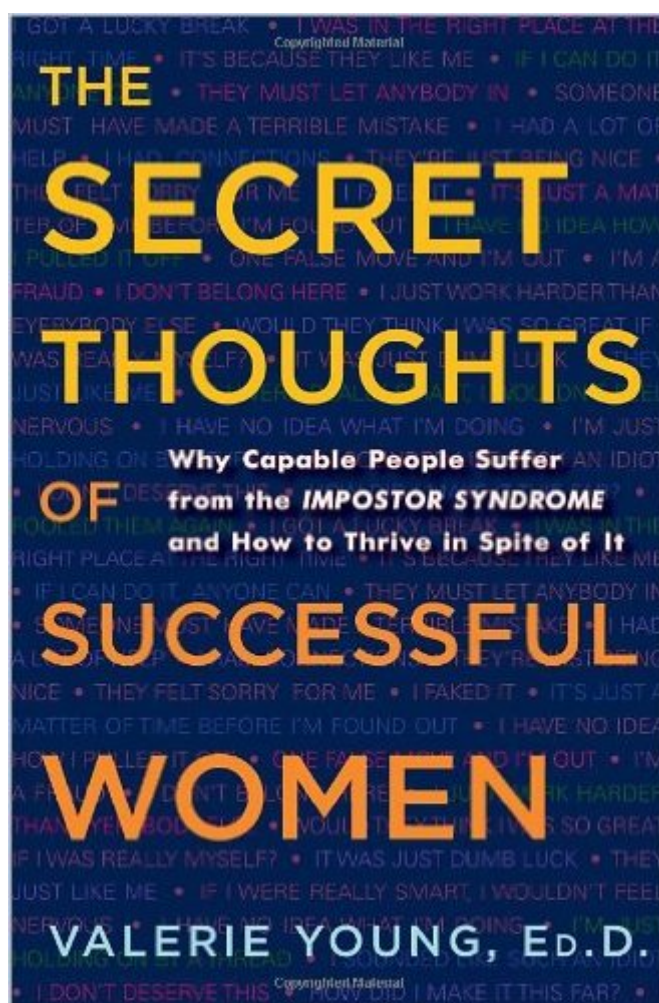


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# The Secret Thoughts Of Successful Women: Why Capable People Suffer From The Impostor Syndrome And How To Thrive In Spite Of It



## Synopsis

It's only because they like me. I was in the right place at the right time. I just work harder than the others. I don't deserve this. It's just a matter of time before I am found out. Someone must have made a terrible mistake. If you are a working woman, chances are this internal monologue sounds all too familiar. And you're not alone. From the high-achieving Ph.D. candidate convinced she's only been admitted to the program because of a clerical error to the senior executive who worries others will find out she's in way over her head, a shocking number of accomplished women in all career paths and at every level feel as though they are faking it "impostors in their own lives and careers. While the impostor syndrome is not unique to women, women are more apt to agonize over tiny mistakes, see even constructive criticism as evidence of their shortcomings, and chalk up their accomplishments to luck rather than skill. They often unconsciously overcompensate with crippling perfectionism, overpreparation, maintaining a lower profile, withholding their talents and opinions, or never finishing important projects. When they do succeed, they think, Phew, I fooled them again. An internationally known speaker, Valerie Young has devoted her career to understanding women's most deeply held beliefs about themselves and their success. In her decades of in-the-trenches research, she has uncovered the often surprising reasons why so many accomplished women experience this crushing self-doubt. In *The Secret Thoughts of Successful Women*, Young gives these women the solution they have been seeking. Combining insightful analysis with effective advice and anecdotes, she explains what the impostor syndrome is, why fraud fears are more common in women, and how you can recognize the way it manifests in your life. With her empowering, step-by-step plan, you will learn to take ownership of your success, overcome self-doubt, and banish the thought patterns that undermine your ability to feel and act "as bright and capable as others already know you are.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I have been fan of Dr. Valerie Young for years. So, when I saw her book, "Secret Thoughts of Successful Women," announced, I was so excited, I ordered it before it was even on the shelf. Boy was I not disappointed. I felt as if Valerie Young was speaking to me personally. The book was amazing in its insight and in fact has made my company's success possible. In my previous "day job" I was a an accomplished senior manager and technologist in the engineering field for over 30 years. But it was always my dream to work for myself. Unfortunately, all of my prior attempts to be a self-bosser were less than satisfying. Yes, I could teach sewing or walk dogs, but for some reason, I wasn't passionate enough about those endeavors to keep my interest long enough to see success. I liked engineering. But, opening up my own successful engineering company seemed so out of reach to me. I had started the framework for one anyway, but kept dragging my feet. I was getting a few small contracts, but nothing that would sustain my being able to work for myself. I still had the nagging feeling that women don't build engineering companies. Men do. After reading the book "Secret Thoughts of Successful Women" and seeing that all of my fears were really the Impostor Syndrome at work, I realized that I had been saying "NO" to my own success all along, and didn't need to. In fact, just after I finished reading the book, I was able to go to the next networking meeting with the "Big Guys" and land a huge contract and exclusive alliance with a very lucrative client company. This relationship will definitely go a long way to ensure the continued success of my company for years to come, and has definitely allowed me to finally become a self-bosser.

Valerie Young's *The Secret Thoughts of Successful Women* is a guide to help women recover from the Imposter Syndrome, a psychological phenomenon that describes the self-doubt that successful women experience. In 1978, Dr. Pauline Clance and Dr. Suzanne Imes discovered that high-achieving women trivialized accomplishments and attributed success to luck, hard work, or favoritism. The Imposter Syndrome "involve[s] a deep sense of inauthenticity and an inability to internalize [] successes" (Kalinovsky). Young's work seeks to help women "own" their success and alleviate the constant stress that these outliers feel. Reading the *The Secret Thoughts of Successful Women* was a lot like reading a book of quotes and anecdotes. Every other paragraph contained words said by a well-known individual that emphasized a sense of illegitimacy. Although interesting,

these quotes and stories are unnecessary in a self-help book. A few stories can be used to highlight a point or topic, but Young saturates her work with words written and said by others. Perhaps the inclusion of these quotes is targeted at individuals who feel better about themselves when they know that famous people suffer from the same syndrome. The text would have been more convincing if studies were cited or researchers discussed. Reading quote after quote was really tiring. The most irritating aspect of this book was the constant questioning of the audience. Every section included numerous questions that asked the audience if it has felt a certain way. Have you ever felt like you didn't deserve your successes? Do you think your professors give you good grades because they like you? Do you feel like you're not smart enough to be here? Yes, yes, and yes. How many times are you going to ask me?

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