

Imposter Syndrome: Tools and Resources

OWLS Leadership Committee | July 2020

Making the Case to Yourself

STEP 1: Recognize our thoughts	What is the thought you are dealing with?	
	What feelings does that thought generate?	
	What triggered that thought? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where were you? • Who were you with? • What was the situation? 	
STEP 2: Examine our thoughts	Examining the thought: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it kind? • Is it helpful? • Is it true? • Whose thought is it? 	
	Evidence that supports that thought: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the evidence reliable? • Could you be jumping to conclusions? 	
STEP 3: Reframe our thoughts and choose our response	Can you imagine a different explanation that could be true?	
	What evidence supports the new explanation?	
	With this awareness, what can you do to choose how you respond to these triggers in a way that is true, helpful and rooted in reality?	

Adapted from PsychologyTools.com by Susanne Aronowitz, Sally Olson, Neha Sampat

Making the Case to Yourself—Sample

STEP 1: Recognize our thoughts	What is the thought you are dealing with?	I am not capable of teaching a room of career services professionals how to teach law students how to negotiate salaries with small law firms.
	What feelings does that thought generate?	Anxiety that I can't deliver on others' expectations; Fear that people will think I'm not good at my job.
	What triggered that thought? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where were you? • Who were you with? • What was the situation? 	Planning for a presentation at a conference early in my career. I held these thoughts privately and did not share them.
STEP 2: Examine our thoughts	Examining the thought: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it kind? • Is it helpful? • Is it true? • Whose thought is it? 	I don't think I gave myself enough credit. Telling myself that I was not capable was neither true nor helpful. I've coached many lawyers on how to negotiate their salaries.
	Evidence that supports that thought: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the evidence reliable? • Could you be jumping to conclusions? 	I never thought of myself as an expert negotiator. I see now that just because I'm not an expert negotiator, I may have jumped to a conclusion that I couldn't help others prepare for salary negotiations.
STEP 3: Reframe our thoughts and choose our response	Can you imagine a different explanation that could be true?	It's possible that I might have been able to conduct this session on my own.
	What evidence supports the new explanation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I've coached many students/graduates on negotiating with their employers. • I always prepare for speaking engagements and am good at seeking out helpful resources. • I had been invited to deliver this workshop—SOMEONE thought I could do it.
	With this awareness, what can you do to choose how you respond to these triggers in a way that is true, helpful and rooted in reality?	This is a good reminder that when a new opportunity seems daunting, I should still consider doing it. I always prepare in advance and know how to access resources to fill in my knowledge gaps. And speaking on a topic that seems intimidating is a great way to enhance my knowledge and add to my value.

Imposter Syndrome Resources

[A Call to Deal with Imposter Syndrome](#), a hidden source of attorney distress, Neha Sampat

[Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale](#), Dr. Pauline Rose Clance

[How to Overcome Impostor Syndrome](#), Jessica Bennett / The New York Times

[Imposter Syndrome: A Secret Epidemic in the Legal Profession](#), Susanne Aronowitz, Oregon State Bar Bulletin

[Imposter Syndrome? 8 Tactics to Combat the Anxiety](#), ABA

[Mentoring Someone with Imposter Syndrome](#), Harvard Business Review

[Overcoming Imposter Syndrome in Your Job Search](#), Mac's List Podcast featuring Lisa Orbé-Austin

[The Belong Blog and Gen Lead](#), Neha Sampat

[Three Tips to Overcome Imposter Syndrome as a Young Associate](#), Jay Harrington, Attorney at Work

[Well-Being Toolkit for Lawyers and Legal Employers](#), ABA / Anne Brafford

[What is Imposter Syndrome and How Can You Combat It?](#), Elizabeth Cox, TED-Ed

[Yes, Imposter Syndrome is Real. Here's How to Deal with It](#), Abigail Abrams, Time.com

Action Items and Commitments

Please list three action items from this presentation that you will take to combat Imposter Syndrome.

Action Item 1:

I can engage the following resources and support to make this effort:

I intend to complete this action by (write date): _____

Action Item 2:

I can engage the following resources and support to make this effort:

I intend to complete this action by (write date): _____

Action Item 3:

I can engage the following resources and support to make this effort:

I intend to complete this action by (write date): _____