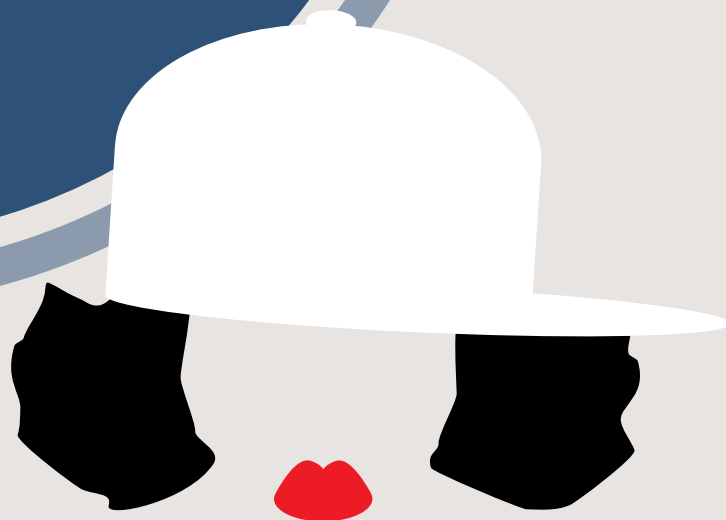


WHAT ELSE HOLDS WOMEN BACK?



WHAT ELSE HOLDS WOMEN BACK?

In addition to the laundry list of barriers to entry, women in cannabis fight many other obstacles on their paths to success.

Lack of work/life balance, internal conflict, and even stigmas around the plant prevent women in our industry from thriving.

Despite the explosive growth the cannabis marketplace has seen over the last decade, over half of survey respondents feel the need to hide the fact they hold jobs in the space. Several different reasons were offered, but fear of judgment stuck out for many participants. For some, this manifests as concern over their personal or professional reputations; others legitimately wonder if they could lose custody of their children simply for working in the industry.

This section looks at the some of the less visible challenges facing the women in cannabis. We noted nearly universal self-esteem struggles, illustrating a shared experienced among women in cannabis that we may not realize. No matter how things may appear on the outside, we are all dealing with something.



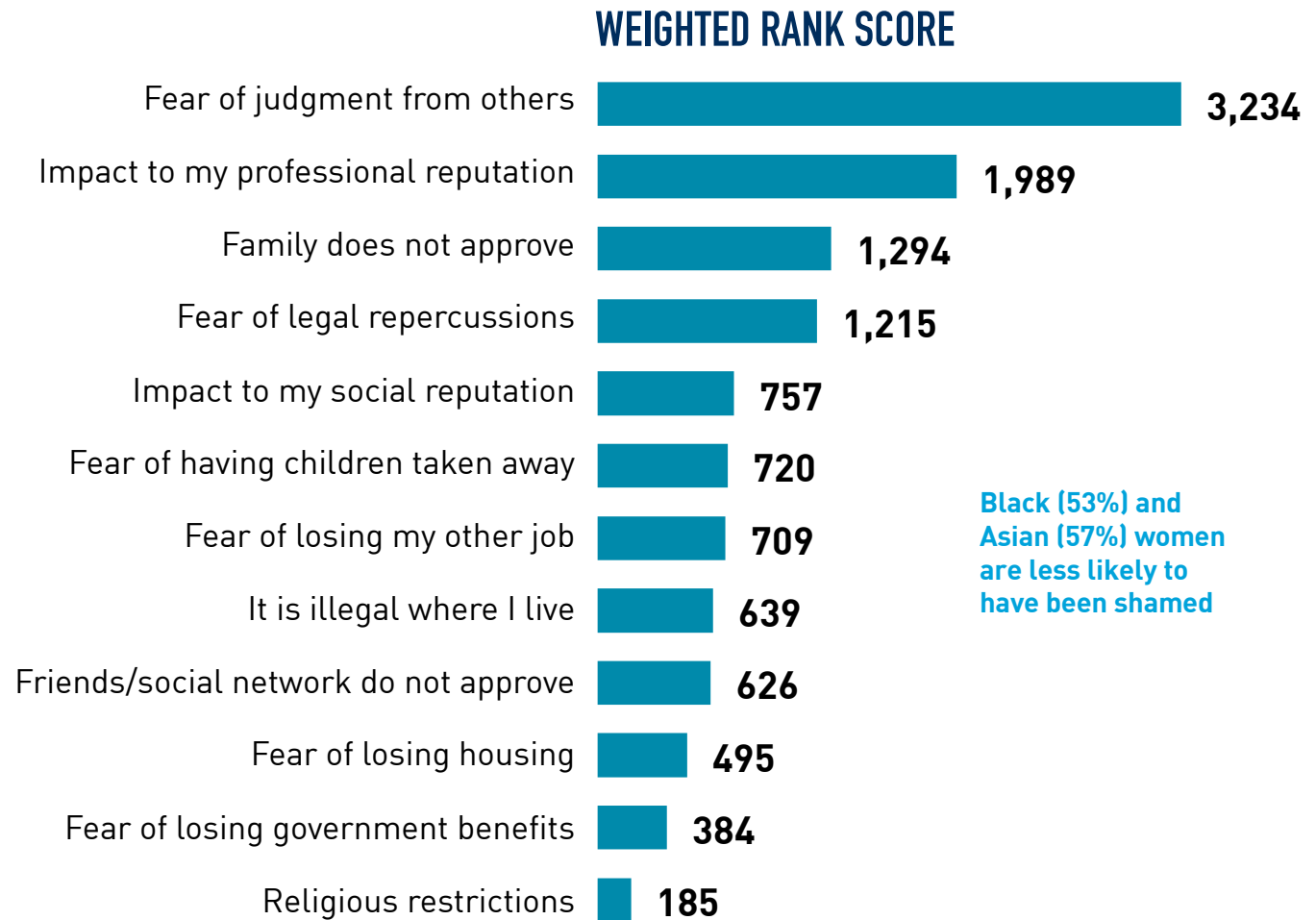
CULTURE: SHAME, STIGMA & FEAR

It's one issue to feel the weight of stigma and shame for cannabis consumption. A far greater issue is that shame and stigma about working in cannabis still exists.

64% have been shamed for their job – largely from their extended family, healthcare professionals and their social network.

41% of Black respondents felt the need to hide their job

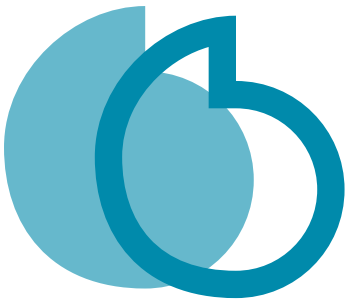
54% of respondents said they feel the need to hide the fact that they WORK in the cannabis industry, with the most common reason being fear of judgment from others.



Q37. If you've ever felt shamed by others for working in the cannabis industry, who shamed you?

Q51. Have you ever felt the need to hide the fact that you work in the cannabis industry?

Q52. What are the top reasons you've felt the need to hide the fact that you work in the cannabis industry? Rank all that apply to you.



[My story is about] getting over that initial fear of showing up. I still have fear but there's less every day.

What if I get arrested?

What if my kids get taken away?

What if I do business with the wrong people?

FOUNDER & CEO, NY

*When I first started the business, **I was afraid to publicize the fact that I worked in cannabis in fear that I'd lose clients from other industries.***

Now I've decided it's better to commit and if someone doesn't like it, I don't want to work with them anyway.

PRESIDENT/CO-FOUNDER, CO

*Even though it is legal in my state, and we operate legally, **the fear of legal repercussion is always in the back of my mind.***

It might just be leftover paranoia from the black-market growing days!

GROWER, ME





I'm out about my consumption now, even though I live in an illegal Rec state.

*When I was raising children in the 80s and 90s in WY I had much more **fear of arrest and losing my kids**.*

Now I worry about professional damages to my real estate business.

OWNER, MI

*My kids are older, otherwise **fear of having my work negatively impact** them would have prevented me from entering the industry.*

CO-FOUNDER, CA

*I have a lot of medical issues and I have **feared that doctors will judge me** and not take my ailments as seriously or give me correct treatment.*

LOGISTICS COORDINATOR, AZ

*Other reason is **fear of losing my personal banking** and business banking privileges at my FDIC insured bank.*

POLICY ANALYST, CO

MY DEFINITION OF SUCCESS...

I wake up every day excited and enthusiastic to work for this incredible plant and with the outstanding people that are just as passionate about it as me.

I get to travel and share my story, share products, share secrets. If this industry has taught me anything it is that the more you give the more you get. The more you love the more you get and the more you learn the more you'll get. So don't stop sharing or loving or learning and this industry will always provide you with success.

Also, being a part of history and making a big impact is a reminder of how successful we truly are when we look at the big picture and see how grand it all really is!

Just saying that I work in this industry is a success considering I was shamed for it for so many years.

That's one more reason to love what I do and how cannabis has made me a successful stoner!

BUSINESS OWNER, CA



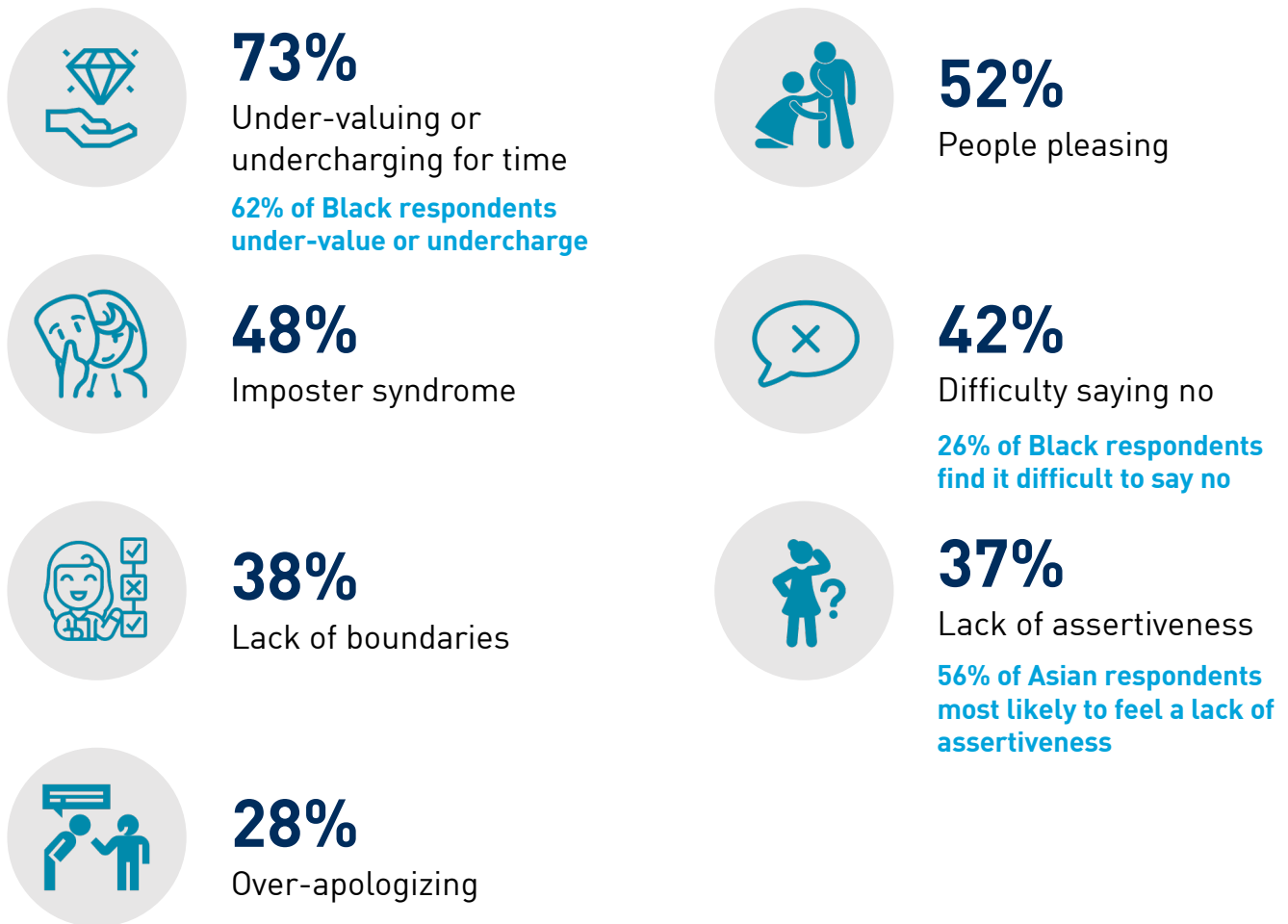
LACK OF SELF-ESTEEM

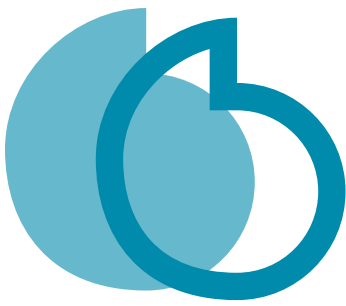
Women also face internal barriers that hold them back from success, most of which may be invisible to others in their lives.

We asked respondents whether any of these “self-esteem” issues had ever affected them professionally.

Stunningly, 95% struggle with at least one, and 9% struggle with ALL of them. When women lack self-esteem, they tend to struggle with stepping into their power and achieving their goals.

5% of our study population have achieved A+ self-esteem and said none of these issues have affected them professionally.





I have struggled, worked on, and resolved all of the above.

None of the above were resolved by empowerment memes on my Facebook and bathroom mirror.

FOUNDER & CEO, CO

*In my past yes, almost all, but today **overcoming most of these has attributed to my happiness and made me a better businesswoman.***

HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING/FARMER, CA

*As a young entry level employee, I feel that all of these things apply. I have matured a lot since I began this work and have begun to recognize and combat many of these issues, but it is true and obvious that **those that are willing to put aside their personal lives and always say yes to more work are favored, and those who set boundaries are passed over for new opportunities.***

OUTDOOR CULTIVATION MANAGER, MA





I used cannabis to overcome my self doubt, teaching myself how to paint.

I've combined EDUCATION within my art and advocacy as a result and have been on an unintentional but natural to me mission of normalizing and reducing stigmas especially as it pertains to female artists, and females who smoke.

CREATIVE DIRECTOR, WA

As a 50-year-old woman, I found my power in the cannabis industry.

CEO, NY

Women need to learn how valuable they are in this industry and men need to heal from the narcissistic traits the gray industry allowed them.

DIRECTOR OF SALES, CA



MY DEFINITION OF SUCCESS...

By how I feel at the end of the day. If I'm tired but ready for more I know I'm on my way to being my most successful self.

SHIFT LEAD, AR

Courage and confidence to try and learn new skills.

CEO, IL

*Happiness with myself and my family.
Personal integrity. Following true values, and not succumbing to the "truths" of others.*

HR STAFFING, CO



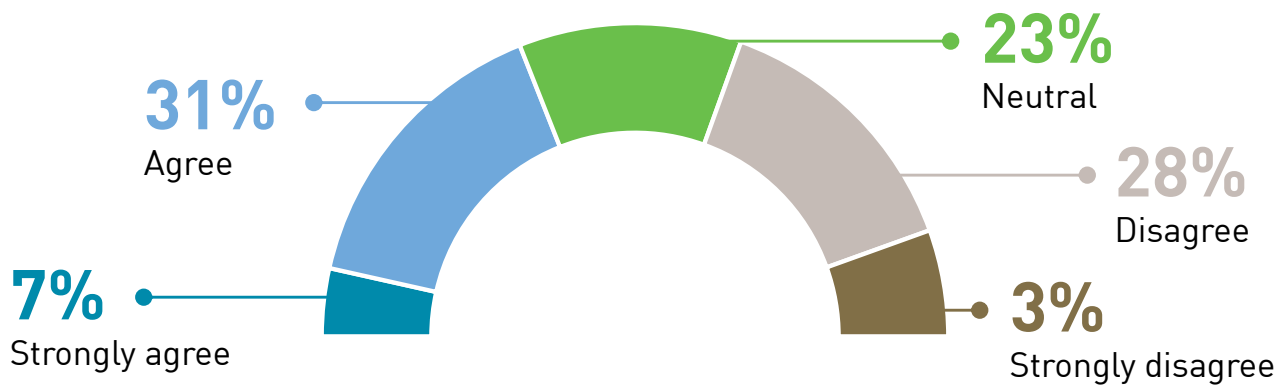
LACK OF BALANCE & SELF-CARE

Adequate rest, balance and self-care are essential to success, but many women struggle to find the time.

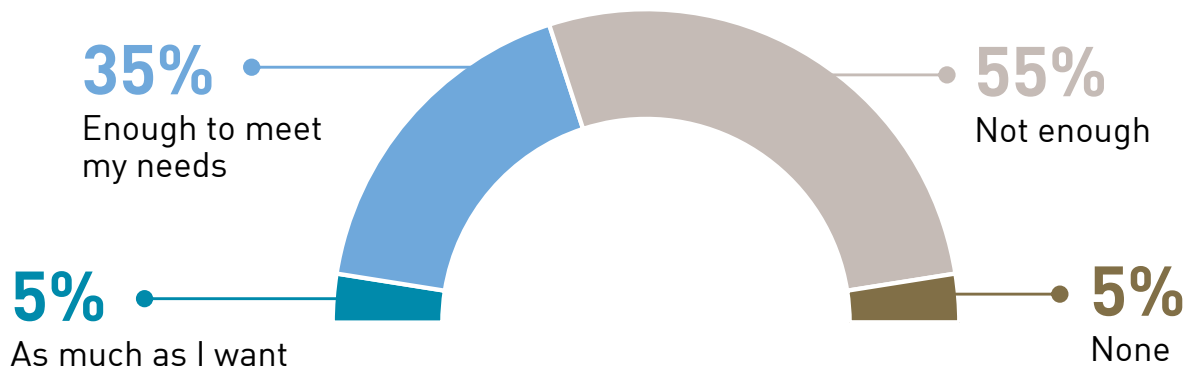
39% of respondents are unable to balance their personal & professional responsibilities, and 60% don't get enough "me" time.

Neglecting personal care can increase anxiety, distractibility, anger, and fatigue, as well as decrease sleep quality, self-esteem and compassion.

I'm able to balance my professional & personal responsibilities.



How much "me time" I get each week.



Q58. How much do you agree with the following statement: I am able to balance all of my personal and professional responsibilities.
Q59. Approximately how much "me time" do you get each week?



IN MY WORDS...

I am a single mom of 2 boys and own a coffee shop/cocktail lounge, commercial real estate properties and a 50-acre hemp farm that dominates my time.

Time management and self-care is something I am working hard to prioritize in the coming year.

I give myself to my businesses 150% and it is not healthy for me or my boys.

Navigating that... I could use some help!

FARMER/HR/HEAD OF SALES, CO



CANNABIS HELPS WOMEN UNWIND

Cannabis is by far the first choice of substances for respondents when they need to unwind.

[According to the CDC](#), 12.7% of women smoke cigarettes, significantly higher than our Industry Insiders. [The CDC](#) also reports that nearly half of adult women report drinking alcohol in the previous 30 days, significantly higher than the 27% of Industry Insiders who use alcohol to unwind.

CANNABIS VS. SUBSTANCES

	ALL	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC	ASIAN
Use cannabis	76%	77%	63%	85%	69%
Drink alcohol	27%	28%	43%	21%	14%
Use other recreational or therapeutic drugs (psychedelics)	16%	17%	6%	23%	19%
Smoke cigarettes	5%	6%	6%	5%	3%



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OTHER WAYS TO UNWIND

There are far more ways to unwind than choosing substances, although for Hispanic and white women, cannabis is the top choice.

Black women are significantly more likely to choose to spend time alone to unwind, and significantly less likely to spend time in nature or exercise.

Somewhat surprisingly, meditation is at the bottom of the list.

CANNABIS VS. OTHER WAYS TO UNWIND

	ALL	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC	ASIAN
Use cannabis	76%	77%	63%	85%	69%
Spend quiet time at home	68%	69%	65%	64%	78%
Spend time in nature	64%	68%	38%	58%	61%
Spend time alone	68%	68%	84%	58%	72%
Watch a movie/TV	62%	63%	56%	68%	75%
Spend time with friends	55%	56%	47%	51%	58%
Exercise	55%	56%	37%	50%	64%
Spend time with family	53%	54%	46%	46%	56%
Self care routine	50%	49%	47%	58%	75%
Surf the internet	35%	36%	41%	36%	36%
Meditate	38%	36%	46%	46%	50%

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IN SUMMARY...

If the daily obstacles facing women professionals in an emerging market on the fringe of legality weren't enough, the trials and tribulations of day-to-day life compound them tenfold.

Shame, self-esteem struggles, and lack of self-care opportunities are nearly universal challenges that only set women further back.

Knowing that 95% of study participants deal with internal barriers to success such as undervaluing themselves, difficulty saying no, and lack of boundaries, it's crucial that the women in cannabis advocate for themselves — and one another. We must remind one another of our worth, and that we deserve to thrive.

And while many survey respondents stated they do get a chance to unwind now and again (nearly three-quarters consume cannabis to relax), over half wish a little more “me time” was in the cards.



How do you take care of yourself when you're struggling?

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REPORT CHAPTERS

Interested in learning more? Download additional results at womenincannabis.study/study-chapters.

Introduction

Methodology

Who are the Women Working in Cannabis?

Which Roles do they Play in the Industry?

Why Work in Cannabis?

What Relationship Do Women Have with Cannabis?

What are the Barriers to Success?

What Else Holds Women Back?

BIPOC Women in Cannabis

LGBTQIA+ in Cannabis

How do Women Define Success?

We Have the Data, Now What?

Leverage the Power of the Data

Profiles of Women in Cannabis

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THANK YOU

WOMEN IN CANNABIS
a Living History

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