



Student Wellness Program

<http://ubhc.rutgers.edu/swp/index.html>

Imposter Syndrome

“I don’t really belong here. They made a mistake letting me in. Eventually I am going to be exposed as a fraud.”

Have any of these ideas ever crossed your mind? It may be Imposter Syndrome depending on how much it impacts your mood and/or behavior. It’s likely that many people experience similar thoughts in a setting that is very competitive and achievement focused.

Research cites the prevalence of Imposter Syndrome could be as high as 82% of people, specifically noticeable in high achievers and can impact job satisfaction and burnout. (Dena M. Bravata, 2020)

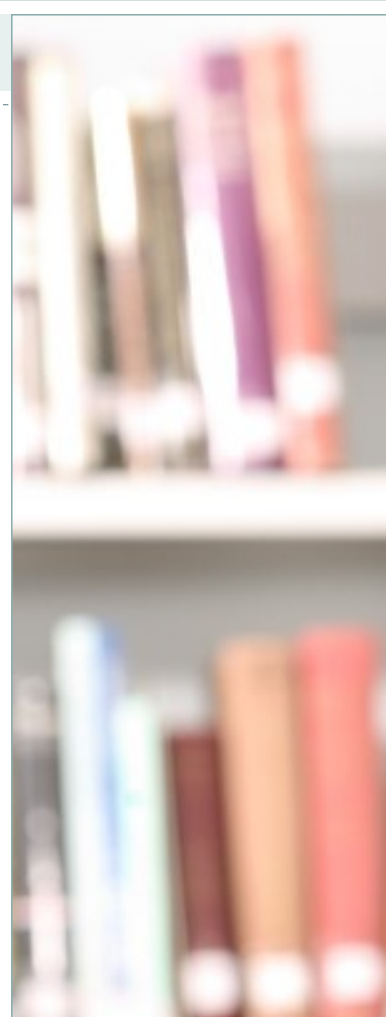
Imposter Syndrome is not a diagnosable mental health condition according to the DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders). Rather, it is a phenomenon introduced by psychologists Imes and Clance, in the 1970s. They described it as "the persistent doubt concerning one’s abilities or accomplishments accompanied by the fear of being exposed as a fraud despite evidence of one’s ongoing success."ⁱ

Those with Imposter Syndrome often experience a drive for perfectionism and also, a pattern of procrastination. Perfectionism exerts pressure to excel 100% of the time, otherwise they may feel incompetent and or anxious.ⁱⁱ The fear of failure (less than perfection) can lead to avoidance of tasks until the time / circumstances are perfect, in turn resulting in either poor performance (self-fulfilling prophecy) or success that they attribute to luck or capabilities.

We can address Imposter Syndrome by challenging ones’ thoughts; asking what is the evidence that supports the thought and what disputes it. Writing this out can be helpful, allowing you to identify irrational thoughts, and see both sides of the argument in a more concrete way.

Another way to combat Imposter Syndrome is to look at your definition of success. Where does your definition come from? Are the criteria for success reasonable? And according to whom? Limiting comparisons to others and focusing on accomplishments rather than what you feel is lacking are additional strategies to help chip away at Imposter Syndrome.

Each of you belong here. Each of you bring unique skills and talents that make you who you are – and will be the foundation of the professional that you become.



Student Wellness Program

Piscataway (732) 235-5933

Newark (973) 972-5429

Voorhees (856) 770-5750

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Student Counseling
Educational Training
Consultations
Psychiatry Services
Orientations
Crisis Debriefing

ⁱ <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/biopsychosocial-solution/202210/freeing-yourself-the-imposter-within> (Marc Lener, 2022)
ⁱⁱ (Psychology Today staff, 2023)

SWP SERVICES

- Recognize these feelings are normal.
- Validate these feelings. No one can tell you how to feel.
- Challenge the thoughts associated with these feelings. Gather evidence for and against.
- Seek a mentor. Maybe someone who has been through your program.
- Reframe mistakes as opportunities to learn.
- Give yourself permission to rest. These feelings may be more prominent when you are tired and stressed.
- Give yourself permission to ask for help. You are not expected to perfect... no matter what your brain is telling you.

The Student Wellness Program (SWP) is available to you and any family members residing in your household, should you be experiencing any stress based events.

All services are free and confidential. Your school has already provided this as another benefit to you. No information is shared with your academic program without written consent from you.

Not only is the SWP available for concerns related to stress, we also work with individuals, couples and families for reasons such as personal difficulties, relationship concerns, grief, anxiety, parenting issues, time management, and substance abuse assessments. Whatever your concerns, we are here for you. Currently the SWP is providing telehealth services via telephone or video. Feel free to reach out to us by telephone if you have any questions, concerns or would like to schedule an appointment.

We are a phone call away...



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(Stratford/Camden Campus):

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