

Imposters No More: Psychological Flexibility for Overcoming Imposter “Syndrome”

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“Tubby” “Little Tubbette” “Tubby Tubby Two by Four”





Contact a personal pain. A thought or self-story, often one that has been around for a while.

Something that feels true. A feeling you work hard to avoid. Consider the impact.



Hi, my name is Jill, and at any moment I'm going to be outed as the fraud that I am.

What exactly is imposter 'syndrome'?

A feeling of phoniness or inadequacy that exists and persists despite objective evidence to the contrary.



Who is most likely to struggle with it?

Most of us (up to 86%)! Especially if we are high achievers and possibly if we have a history of marginalization

Not a "syndrome" at all!

syndrome

[[sin-droh](#)m, -[druh](#)m] [SHOW IPA](#)



[See synonyms for syndrome on Thesaurus.com](#)

noun

1. *Pathology, Psychiatry.* a group of symptoms that together are characteristic of a specific disorder, disease, or the like.



How about a cultural rebranding?

Imposter experience, imposter phenomenon,
imposter thoughts and feelings, imposterism

Imposterism can lead to **avoidance of challenge** to reduce anxiety and self-doubt.

Cost: missed opportunities



Imposterism can also lead to **overachieving** in an attempt to feel more confident, competent, experienced, or knowledgeable.

Cost: burnout!



Five Subtypes



THE PERFECTIONIST

Has excessively high standards

THE SUPERHUMAN

Works harder and harder to measure up



THE NATURAL GENIUS

Must have natural ability to master tasks



THE SOLOIST

Asking for help reveals fraudulence



THE EXPERT

Fears being exposed as inexperienced or unknowledgeable

These are forms of
avoidance and
may not align with
values.





Pain and What Matters



What matters

Each moment
presents an
opportunity to
choose values.

The comfort zone is cozy, but it's never where
the magic happens



Who do you wish to
be? How will you
show up?

Maybe...

pain is not the
problem



So what is?



Experiential Avoidance

Anything you do or don't do to change or control the way you feel

WTF: What's the function?

**(it works or
we wouldn't
do it!)**

- ✓ Procrastination
- ✓ Over working
- ✓ Over preparing
- ✓ Situational avoidance
- ✓ Compulsive/impulsive behavior
- ✓ People pleasing
- ✓ Reassurance seeking
- ✓ Yoga?

Pain x Resistance = Suffering



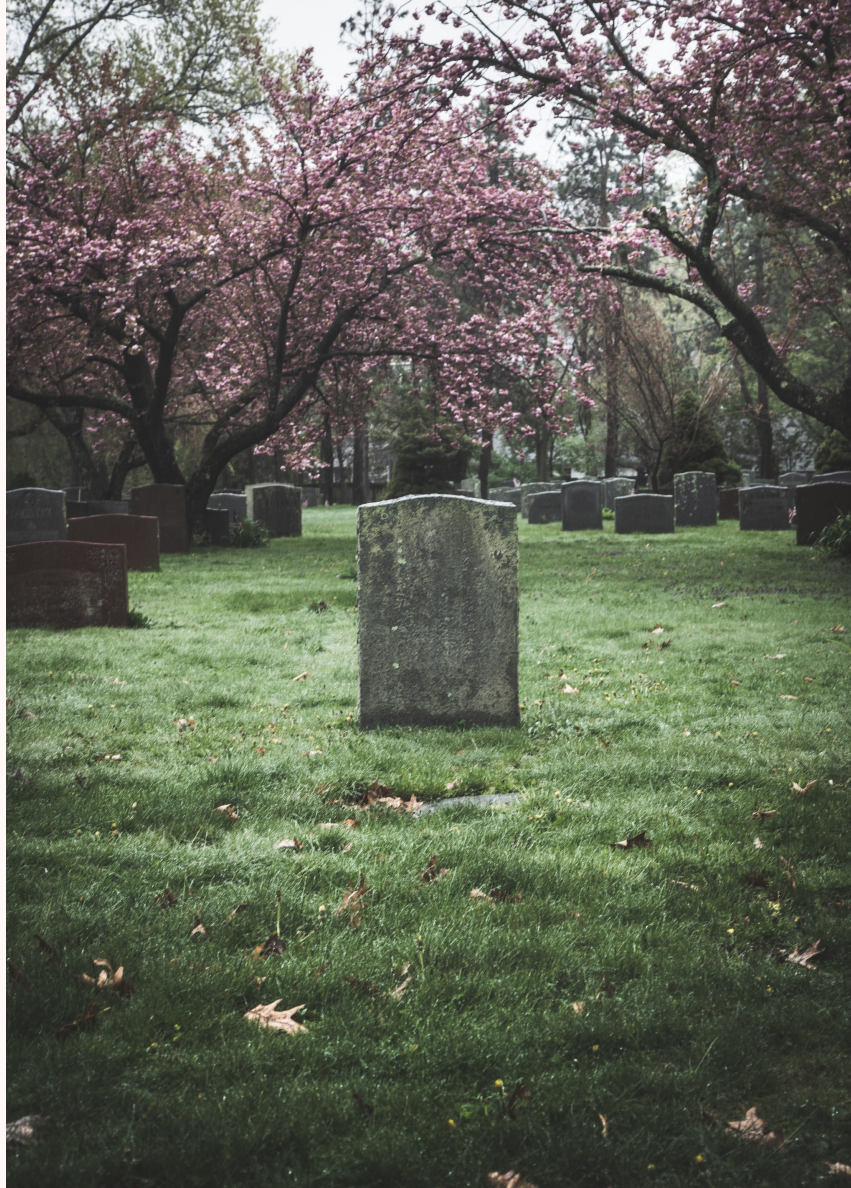
The ME you want to be in this one moMEnt

Psychological Flexibility (aka “workable”)

Choosing what you do or don't do based on your most important and deeply held personal values—who and how you want to be and the life you want to live—without allowing negative thoughts or the avoidance of uncomfortable feelings to get in your way.

Example Values

- Authentic
- Affectionate
- Bold
- Brave
- Caring
- Compassionate
- Daring
- Friendly
- Grateful
- Generous
- Humble
- Humorous
- Kind
- Loving
- Loyal
- Open
- Playful
- Persistent
- Present
- Punctual
- Reliable
- Respectful (self/others)
- Responsible (may include fiscal)
- Sensual
- Sexual
- Silly
- Skillful
- Tender
- Tolerant
- Understanding



Here lies You...

What do you
want written on
your
tombstone?

WWJD

Who is your hero?

What would she do? Or say to you?



Did I do the TEDx?

Yes.

Scared as all get out.



Staying the
same—in your
comfort zone—is

cozy



But it's never where
the *magic* happens



- ✓ Love risks loss
- ✓ Success risks failure
- ✓ Creativity risks critique

What are you willing to have?



Let's Practice!
Use Your Senses

**Get comfortable being
uncomfortable**

Fold hands/arms

Notice your phone

*Acceptance/
Willingness*



Homework Practice!

Acceptance



Willingness

Tactile: anything routine/ritual

Auditory: online sirens, babies crying, jackhammers

Visual: online images

Smell/Taste: home, restaurant, BEANBOOZLED!

Emotions: amusement park, Marley & Me, jump scares, political figures

Don't think about a cactus

Sticky
Thoughts



My rent is due.

If I _____I'll get it wrong and they will think I'm incompetent and a fraud.

Our minds are not dictators! We can observe thoughts, understand they are trying to help, and choose to when to listen.





1. Choose a goal or aspiration you've been dreaming about.
2. What does your mind say that gets in your way?
3. Now say, "I can't raise my hand."
4. Raise your hand.
5. Try "I can't possibly keep it in the air."

What does this experience tell you?

Maybe it's possible to think and feel one way and choose to act another.

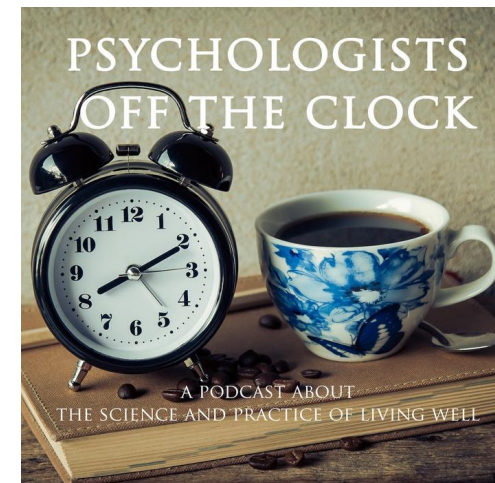
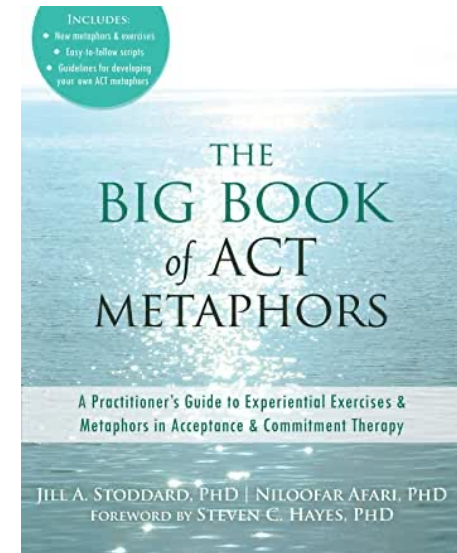
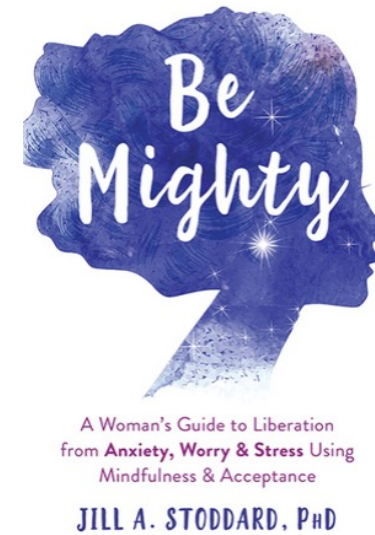
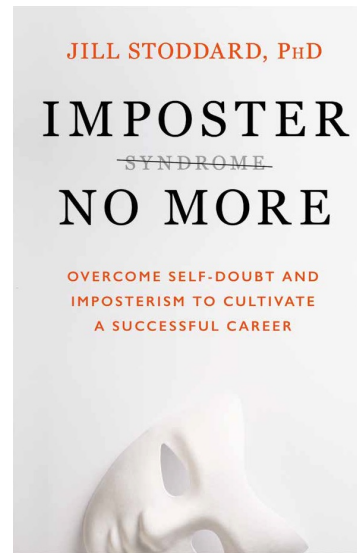
Have you dropped anchor?





Additional Resources

- Jill's books, monthly tips, TEDx talk, podcast appearances, coaching, speaking, etc
 - www.jillstoddard.com
- Jill's clinic for therapy in CA
 - www.csamsandiego.com
- Psychologists Off the Clock Podcast
 - www.offtheclockpsych.com or wherever you listen to pods



Let's Connect!

Enter the Imposter No More audiobook giveaway!

Sign up for my monthly tips or take a quiz at

www.jillstoddard.com. Respond to the welcome email letting me know you want to enter the Safer Society giveaway.



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