

How to banish imposter syndrome while working from home

For those not furloughed, the majority of us will invariably have spent the last few months working from home, to varying degrees of success. The plus sides – no commute and a more flexible work/life balance. The downsides? Lack of motivation, feeling disconnected with our colleagues and the worst of all – imposter syndrome rearing its ugly head, even during lockdown.

Yes, despite the fact we've been in the midst of a global crisis, many of us working from home will have suffered or currently be suffering from imposter syndrome. Likely due to the fact that so many people have either been made redundant — as many companies struggle to stay afloat during the pandemic — or have had to take a large pay cut.

And, if we're lucky enough to still have a job, it might not feel as secure as it once did. Combine that with the fact that all communication with our colleagues is now digital, contributing to the feeling of always having to be available, and the constant guilt that we are — in fact — allowed to work in our pyjamas every day, is a recipe for feeling like an imposter whilst working from home.

What is imposter syndrome?

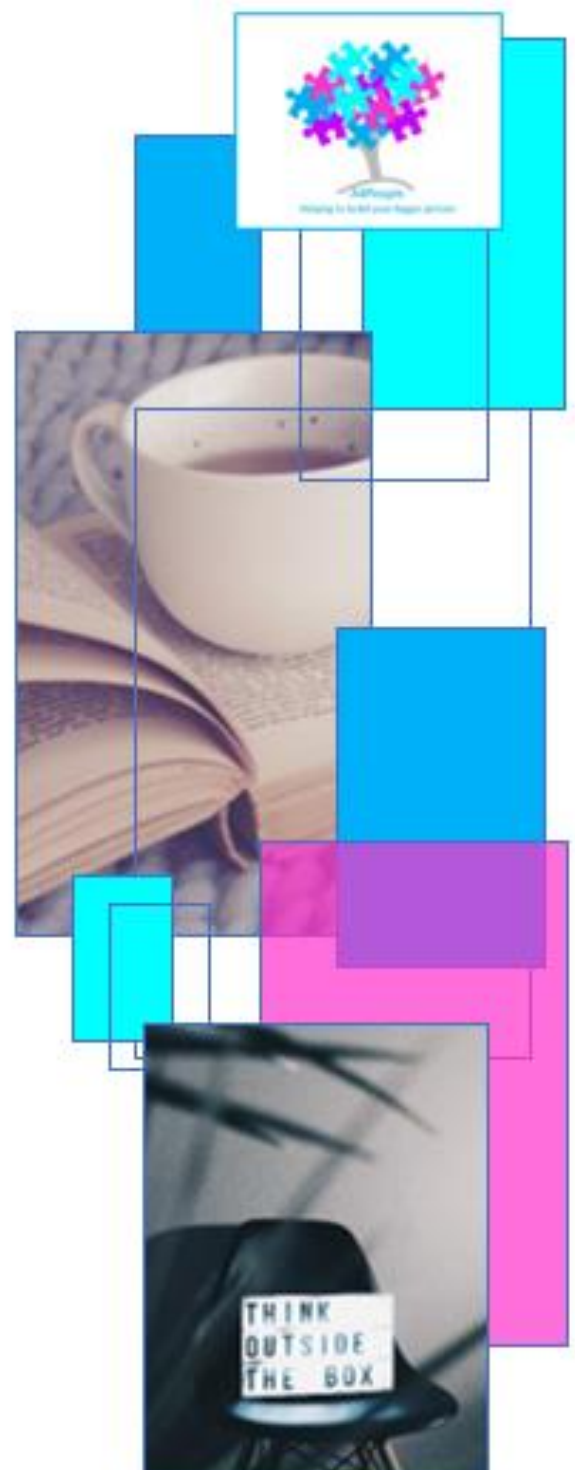
Imposter syndrome describes the invasive thoughts of self-doubt which come about in a situation where you feel like your worth has been overstated.

In this new world, where a quick chat with a colleague to soothe our feelings of anxiety is off the cards, thoughts of self-doubt can build into a whole identity of their own. This is called 'confirmation bias,' where your brain 'cherry-picks' pieces of information from an event or interaction, to confirm our existing negative beliefs or ideas.

So, how can you move past these feelings of self-sabotage?

3 steps you can follow to help overcome imposter syndrome:

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Speak to the fear

Taking note of when these thoughts of self-doubt arise, is the first step in working through the moment when you feel your worth has been overstated. Keep a note or message a friend to break the spell of shame around these thoughts and feelings.

Beware of the bias trap

Get smart about confirmation bias – the brain's way of cherry-picking information that confirms our existing beliefs or ideas. Write out all of the reasons why you feel like an imposter and play devil's advocate. Ask yourself what you'd like to believe instead, and accept each compliment as evidence that this is the reality you are denying yourself.

Give yourself permission to be a work in progress

So many of the fears that feed imposter syndrome arises from the desire to be perfect or to be the finished article, often in accordance with someone else's definition of success. Give permission to the idea that even the people you admire are still working on the things you strive for, and that failure is part of any growth journey and no one is perfect and never will be.

