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Fri, Sep 13, 2024 12:30PM 9:21

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

imposter syndrome, feel, impostor syndrome, experienced, student, work, university, psychotherapist, students, woman, otr, find, learning, poll, impact, worried, reframe, psychologists, confidential counseling, year

SPEAKERS

Katie Bell, Erik Mikalik, Alexa di Francesco, Streeter 3, Streeter 2, Streeter 4, Dena Bravata, Streeter 5, Streeter 1

- A** Alexa di Francesco 00:00
Katie, welcome back to the OTR Podcast. I'm Alexa di Francesco
- K** Katie Bell 00:12
and I'm Katie Bell. This semester, we're doing things a bit differently for our podcast. We're
- A** Alexa di Francesco 00:17
going to focus on some of the big questions students have about their experiences here at Tmu. So
- K** Katie Bell 00:22
this means unaffordable housing, tuition, woes, what it means to hook up in 2024
- A** Alexa di Francesco 00:27
or anything you want us to talk about, really, so to get involved in the conversation, email us at ontherecknews@torontomu.ca
- K** Katie Bell 00:35
But today's big question is, do you ever suffer from imposter syndrome? Imposter syndrome.

A Alexa di Francesco 00:40
So feeling like people think I'm a fraud, yeah, and

K Katie Bell 00:43
thinking that people have an exaggerated view of your abilities, so you downplay your achievements. That's how psychologists Pauline rose Clance and Susan IMEs described it in their 1978 research paper where they coined the term.

A Alexa di Francesco 00:55
I wonder if they felt impostor syndrome. They probably did.

K Katie Bell 00:59
According to the Harvard Business Review, 1/3 of young people experience imposter syndrome, and the other 70% of us will experience it at some point in our lives,

A Alexa di Francesco 01:07
and it doesn't affect us all equally either. According to the survey center on American life, young women are more likely than their colleagues to feel like they're not good at their job. I feel like I'm getting the hang of this podcasting thing. I think you are too, but sadly, this is a trend that might continue throughout women's careers. A KPMG study last year found that 75% of women executives experienced imposter syndrome in the workplace, and

K Katie Bell 01:31
other parts of your identity can make you feel more likely to feel imposter syndrome too. Someone who researches this is Dena Bravata Her study focused on students, and she found that imposter syndrome was more prevalent in ethnic minorities.

D Dena Bravata 01:44
I think in a lot of circumstances, it has to do with the fact that many of the folks who were studied were minority students. And so these are folks who, you know, often, were characterized as having inadequate financial aid. Many were the first in their families to be in a, you know, degree granting program. They may be the first person to graduate from university in their families, and in other cases, they were actually both students and working so, you know. So I think that there were a lot of things going on for them, that may not have been the case for their white, you know, peers.

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Alexa di Francesco 02:24

So if a lack of resources can make us more likely to have imposter syndrome, can having access to resources help imposter syndrome go away. It's

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Katie Bell 02:33

not so much resources, but learning how to reframe your mind, at least. That's what psychotherapist Erik Mikalik said

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Erik Mikalik 02:39

When you're worried about something, a what reframing it means is you change a little bit of the wording of your perception, and it can have a gigantic impact on how the cognition actually impacts your physiology. So I'll give you an example. So for me, when I get nervous, worried or anxious about something, a common reframe that I use or shift my thinking to, is I'm not when I'm worried about something, it means I care about it. It still feels, it worrisome. It's still uncomfortable to deal with. But wow, does me thinking I'm worried I care about something shift the way I look at how I'm behaving. So if I'm just worried that, oh no, that client is going to think I'm not a good therapist, I start feeling incompetent. I start feeling nervous. I start feeling like they think that I'm not good enough. But if I shift, or I reframe my perception of I just care a lot, all of a sudden, I'm like, You know what? This person's kind of lucky to be working with me? Or that says a lot about me, I would want to work with a therapist who cares about me.

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Alexa di Francesco 03:46

So that's where the saying 'all in my head' comes from.

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Katie Bell 03:47

Yeah, maybe. But for TMU students who want external help, there's help available. The Yeats School of graduate and postdoctoral studies and the graduate Leadership Institute host learn to read workshops which teach you how to be confident in public. This one past March, even focused on imposter syndrome,

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Alexa di Francesco 04:04

and if you're an undergrad, there's a TMU leadership program which hosts similar sessions on campus. There's also the Center for Student Development and counseling that's a team of psychologists, social workers, psychotherapists and counseling interns that offer you free, confidential counseling

K Katie Bell 04:20

we care about you, TMU. Just how many of our students have imposter syndrome? Anyways?

A Alexa di Francesco 04:25

Good question. We wanted to hear what you thought, so we set up a poll right outside our newsroom. The results are in and 88% of you have experienced impostor syndrome. Only 0.6% of you responded, 'No.' Pretty overwhelming numbers there.

K Katie Bell 04:38

Wow, yeah. So that's what our poll said, and almost 50 of you voted. By the way, we also sent our reporters to find out what you think about imposter syndrome as a TMU student, here's what you said.

S Streeter 1 04:49

I feel like there was a couple instances where I felt impostor syndrome, but one of my most, earliest and still to this day, standing out moments, would have been first Gaia accepted into Creative Industries. Now I'm in my final year, but I remember in my first year how everyone around me was experienced. Everyone around me knew what was going on, everyone around me had some form of creative experience, and I felt really out of place. It didn't help that the program was predominantly white and I was a visible minority. I'm a hijabi, I'm South Asian, I'm Muslim, and I just felt like the cultural differences and our different cultural experiences really did make an impact in the way that we kind of perceived media, the way we perceived creativity and the way that we continued learning. I

S Streeter 2 05:34

think I experienced imposter syndrome pretty heavily when I did my first nine to five corporate job as a co op student. I was working at TED, and I completely just like, felt like I had never prepared for this, that I I wasn't cut out for the job. I also didn't really think that I deserved the job, because I had gotten it over some of my friends, and I just didn't feel like I was the right choice for it. I felt like I was a fraud. In

S Streeter 3 05:57

My first year was pretty rough, also, with covid being a thing, and me being isolated a lot from people, it was even worse because I wasn't with like minded individuals around me, and so I couldn't relate to anybody about the imposter syndrome that I was experiencing. I mean, university and academic institutions, they attract very intelligent people, and they attract people that have been doing things all their life, and they got they did this, and they got this scholarship, and it is and while I could relate to that, I felt like I didn't belong because I wasn't

doing as much as them, which led me to overcompensate and burn myself out. So that is a result of imposter syndrome. I coped with it by joining student groups, which that as well as talking to people about it, and talking openly about it is important as well.

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Streeter 4 06:44

I felt imposter syndrome, especially being a woman in tech. I am in the Co Op program, and so whenever I was going against, for example, group interviews, or even just people around my workplace, I find myself being undermined just because I'm a woman, and I feel like I find myself being an imposter, even though I know a lot of the same things that my coworkers do, or a lot of the same things that my peers do, even in the classroom, but I'm a little bit taken for granted, but I find that how to cope with that is just knowing that I have my own work and I have my own standards in what I can achieve and what I want to achieve, but also just the different student groups, and also the different empowerment groups, like within trssm or within Tmu, especially women intact, or it MSA, I really got to find myself a place as a woman in tech and really know that I am worth in this classroom.

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Streeter 5 07:38

Well, I grew up with learning disabilities that were left on I diagnosed for really long time, but now I met University. So obviously, before getting diagnosed, I was a below average student, but once I got that support in place, I was able to actually, like, develop the skills that I needed for university. But unfortunately, sometimes your brain doesn't always make that same transition someone with a developmental disability, you have to work 10 times harder to get the skills that you need to go to university or get good grades. So having your brain to kind of kind of come over that, and being able to breathe in terms of being able to understand that you're at the goal that you have always really been wanting to meet or haven't met in previous years. So trying to kind of overcome that is really hard, in a sense, that you have to be like you're at the level you're you're always supposed to be at. You don't have to push yourself beyond the point of burnout, or even just trying to go from day to day, taking breaks, being able to adjust your mindset so you're not pushing yourself to, you know, obviously burnout, and that's one of the big things with imposter syndrome, is that you're constantly burning yourself out. So keeping those like, you know boundaries in place is something that I've really had to learn.

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Alexa di Francesco 08:44

So there you have it. Thanks for stepping up to the mic, TMU. We appreciate you going on the record. Next week we're talking about safety on campus. So our poll on a big poster outside the OTR newsroom will be asking you how safe you feel on campus. And remember, if you have

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Katie Bell 08:59

a big question for us. Email us at ontherecordnews.ca, I'm Katie Bell, special thanks to Almost Barely for our theme music "letting go."



Alexa di Francesco 09:07

and I'm Alexa Di Francesco. We'll talk to you next week.