



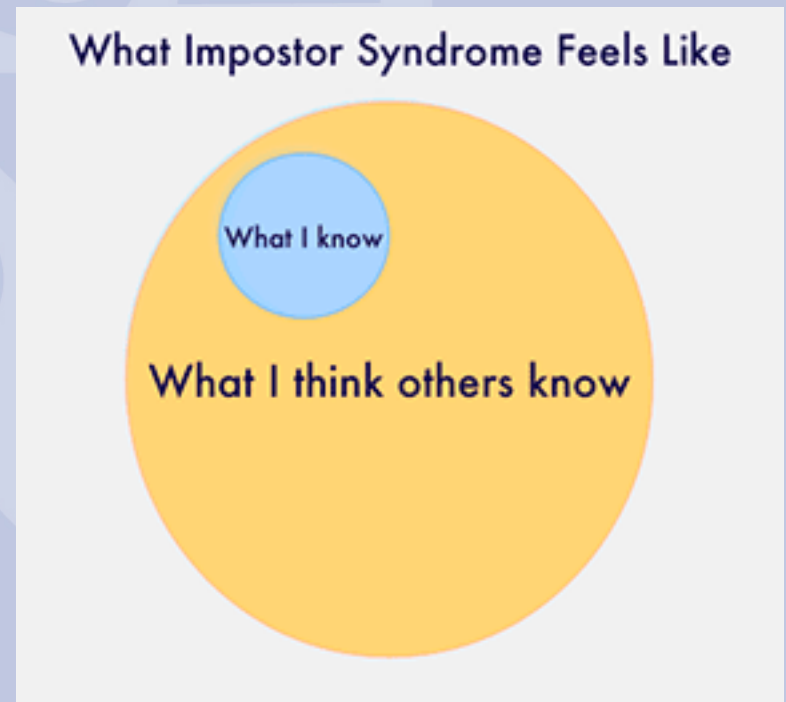
Graduate School of Education
PennGSE

Tips for Resisting “Imposter Syndrome” as a Person of Color in Applied Linguistics

Nelson Flores

What is imposter syndrome?

- Defined by Wikipedia
“psychological pattern in which an individual doubts their accomplishments and has a persistent internalized fear of being exposed as a fraud”



The Problem with Imposter Syndrome

- It suggests that the problem resides in the individual
- It suggests the solution is to change the mindset of the individual
- No focus on the need for institutional change

STOP COMPLAINING,
YOU ARE THE PROBLEM.

Tip #1

- Start from the mindset that feelings of being an imposter in applied linguistics stem from the fact that the field has historically been (and continues to be) predominantly white.



Tip #2

- Learn to recognize academic gaslighting when you see it.
- “You are making no new contributions to the literature.”
- “That scholar is a nice person.”
- “You are too ideological.”
- “Are you calling me a racist?”

Tip #3

- Have an academic crew who will support you both professionally and personally.



Tip #4

- Have a non-academic crew who will help remind you that a world exists outside of academia.



Tip #5

- Strategically choose your battles and remember that small changes matter.



Final Takeaway

- You are not the problem
- You belong in applied linguistics
- Applied linguistics needs you
- Together we can transform the field



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