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The P Word

Perfection

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Apply hte 80% Rule

Optimal vs Perfect

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The F Word

Failure

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Things that didn't work

I tried: what did I learn?

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If you are managing others…

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STOP telling people they are amazing!

START telling people WHY

by giving specific strengths-based feedback

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Supporting/Coaching Others

Where do those feelings come from?
What impact are they having?

What evidence do you have to support your feelings?
What evidence do you have that contradicts them?

What makes the feelings worse/better?

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You can choose courage or you can choose comfort, but you can't choose both

Brene Brown

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Physical Courage

Acts performed by an individual despite the risk of death or physical harm to the actor

Rachman (1984) and Lopez (2007)

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Moral Courage

The willingness to act toward a moral or worthwhile goal, despite the presence of risk, uncertainty, and fear

Biswas-Diener (2012)

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Psychological Courage

A challenge to the inner psyche

Putman (2004)

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When have you been courageous?

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7 Steps to COURAGE

Calling
Ownership
Uncertainty
Resources
Action
Grit
Evolution

by Dr Roz Savage, MBE

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Re-write your Story

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Let curiosity be your compass and courage your sail

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Stop	**Start**
Think About	**Carry On**

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#ChooseCourage

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Further Reading

The Imposter Phenomenon by Kate Atkin
The Pursuit of Perfect by Tal Ben-Shahar
The Gift of Imperfection Brene Brown
Inferior by Angela Saini

www.TED.com
for talks by Susan Cain, Brene Brown & Amy Cuddy

and
The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse by Charlie Mackesy as a book and animated film on YouTube

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