

# Imposter Syndrome

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# IMPOSTOR SYNDROME

“Women who experience impostor syndrome maintain a strong belief that **they are not intelligent**; in fact they are convinced that **they have fooled** anyone who thinks otherwise.”

- *Pauline Rose Clance & Suzanne Imes*





# REASONS WHY A GOOD THING HAPPENED TO YOU:

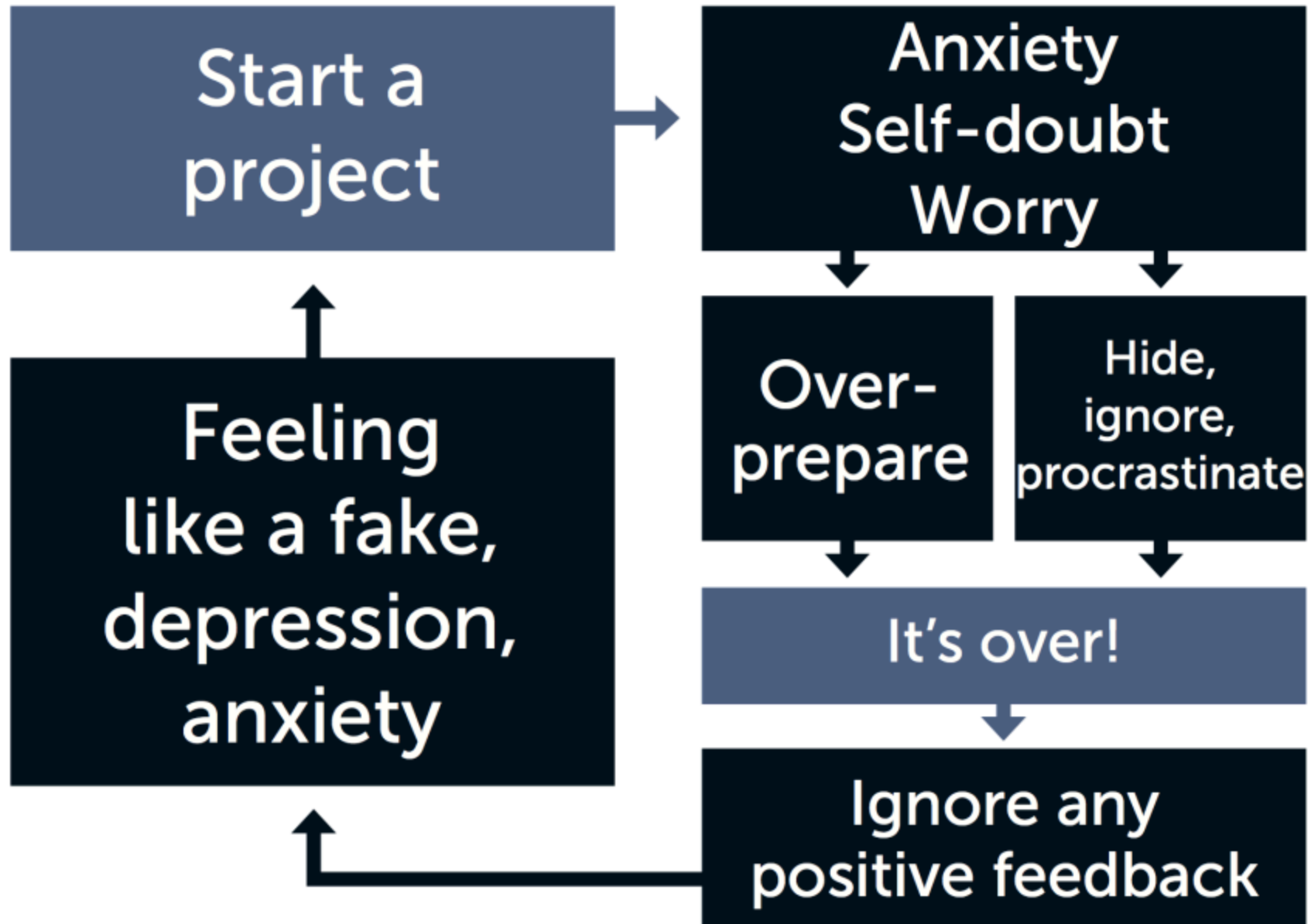


UUHHHHHHH?

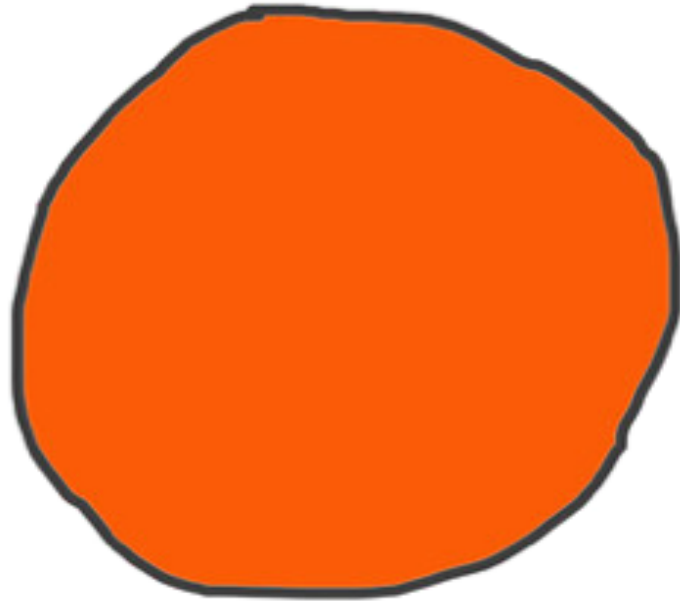
LUCK

A MISTAKE

BECAUSE SOMETHING BAD  
IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN



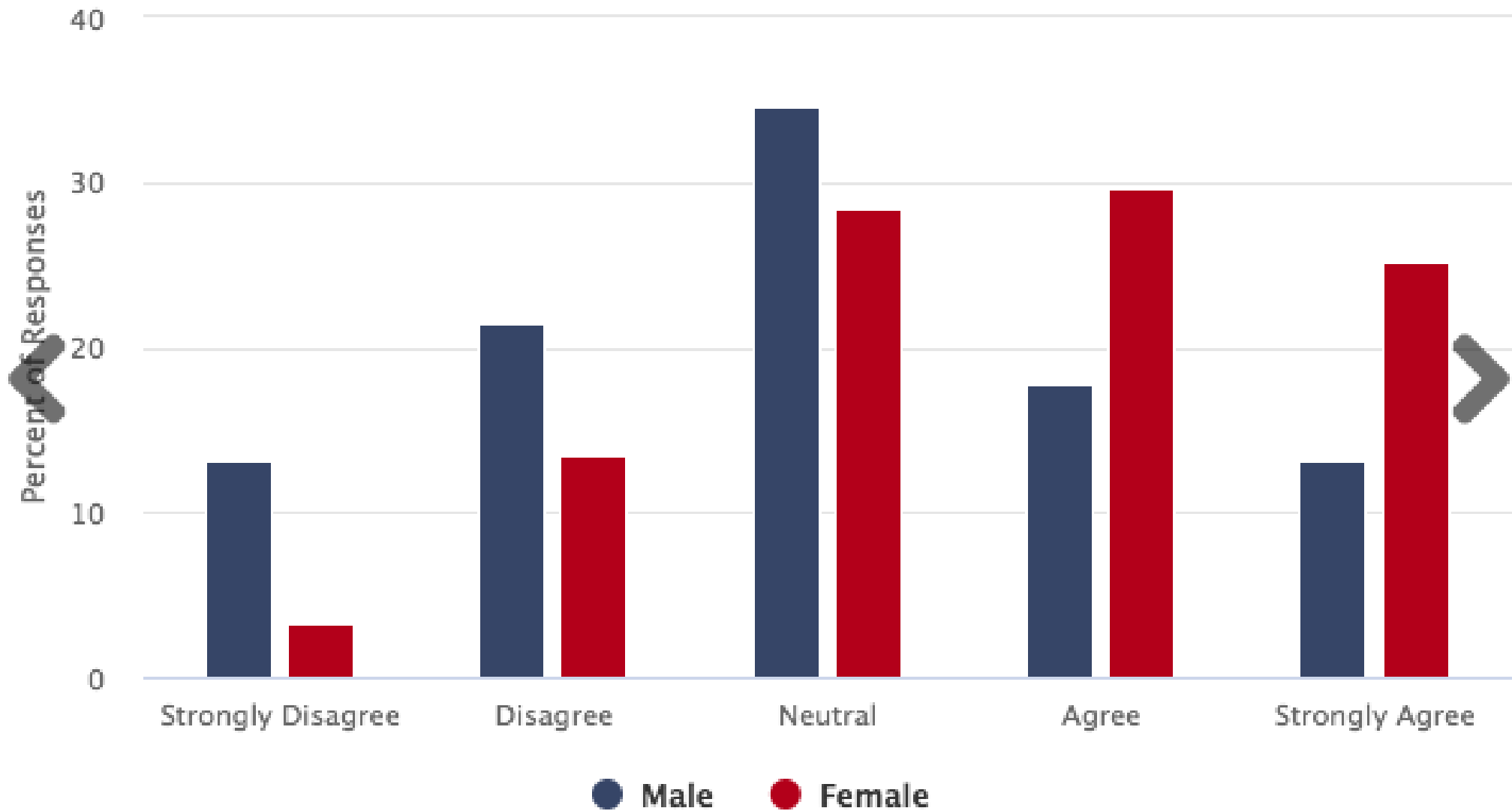
# TYPES OF PEOPLE WHO CAN HAVE IMPOSTOR SYNDROME:



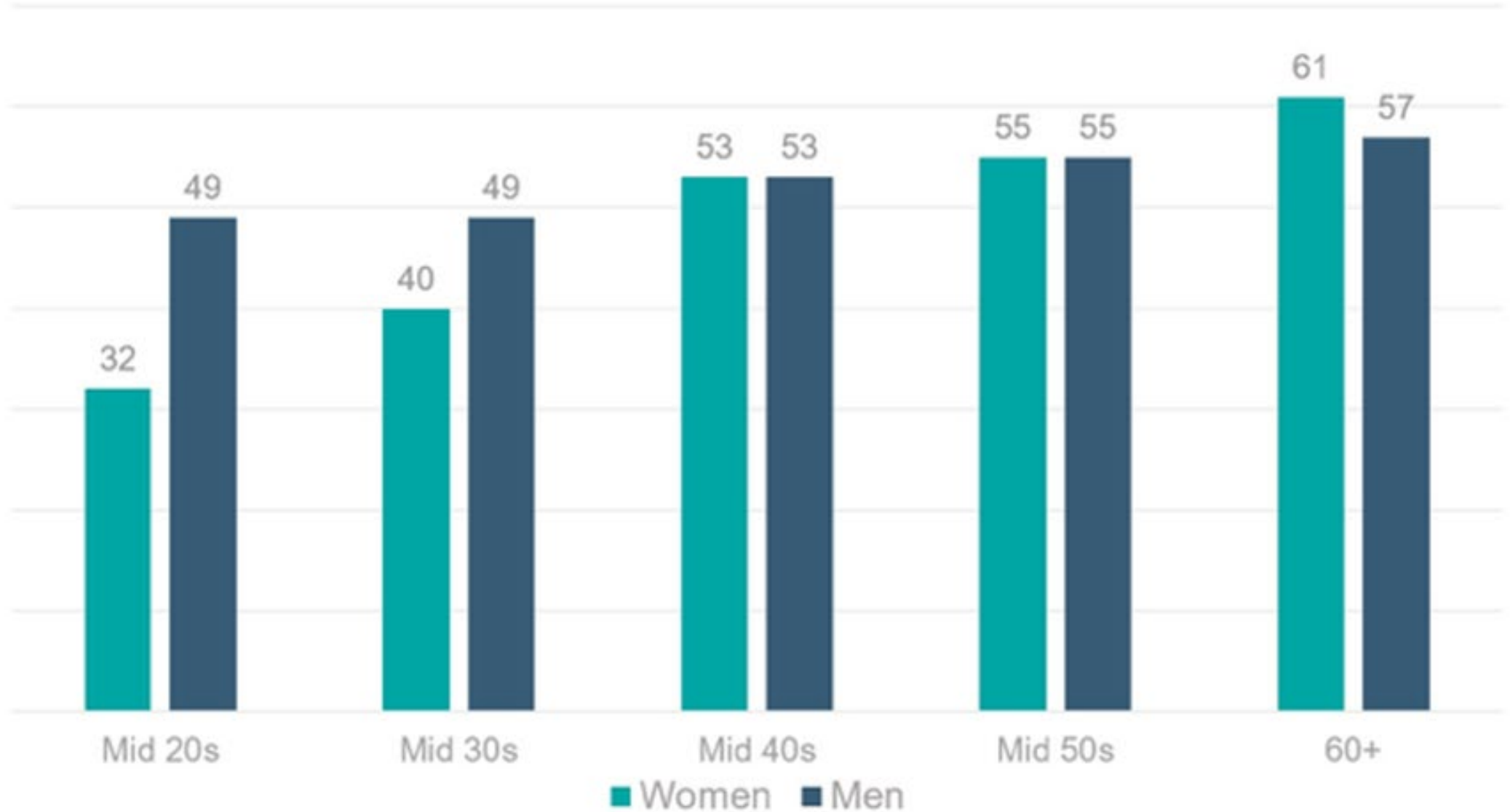
- ALL THE SMART, SUCCESSFUL  
PEOPLE THAT YOU THINK  
HAVE THEIR SHIT TOGETHER



# Survey Responses to the statement "I think most people at the University of Michigan are smarter than me"




# Gender Confidence Over Time





We're treating "impostor syndrome" as a **personal problem to be overcome**, rather than what it actually is — a **reflection of our reality.**

*- Cate Hudson,  
Model View Culture*



**24%** STEM jobs in the U.S.  
that belong to women

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Men outnumber  
women in  
STEM fields **5 to 1**

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**70% ↑** students in specific STEM  
majors like computer  
science are male



# WHAT CAN WE DO?

## Train

Teaching recruiters & hiring teams about implicit bias improves offers to women

## Explain

Telling minority students about benefits of their work leads to better grades & more science classes

## Invite

Welcoming people to “opt-in” to new perspectives and experiences brings voluntary cooperation

## Task Forces

Being accountable tells our brains to be more intentional about actions we take when we have to explain why

## Diversity Mgrs

Companies see up to an 18% increase over five years in underrepresented groups in management

## Allies

Men have the opportunity to play powerful roles as our internal gender equity advocates.

# Tips for dealing with imposter syndrome

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**Perfectionists** set excessively high goals for themselves, and when they fail to, they experience major self-doubt and worry about measuring up. This group can be control freaks, feeling like if they want something done right, they need to do it themselves.

**Super-people** push themselves to work harder to measure up to their colleagues. But this is just a cover-up for their insecurities, and the work overload may harm not only their mental health, but also their relationships.

**Natural geniuses** judge their competence on ease and speed as opposed to effort. The bar is set impossibly high, and they judge themselves based on getting things right on the first try.

**Soloists** feel as though asking for help reveals phoniness. They care mostly about “who” completes the task. They think they need to do and figure out everything on their own, needing help is a sign of failure that evokes shame.

**Experts** measure their competence based on “what” and “how much” they know or can do. Even a minor lack of knowledge denotes failure and shame. Believing they will never know enough, they fear being exposed as inexperienced or uninformed.

# Imposter Personas

Quiz Time!

 Were you surprised by your results?

 Do you relate to the IS type you received?

 What advice would you give to another person with imposter syndrome?

 Has imposter syndrome affected your career/education?

 What did you do to overcome these feelings?

 Did these feelings ever affect your personal life?

 How should this syndrome be addressed in the STEM fields?

 What can be changed at institutional and societal levels to alter individual experiences?

## Discussion



it's not who you are  
that holds you back.  
it's who you think  
you're not

Dear Me,

into you are  
only a world  
back because

already you are  
the only one  
who can  
make it  
all your  
own  
way

# Extra resources

<https://www.themuse.com/advice/5-different-types-of-imposter-syndrome-and-5-ways-to-battle-each-one>

<http://nymag.com/scienceofus/2016/04/do-you-have-severe-impostor-syndrome.html>

<https://impostorsyndrome.com/5-types-of-impostors/>

<https://medium.com/@AlyintheATL/a-few-words-on-impostor-syndrome-women-in-stem-5b50e465a671>

<https://self-compassion.org/>

<https://www.michigandaily.com/section/research/students-faculty-reflect-imposter-syndrome-university>

<https://www.girlsguidetopm.com/10-tips-to-overcome-imposter-syndrome/>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jackzenger/2018/04/08/the-confidence-gap-in-men-and-women-why-it-matters-and-how-to-overcome-it/#5330a1cd3bfa>

For a different perspective:

<http://blog.interviewing.io/impostor-syndrome-strikes-men-just-as-hard-as-women-and-other-findings-from-thousands-of-technical-interviews/>

If you're looking from some harsh love:

<https://startunhros.com/21-ways-overcome-impostor-syndrome/>

This week made me think of something in a new way

Strongly dis/agree, dis/agree, somewhat dis/agree, neutral

I will try to apply something presented today to my own mentoring relationship

Strongly dis/agree, dis/agree, somewhat dis/agree, neutral

One thing I learned or found interesting this week was....

One question this raised for me or something I would like to learn more about is.....