

# Imposter Syndrome Workshop



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THIS IS DR. ADAMS. SHE'S A SOCIAL  
PSYCHOLOGIST AND THE WORLD'S TOP  
EXPERT ON IMPOSTOR SYNDROME.

HAHA, DON'T BE SILLY! THERE  
ARE LOTS OF SCHOLARS WHO  
HAVE MADE MORE SIGNIFICANT...

...OH MY GOD.



# **Start with a video:**

**What is imposter syndrome and how you can combat it by Elizabeth Cox (TED-Ed)**

# **A Game: Two Truths and a Lie**

I often find myself thinking “If I’m a real physicist, I really should \_\_\_\_\_ more interesting...”

I need to decide if I am a mother, or a physicist - I can’t be both.

I often wonder if every position I’ve ever held in academia, be it graduate student, Stanford post-doc, this faculty position - is because those who hired me can check the “female” box in their diversity portfolio.

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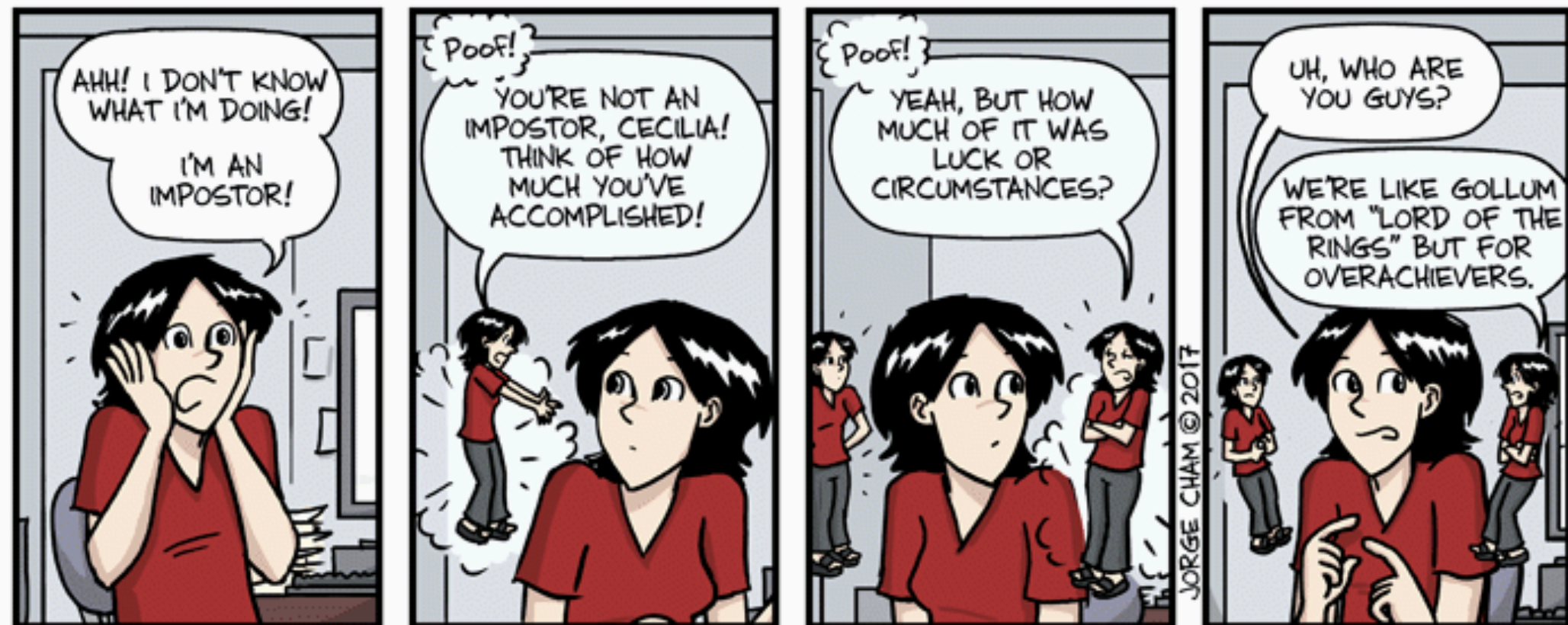
# Causes for Imposter Syndrome





# Causes for Imposter Syndrome

- Background-nature/nurture
- Stereotypes
- Culture of the field
- Posturing by colleagues
- Expectations of performance
- Internal pressure
- ....





# Different Types of Imposters

- “**Perfectionists**” set extremely high expectations for themselves, and even if they meet 99% of their goals, they’re going to feel like failures. Any small mistake will make them question their own competence.
- “**Experts**” feel the need to know every piece of information before they start a project and constantly look for new certifications or trainings to improve their skills. They won’t apply for a job if they don’t meet all the criteria in the posting, and they might be hesitant to ask a question in class or speak up in a meeting at work because they’re afraid of looking stupid if they don’t already know the answer.
- When the “**natural genius**” has to struggle or work hard to accomplish something, he or she thinks this means they aren’t good enough. They are used to skills coming easily, and when they have to put in effort, their brain tells them that’s proof they’re an impostor.
- “**Soloists**” feel they have to accomplish tasks on their own, and if they need to ask for help, they think that means they are a failure or a fraud.
- “**Supermen**” or “**superwomen**” push themselves to work harder than those around them to prove that they’re not impostors. They feel the need to succeed in all aspects of life—at work, as parents, as partners—and may feel stressed when they are not accomplishing something.

# Symptoms of Imposter Syndrome

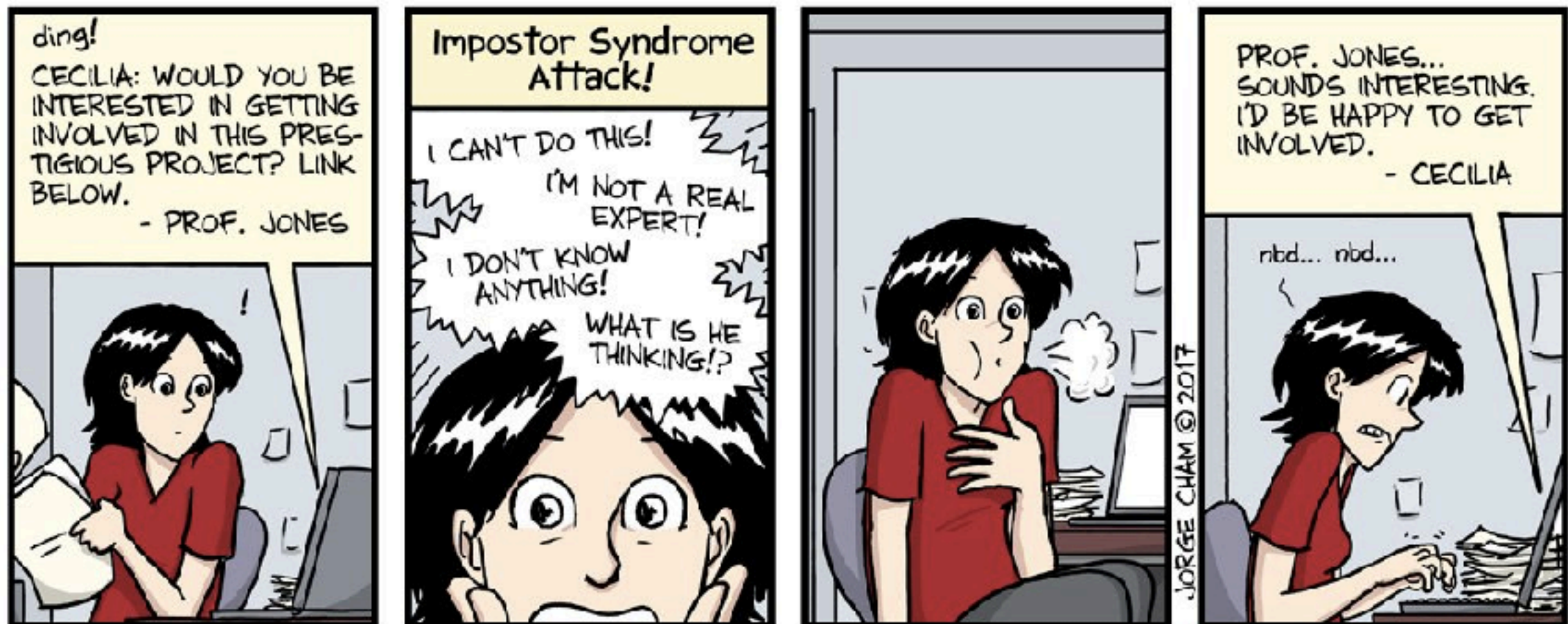


# Symptoms of Imposter Syndrome

- Setting self apart
- Worrying that you will not live up to expectations
- Avoiding extra responsibilities
- Attributing your success to outside factors
- Self sabotage
- Experiencing dissatisfaction in your work
- Avoiding opportunities to move up the ranks
- Going overboard on setting goals



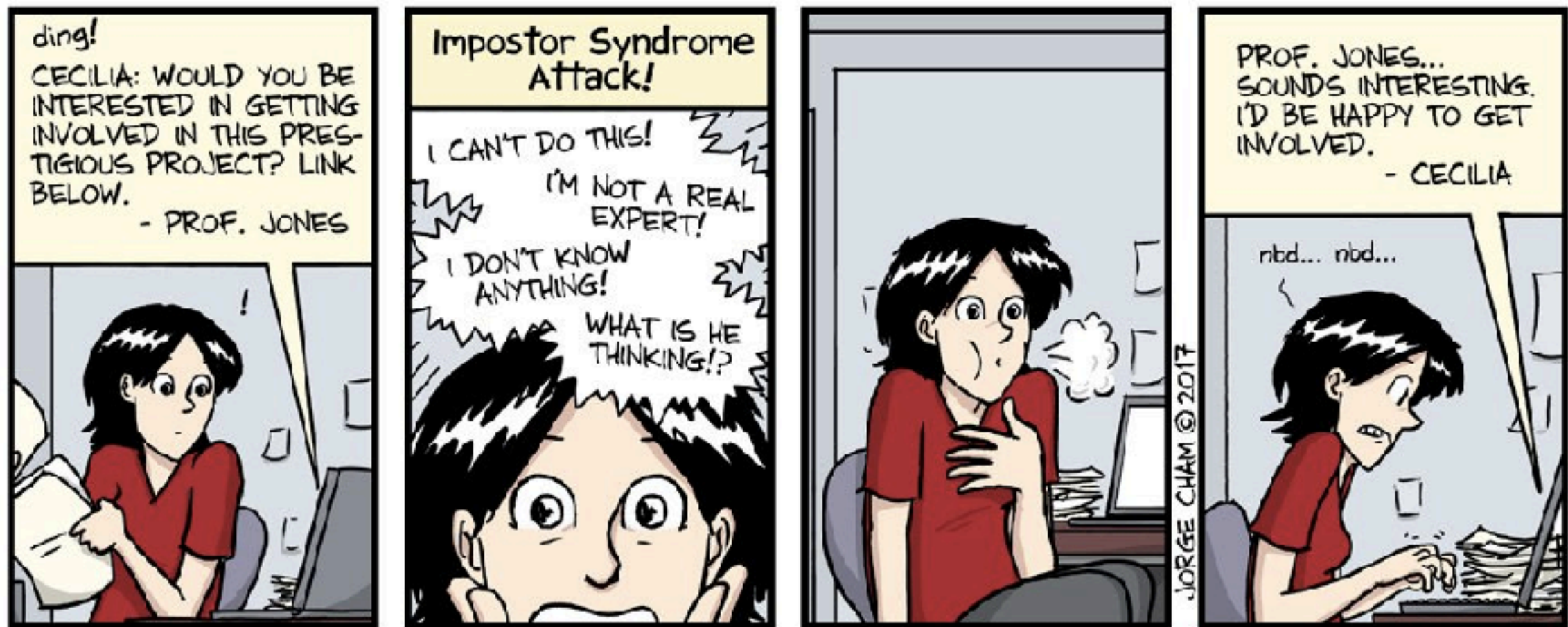
# Techniques for Coping with Imposter Syndrome





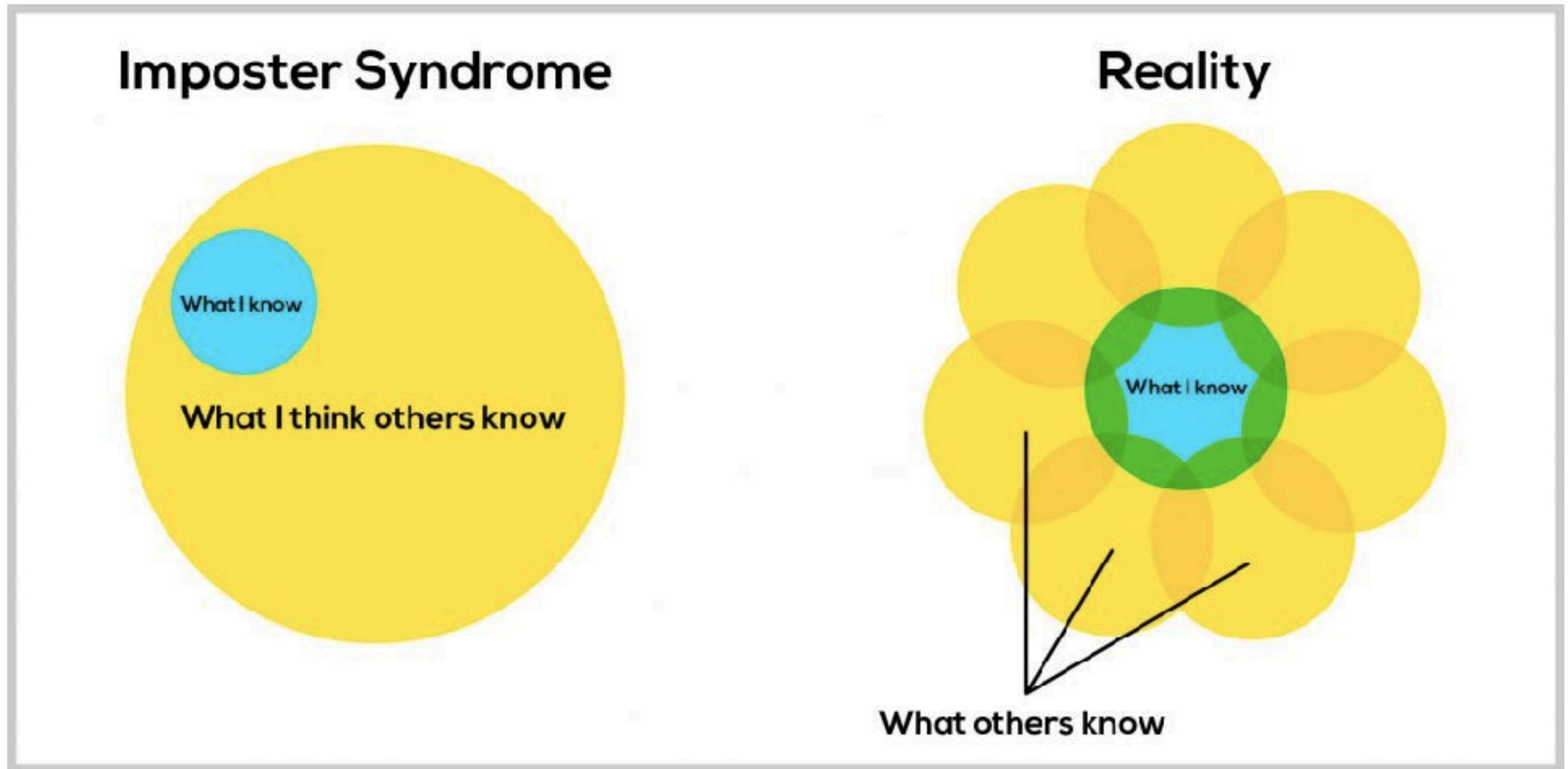
# Techniques for Coping with Imposter Syndrome

- Talk about it
- Get educated
- Trust the process
- Document accomplishments
- Accept that perfection is impossible
- Challenge negative thoughts
- See uncertainty as a strength





# Questions? Comments?



**Please continue this discussion with your friends and colleagues.**