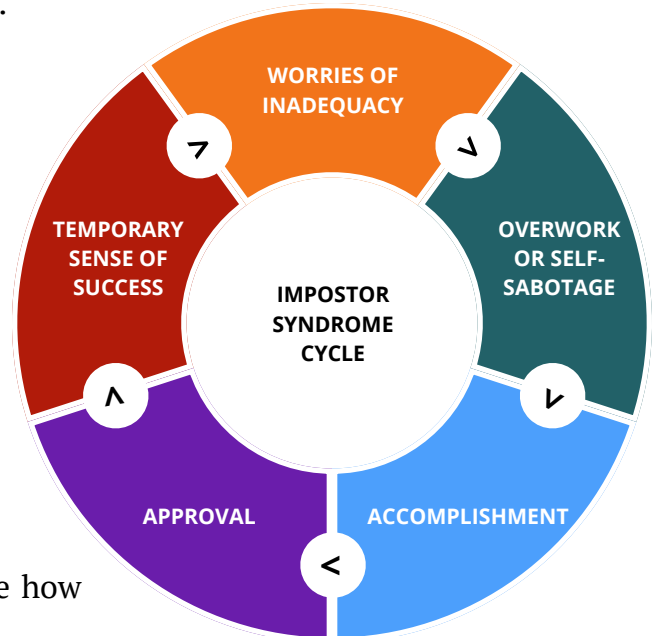


# Impostor syndrome

In a world of technology that seems to evolve at light speed, it is easy to feel that our skills and knowledge lag behind those of our peers. For some, however this perceived disparity can become great: even though they may be every bit as competent as their colleagues, they begin to feel inferior. After a time, they begin to assume that circumstance and blind luck has prevented them from being discovered as the fraud they believe themselves to be. This debilitating condition is the essence of Impostor syndrome (Clarence & Imes, 1978).

Impostor syndrome generally looks like this:

- 1) You start by worrying that you're not good enough.
- 2) This doubt causes you to work far too hard, creating burnout conditions.
- 3) Still, because of the effort you put into the activity, you accomplish what you set out to.
- 4) This gets you the approval you sought...
- 5) ...which leads to a temporary sense of success.
- 6) Until you discover minor errors in your work. Then you remember your burnout and start to doubt yourself again.



Impostor syndrome often gets better when you realize how many people feel the same way you do.

IMPOSTOR SYNDROME				
B	I	N	G	O
"They were just being nice."	"I don't actually belong here."	"I'm going to screw this up."	"It was a fluke I did that."	"This won't be right, but..."
"I just got lucky."	"Oh, stop, it was nothing."	"Everyone else has it together."	"I just look good on paper."	"You are way calmer than I was."
"If I can do it, anyone can."	"I should have seen that."	<b>FREE SPACE</b>	"My opinion doesn't matter."	"I had an awful lot of help."
"I just made it up as I went."	"I'm an idiot for getting that wrong."	"I can't seem to keep up."	"This is a dumb question, but..."	"I'm not the right person for that."
"I'm sorry I didn't know."	"I have no idea what I'm doing."	"I'll figure it out eventually."	"I didn't do anything, really."	"I was invited by mistake."

One way to do that is to keep an "Impostor syndrome BINGO" card nearby, and pay attention to how often you hear other people say some of the things on it.

Or, be mindful of how often you hear yourself say some of these very words.

You may surprise yourself.