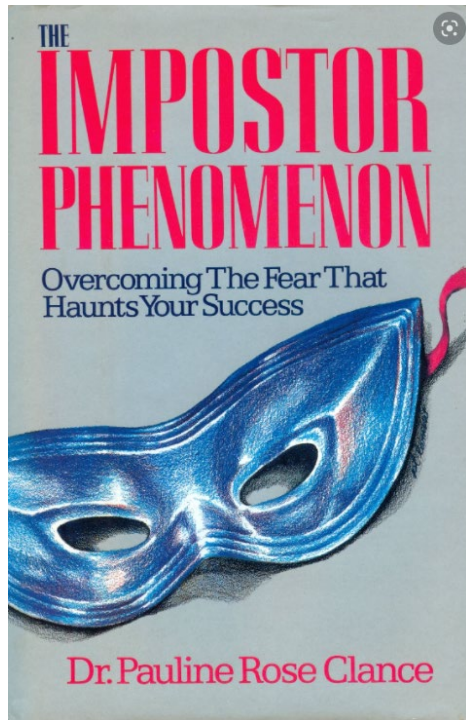




**Addressing
the Elephant
in the Room**

***Course Strategies to Help
Students Manage Feelings of
Imposter Syndrome***



**1978 Clance and
Imes described
“Imposter
Phenomenon” in
high achieving
women**

Imposter Phenomenon (IP)

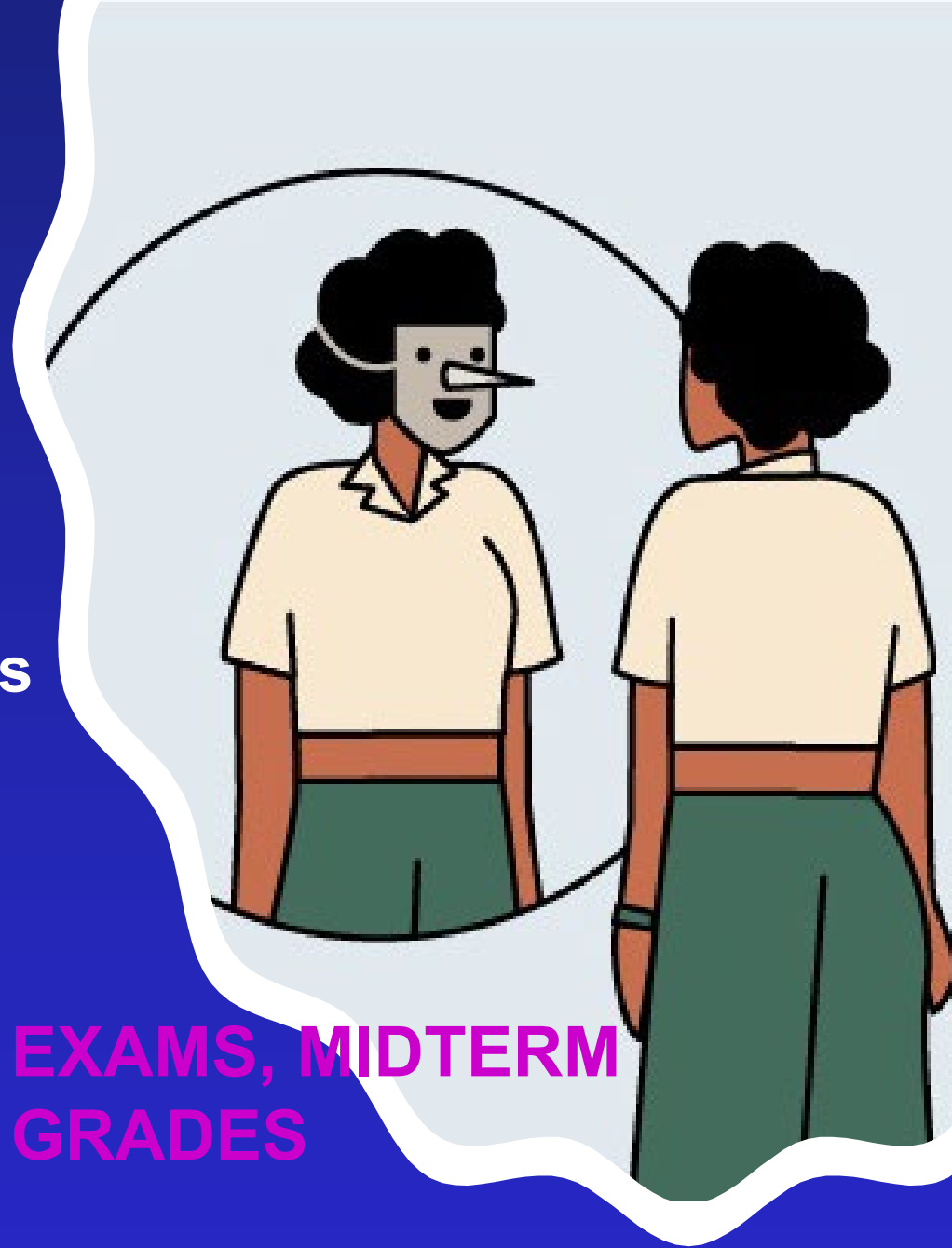
- feelings of intellectual fraud
- persistent belief that past successes are not earned
- terrified of failure and being “outed”

Clance, Pauline Rose, and Suzanne Ament Imes. "The impostor phenomenon in high achieving women: Dynamics and therapeutic intervention." *Psychotherapy: Theory, research & practice* 15.3 (1978): 241.

Some Features of Imposter Phenomenon

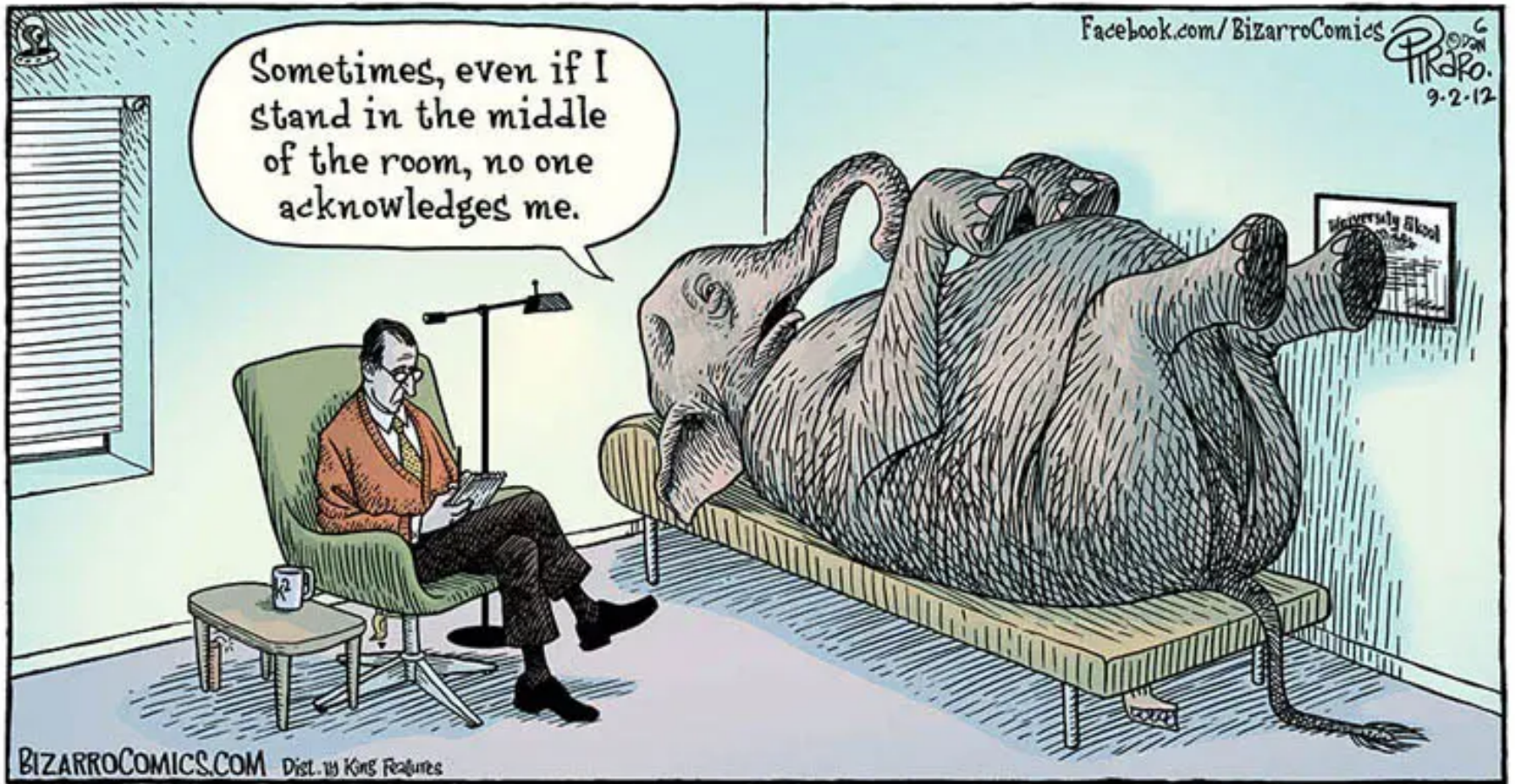
- Self Critical
- Over-Estimating Others
- Dismissive of Success
- Difficulty Accepting Praise
- Introversion
- Generalized Anxiety
- Dread of Evaluation
- Terror of Failure

EXAMS, MIDTERM
GRADES



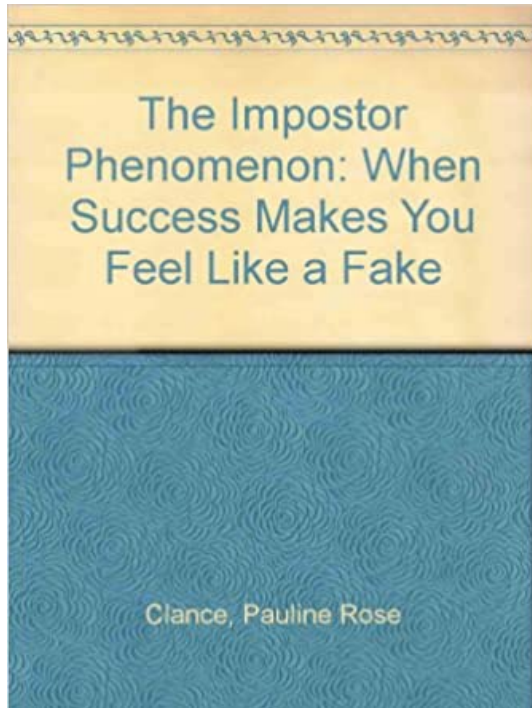


**How Can We Help
Our Students?**



Step 1

See it



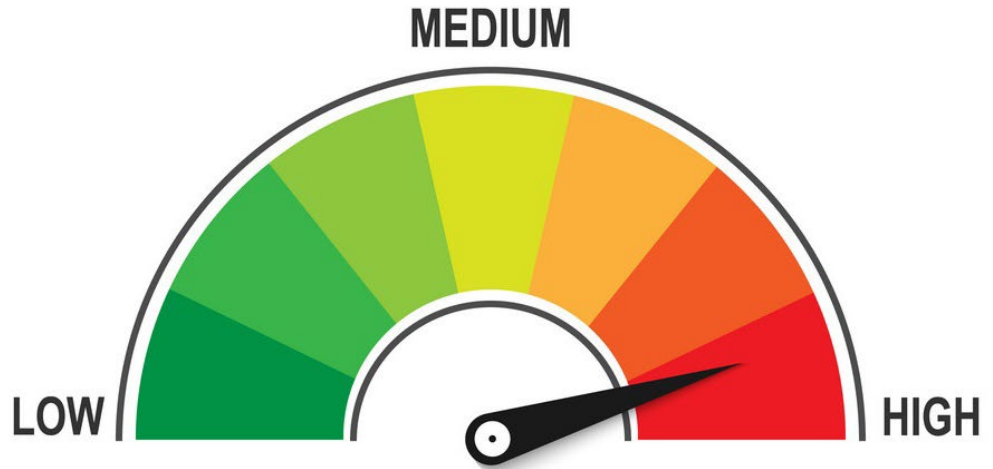
Now available
as quick on-line
test

<http://impostortest.nickol.as/>

Clance Impostor Scale

Developed a series of
questions to help
determine level of
Impostor Feelings

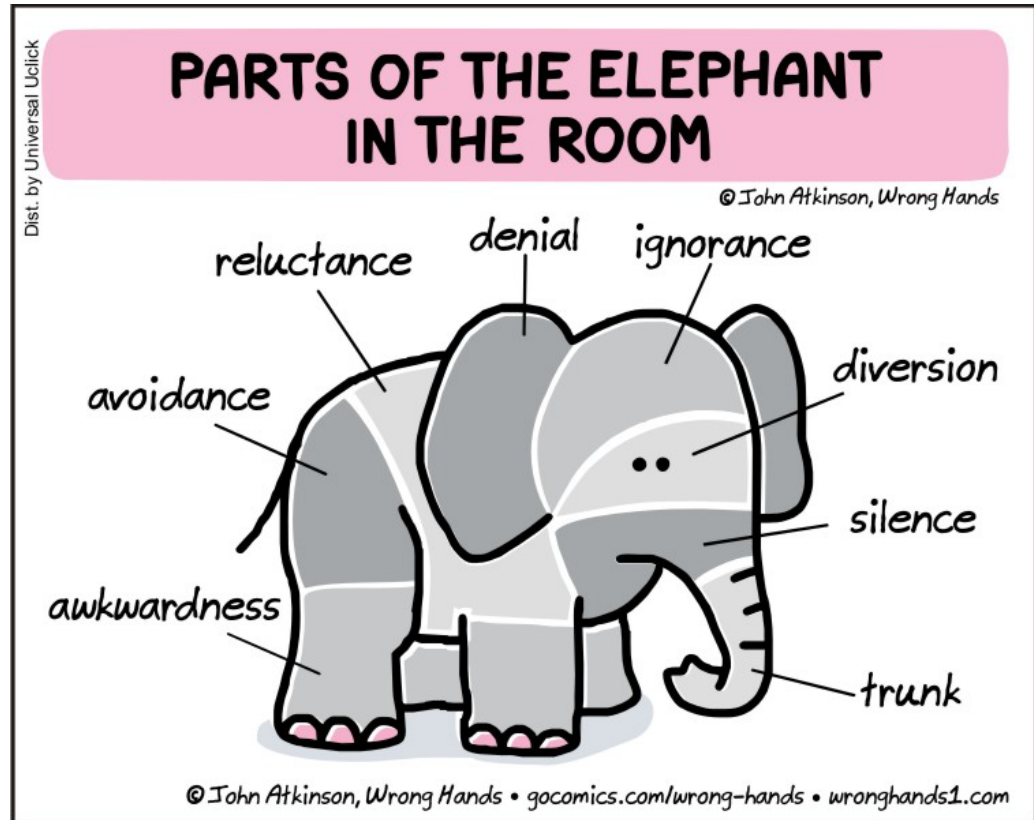
Discussion Prompts



- Were you surprised by your IP score? Why or why not?
- Can you describe an experience when you felt like an Imposter?
- Did your experience affect your motivation?
- Did it make you feel isolated?
- Did it impact your willingness to take risks/pursue new opportunities?

Step 2

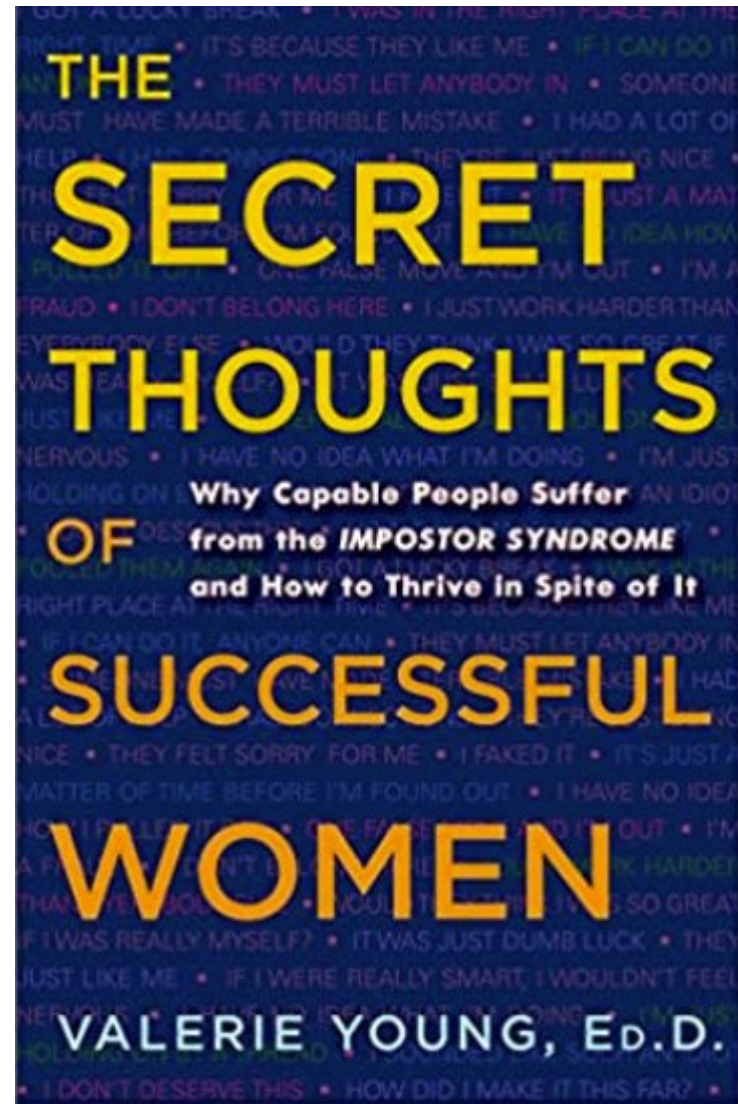
Name it



- Cartoon by John Atkinson. ©John Atkinson, Wrong Hands

5 Types Of Imposter Syndrome

- The Perfectionist
- Superwoman/man
- Natural Genius
- The Soloist
- The Expert



The Perfectionist

- Sets unrealistic expectations
- Feels inadequate when can't meet them
- **Obsesses over minor errors**



Superwoman/man



- Constantly working to measure up
- Works much harder than peers
- Seeks external validation of worth
- **Feels haven't earned success**

— Natural Genius

- Operates under a Fixed Mindset
- Judges themselves based on ease and speed in accomplishing tasks
- **Feels shame if mastery takes time**





Photo by [Gift Habeshaw/Unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com/photos/Gift-Habeshaw)

The Soloist

Should be able to do everything
themselves

Only frauds need help

The Expert



- Measures their success by how much they know
- **Never thinks they know enough**
- Always someone smarter out there

Discussion Prompts

- Which Imposter type did you most identify with?
- Which one resonated the least?



Step 3

**Manage
it**



Managing Imposterism

9 Ways to Cope With Imposter Syndrome

Know the signs.

Know you're not alone.

Distinguish humility & fear.

Let go of perfectionism.

Be kind to yourself.

Track your success.

Talk with your mentor and a manager.

Say "yes" to opportunities.

Embrace the feeling.



Could all be used for credit, extra credit or simply informational



Facilitating Conversations

- Assign Clance IP test and background readings as Group Assignments
- Incorporate as Discussion board prompts.
- Have students interview people in their lives. Have they ever felt like Imposters?
- Provide IP materials to struggling students (Starfish, Midterms, Remediation)
- Have students suggest and try different coping methods and report back on effectiveness.

Imposter Syndrome Resources

- **Research**

- Dr Pauline Clance : www.paulineroseclance.com
- Dr Valerie Young : <https://impostorsyndrome.com/>

- **Short Articles**

- [Impostor Phenomenon Measurement Scales: A Systematic Review](#)
- [Speaking of Psychology: How to overcome feeling like an impostor](#)
- [The 5 Types of Imposter Syndrome](#)

- **Books**

- [The Secret Thoughts of Successful Women: Why Capable People Suffer from the Impostor Syndrome and How to Thrive in Spite of It](#)
- [The Imposter Cure: Escape the mind-trap of imposter syndrome](#)
- [Yes! You Are Good Enough: End Imposter Syndrome, Overthinking and Perfectionism and Do What YOU Want](#)
- [The Empress Has No Clothes: Conquering Self-Doubt to Embrace Success](#)

Imposter Syndrome Resources

- **Videos/Ted Talks**

- [I Don't Deserve My Success](#)
- [Thinking your way out of imposter syndrome](#)
- [How students of color confront impostor syndrome](#)
- [What is imposter syndrome and how can you combat it?](#)
- [Know your worth, and then ask for it](#)