

EDUCATED, SUCCESSFUL &... AN IMPOSTER?

*A WORKBOOK TO HELP YOU DEFEAT
IMPOSTER SYNDROME*



IMPOSTER NO MORE

Individuals who struggle with imposter syndrome have a difficult time internalizing their success and achievements.

What would it take for you to know and believe you belong and are worthy of your current position and success?

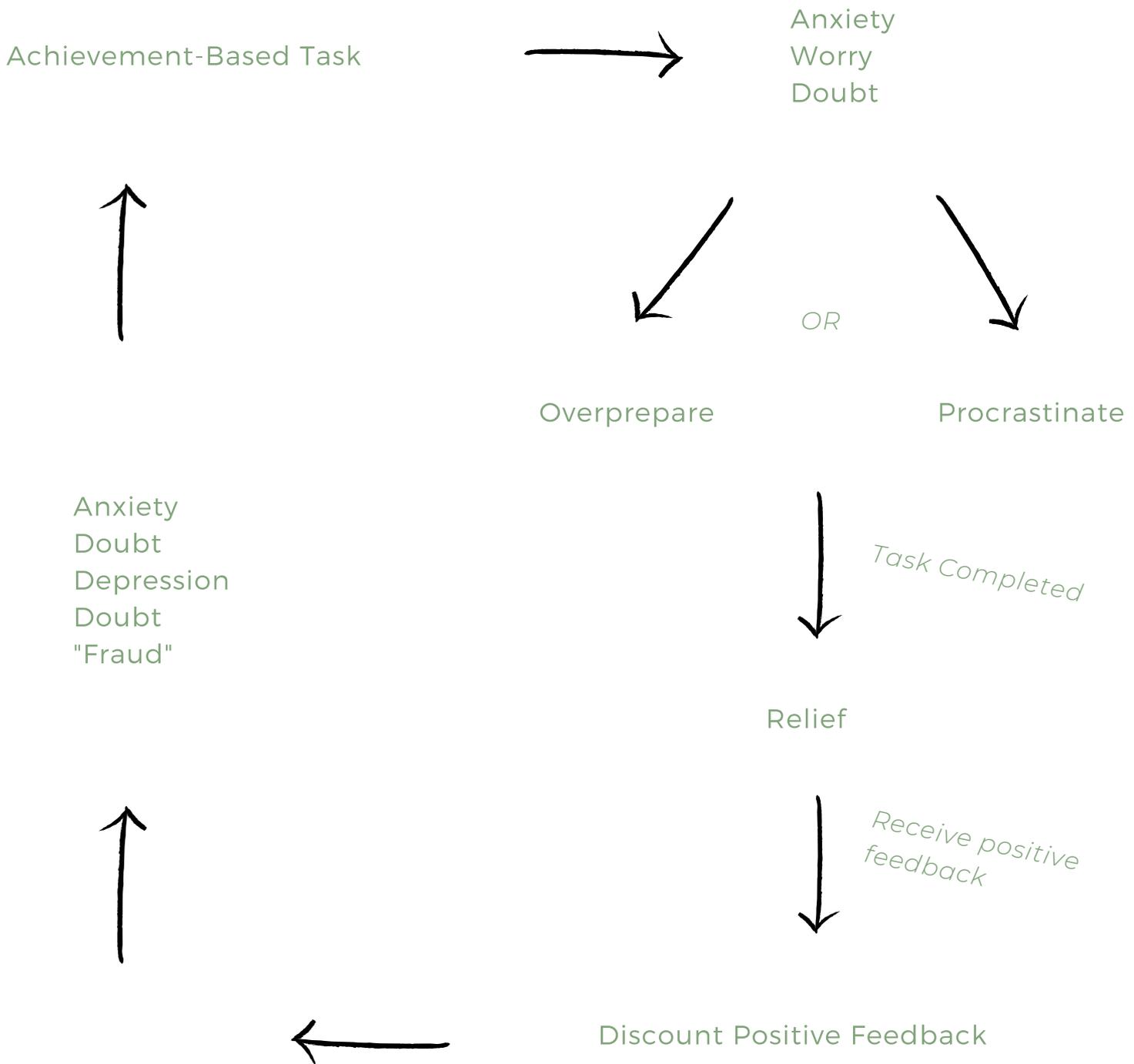
Imposter syndrome can negatively impact your life, as it can make one avoid taking risks, can cause anxiety and depression and cause you to overwork yourself.

How has feeling like an imposter impacted your life?



THE IMPOSTER CYCLE

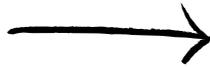
This Imposter Cycle was created by Clance (1985) and it depicts how you stay trapped in the feelings which perpetuate the Imposter Syndrome.



WHAT'S YOUR IMPOSTER CYCLE?

Using the Imposter Cycle as a guide, complete the cycle using a past incident experienced.

Pick a past achievement-based task you were asked to complete



How did you feel when you learned you had to complete this task?





How did the above feeling/s make you respond to the task?
(over-prepare or procrastinate)

How did you feel after you discounted the positive feedback?



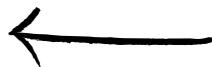
Task Completed

Relief



Receive positive feedback

What did you say to yourself that discounted the positive feedback?





CHANGE THE TAPE

The imposter syndrome comes with its own internal tape that keeps the cycling moving. These thoughts are usually unhealthy, unhelpful, or wrong.

Write two common thoughts on your imposter syndrome tape.

Example: "All of my co-workers know more than me."

Look at each thought identified above and ask yourself:

"Is this thought helpful, healthy or true?"

If you answered "no", change the tape it's not serving you!

For each thought above, rewrite it from a more helpful, t

Example: "Some of my co-workers might know more than me"



A thought can be both true and unhelpful. Let's look at a thought:

"My performance review was terrible "

That may be a true thought, but it isn't useful because it will likely create negative feelings and behaviors. Tackle true, unhelpful thoughts by reframing them. New thought:

"My performance review wasn't what I wanted it to be, but I am actively working on making improvements".



REWRITING SUCCESS

Often our unrealistic definitions of success and failure can fuel our imposter syndrome.

Success to me is..

- Is my definition healthy?
- Is my definition realistic?
- Does my definition motivate me?
- Is my definition attainable?

My new definition of success is...

COMBATING IMPOSTER SYNDROME

Overcoming imposter syndrome takes time so be **gentle** and **patient** with yourself. Below are a few tools to help you in the fight.

- ✔ Create an email to document your wins. Email yourself daily and review weekly
- ✔ Rework your personal definition of "success" and "failure"
- ✔ Push past imposter thoughts and feelings and keep showing up and doing your best.
- ✔ Schedule an appointment with a therapist to work through the feelings/thoughts that come with
- ✔ Build your tribe and get and receive support to others who struggle with imposter symptoms
- ✔ Create positive affirmations to counter the negative self-talk. Post the affirmation in a place you visit often
- ✔ Keep showing up and doing your best despite what imposter syndrome is telling you
- ✔ Make a case against your imposter syndrome internal dialogue. Gather all the facts and see if it really stands up.

MY MASTER PLAN TO BEAT IMPOSTER SYNDROME

You know your cycle, you have tools to help you beat your cycle, now its time to create a clear plan.

Support:

Identify two people you can talk to when the internal imposter syndrome tape gets too loud:

Affirmations:

Create two affirmations that declare your worth and sense of belonging. Post them in frequently visible places (i.e. bathroom mirror, refrigerator door, etc.)

Evidence:

Identify two ways you will collect evidence (or facts) to review when your start doubting or questioning yourself.

**Congratulations,
you've successfully
completed the
workbook.**

Revisit this guide as often as necessary to assist you in your fight against imposter syndrome.

References:

Clance, P.,R. (1985). The Imposter Phenomenon: Overcoming the fear that haunts your success. Atlanta, GA: Peachtree.

Clance, P.R. & O'Toole, M. (1988). The imposter phenomenon: An internal barrier to empowerment and achievement. The Haworld Press.

**Gould, J. (2008). Gradpsych Extra: Get Real: Feel like an imposter? You're not alone. Monitor Staff, 39, 76.
<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2008/07-08/imposter>**

Kaplan, K. (2009). Unmasking the imposter. Nature 459, 468-469.

Matthews, G., & Clance, P. (1985). Treatment of the impostor phenomenon in psychotherapy clients. Psychotherapy in Private practice, 3(1), 71-81.

Sakulku, J. & Alexander, J. (2011). The imposter phenomenon. International Journal of Behavioral Science, 6, 73-92.

