

Excellence > Perfection: Perfectionism and Self-Compassion

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Michelangelo's Unfinished Sculptures



Goals



Identify perfectionistic thinking and its impact on you



Differentiate a healthy pursuit of excellence from perfectionism



Describe self-compassion and engage in a self-compassion practice



Mindset of Perfectionism

Sets and rigidly adheres to unrealistic standards for oneself and others

All-or-nothing mindset with excessive self-criticism

Self-worth tied to performance, with an intense fear of failure and an overemphasis on results



Common Self-Talk

“If I don’t work hard, people will think I’m lazy.”

“I should be able to do this without any help.”

“I can’t show anyone my work until it’s flawless.”

“I have to get everything right.”

“I must impress everyone.”

“I feel guilty if I’m not working.”

“What will other people think of me if I don’t succeed.”

“Other people are so much better than I am.”

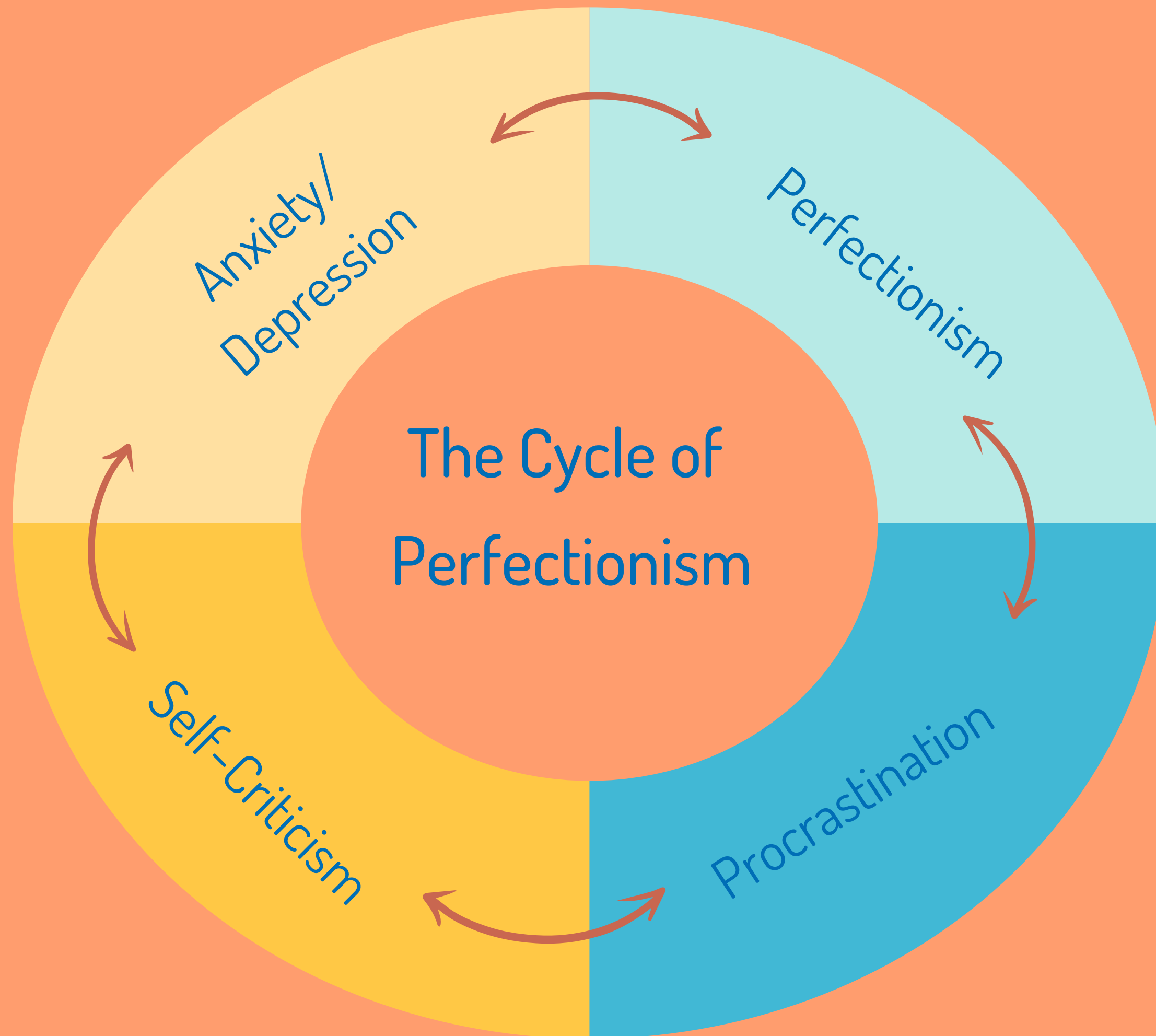
Group Discussion



In what ways do you engage in perfectionist thinking?

Can you think of a time that perfectionism negatively impacted you?

How might educational system, media, family upbringing and culture play into perfectionist tendencies?



Shift Mindset: Excellence > Perfection

Perfectionistic Thinking	vs. Healthy Pursuit of Excellence
"I have to ace every exam and be the top of my class to have a successful career in medicine."	"I will strive to excel in my studies and clinical skills, focusing on my personal development and growth along the way."
"I can't afford to make any mistakes during this patient encounter. I have to get it right."	"I'll approach this patient with curiosity and compassion, learning from the experience regardless of the outcome. Every patient interaction helps me become a better doctor."
"I have to get the highest score in this clinical rotation to be respected by my peers."	"I will focus on understanding the material deeply and taking pride in the effort I put into preparing."
"I missed those easy questions. I feel like I bombed that exam. I'll never be able to catch up now."	"I didn't do as well as I hoped, but I can analyze my performance, identify areas for improvement, and adjust my study strategies moving forward."
"I didn't finish all my studying, so my progress on this project doesn't matter."	"I made significant progress on my project today, and I'll celebrate by having dinner with a friend and continue my work tomorrow."



“Self-compassion provides an island of calm, a refuge from the stormy seas of endless positive and negative self-judgment, so that we can finally stop asking, “
Am I as good as they are? Am I good enough?”
–Kristin Neff, Self Compassion

The Scientific Benefits of Self-Compassion



Decrease in
Stress

Enhance
Wellbeing and
Emotional
Resiliency

Increase
Motivation
and
Productivity

3 Components of Self-Compassion



Self-kindness

(Treat yourself with the same warmth and understanding you offer to others.)

Common humanity
(We all struggle!)

Mindfulness
(Be present in the moment.)

Self-Compassion Exercise



Self-Compassion in Daily Life:

Cultivate your Wellbeing



Pay attention to the beauty around you:

- Art,
- Nature
- Kindness



Listen:

- Your favorite music
- Sounds of nature
- Your own desires
- Mindful meditation



Engage in self-soothing activities:

- Pet an animal
- Give and receive hugs
- Cuddle up in a soft blanket
- Take a warm shower



Inhale:

- Breathe in fresh air
- Pleasant aromas
- Scented candle
- Cup of coffee




Savor:

- Eat slowly and notice pleasurable flavors



Connect with people that bring you love and joy!



“It is in the process of embracing our imperfections that we find our truest gifts: courage, compassion, and connection.”
—Brené Brown



Questions and Resources

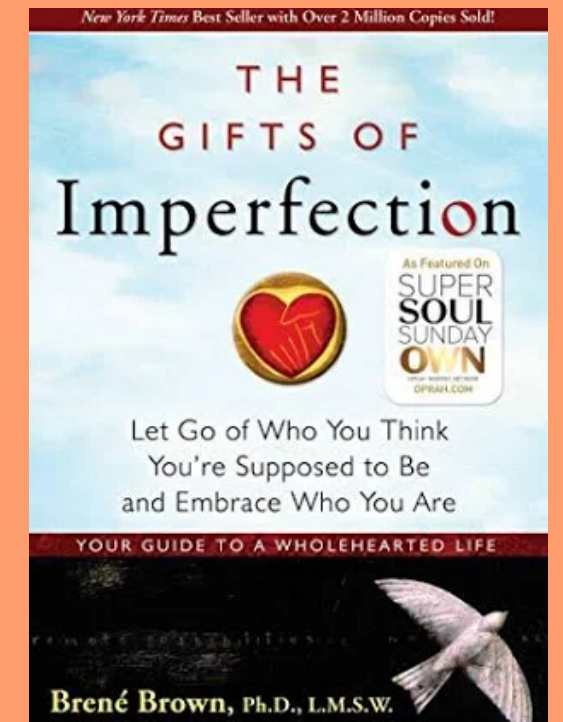


Free Headspace App
Guided Self-Compassion Meditations



Dr. Kristin Neff

Self-Compassion resources and exercises



Workshop Evaluation



Thank you for your participation!

2-Min Survey about Resources and Access to Mental Health from SAO



Coming up...

- Busting Imposter Syndrome 11/5 at 12pm
 - *An interactive workshop to unpack imposter syndrome, how it impacts our lives, and strategies to transform our thoughts. In partnership with SPH.*
- Zentangle 12/12 at 12pm
 - *An easy-to-learn, fun, & meditative art form that involves drawing repetitive "tangles" to create beautiful patterns! Zentangle teaches us how to embrace being present, release perfectionism, and realize that we can all create art.*

**Register for
Imposter Syndrome**

