

The Super Ego and Imposter Syndrome

Super Ego

As you know from EE class, the superego's function is to control impulses. It also has the function of persuading the ego to turn to moralistic goals - rather than simply realistic ones - and to strive for perfection.

Your super ego may punish you with guilt when your reality falls short of your ideal self's expectations. The super ego can also reward us through the ideal self when we behave 'properly' by making us feel proud.

If your ideal self is at too high a standard, then whatever you do will represent failure. The super ego can be helpful to keep in mind when discussing Impostor Syndrome.

Impostor Syndrome

Impostor syndrome is a feeling of inadequacy that persists even in face of information that indicates the opposite is true. It is experienced internally as chronic self-doubt, minimization of accomplishments and an inability to internalize success.

Impostor Syndrome feelings can be divided into three subcategories:

- Feeling like a fake
- Attributing success to luck
- Discounting success

Dealing with Impostor Syndrome and its associated feelings:

- Identify and name your feelings
- Reaching out to your support system (e.g., Accountability Groups!)
- Recognize automatic thoughts & question them
- Are the thoughts in your head feelings or facts?
- Be kind to and patient with yourself – recognize progress, don't expect perfection!