



## Dealing with Imposter Syndrome: Shedding the mask of self-doubt

In the grand theatre of life, we all play different roles. But for some, the fear of being unmasked, of being exposed as a fraud, can be utterly paralyzing. This fear has a name: imposter syndrome. But don't fret, because it is possible to connect with this fear and turn it around so that you can get to know and value who you truly are.

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### The psychology of imposter syndrome

Imposter syndrome is not a disease, nor a personality trait; it's a psychological pattern where individuals doubt their skills, talents or accomplishments, and harbour a constant fear of being exposed as a 'fraud'.

Remarkably, it is not confined to those with low self-esteem. According to a 2022 study, a staggering **82% of adults** have experienced imposter feelings at some point in their lives. This phenomenon is prevalent, regardless of success or status. It's an equal opportunity malady, targeting everyone from trainees to top executives.

Imposter syndrome can be traced back to factors such as perfectionism, fear of failure, and societal expectations. **However, its roots often lie in childhood experiences and messages about success, work, and self-worth.**



## Recognising imposter syndrome

Imposter syndrome can manifest in a myriad of ways. Some common signs include:

- » Feeling that your success is down to luck, not ability or hard work
- » An inability to realistically assess your competence and skills
- » Constantly seeking validation from others
- » Fear of failure, leading to procrastination or excessive preparation
- » Overworking and burnout to prove oneself
- » Minimising accomplishments or attributing them to external factors

## Strategies for overcoming imposter syndrome

Now that we understand the psychological basis and recognise the signs, let's explore practical tips and strategies to help overcome feelings of inadequacy.

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### Acknowledge your feelings

Recognise when imposter thoughts arise and label them for what they are. Acknowledging these thoughts can help **create distance between you and the negative emotions associated with imposter syndrome.**

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### Share your experiences

Open up to trusted friends, colleagues or mentors about your feelings of self-doubt. Chances are, they have experienced similar emotions and **can offer valuable support and perspective.**

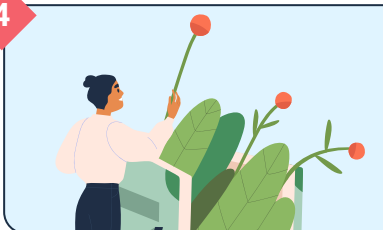
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### Focus on your strengths

Take time to reflect on your achievements and skills and maintain a record of positive feedback or accomplishments. **This can help you build a more balanced view of your abilities and counteract imposter thoughts.**

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### Develop a growth mindset

Embrace challenges and setbacks as opportunities for growth, rather than evidence of inadequacy. **By adopting a growth mindset, you can focus on learning and improvement rather than seeking perfection.**

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### Practice self-compassion

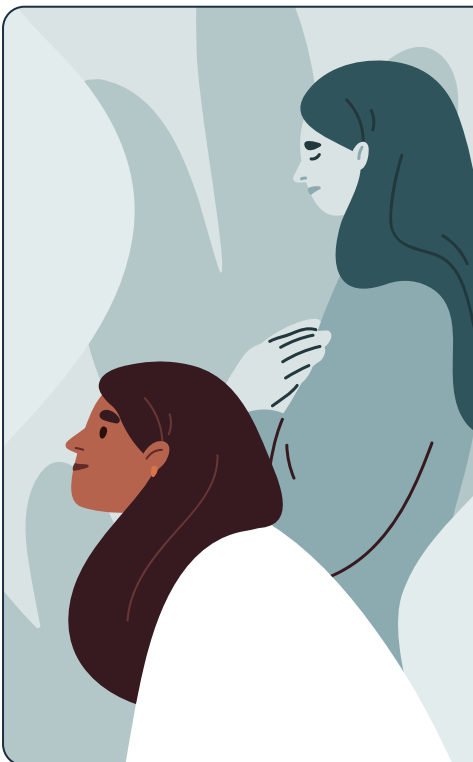
Treat yourself with kindness and understanding when you experience feelings of self-doubt or failure. **Practising self-compassion can help reduce the impact of imposter syndrome and promote a healthier self-image.**

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### Seek professional help if needed

If imposter syndrome is causing significant distress or affecting your daily life, consider seeking support from a mental health professional who can provide **tailored guidance and coping strategies.**



Imposter syndrome is a widespread psychological phenomenon that can have a profound impact on an individual's self-esteem, mental health, and professional success. By understanding the psychological basis, recognising the signs, and implementing practical strategies, you can empower yourself to shed the mask of self-doubt and embrace your authentic capabilities.

Remember, we all have unique strengths and experiences that contribute to our success. Be kind to yourself, celebrate your achievements, and embark on a journey of self-discovery and growth. As you tackle imposter syndrome and cultivate self-compassion, you will find that the mask of self-doubt starts to crumble, revealing your true, authentic self.

It's important to remind ourselves that even the most successful people face moments of self-doubt and insecurity. The key is to acknowledge these feelings, learn from them, and continue moving forward. **Over time, as you build resilience and develop a deeper understanding of your strengths and weaknesses, the grip of imposter syndrome will weaken, allowing you to thrive in both your personal and professional life.**

So, take a deep breath, acknowledge your unique talents, and remember that you are not alone in this journey. Together we can learn how to help the imposter within find peace, embrace our true selves, and live a more fulfilling and authentic life.

Looking for more support and advice on where to go?  
Reach out to HealthHero and Validium today.

