



IMPOSTER
PHENOMENON IN
ACADEMIA

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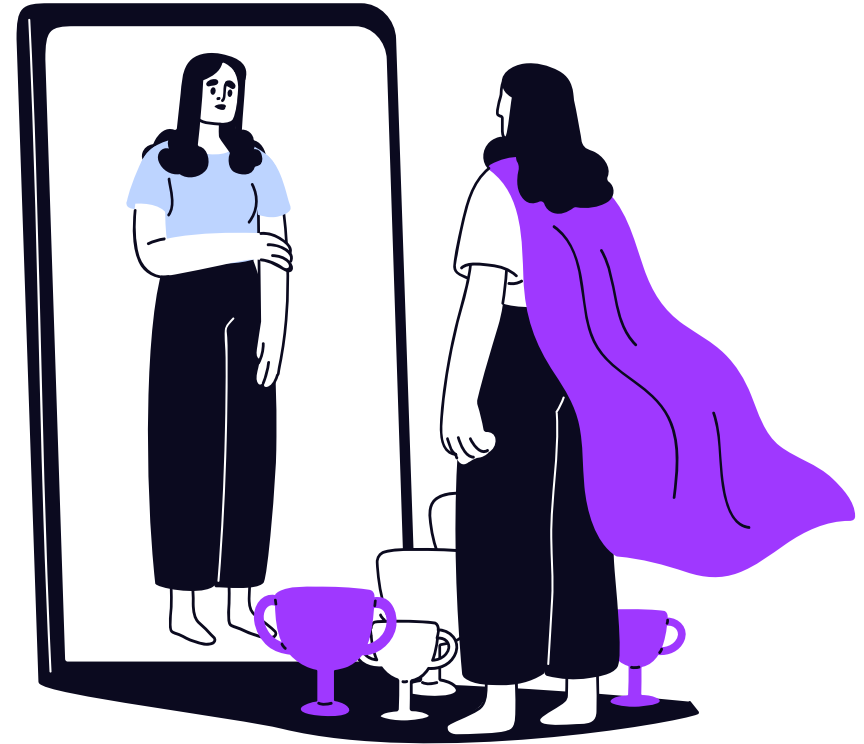
RAISE YOUR HANDS IF...

YOU HAVE EVER GIVEN A PRESENTATION ON YOUR RESEARCH AND FELT CERTAIN THAT EVERYONE IN THE ROOM THOUGHT YOU HAVE NO REAL KNOWLEDGE?

YOU ALWAYS COMPARE YOURSELF TO OTHER RESEARCHERS AND DOUBT YOUR OWN EXPERTISE?

YOU QUESTIONED WHETHER YOU GOT YOUR CURRENT POSITION BECAUSE THERE WERE NO BETTER APPLICANTS?

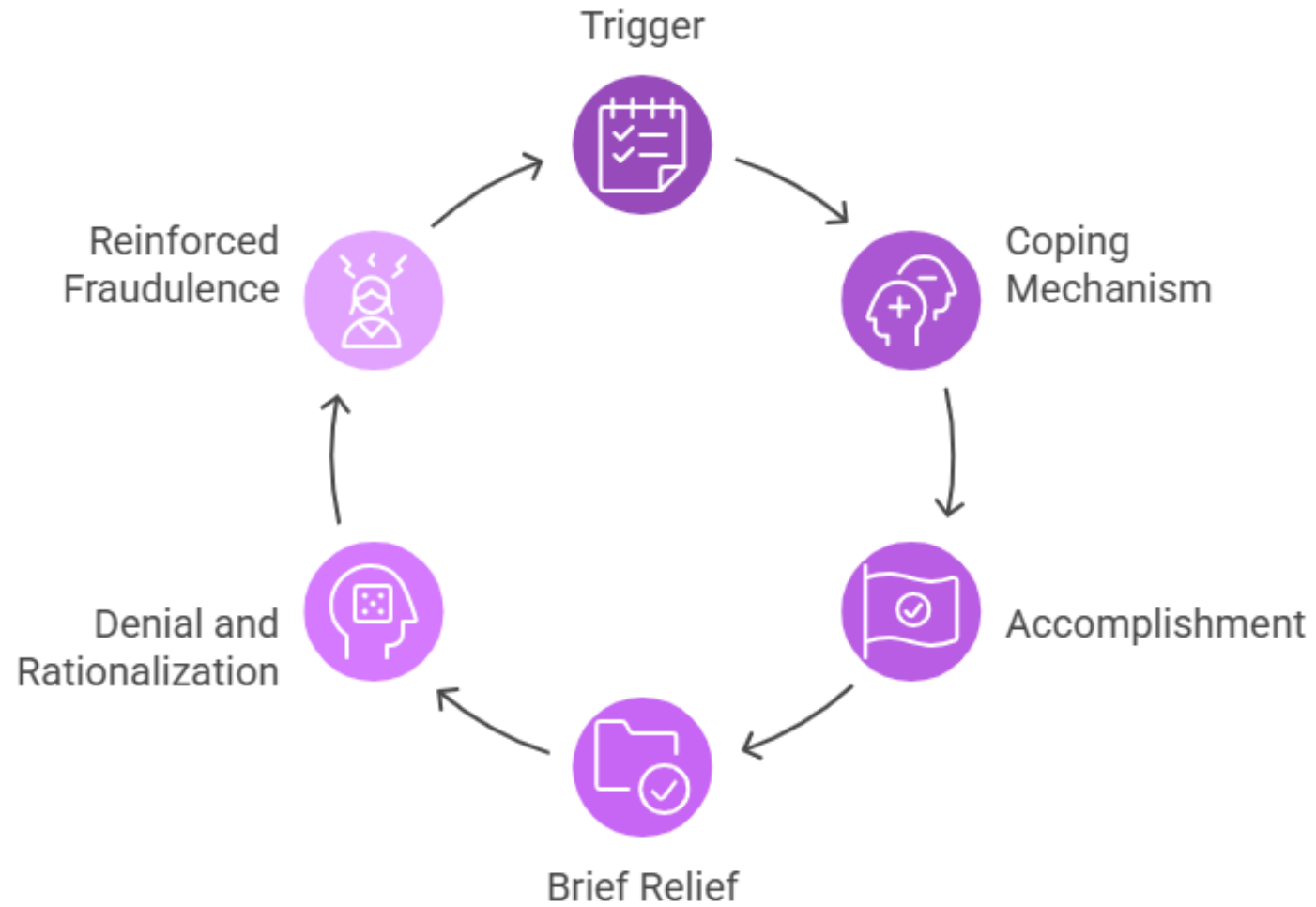
IMPOSTER PHENOMENON



The **persistent inability to internalize success** despite objective evidence of competence, with individuals instead **attributing their achievements to luck or external factors.**

Pervasive **fear of being exposed as a “fraud”.**

The Imposter Cycle



Made with  Napkin

IMPOSTERISM

Perfectionism:

- Predictor
- Intense self-criticism
- Setting impossibly high standards

EFFECTS OF IMPOSTERISM

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Psychological distress
- Low self confidence



IMPOSTERISM

Persistence of these result in:

- Reduced well-being
- Reduce job satisfaction & performance
- Resource draining & avoidant coping strategies

High achieving populations and industries:

- Demanding exceptional performance, innovation, and competitiveness
- Fostering constant pursuit of excellence



IP AND ACADEMIA

- Academic culture is based on competition and performance
 - Pursuit of prestige-related titles
 - Competitive publishing and grant systems
 - Emphasis on quantitative outputs and need for impact



IP AND ACADEMIA

- Academics are evaluated by high but ambiguous standards
 - Peer reviews
 - Grant competitions
 - Supervisor
 - Comparisons
- Reinforce feelings of inadequacy, self-doubt, perfectionism, and over-work
- Academia's constant cycle of evaluation, production, and public presentation can therefore acts as a catalyst for IP



IP AND ACADEMIA

- Belonging & psychological safety
 - Loneliness
 - Lack of formal teams and support structures lead to internalized doubt
 - “Your research”



OUT OF 530
ACADEMICS 72%
REPORT FREQUENT
IMPOSTER FEELINGS

PROFESSIONAL TOLL OF IP

- IP may cause an unintentional threat to the **Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)**
- Need to avoid "exposure" and increased self-doubt in choices can lead individuals to unintentionally choose behaviors or research practices that are not appropriate
 - Unintentional
 - Self-preservation instincts associated with IP

WHAT CAN WE DO SO FAR?

- Addressing IP requires cultural change not just individual change
 - Creating inclusive, supportive environments
 - Open and transparent communication
 - Reframe thinking





HELP US UNDERSTAND THE IP IN DUTCH ACADEMIA

Please feel free to share this with your network. Let's bring some transparency to the academic experience.

THANK YOU

REFERENCES

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