



CHANGE

BRAVING THE REAL TRIGGERS OF IMPOSTER SYNDROME

 **ISA**
FALL SUMMIT

THE CHANNEL'S BEST
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENT

A MINDFUL MOMENT

#GOALS



UNSTUCK



UNBOTHERED



UNINTERRUPTED

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Abstract: The term imposter phenomenon is used to designate an internal experience of intellectual phonies, which appears to be particularly prevalent and intense among a select sample of high achieving women. Certain early family dynamics and later imposition of societal sex-role stereotyping appear to contribute significantly to the development of the imposter phenomenon. Despite outstanding academic and professional accomplishments, women who experience the imposter phenomenon persist in believing that they are really not bright and have fooled anyone who thinks otherwise. Numerous achievements, which one might expect to provide ample object evidence of superior intellectual functioning, do not appear to affect the imposter belief. Four factors, which contribute to the maintenance of imposter feelings over time, are outlined. Therapeutic approaches found to be effective in helping women change the imposter self-concept are described.

In the past five years we have worked in individual psychotherapy, theme-centered international groups, and college classes with over 150 highly successful women—women who have earned PhDs in various specialties, who are respected professionals in their fields, or who are students recognized for their academic excellence. However, despite their earned degrees, scholastic honors, high achievement on standardized tests, praise and professional recognition from colleagues and respected authorities, these women do not experience an internal sense of success. They consider themselves to be “impostors.” Women who experience the imposter phenomenon maintain a strong belief that they are not intelligent; in fact they are convinced that they have fooled anyone who thinks otherwise. For example, students often fantasize that they were mistakenly admitted to graduate school because of an error by the admissions committee. Numerous women graduate students state their high examination scores are due to luck, to misgrading, or to the faulty judgment of professors. Women professionals in our sample feel over evaluated by colleagues and administrators. One women professor said, “I’m not good enough to be on the faculty here. Some mistakes was made in the selection process.” Another, the chairperson of her department, said, “Obviously I’m in this position because my abilities have been overestimated.” Another woman with two master’s degrees, a PhD, and numerous publications to her credit considered herself unqualified to teach remedial college classes in her field. In other words, these women find innumerable means of negating any external evidence that contradicts their belief that they are, in reality, unintelligent.”

The question has been raised as to whether or not men experience this phenomenon. In our clinical experience, we have found that the phenomenon occurs with much less frequency in men and that when it does occur, it is with much less intensity. We have received mixed opinions from these colleagues with whom we have consulted. The attribution research findings summarized later, truly



Stop Telling Women They Have Imposter Syndrome

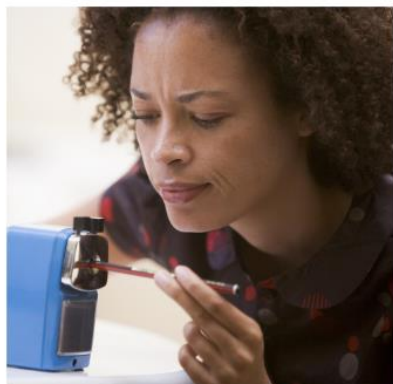
by Ruchika Tulshyan and Jodi-Ann Burey

February 11, 2021



20M+ GOOGLE SEARCH RESULTS

FIVE TYPES OF IMPOSTERS



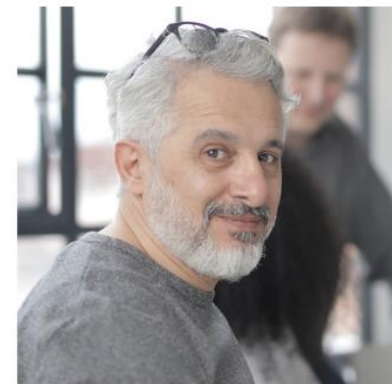
PERFECTIONIST



SUPER HUMAN



NATURAL
GENIUS



EXPERT



SOLOIST



FALL SUMMIT

YOU'RE NOT AN IMPOSTER; YOU'RE TRIGGERED

YOUR BEHAVIOR CHAIN



TRIGGERS



THOUGHTS/
FEELINGS



ACTION OR
INACTION

CONSEQUENCES
+ OR -



WHAT'S GOT YOU STUCK?

MANAGING TRIGGERS, RISKS, & FEARS

WHY AGREEMENTS MATTER



REAL TRIGGERS

Personal Triggers

- Unresolved traumas
- Fear of failure
- Lack of healthy boundaries
- Mental & emotional illness
- Varying levels of ability
- Lack of skills
- Family & financial stress
- Lack of self-awareness
- Negative self-talk
- Overuse of social media
- Toxic positivity
- Bad agreements

Global Triggers

- Racism
- Sexism
- Classism & Elitism
- Religious Discrimination
- Ageism
- Ableism
- Tokenism
- Colorism
- Weight bias
- Xenophobia
- Transphobia
- Homophobia
- Loneliness
- Stereotypes
- Lack of safe spaces

Workplace Triggers

- Change/new processes
- Hiring & promotion discrimination
- Unchecked microaggressions, bullying and harassment
- DE&I awareness without activation
- Lack of policy enforcement
- Poor managers/communication
- Overtalking or ignoring others
- Lack of advocacy
- Natural hair discrimination
- Lack of work-life flexibility
- Mental health stigma
- Compensation, rewards, and promotion inequities
- Lack of empathy and trust-building
- Limited opportunities for upskilling/reskilling





PRINCESS, YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE A RISK MANAGER.



F I V E
P O W E R
P L A Y S

TO MANAGE YOUR TRIGGERS

FOUR BRAVE VOLUNTEERS





1: CHALLENGE ASSUMED CONSTRAINTS



2: SET YOUR
INWARD
INTENTIONS

3: DECIDE TO MOVE



4. FIGHT FEAR WITH POWER



POSITION
POWER



TASK
POWER



PERSONAL
POWER

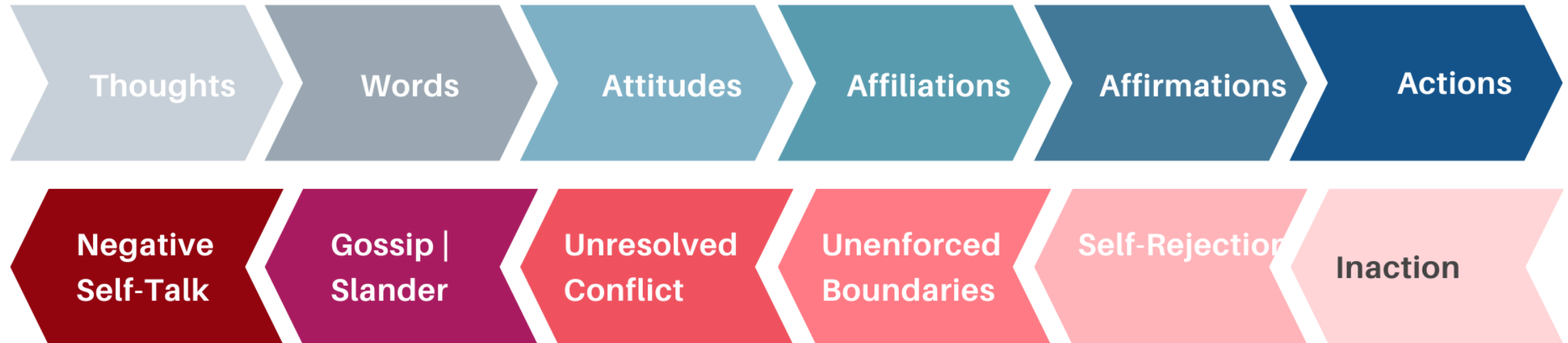


RELATIONSHIP
POWER



KNOWLEDGE
POWER

5: ALIGN IN A POSITIVE DIRECTION





1. WHAT'S TRIGGERING ME?
2. WHAT DO I THINK IS STANDING IN MY WAY? IS IT?
3. WHAT AM I TRYING TO DO TO MYSELF VS. WHAT OTHERS ARE TRYING TO DO?
4. WHAT'S MY POWER SOURCE?

YOU ARE PREPARED TO GO!



QUESTIONS?

It's time to  ™



We help organizations protect their people, purpose, and profits by making wellness actionable.

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