



FEAR OF FRAUD: Mentoring Faculty, Residents, and Students with Imposter Syndrome

Imposter syndrome stems from strong feelings of self-doubt, including fear of being a failure or “fraud.” Members of the health sciences community are no exception.

In the long run, faculty, residents, and students impacted by imposter syndrome can experience stunted development and academic success.

To bring awareness to its prevalence and negate the consequences, mentoring a person with imposter syndrome should include the following:



ESTABLISH PREVALENCE

Let your mentee know that experiencing imposter syndrome and self-doubt are common—they are not alone in these feelings.

CELEBRATE ACHIEVEMENTS

Assist mentees in recognizing their accomplishments and the value of each one. It is one’s feelings that lead to self-doubt—not their performance.

ENCOURAGE ACCEPTANCE

Remind mentees that each of us will have an occasional failure, but that doesn’t make us a failure. Mistakes happen to everyone. Forgive yourself and try again.

PROMOTE POSITIVITY

Utilize self-reflection and mindfulness training focused on bringing awareness to the positives of the mentee’s personal and professional activities.

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Share any personal feelings you may have about your own imposter syndrome. How have you dealt with your feelings? How have you overcome self-doubt?



70%

Approximately **70%** of people report experiencing imposter syndrome during their career.



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Additional Resources

LaDonna, K. A., Ginsburg, S., & Watling, C. (2018). Rising to the level of your incompetence: What physician’s self-assessment of their performance reveals about the imposter syndrome in medicine. *Acad Med*, 93(5):763-768.
Persky, A. M. (2018). Intellectual self-doubt and how to get out of it. *Am J Pharm Ed*, 82(2):6990.
Sakulku, J., & Alexander, J. (2011). The imposter phenomenon. *Int J Behav Sci*, 6(1):75-97.