



WHAT IS IMPOSTER SYNDROME?

Imposter syndrome is that little voice in your head telling you that you are not good enough; it makes you feel inadequate, resulting in continuous self-doubt. Even when you achieve something, small or big, you believe it was achieved through sheer luck instead of your talents and hard work. Individuals with imposter syndrome often fear and think that they will be found out as fake or phony in their craft or career.

Imposter syndrome can look like this.....

1 A CYCLE OF ANXIETY AND SHORT TERM RELIEF

A cycle of feeling anxious that you are not good enough at achieving your goals, followed by short-term relief when you do reach that goal, to more anxiety and self-doubt that your achievement wasn't good enough.

2 LOW SELF-CONFIDENCE

Imposter syndrome lowers self-confidence and self-esteem because they constantly put themselves down, their inner critic continually tells them that they are not good enough, their achievements were luck, they will eventually be caught out, and so on.

3 A STRONG NEED TO BE THE BEST

Perfectionism is a broad personality style where a person is constantly concerned with striving for flawlessness and perfection; they often have critical self-evaluations and concerns regarding other people's evaluations of themselves. A perfectionist may strive for extremely high standards, they are personally demanding, judge their self-worth based on their ability to strive for and achieve such unrelenting standards, and experience negative consequences of setting such demanding standards.

4 UNWILLINGNESS TO INTERNALIZE POSITIVE FEEDBACK

They cannot internalize their accomplishments, however successful they are. They might think that their achievements are all just luck or that they managed to pull the wool over everyone's eyes but will soon be found out as nothing more than a fraud.

5 SELF-SABOTAGE

Individuals often self-sabotage and passively take steps to prevent themselves from reaching their goals. Unfortunately, chronic self-sabotage depletes drive and motivation. It leaves us sad, anxious and damages our self-esteem; a vicious circle will spiral out of control if left untouched.

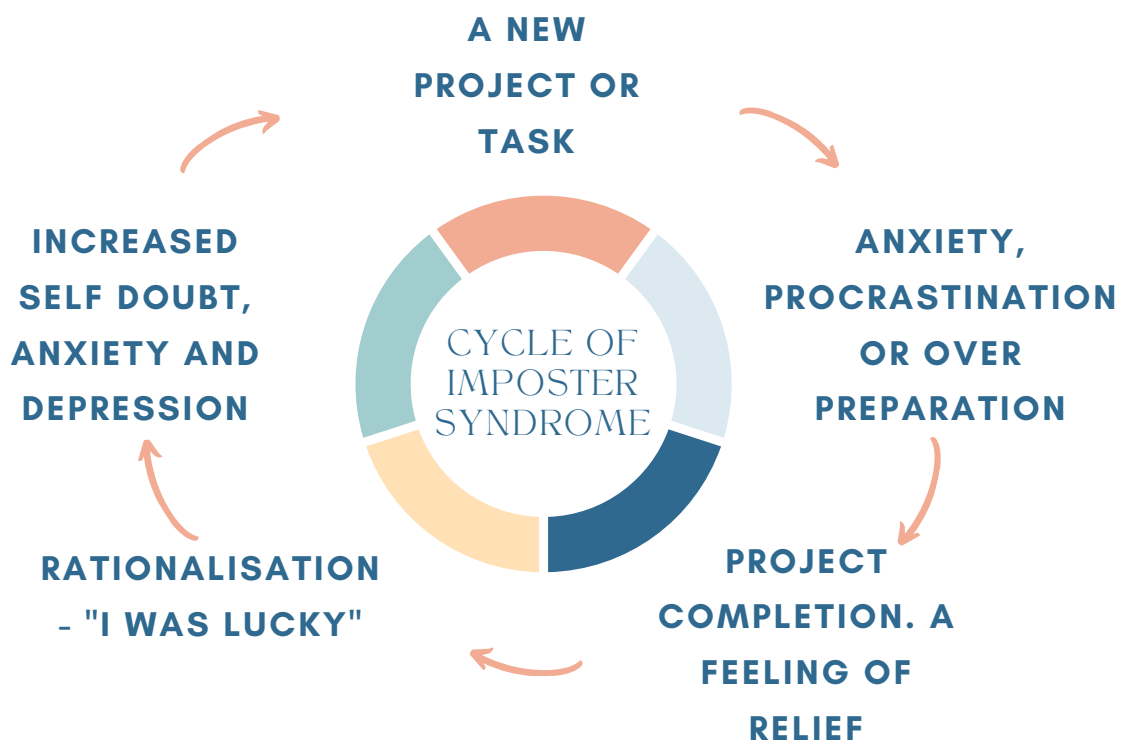


IMPOSTER SYNDROME CYCLE

Individuals with imposter syndrome constantly second-guess themselves, downplay their accomplishments, and often wonder whether they're good enough or intelligent enough for the opportunities presented. Imposter Syndrome has a few distinct characteristics, such as a crippling self-belief that you don't deserve success, that you couldn't replicate your success if you tried, and that you are incapable. Imposter Syndrome has many adverse effects, including not asking for help, saying 'no' to new opportunities, avoiding feedback or criticism, and even anxiety and depression.

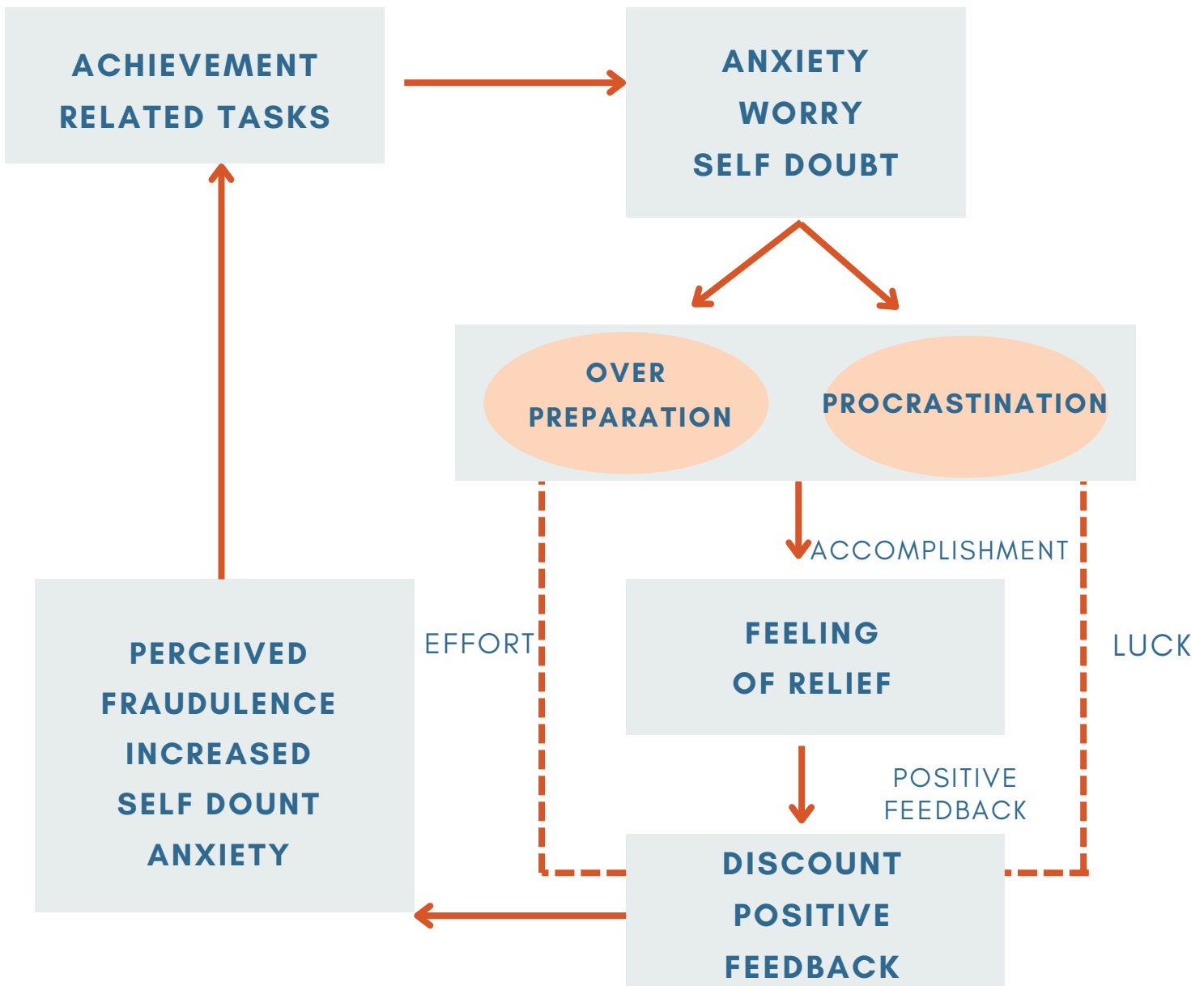
Essentially any achievement-related task will cause someone with Impostor Syndrome to get overwhelmed, setting off a predictable cycle of worry, self-doubt, and fear. To get through this, they fall into either a pattern of over-preparation (overdoing it) or procrastination (avoiding it). You may fall into one category or go back and forth between these reactions.

When the task has been accomplished, the individual feels relief and will likely receive positive feedback. However, that feedback is often disregarded, leading to sustained feelings of perceived fraudulence, self-doubt, depression, or anxiety.





IMPOSTER SYNDROME CYCLE



Clance's (1985) model of the Imposter Cycle, as depicted in Sakulku & Alexander (2011).





OVERCOMING THE IMPOSTER SYNDROME CYCLE

1

DEVELOP THE MINDSET

You perceive your accomplishments as fraudulence because of your critical mindset. Adopting a positive attitude by replacing ruminating thoughts with happy thoughts can help you cope and move forward.

2

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

One way to overcome imposter syndrome is by gaining more confidence. No one is born with confidence. Reflect on your strengths and weaknesses from the past and see how far you have come.

3

CREATE AN "I AM GREAT" FOLDER

Imposter feelings are hard to experience when you know what you've accomplished. So every month, look at what you've accomplished so you can rest assured that you're doing a great job.

4

DEVELOP A THOUGHT RECORD

The idea that our thoughts determine how we feel and behave is the cornerstone of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT). The thought record helps bring awareness to your thoughts that lead to incorrect beliefs about yourself and your situations.

5

ACCEPT FAILURE

Rather than letting failures overwhelm you with even more self-doubt, cultivate the ability to accept failure as a natural part of being human. With this new acceptance, acknowledge what you have learned and use it as a tool to grow and move forward.





1

DEVELOP THE MINDSET

Complete the exercise below where you replace your critical negative thoughts with positive thoughts and actions.



Fear of failure stops you from trying something new.



Trying something new by pushing yourself out of your comfort zone.



Comparing yourself to others and feeling less great about yourself.



Looking at others success as inspiration, rather than putting yourself down.





2

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Could you complete the exercise below so that you won't have to worry that you're not good enough for certain things and believe you are capable?

STRENGTHS

What do I do well?

What unique set of skills do I have?

Large empty space for writing strengths.

WEAKNESSES

What could I improve on?

What have I learnt from the things I didn't do well in the past?

Large empty space for writing weaknesses.





3

CREATE AN "I AM GREAT" FOLDER

Write down all the things that you are great at or have accomplished so far. These could be screenshots of kind messages you've received from fans, coworkers, friends, or family members. You could also include media clippings, data metrics, or other figures that show your accomplishments.

A large rectangular area with a light orange background and horizontal lines for writing.



4

THOUGHT RECORD KEEPER

WHERE WERE YOU?	FEELING OR EMOTION	AUTOMATIC NEGATIVE THOUGHT	EVIDENCE THAT SUPPORTS YOUR THOUGHT	EVIDENCE THAT DOES NOT SUPPORT YOUR THOUGHT	ALTERNATIVE THOUGHT	FEELING OR EMOTION
Where were you? What were you doing? Who were you with?	Eg, sad, angry, scared. Rate from 0 - 100%	What were your thoughts? Did you have any memories or any other insights?	Is there any truth behind your thought? What is the evidence?	What facts or evidence do not support your thought? Could you be magnifying or jumping to conclusions?	Write your new thought after you have taken all the evidence into consideration.	How do you feel now, 0-100%



5

ACCEPTING FAILURE

Unfortunately, failure is inevitable if you plan to succeed in life. Failure allows us to bounce back, to learn from our mistakes, and helps us appreciate success.

THINGS I FAILED AT

POSITIVE THINGS THAT I LEARNT AS A RESULT

REFLECTION: DO YOU STILL THINK YOU FAILED? WHY OR WHY NOT?





HABIT TRACKER

Use this habit tracker to track your progress in making positive changes to your life.

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

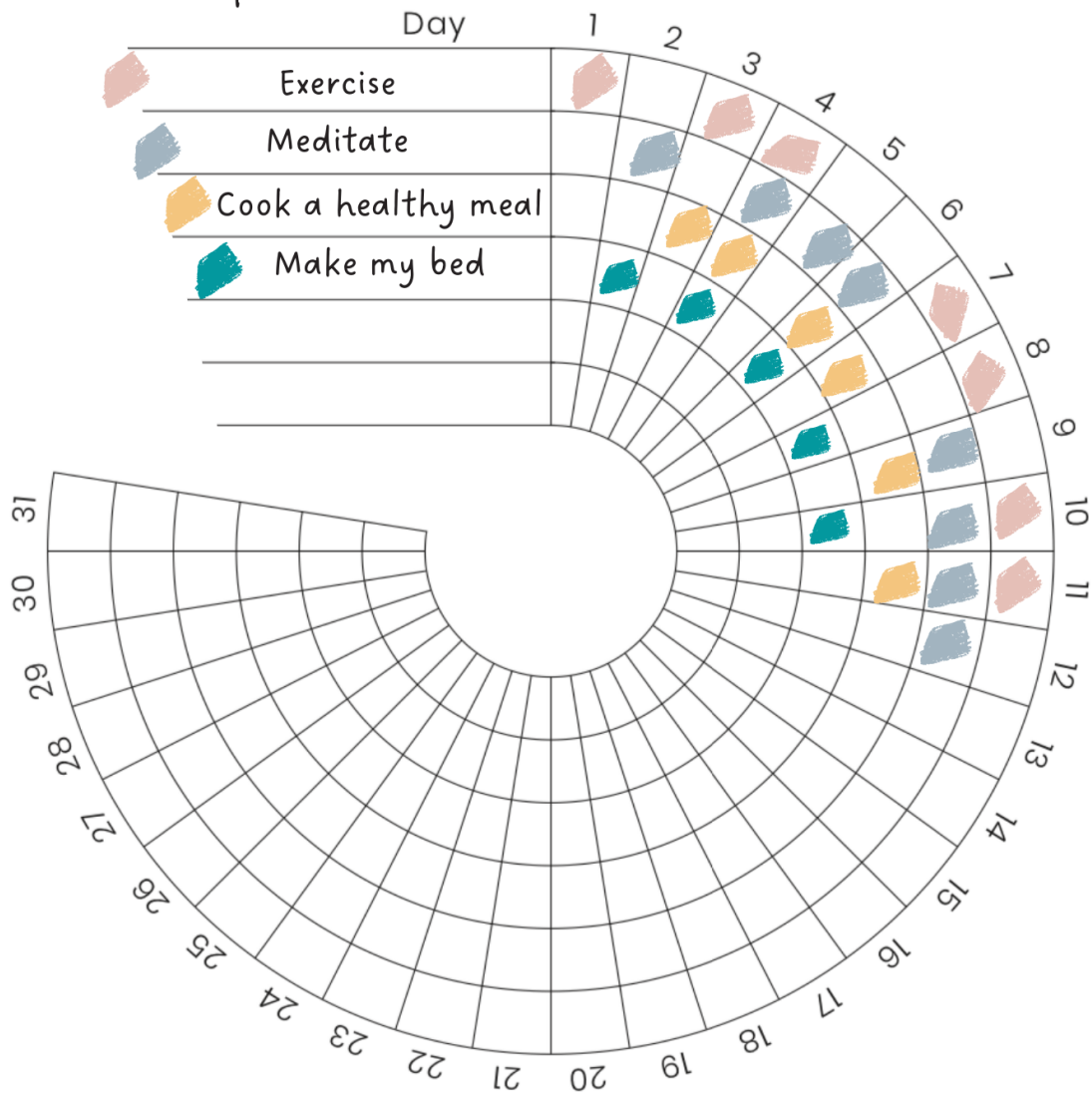
NOTES





EXAMPLE HABIT TRACKER

MONTH April



NOTES

