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## ART OF MEDICINE

### Imposter Syndrome

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#### Abstract

This self-portrait, done in bold colors, depicts the experience of “imposterhood” in medicine.

Figure. *Imposter Syndrome*



#### Media

Sharpie markers and colored pencil on poster board.

Imposter syndrome is a real and uncomfortable feeling for many of us who find ourselves in the midst of talented and accomplished people. This was certainly the case for me as I started my journey in medicine, constantly comparing myself to others and worrying that I did not measure up.

Imposter syndrome in medicine is a topic most often discussed from a serious psychological point of view.<sup>1,2,3</sup> The use of **cartoon humor**, however, makes the concept of “imposterhood” accessible and understandable in an immediate and nonthreatening way. The drawing tries to capture at a glance medical students’ universal **feeling of insecurity**: “Am I good enough? Is my disguise working? Are people going to find out that I’m not what I should be?” At the same time, the picture shows that the artist is laughing at herself, recognizing the silliness of her disguise in the midst of a room full of people trying to disguise themselves as well. The lightheartedness and visual immediacy of the cartoon capture a kernel of truth and irony that a narrative essay could not—it allows us to laugh at ourselves, reflect on imposter syndrome as a common human experience, and perhaps breathe a sigh of relief that we are not alone.

### References

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#### Citation

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#### Conflict of Interest Disclosure

The author(s) had no conflicts of interest to disclose.

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