

Combatting Imposter Syndrome

What is imposter syndrome and why does it matter?

- **Imposter syndrome** is a psychological occurrence in which an individual doubts their skills, talents, or accomplishments and has a persistent internalized fear of being exposed as a fraud.
- Identify the signs and recognize that you are okay!
 - **What is imposter syndrome?** [Imposter Syndrome | California State University, Long Beach \(csulb.edu\)](#)
 - **[VIDEO]** [Elizabeth Cox: What is imposter syndrome and how can you combat it? | TED Talk](#)
- Here are a few steps to combat imposter syndrome:
 - Develop a growth mindset - you can always improve!
 - Battle negative self-talk (aka Inner Critic)
 - 4 ways to stop beating yourself up
 1. Notice the Critic
 2. Separate the Critic from you
 3. Talk back
 4. Replace the Critic
 - Practice journaling or meditation to get in touch with your inner thoughts and feelings.
 - Recognize need for perfectionism and letting it go
 - Recognize the difference between perfectionism and striving for excellence.
 - Practice self-compassion to manage
 - Know that your feelings are normal
 - You are not alone, many of your peers are likely dealing with the same thoughts,
 - Do not compare yourself negatively to others
 - Share your concerns with trustworthy people! Talk to an academic advisor if you feel unsure about your application process.
- It is okay to feel like you do not know what you are doing
 - Especially with big life events like going back to school, or getting a promotion. Do not “hide” think of yourself as a “boss-in -training.” You are someone who is learning and gaining expertise. A balance exists between imposter syndrome and authentic modesty.
- Seek out advice!
 - It is okay to talk about how you are feeling. You can always look to speak to someone you trust! Look for a mentor or someone you can feel help you push through your feelings and your endeavors. You can also seek out someone who was once in a similar position.
- Keep in mind:
 - Your undergraduate degree is NOT a deciding factor when being admitted, your relevant experience is!
 - Do not be afraid to apply if your baccalaureate degree is not in the same field as the one you are considering for graduate school. What have you done to make your experience relevant to the program you are considering applying to?
 - Find connections between your undergraduate major and relevant experience. What are some ways they intertwine or connect with one another?