# Horoscope for the next 40 minutes

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1. Let's get acquainted!

2. A little bit of history

3. OK but… WHAT IS IT?

4. The practical bit (finally)

5. "Not a question, more of a comment"

6. Sources???

# 1. Let's get acquainted!

I promise, that's kinda relevant

# Marine GANDY

DevRel Engineer at Platform.sh

*that's me*

# Marine GANDY

DevRel Engineer at Platform.sh

*I mean, THAT is me*

# My journey

- I come from **a literary background**

- I switched to web development **at 25**

- I'm the current **President of the French Drupal Association**

- I've been **working remotely** for 3 years

- I love and do **many things** outside of work!

# So why am I talking about this?

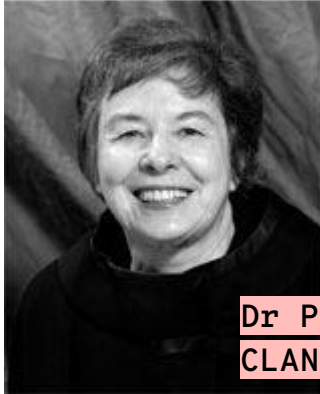# Because all these elements heavily influence

## how I feel at work

Bear with me, it will
make sense

# 2. A little bit of history

"Your past is just a lesson, not a life sentence."
– Deep Life Quote

# It all began in 1978

with two psychologists:



Dr Pauline Rose CLANCE



Dr Suzanne IMES

**At first, they thought it only touched women...**

The Imposter Phenomenon in High Achieving Women:
Dynamics and Therapeutic Intervention

Pauline Rose Clance & Suzanne Imes

**But since then, more research has been conducted**

It turns out…

The feeling is spread **equally** among men and women

**Nowadays, we estimate that**

**70%**

**of people will experience this feeling**

**It's not a disease,
it's a common human experience !**

This is why Dr Clance herself now uses the term

**'impostor phenomenon'**

(and so should we)

# Isn't it more ==widespread== in ==tech== though?

I mean…

Yeah, some factors
don't help ➡

The field of competence is very wide

⬇

It's impossible to master everything

⬇

The tech and tools are evolving fast

⬇

We're constantly becoming 'juniors' again

# 3. OK but... WHAT IS IT?

Oh you wanted an actual definition?

It's kinda like

atychiphobia

It's kinda like

~~atychiphobia~~

It's kinda like

kakorraphiophobia

OK FINE listen, it's like

**THE FEAR OF FAILURE**

# OK, we need Wikipedia.

" Impostor 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.

Despite external evidence of their competence, those experiencing this phenomenon do not believe they deserve their success or luck.

[...] they may think that they are deceiving others because they feel as if they are not as intelligent as they outwardly portray themselves to be. "

# Have you ever heard of the fundamental attribution error?

It's the tendency for people to

under-emphasize situational and environmental explanations

[...] while overemphasizing dispositional- and personality-based explanations.

(Thank you Wikipedia, again)

# So the impostor phenomenon is pretty much the opposite!

Because you

overestimate external explanations
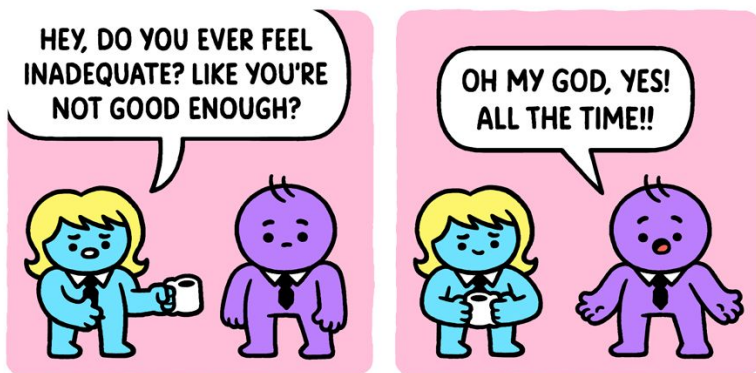
(aka: you're just lucky)

while you  underestimate internal explanations

(aka: you're actually doing fine!)

# Careful though!

Not everything is 'impostor syndrome'!

# 'Assurance Fraud' by Mr. Lovenstein

# There's a difference between the impostor phenomenon and…

a bad work environment

Underrepresented groups

Starting over at a new company

First job after school

Fancy new tech you don't understand (yet)

**It's normal**

**to have doubts sometimes!**

Switching careers

Colleagues with 20+ years of experience

# OH NO

Here comes the part where you have to contribute

# 4. The practical bit, finally

OK FINE, I'll tell you!

# Is it me, or is it the context around me?

**Do I know what is expected of me?**

- Is communication fluid?
- Is my job description clear?
- Are my goals realistic and explicit?

**Is the feeling recurrent?**

- Am I sensitive to a specific context (a new project, a new stack, a subject I don't feel comfortable with?)

**Is the feeling linked to someone in particular?**

**Do I get regular feedback?**

- Is the feedback always negative?
- Do I always feel like I don't deserve the praise I get, or do I enjoy some of my achievements?

# Getting past the comparison and the competition

**The Internet stars are not the only talented people!**

- Lots of anonymous devs are experts in their fields
- By the way, being famous is not a proof of expertise…

**There's a reason we work in teams.**

- The differences in profile, experience and seniority enrich the team. Diversity is the key!

**Accept that the others don't know everything either**

# Getting past the comparison and the competition



Imposter Syndrome — What I know / What I think others know

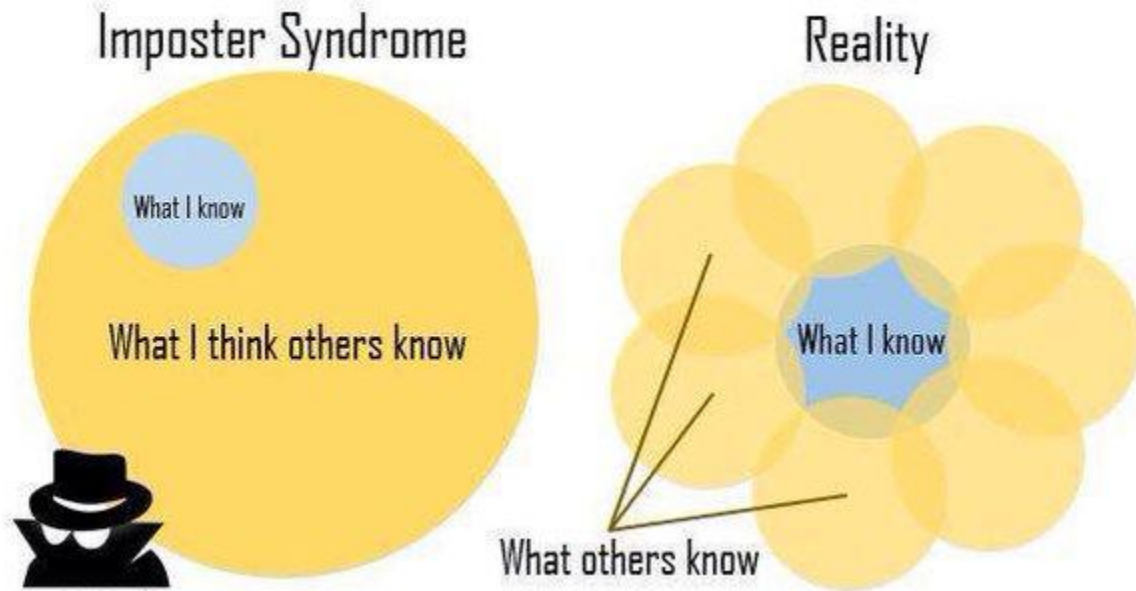Reality — What I know / What others know

Image taken from the article "Développeuses #2 : le syndrome de l'imposteur" by Aurélie Vache

# Getting past the comparison and the competition

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**Accept that the others don't know everything either**

**Take an interest in other people's journey**

- How did they get here, what challenges did they overcome, what did they study, what was hard for them…
- Get inspired! That might kickstart your own growth.

# Working on your (perceived) weaknesses

## Target

- What is a cause of stress every single time?
- What do I have to do often?
- What is expected of me?

## Prioritize

- Choose one topic at a time and delve in it
- Wandering means you will stay on the surface
- Being recognized in your speciality is fulfilling!

## Split!

- Transform that mountain in small, manageable steps

## Track your progress :)

# Working on different skills

**The aim: seeing your own progress**

**Go for dev-adjacent skills**

- Agility, communication, a new (human) language, web quality, accessibility, DevOps…
- Bonus: it adds to your resume!

**Or… go for something else entirely!**

- Pottery, gardening, knitting… doing something tangible for a change  feels good
- It's a way to clear your mind, stop thinking about work
- It's not stressful: you're doing something for yourself, there's nothing at stake

# Don't stay alone!

**Tell your team you need them!**

- Ask for regular feedback
- Get help in order to reach your goals

**Find your community**

- For me, it's Duchess France, a women in tech network
- Because it's sometimes easier to be vulnerable with people outside your work team
- Because you need people who have had similar experiences

**Knowing that others enjoy working with you is the boost you need to see that you do belong!**

# Sharing is caring

**Help others grow!**

- Support juniors / interns / new members
- Offer pair programming sessions
- Share the articles you read
- Explain your job  in schools, inspire new generations

**Become a speaker, write articles**

- Choose a subject and deep-dive or present it with a different angle
- You know you master your subject when you can explain it to others :)

# Knowing that
# it has a name :)

YES you are normal!

You can ignore it and live with it, too

# Getting (professional) help

Coaching, mentoring

Private classes, trainings, certifications

Mental health care

# 5. "Not a question, more of a comment"

We don't have time for questions anyway.

# Thank you!

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platform.sh

# 6. Sources???

I promise I didn't make it up!

# The origins

- Wikipedia article on impostor syndrome

  https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impostor_syndrome

- Compilation of research on the impostor phenomenon, Dr Pauline Rose Clance

  https://www.paulineroseclance.com/impostor_phenomenon.html

- Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale

  https://www.paulineroseclance.com/pdf/IPTestandscoring.pdf

- 'The Imposter Phenomenon in High Achieving Women: Dynamics and Therapeutic Intervention', Pauline Rose Clance & Suzanne Imes

  https://www.paulineroseclance.com/pdf/ip_high_achieving_women.pdf

# Articles

- 'Why Learning to Code is So Damn Hard'

  https://www.thinkful.com/blog/why-learning-to-code-is-so-damn-hard/

- 'Stop Telling Women They Have Imposter Syndrome'

  https://hbr.org/2021/02/stop-telling-women-they-have-imposter-syndrome

- 'The Dangers of Feeling Like a Fake' https://hbr.org/2005/09/the-dangers-of-feeling-like-a-fake

- 'Feel like a fraud?' https://www.apa.org/gradpsych/2013/11/fraud

- 'Feeling Like a Fraud: The Impostor Phenomenon in Science Writing'

  https://www.theopennotebook.com/2016/11/15/feeling-like-a-fraud-the-impostor-phenomenon-in-science-writing/

# Videos

- 'What is imposter syndrome and how can you combat it?', Elizabeth Cox

  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQUxL4Jm1Lo

- 'How you can use impostor syndrome to your benefit', Mike Cannon-Brookes (Atlassian)

  https://youtu.be/ZkwqZfvbdFw

- '6 Signs You Might Have Impostor Syndrome', Psych2Go

  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xvGawC0eS4w

- "L'effet Julien Lepers", Horizon Gull (FR) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mrXtwcGkroI

- "Pourquoi les américains nous paraissent-ils idiots ?", Horizon Gull (FR)

  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ic3xHn1E8EE

# Random

- '"Among Us": Academic edition' by PhD Comics

  https://phdcomics.com/comics/archive.php?comicid=2042

- 'Assurance Fraud' by Mr. Lovenstein https://tapas.io/episode/2640963

- Fundamental attribution error https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fundamental_attribution_error

- 'Batman: The Imposter' trailer https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9L_70vpquQ

- Dave Gahan's 'Imposter' album

  https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLK8pmrLAfsrgtiJxu9NmIXg-Jndm4iDvA