

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/the-problem-with-imposter-syndrome/>

Stitch Fix founder and CEO Katrina Lake argues that imposter syndrome isn't a pathology of the person experiencing exclusion, but instead indicates a problem with the power dynamics that makes certain people feel excluded. The onus is on the community or company to be more inclusive, rather than on members of underrepresented groups to "solve" their imposter syndrome.



Transcript

- This imposter syndrome thing drives me nuts because 00:00:04,900 I mean, I get asked this a lot and I understand the sentiment of it and I think, what I think is most, like, I just hate the whole concept of it because I feel like when you say imposter syndrome, it makes it sound like something's wrong with me, like I have the problem.. And I'm like, No, no, no.. If I am feeling excluded in your environment, or in your community, or in your, whatever, fill in the blank, like, you're the one with the problem, like, I don't have a syndrome, like you have something to fix.. And so, I think there's a actually an amazing- there's a great article that was written actually, like last week in HBR that was, the title was like, stop telling women they have imposter syndrome.. It's broader than that.. I think anybody can feel imposter syndrome.. You don't have to be a woman.. But it talks, actually, it's a very interesting, when I go on rants on it, I didn't actually know a lot of like, the historical context of the word and how it really was specifically targeted towards women for a long time.. But I do think like, you know, as a community, we have work to do, whereas like, you know, as a business community, we have work to do as like, even in places in Stanford, like there's probably majors in Stanford or classrooms in Stanford, where there's groups of people that feel like they don't belong there, and they don't feel included.. And rather than making it seem like that's something that's wrong with them, like that should be our communal problem that we have to solve to make sure that people can feel equal access to success and that people can feel, you know, included in those contexts..

And so, you know, I hope that the narrative changes a little bit on this because like, it just puts the burden on like women and underrepresented communities of like, oh, you have the problem.. I'm like, I don't have a problem like, everybody else like has the problem.. (slow electronic music)..