

What is **imposter** syndrom and how can you combat it?

1. Watch the video. Do you sometimes have such feelings?

## 2. Find the translation to the phrases

1 nagging doubt	Обман, мошенничество
2 to earn my accomplishments	Заслужить/ быть достойным
3 to deserve	Восприимчивый
4 Be worthy of	Не дающие покоя сомнения
5 unwarranted sense of insecurity	Получить положительный отзыв
6 tend to think	Не в состоянии избавить
7 alone in thinking that way	Быть честным со своими чувствами
8 to voice their doubts	Заслуживать достижений
9 to receive positive feedback	Отвергать/ не признавать чувства
10 to fail to ease	Беспричинная неуверенность в себе
11 fraudulence	Поднять самооценку
12 to be frank about my feelings	Одна так думаю
13 to build confidence	Озвучить свои сомнения
14 to downplay	Похвала и возможности
15 accolades and opportunities	Занижать/ преуменьшать
16 susceptible	Склонны думать
17 to dismiss feelings	Стоить того

### 3. Watch the video again with the transcript.

Even after writing eleven books and winning several prestigious awards, Maya Angelou couldn't escape the **nagging doubt** that she hadn't really **earned her accomplishments**.

Albert Einstein experienced something similar: he described himself as an **"involuntary swindler"** whose work didn't **deserve** as much attention as it had received. Accomplishments at the level of Angelou's or Einstein's are rare, but their feeling of **fraudulence** is extremely common. Why can't so many of us shake feelings that we haven't earned our accomplishments, or that our ideas and skills aren't **worthy of** others' attention?

Psychologist Pauline Rose Clance was the first to study this **unwarranted sense of insecurity**.

In her work as a therapist, she noticed many of her undergraduate patients shared a concern: though they had high grades, they didn't believe they deserved their spots at the university.

Some even believed their acceptance had been an admissions error. While Clance knew these fears were unfounded, she could also remember feeling the exact same way in graduate school.

She and her patients experienced something that goes by a number of names:

**imposter** phenomenon,  
imposter experience,  
and imposter syndrome.

Together with colleague Suzanne Imes, Clance first studied imposterism in female college students and faculty.

Their work established pervasive feelings of **fraudulence** in this group. Since that first study, the same thing has been established across gender, race, age, and a huge range of occupations, though it may be more prevalent and disproportionately affect the experiences of underrepresented or disadvantaged groups. To call it a syndrome is to **downplay** how universal it is. It's not a disease or an abnormality, and it isn't necessarily tied to depression, anxiety, or self-esteem.

Where do these feelings of fraudulence come from? People who are highly skilled or accomplished **tend to think** others are just as skilled. This can spiral into feelings that they don't deserve **accolades and opportunities** over other people.

And as Angelou and Einstein experienced, there's often no threshold of accomplishment that puts these feelings to rest.

Feelings of imposterism aren't restricted to highly skilled individuals, either. Everyone is **susceptible** to a phenomenon known as pluralistic ignorance, where we each doubt ourselves privately, but believe we're **alone in thinking that way** because no one else voices their doubts.

Since it's tough to really know how hard our peers work, how difficult they find certain tasks, or how much they doubt themselves, there's no easy way **to dismiss feelings** that we're less capable than the people around us.



Intense feelings of imposterism can prevent people from sharing their great ideas or applying for jobs and programs where they'd excel.

At least so far, the most surefire way to combat imposter syndrome is to talk about it. Many people suffering from imposter syndrome are afraid that if they ask about their performance, their fears will be confirmed. And even when they **receive positive feedback**, it often **fails to ease** feelings of fraudulence.

But on the other hand, hearing that an advisor or mentor has experienced feelings of imposterism can help relieve those feelings.

The same goes for peers. Even simply finding out there's a term for these feelings can be an incredible relief. Once you're aware of the phenomenon, you can combat your own imposter syndrome by collecting and revisiting positive feedback. One scientist who kept blaming herself for problems in her lab started to document the causes every time something went wrong. Eventually, she realized most of the problems came from equipment failure, and came to recognize her own competence.

We may never be able to banish these feelings entirely, but we can have open conversations about academic or professional challenges. With increasing awareness of how common these experiences are,

perhaps we can feel freer **to be frank about our feelings**

and **build confidence** in some simple truths:

you have talent,

you are capable,

and you belong.

#### 4. Have you got an imposter syndrom?

Put T if it's true for you

1. I sometimes can't escape the **nagging doubt** that I haven't really **earned my accomplishments**.

- at work
- at university when I take exams
- when I receive positive feedback

2. I can feel that don't **deserve** as much attention as I have received.

3. My ideas and skills aren't **worthy of** others' attention.

4. I often feel **unwarranted sense of insecurity**.

5. Even if I'm highly skilled, I anyway **tend to think** others are just as skilled or even better.

6. I'm **alone in thinking that way** because no one else **voices their doubts**.

7. And even when I **receive positive feedback**, it often **fails to ease** feelings of **fraudulence**.

8. I can't be **frank about my feelings** and **build confidence** in some simple truths: my talent, my skills.