

PRODUCTIVELY WORKING THROUGH IMPOSTOR SYNDROME

With Guest Speaker, Emma Lee Guthrie



I was an **IMPOSTOR.**

The lies we tell ourselves.





the impostor phenomenon

impostorism

impostor syndrome



OUTLINE OF TODAY'S TALK

- ❑ The impostor phenomenon
- ❑ IDENTIFY
- ❑ Activity
- ❑ SHARE
- ❑ PLAN
- ❑ Think-tank
- ❑ Questions

IMPOSTOR SYNDROME IN GRADUATE STUDENTS

□ Dissertation Study Purpose:

To learn how graduate students across the disciplines experience impostor feelings in relation to writing and mentoring.

**Please see handout for overview of study design*

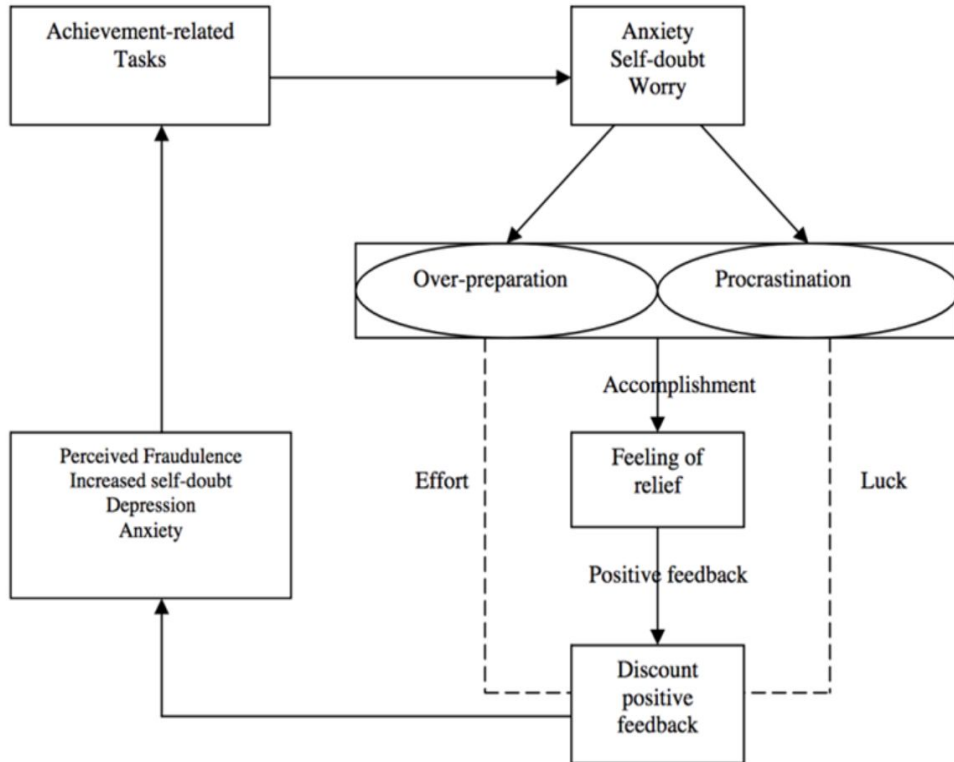
identify

IDENTIFY

Do any of these resonate with you?

1. Inability to celebrate and acknowledge personal or collaborative accomplishments
2. Constantly comparing yourself to other people
3. Extreme perfectionism and/or procrastination
4. Extreme sensitivity to constructive criticism
5. Working extra to “cover up” your “incapability”
6. Struggling to ask for help or set productive boundaries (people pleaser)
7. Rejecting positive feedback and focusing only on the negative aspects
8. Setting extremely challenging goals and then feeling disappointment if/when you fall short
9. Frequent black and white thinking
10. Talking yourself out of opportunities because “you’re not good enough”

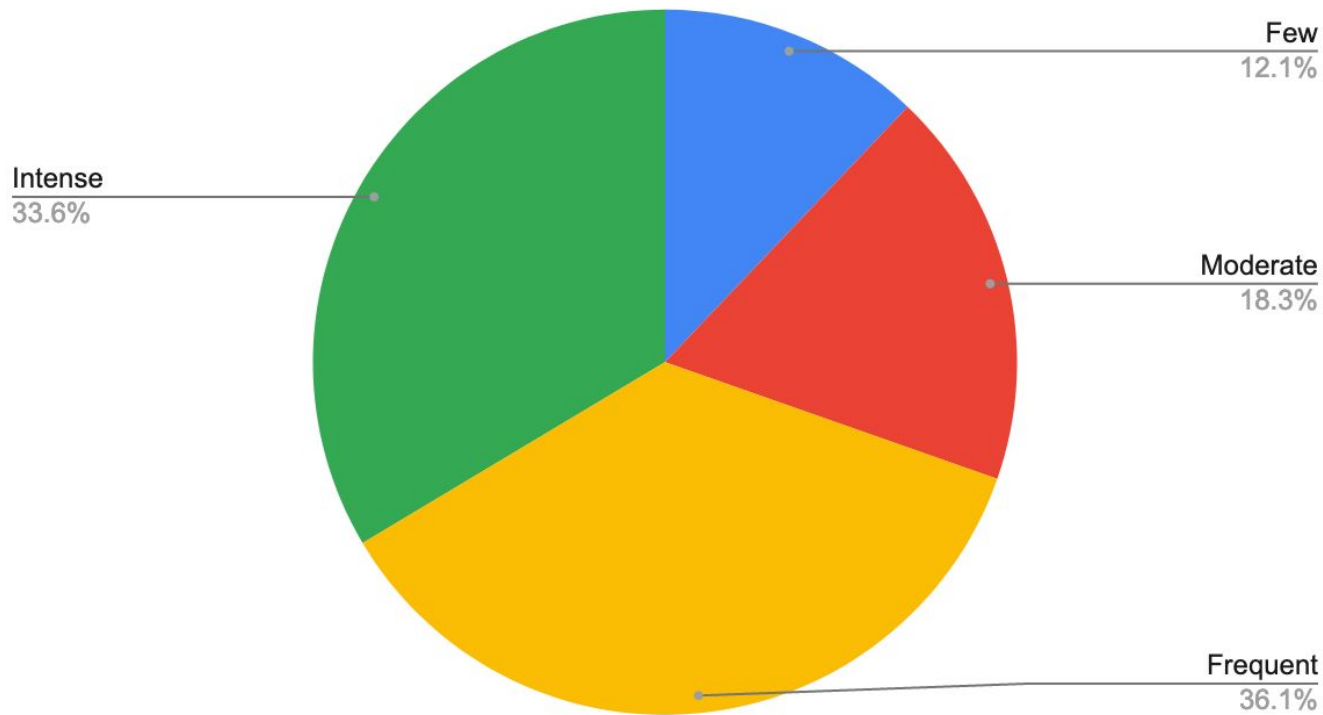
CLANCE IP CYCLE & SCALE



The [Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale](#) is a short test that helps determine whether or not you have impostor characteristics and, if so, to what extent you are suffering.

*If you would like to take the test, the link is on your handout.

Graduate Students' Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale Scores





share

SHARE

When, where, and how do you experience impostor feelings?

Additional prompts for reflection:

- When do I have impostor feelings?
- Where do my impostor feelings come from?
- How do I feel when I have impostor feelings?
- Are they impacted by specific tasks or actions?
- Are they impacted by specific environments?
- Are they impacted by specific people (including yourself) ?
- Are they impacted by past or current experiences?
- Are they impacted by past or current mental health challenges?
- Are they impacted by structural and/ or systemic problems or inequalities?
 - Out of the above list, what do you have control over?
 - What may you need to seek external help or support with?



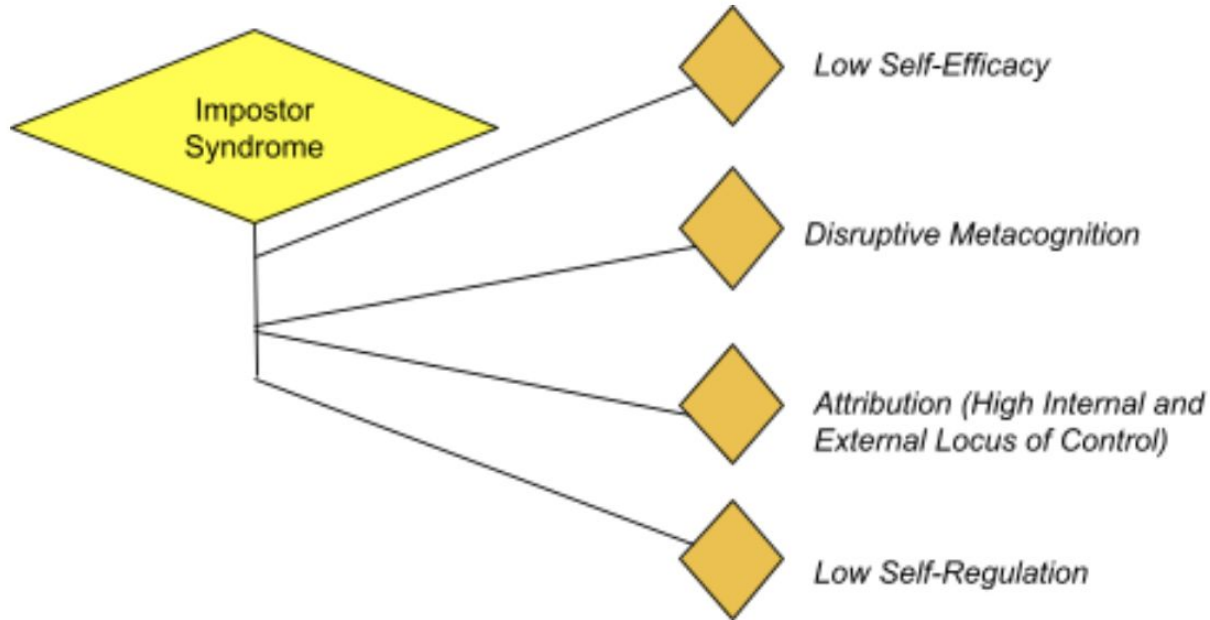
plan

States, Traits, and Dispositions

- ❑ **States** - “Emotions are typically considered as episodic “states” in that they occur for a fixed duration of time and occur because of a specific triggering event, which can be either externally driven (a bad grade on an assignment) or internally driven (making an association with previous negative experiences)” (Driscoll & Powell).
- ❑ **Traits** - “A psychological trait is a persistent and stable emotion felt consistently over time” (Driscoll & Powell).
- ❑ **Dispositions** - Dispositions are internally held characteristics that determine how knowledge, traits, and emotions are used, applied, transferred, adapted, and/or repurposed.

Generative vs. Disruptive

A CONSTELLATION OF DISRUPTIVE DISPOSITIONS



“[A constellation] allows for multiply-situated subjects to connect to multiple discourses at the same time, as well as for those relationships (among subjects, among discourses, among kinds of connections) to shift and change without holding a subject captive” (Powell et al., 2014).

IMPOSTOR SYNDROME

Low Self-Efficacy

Low *self-efficacy* means that you believe you are not capable of planning, executing, or accomplishing a goal. This is the mostly commonly referenced disposition in impostor syndrome research.

Disruptive Metacognition

Metacognition is self-reflection on your thinking including on how identity, social factors, ideologies, and cultural processes structure your knowledge. However, metacognition is disruptive when self-reflection is only negative. (For example, “I didn’t do well on that assessment– the way I think is always wrong.... I should probably quit since my boss hates me.”)



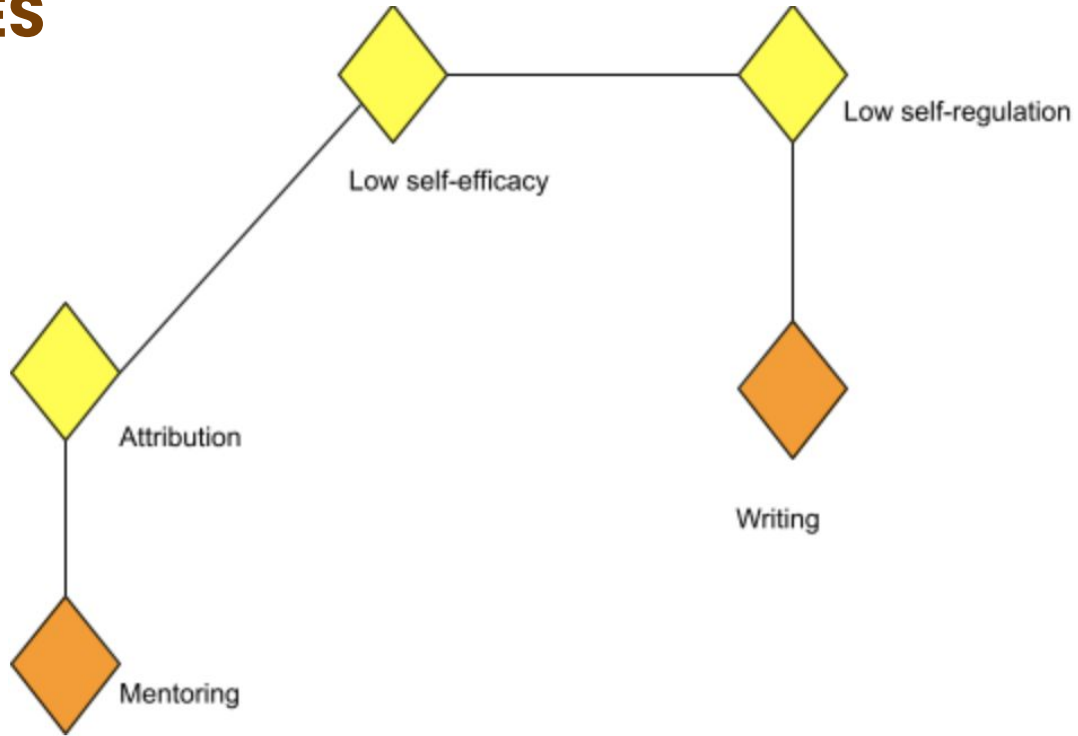
Attribution with a High External & Internal Locus of Control

Attribution is a disposition to attribute successes or failures to factors inside or outside of your control. It also addresses attributing success or failure to yourself or others. It becomes disruptive when you attribute all your successes to others and all your failures to yourself.

Disruptive Self-Regulation

Self-regulation is a disposition to set reasonable goals, use productive strategies, self-evaluate progress, practice effective time management, reflect on successes and failures, and make changes to improve. It is disruptive when self-regulation turns into setting unrealistic goals, perfectionism, and/ or procrastination.

ROSALIE'S IMPOSTOR EXPERIENCES



PLAN: SELF-EFFICACY

- ❑ Identity work (self-concept)
- ❑ Scaffolded goal-setting (stretch zone)
- ❑ Create a physical record of successes (short and long-term goals)
- ❑ Modeling and mentorship for identifying strengths
- ❑ Learning how to wade through, accept, and apply constructive criticism with others

PLAN: METACOGNITION

- ❑ Self-Reflection Before, During, and After any Achievement-Related Task
 - ❑ **Before** - What are the instructions? Is this similar to previous work? How do I get started? What is my first small step? What might the following steps be?
 - ❑ **During** - What am I doing well? What might I do differently? Might I share this with someone to receive feedback?
 - ❑ **After Task** - What worked well? What might I do differently next time? Did I receive feedback? Do I want a support person to work through this feedback with? Can I apply this to anything else I'm working on?

PLAN: ATTRIBUTION

- ❑ Locus of control (Internal vs. External)
- ❑ Replace black and white thinking
- ❑ See how other people view the situation
- ❑ Creating a physical record of successes (short and long-term goals)
- ❑ Modeling and mentorship

PLAN: SELF-REGULATION

- ❑ Create a routine that works FOR YOU and stick to it
- ❑ Scaffolded goal-setting
- ❑ Reflection and meditation
- ❑ Identity (self-concept)
- ❑ Self-care and rewards



think-tank

The background features several grey squares of varying sizes and positions, each with a soft, grey shadow cast to its right and slightly downwards, creating a sense of depth and movement. The squares are arranged in a non-uniform pattern across the white background.

questions