Model of the Imposter Cycle (2011)

Clance (1985) proposed a model to describe “the imposter cycle.” In the model, when an individual faces an achievement-related task they experience anxiety, self-doubt and worry, which may promote over-preparation or procrastination (or both). If the task is accomplished, its often attributed to high effort (with over-preparation) or luck (with procrastination). With accomplishment, the individual experiences relief and is likely to receive positive feedback. However, that feedback is often discounted, leading to sustained feelings of perceived fraudulence, self-doubt, depression or anxiety.

