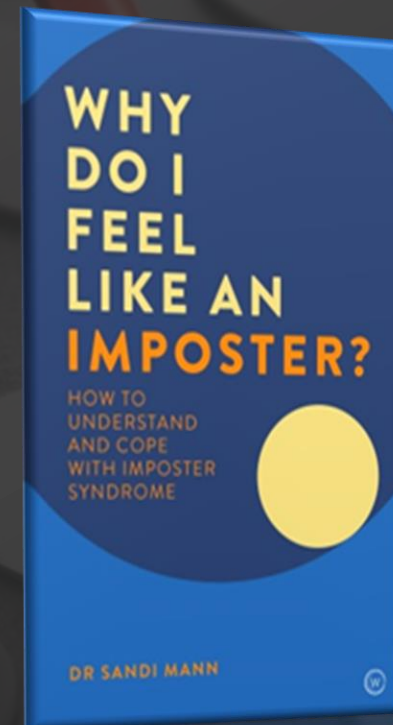
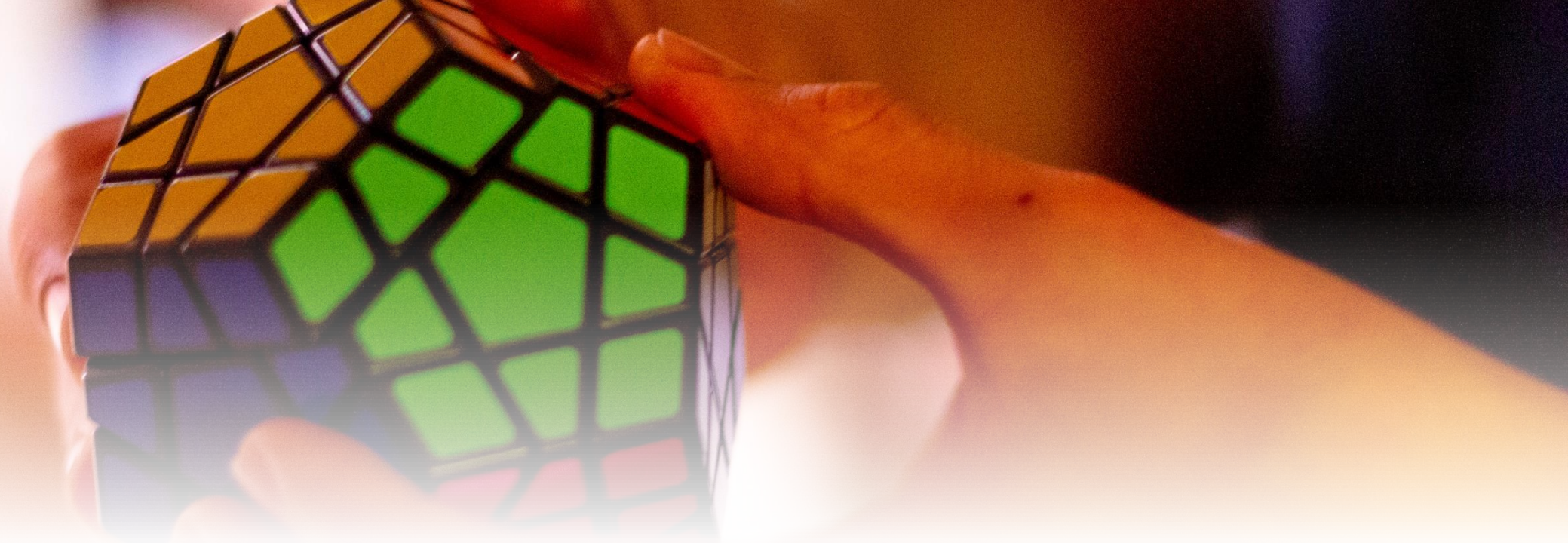


IMPOSTER SYNDROME: WHAT IT IS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT.

Dr Sandi Mann

- Clinical Lead Mental Health Services, Sparta Health
- Author of Why Do I Feel Like An Imposter?
- Watkins Publishing 2019





THIS WORKSHOP WILL UNCOVER

**Risk factors and causes of
IS**

How to identify if you have IS

**Techniques to overcome IS:
A 6-step plan**

HANDS UP IF YOU HAVE EVER....

- Decided a success you've had was a fluke?
- Felt you didn't really deserve praise, an award or achievement?
- Worried that people will find out that you are not as good as they think you are?
- Sitting here thinking everyone else looks like they belong/know what they are doing/look more put together than me??



WHAT is Imposter Syndrome?

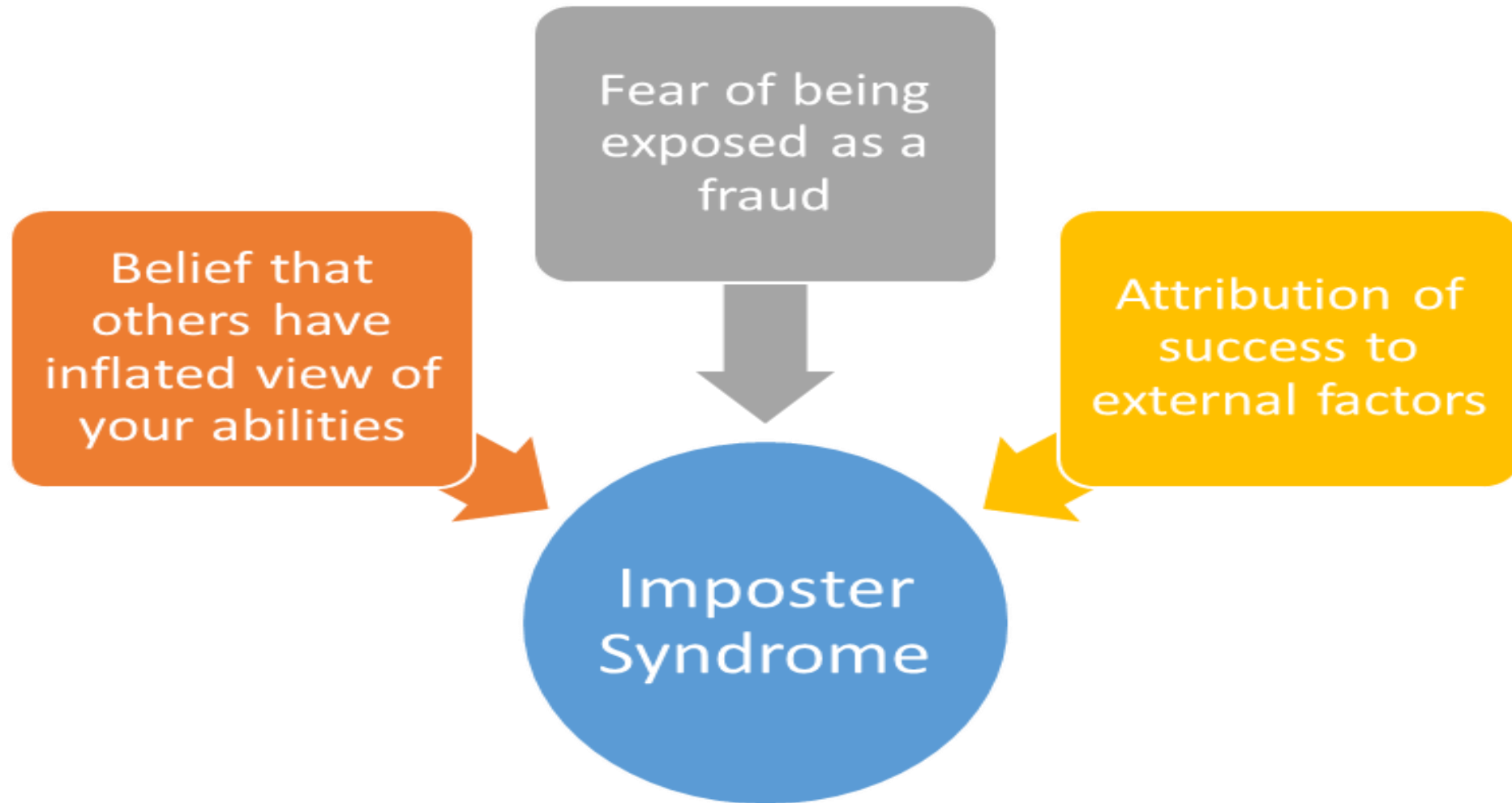


The belief that you are fraudulently claiming to be something you are not, that you are not as good as other people think you are (Mann 2019)



The term 'Imposter Syndrome' or 'Imposter Phenomenon', was first coined in 1978 by clinical psychologists Pauline R. Clance and Suzanne A. Imes

THE THREE CHARACTERISTICS OF IMPOSTER SYNDROME



WHO IS MOST AT RISK?



Students



**Academics and people
employed in other
creative fields.**



**Highly successful people
and those with unusually
early career success.**



**First generation
professionals/college/
graduate school students.**



**Those who took
atypical routes to
their position.**



**Under-represented
groups**



**Those with high-
achieving parents**



**Having High-achieving
Sibling**

FAMOUS IMPOSTERS



'When are they going to discover that I am, in fact, a fraud and take everything away from me?'

Tom Hanks



'I thought it was a fluke,' she said in an interview. 'They'd come to my house, knocking on the door, "Excuse me, we meant to give that to someone else. That was going to Meryl Streep.'"

Jodie Foster



'Any moment, someone's going to find out I'm a total fraud.'

Emma Watson

THE THOUGHTS THAT LEAD TO IS



SYMPTOMS OF IS



Working exceptionally hard



Perfectionism



Undermining achievements



Discounting praise



Self-handicapping

1. WORKING EXCEPTIONALLY HARD



2. PERFECTIONISM



3. UNDERMINING ACHIEVEMENTS



Cognitive dissonance caused by low self-belief combined with recognition of achievement



4. DISCOUNTING PRAISE



5. SELF-HANDICAPPING



SO, DO YOU HAVE IMPOSTER SYNDROME?

1. How easy do you find it to accept praise?

Very hard	Quite hard	Quite easy	Very easy
1	2	3	4

2. When you do something well, how likely are you to dismiss it as not really much (eg it was easy, anyone could have done that, it was nothing special)

Very likely	Quite likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely
1	2	3	4

3. When you do something well, how likely are you to attribute your success to luck?

Very likely	Quite likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely
1	2	3	4

4. When you do something less well, how likely are you to attribute your failure to luck?

Not at all likely	Not very likely	Quite likely	Very likely
1	2	3	4

SO, DO YOU HAVE IMPOSTER SYNDROME?

1. When you perform poorly, or fail, how likely are you to attribute your failure to your own lack of skill or not working hard enough?

Very likely	Quite likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely
1	2	3	4

2. When you do something well how likely are you to attribute your success to other people's input ('they helped me')?

Very likely	Quite likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely
1	2	3	4

3. When you do something poorly how likely are you to attribute your failure to other people ('it was their fault')?

Not at all likely	Not very likely	Quite likely	Very likely
1	2	3	4

4. How important is it for you to be the best at something that matters to you?

Very important	Quite important	Not very important	Not at all important
1	2	3	4

SO, DO YOU HAVE IMPOSTER SYNDROME?

1. How important is success for you?

Very important	Quite important	Not very important	Not at all important
1	2	3	4

2. How likely are you to focus on what you have not done well compared to what you have done well?

Very likely	Quite likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely
1	2	3	4

3. How important is it to you to find a 'hero' to befriend and impress?

Very important	Quite important	Not very important	Not at all important
1	2	3	4

4. How often do you feel afraid to express your views lest people discover your lack of knowledge?

Very often	Quite often	Not very often	Not at all/rarely
1	2	3	4

SO, DO YOU HAVE IMPOSTER SYNDROME?

1. How often do you find yourself unable to start a project for fear of failing?

Very often	Quite often	Not very often	Not at all/rarely
1	2	3	4

2. How often do you find yourself unwilling to finish a project because it isn't yet good enough?

Very often	Quite often	Not very often	Not at all/rarely
1	2	3	4

3. How happy are you to live with a piece of work you have done that you know isn't perfect?

Not at all happy	Not very happy	Quite happy	Very happy
1	2	3	4

4. How often do you find yourself thinking that you are a fraud?

Very often	Quite often	Not very often	Not at all/rarely
1	2	3	4

5. How worried are you that your lack of skill/talent/ability will be discovered?

Very worried	Quite worried	Not very worried	Not at all worried
1	2	3	4

6. How important is validation from others to you (e.g. praise)

Very important	Quite important	Not very important	Not at all important
1	2	3	4

HOW TO OVERCOME IMPOSTER SYNDROME?

1

- Analyse the belief

2

- Identify your strengths

3

- make more mistakes

4

- Manage social media

5

- Keep a comparison journal

6

- Challenge how you view success

1. ANALYSE THE BELIEF

Think of a belief about yourself that might be imposterish eg

I am not good enough at work/my job/as a parent etc



CREATE A TABLE

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3



COLUMN 1: ACKNOWLEDGE THE FACTS IN RELATION TO THE IMPOSTERISH BELIEF 'I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH'

The Fact	Column 2	Column 3
I got A* in English A Level		
I won a fabulous promotion		
I received praise for a presentation I delivered		



COLUMN 2: IDENTIFY IMPOSTERISH THOUGHTS

The Fact	My imposterish thoughts about that fact	
I got A* in English A Level	I was lucky that the right questions came up	
I won a fabulous promotion	I am not up to the job; it was a mistake to appoint me	
I received praise for a presentation I delivered	I didn't do it perfectly	



COLUMN 3: IDENTIFY NON-IMPOSTERISH ALTERNATIVES

The Fact	My imposterish thoughts about that fact	Skills, capabilities or talents that might have led to the facts
I got A* in English A Level	I was lucky that the right questions came up	I am good at English
I won a fabulous promotion	I am not up to the job; it was a mistake to appoint me	I am skilled at my job and a good manager
I received praise for a presentation I delivered	I didn't do it perfectly	It was a strong presentation with clear slides and enthusiastic delivery



NOW RATE THE CHANCES THAT EACH OPTION IS CORRECT

The Fact	My imposterish thoughts about that fact	Skills, capabilities or talents that might have led to the facts
I got A* in English A Level	I was lucky that the right questions came up 60%	I am good at English 70%
I won a fabulous promotion	I am not up to the job; it was a mistake to appoint me 30%	I am skilled at my job and a good manager 60%
I received praise for a presentation I delivered	I didn't do it perfectly 80%	It was a strong presentation with clear slides and enthusiastic delivery 90%



EXAMPLE: I AM NOT REALLY A GOOD PSYCHOLOGIST

The facts	Imposterish beliefs	Counter arguments: what would I tell a friend (or a client?)
I have 4 psychology degrees	This just means I am academic 60%	Not many people have 4 degrees! You must have some ability 80%
I have postgrad qualifications in EMDR/CBT	I work hard - anyone can get these if they put the effort in 60%	But all that work has made you a better therapist 90%
I run a busy and successful clinic	I am just lucky to have so many clients and MH is of course a huge issue these days 35%	But you get a lot of personal recommendations and have great feedback 80%
I have written many books	But they are not that good as they are not best sellers 70%	It is still a great achievement to have written so many books and it shows skill and knowledge. 80%
I am accredited	Lots of people are – and they are not all good. 55%	It keeps your skills up to scratch. 80%



Identify your strengths

Make a list of:

- Ten of your strengths, for example, persistence, courage, friendliness, creativity
- At least five things you admire about yourself, for example the way you have raised your children, your good relationship with your brother, or your spirituality
- The five greatest achievements in your life so far, like recovering from a serious illness, graduating from high school, or learning to use a computer
- At least 20 accomplishments - they can be as simple as learning to use a new app on your phone, to getting an advanced college degree
- 10 things you could do to help someone else.

Ten accomplishments

1. Taking up swimming
2. Going to the gym
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.
- 20.

Ten things I could do to help someone else

- | | |
|---------------|-----|
| 1. Shopping | 6. |
| 2. MH support | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |

Ten strengths

1. I am hard-working
2. I am thoughtful
3. I am creative
4. I am joyful
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Five things I admire about myself

1. I am resilient
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

My five greatest achievements

1. My children
2. My qualifications
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

3.

**MAKE
MORE
MISTAKES**



NEW NON IMPOSTERISH THOUGHTS



SO MAKE A LIST OF MISTAKES YOU HAVE MADE



MANAGE SOCIAL MEDIA

4.



5

Keep a 'comparison' journal

Date/time of comparison	Who did you compare yourself to?	What was the trigger for the comparison	What aspect of your life did you make the comparison about (eg wealth, looks, work achievement, kids successes etc)	How did this make you feel?
Thursday 11am	Andy, old friend.	He posted a holiday photo on Facebook	His success (that he could afford such an upmarket holiday), his looks (still looks great) and his beautiful wife.	Inadequate; I am not nearly as successful or good-looking, despite us being the same age.

6.

CHALLENGE HOW YOU VIEW SUCCESS



Want to know more?

