

HOW TO BREAK FREE OF IMPOSTER SYNDROME AND TOXIC WORK CULTURE

Micro-guide

*Psychological freedom
is a right not a
privilege.*

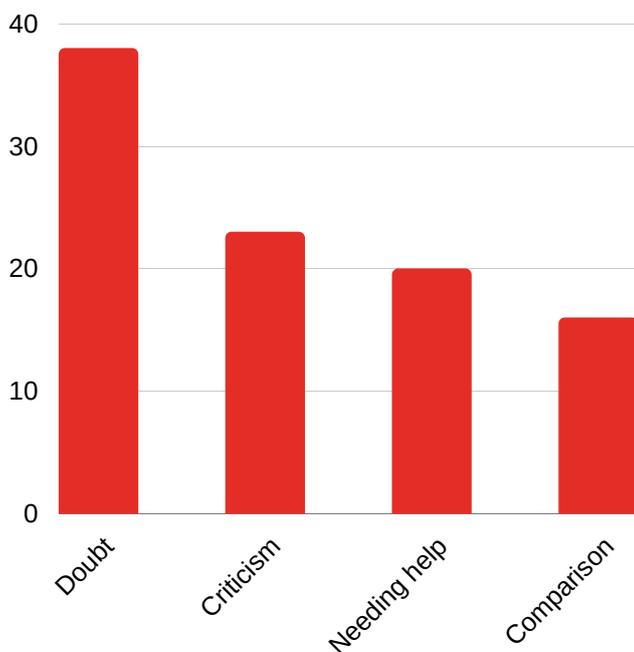


IMPOSTER SYNDROME

is a difficulty with internalising success. It's characterised by feelings of inadequacy and fraudulence that are resistant to evidence of achievement.

THE ROOT CAUSE

For many people the root cause is self-doubt and an inaccurate picture of reality. As a result, negative messages have a greater impact. Toxic (highly critical and unsupportive) work culture reinforce the self-doubt and a sense of powerlessness.



Main triggers for imposter syndrome feelings*

* OnePoll survey of 3,000 UK adults on behalf of Access Commercial Finance, between 13/06/2018 and 15/06/2018.

IT IS COMMON

A survey of 3000 UK adults found that 62% had experienced Imposter Syndrome in the past 12 months.* It's more common among women (66% of women versus 56% of men) and among younger people (86% of those aged 18-34 years).*

IMPACT

Imposter Syndrome drives individuals into perfectionism and overworking. It holds them back from taking risks, asking for pay rises, or applying for the jobs they really want. It inadvertently perpetuates toxic work culture

BREAK FREE

Imposter Syndrome isn't irreversible. Examining the source of your doubts (limiting beliefs) and creating psychological safety for yourself, coupled with cutting back on unhelpful behaviours will help you feel more confident, achieve goals with less stress, and move away from unhealthy work environments.

Get to the beliefs that fuel imposter syndrome and toxic work culture. Do this exercise alone or with someone.

Have you identified your disempowering beliefs?



For example:

- I feel insecure or lack confidence because... [fill in the blank]
- To prove that I am worthy I would need to... [fill in the blank]
- To feel secure and confident, what I would need to hear from others is... [fill in the blank]
- I will know that I am worthy when the world gives me more... [fill in the blank]
- The thing that would kill my confidence forever is ... [fill in the blank]

Have you clarified the pros and cons of holding on to each belief?



For example: "I lack confidence because I don't have enough skills"

- Pros: I get to chase the next qualification rather than take a real risk. It keeps me safe.
- Cons: I procrastinate over applying for a new job, asking for a pay rise, starting my business, or taking a sabbatical.

Have you made a clear decision as to whether you want to continue investing attention and energy into this belief?

- Where attention goes, energy flows. Notice how you feel about your choice.



■ Have you considered alternative beliefs



For example:

- I don't lack confidence AND I have enough skills.
- Consider the evidence supporting the fact that you've taken risks in the pasts and figured things out with the skills you already had.

■ Have you made a clear resolution going forward?



- Have you made a clear commitment one way or another? You can commit to action or you can commit to giving yourself space. The important thing is the sense of commitment. Commitment is the ultimate antidote to doubt and procrastination.

■ How will you hold yourself accountable?



- Check in with yourself daily to make sure disempowering thoughts are handled regularly? For example, ask yourself daily: What do you want to create today? What is holding you back? Work on those.

■ Will you create or participate in spaces for protest, healing, and change?



- Give yourself space to share your journey, catalyse change, and inspire others to do the same.

Repeat this exercise as often as needed. Use it to create transformational conversations

HI I'M DR AMINA AITSI-SELMI

I'm a recovering overachiever and have experienced imposter syndrome, over a 15+ year career as a doctor, scientist and population health specialist. I've worked in hospitals, a war zone, a pandemic and with the United Nations.

Since 2016, I've built my own coaching and consulting business and spent 1000+ hours working with talented professionals who want to create an inspiring career and lead with more confidence and ease.

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