

GROWTH GOALS,
EMBRACING "GOOD ENOUGH,"
AND MANAGING SHAME

Helping Students with Perfectionism

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WEST DES MOINES, IA





Introduction & Agenda



WHAT IS PERFECTIONISM?

IS THERE A LINK BETWEEN
PERFECTIONISM AND GIFTEDNESS?



Introduction & Agenda

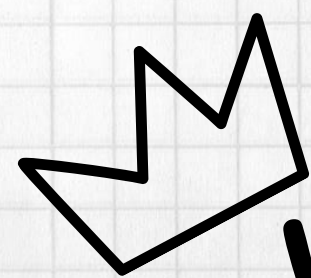


WHY DO WE EXPERIENCE
PERFECTIONISM?

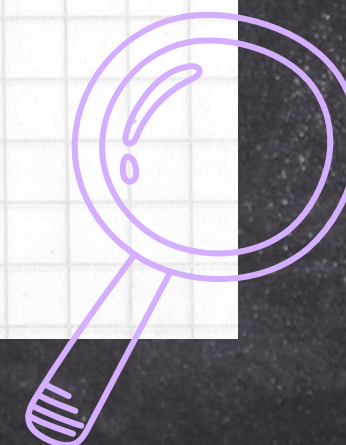
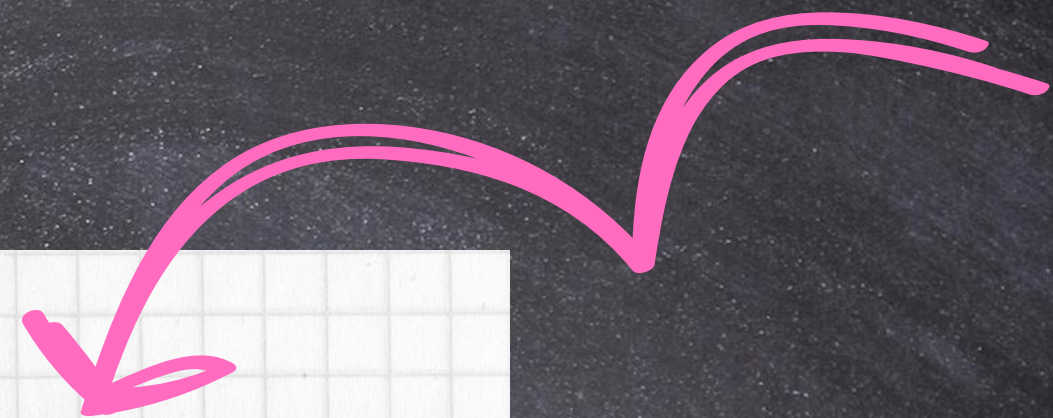
HOW CAN WE WORK ON PERFECTIONISM?



Your
questions



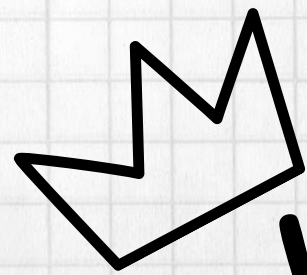
What is Perfectionism?



Hardest decision



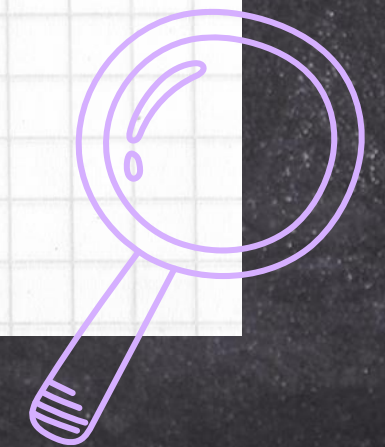
Of my life.



What is Perfectionism?

"Perfectionism is the setting of, and striving for, very demanding standards that are self-imposed and relentlessly pursued..."

(Shafran, Egan, & Wade- 2010)



What is Perfectionism?





What is Perfectionism?



Helpful

- High (but achievable) standards
- Striving to meet standards has positive consequences
- Achieving standards fits around your life
- Self-worth based on many different things
- Self-compassion

Unhelpful

- Extremely high or unrealistic standards
- Striving to meet standards has negative consequences
- Life has to fit around achieving standards
- Self-worth is based on meeting standards

PUGH &
WALLEY (2022)

Helpful Perfectionism

ENJOYING THE
PROCESS

HEALTHY
STRIVING

MISTAKES
AS
LEARNING
TOOLS

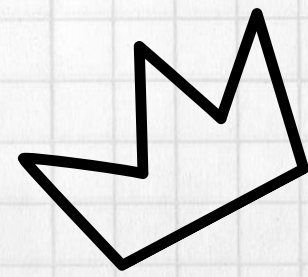
REASONABLE
ANXIETY

BOUNCING BACK
"QUICKLY" FROM

FAILURE & DISAPPOINTMENT

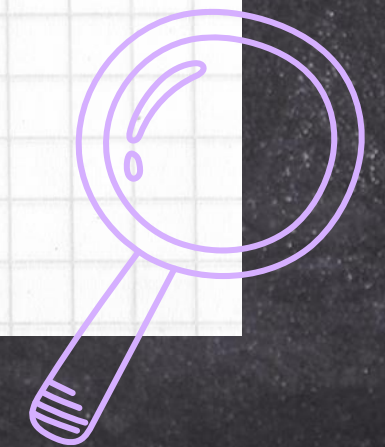
ABLE TO
USE CONSTRUCTIVE
FEEDBACK

BURKE (2014)



Helpful perfectionism includes:

- Being able to admit when you're wrong
- Self-compassion for mistakes
- Celebrating achievements
- Resting
- Willingness to be vulnerable
- Hard work toward high standards
- Staying present in the process





Unhelpful perfectionism



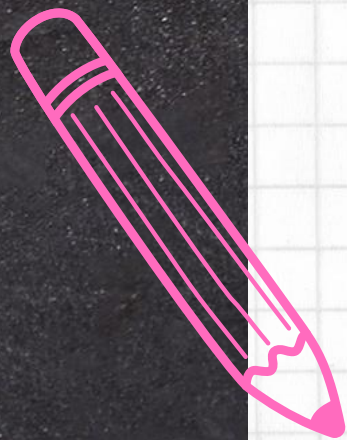


Perfection is defined as:

A lack of vulnerability

Always meeting expectations

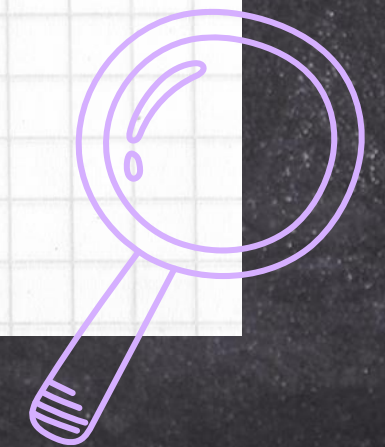
Being free from inner conflict





Unhelpful Perfectionism includes:

- Self-judgment
- Isolation
- Identity based in achievements
- Inflexible beliefs about perfection



What is Perfectionism?

"Perfectionism isn't just a desire to be the best. It means we set impossibly high standards for ourselves (and possibly for others) that we can never reach. It means we criticize ourselves relentlessly when we make mistakes and see them as fatal flaws rather than a natural part of the learning process. Perfectionism means we never feel good enough because we base our self-worth on what we do, what we achieve, and what others think of us."

-Sharon Martin, LCSW



LiveWellwithSharonMartin.com

UNSATISFIED WITH
ANYTHING (BUT
PERFECTION)

STANDARDS BEYOND
REACH AND REASON

MISTAKES SEEN
AS
EVIDENCE OF
UNWORTHINESS

Unhelpful Perfectionism

HIGH
ANXIETY

DEFENSIVE
WHEN GIVEN
FEEDBACK

DIFFICULTY
MOVING THROUGH
FAILURE & DISAPPOINTMENT

BURKE (2014)






Unhelpful Perfectionism

Gets in the way of daily living and enjoyment of life

Contributes to other challenges


Can lead to burnout, anxiety & depression

Has the opposite effect (doing and achieving a lot, but feeling worse)

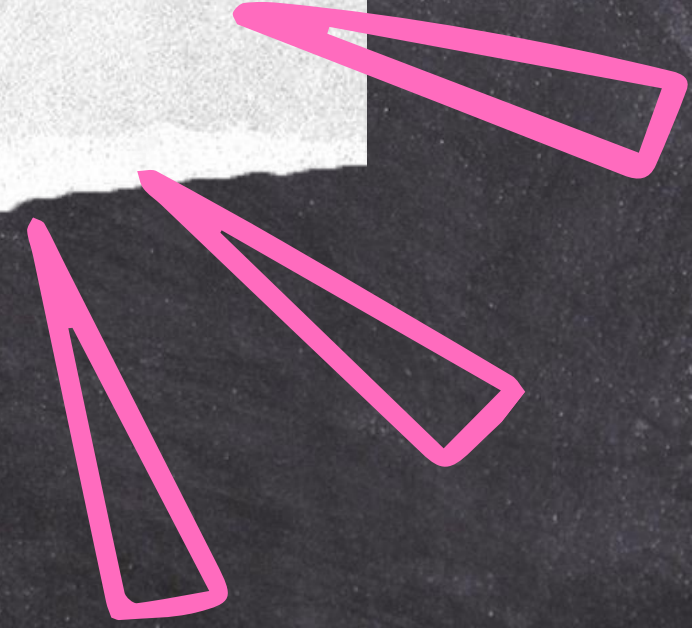




Questions



Perfectionism & Giftedness



Review of Giftedness

Multiple Definitions

- Single-factor models
- 3-factor model
- Multiple intelligences



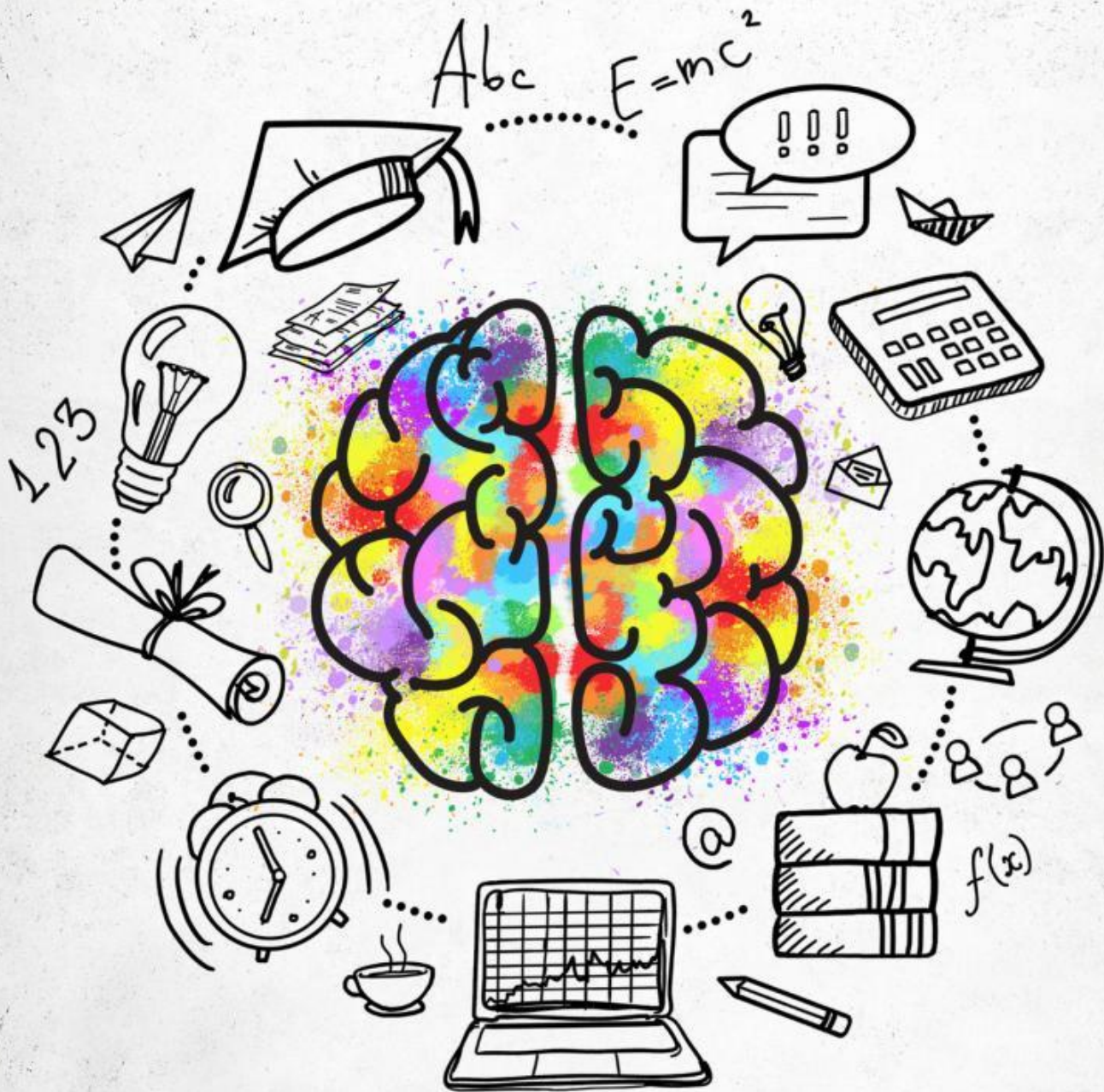
Ways to understand


- Developmental asynchrony
- Overexcitabilities or Intensities
- Talents
- Neurodivergence

Perfectionism & Giftedness

Research suggests:

- There's a connection between giftedness and perfectionism for some gifted children, tweens, and teens.
- Other factors may combine with giftedness and contribute to perfectionism.
- It's not all bad--helpful perfectionism is real!





Why do we
experience
perfectionism?

“ At it's root, perfectionism
isn't really about a deep
love of being meticulous.

It's about fear.

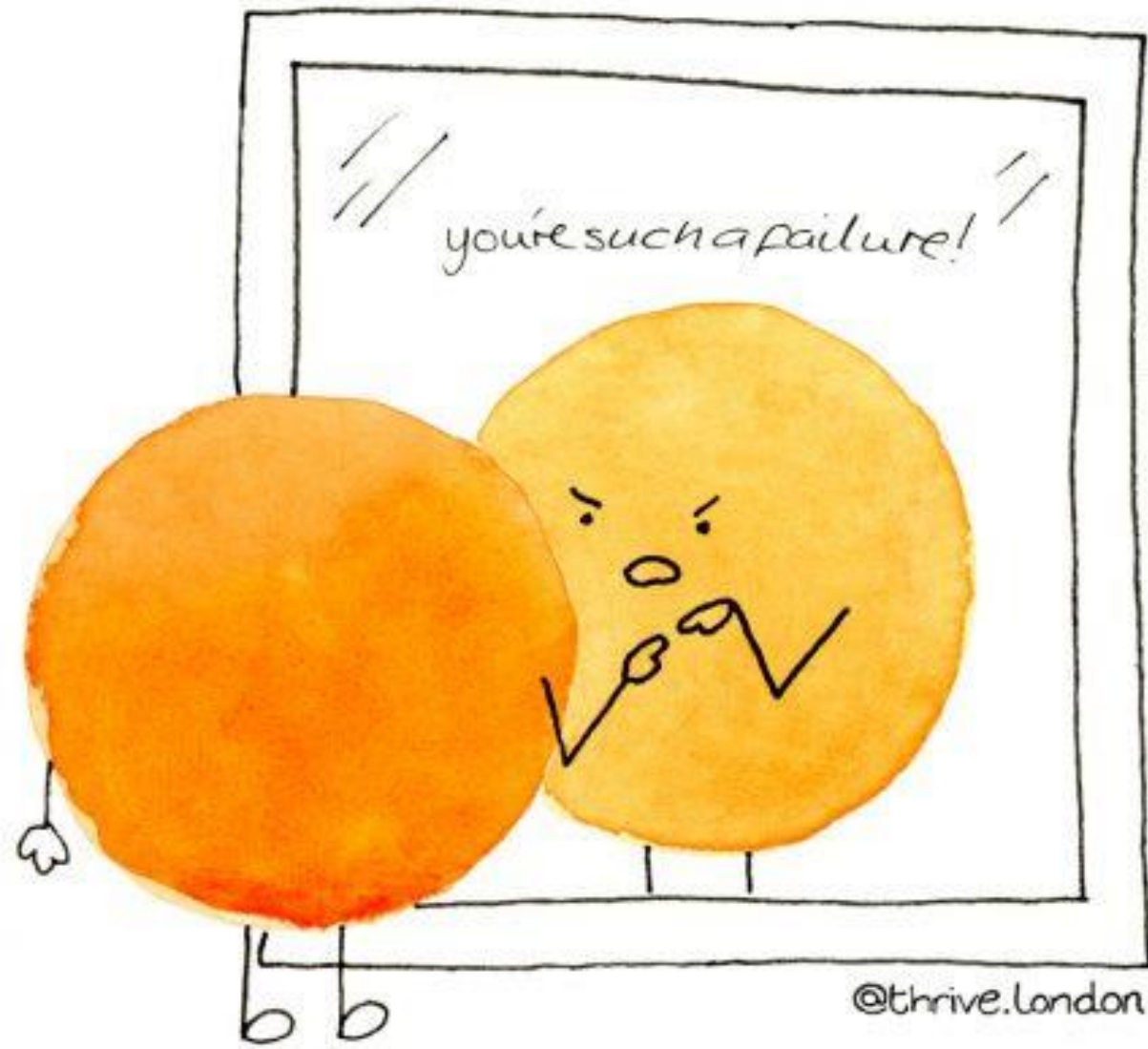
Fear of making a mistake.

Fear of disappointing others.

Fear of failure.

Fear of success. ”

- MICHAEL LAW



WHY ARE WE SO AFRAID TO
BE IMPERFECT?

When perfectionism is
driving us, shame is always
riding shotgun and fear is
the annoying backseat driver.

Brené Brown

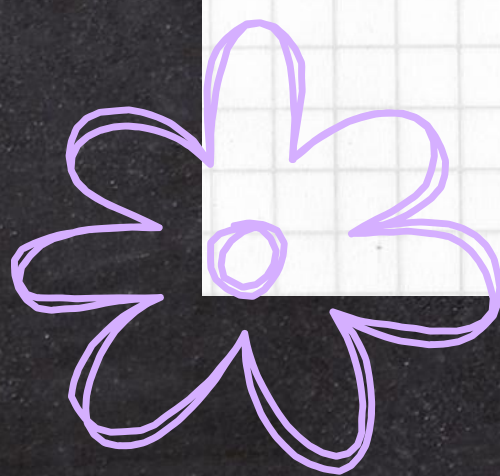
imperfectionistblog.com



What is Shame?

Feeling flawed and unworthy of love,
belonging, and connection.

Brown (2021)





PERFECTIONISM

"I'm not good enough"

FEAR
&
SHAME

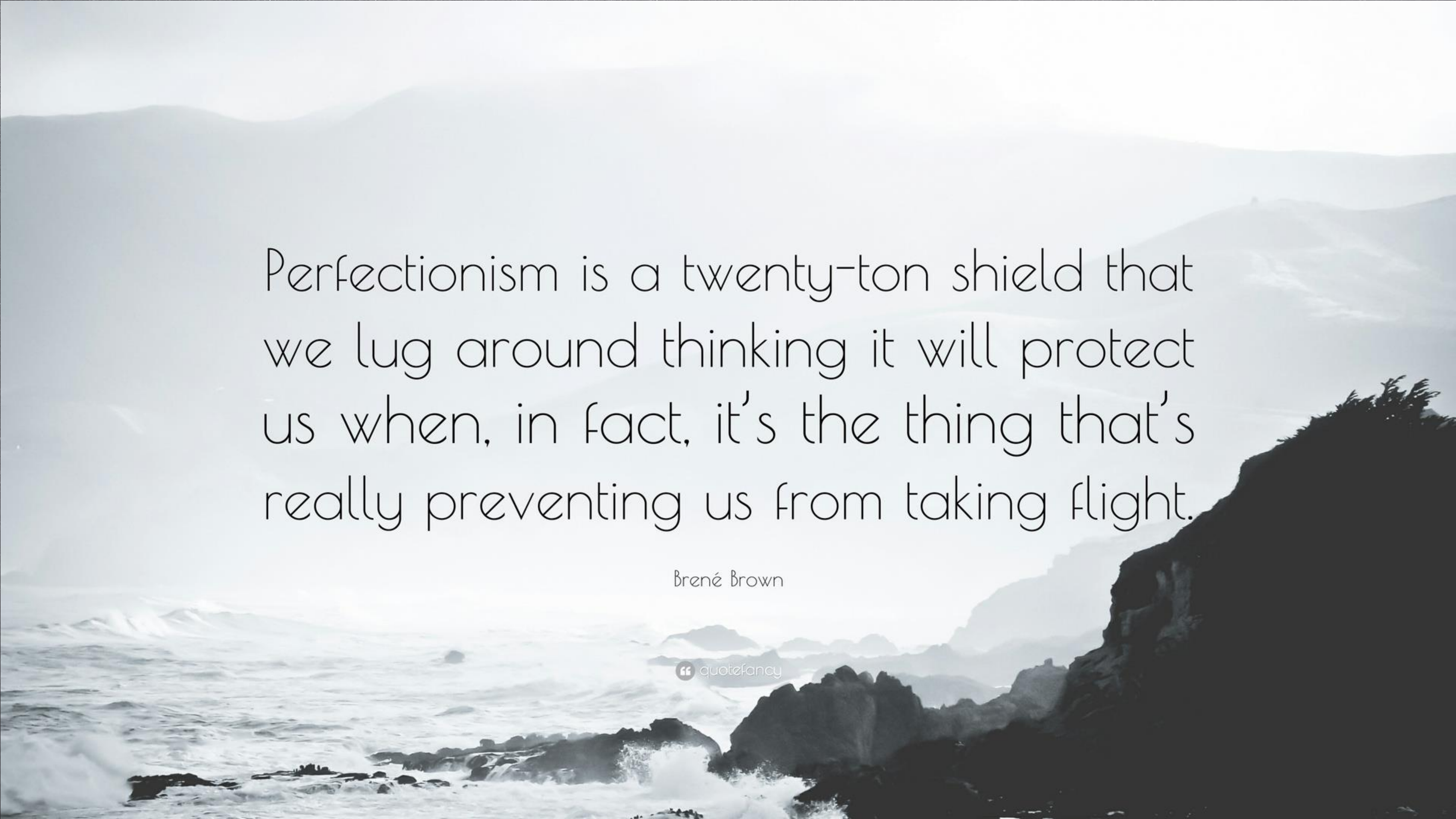


@Illuminate_Counselling

SHAME

PERFECTIONISM



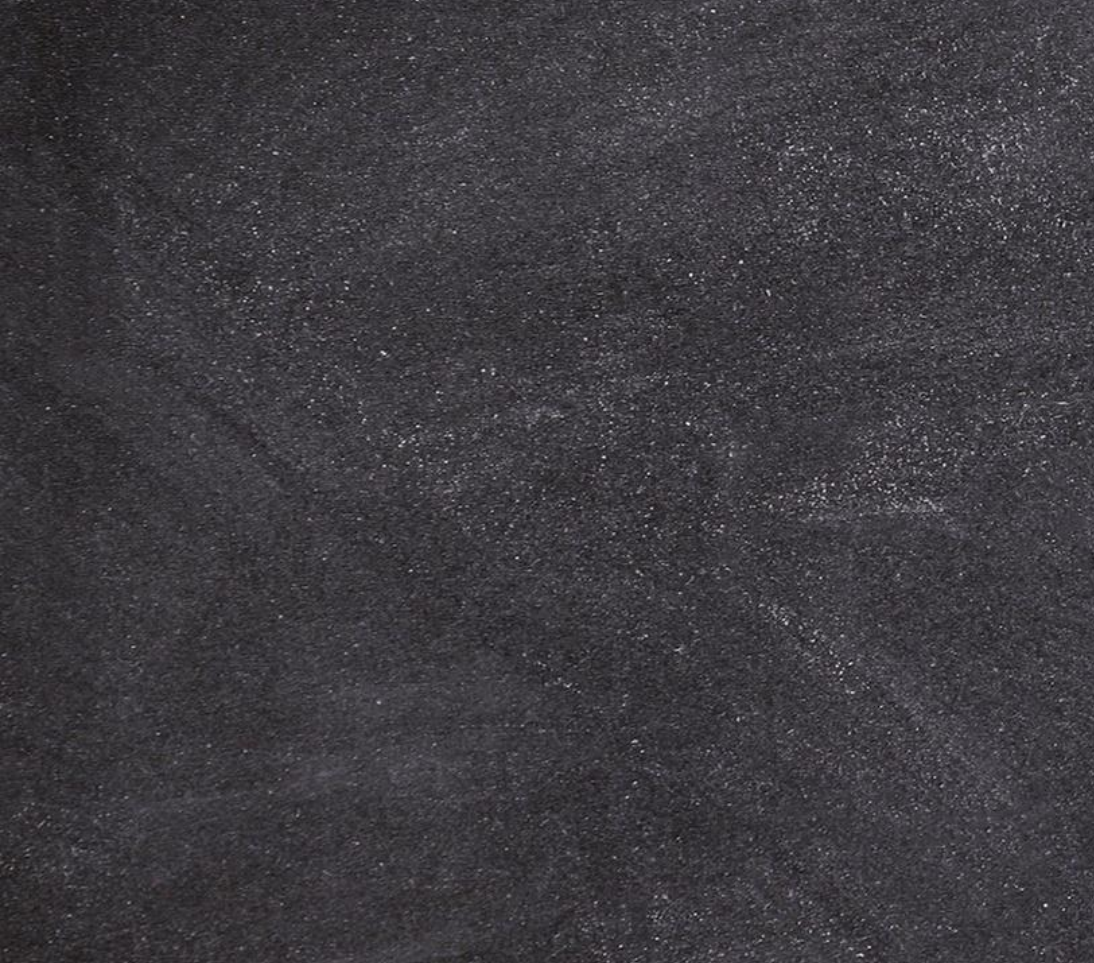


Perfectionism is a twenty-ton shield that we lug around thinking it will protect us when, in fact, it's the thing that's really preventing us from taking flight.

Brené Brown

“ quote fancy







Developing Shame Resiliency

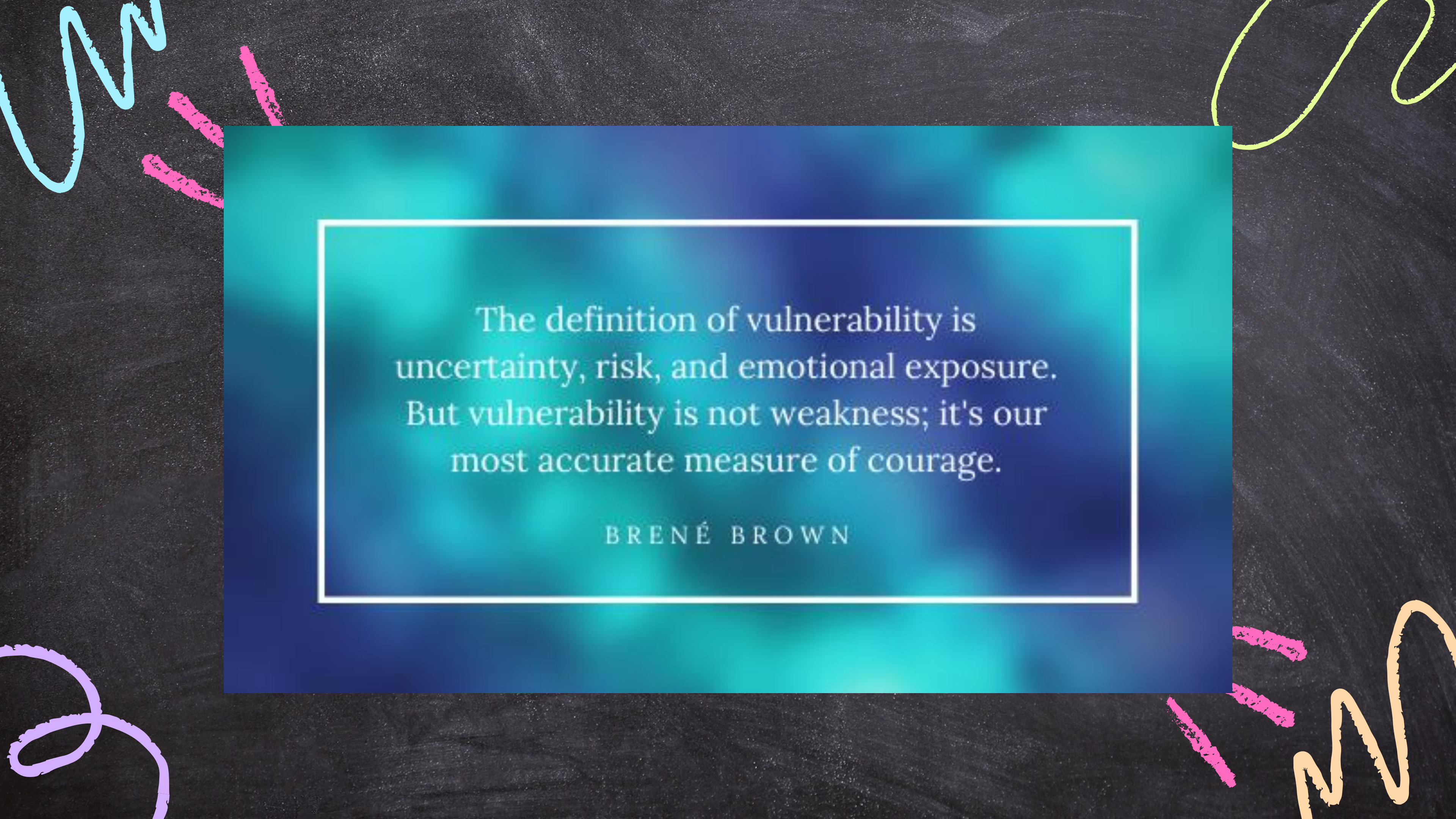


Vulnerability

Being willing to
show up and be
seen when you have
no control over the
outcome

Self-compassion

Authenticity

The image features a quote by Brené Brown centered on a rectangular teal-to-blue gradient box. The box is set against a dark, textured background that resembles a chalkboard. The background is decorated with colorful, hand-drawn scribbles in light blue, pink, yellow, and purple. The quote itself is written in a white, serif font and is enclosed within a thin white rectangular border.

The definition of vulnerability is
uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure.
But vulnerability is not weakness; it's our
most accurate measure of courage.

BRENÉ BROWN



Developing Shame Resiliency



Vulnerability

Self-compassion

Giving yourself
support, kindness,
love, and
understanding the
way you would a
good friend.

Authenticity

Self-Compassion is:



Self Kindness

Be loving towards ourselves, instead of self-critical.



Common Humanity

Everyone suffers. You are not perfect. No one is. You are not alone.



Mindfulness

Notice our struggle. Feel it, instead of being reactive. Be with it, avoiding self-judgement or overreaction.

From the work of Kristin Neff



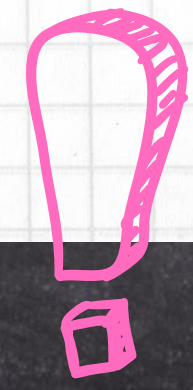
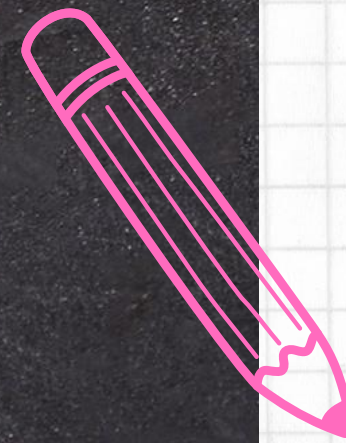
LuminateWellness.com



Shame & Self-Compassion

If you have a problem and are ashamed about that problem it is more likely to persist. If your shame decreases and you experience more self-compassion, you will be more able to make needed changes in your life.

Finn (2011)





Developing Shame Resiliency



Vulnerability

Self-compassion

Authenticity

The daily practice
of letting go of who
we think we're
supposed to be and
being who we are.



Authenticity is a collection of choices that we have to make every day. It's about the choice to show up and be real. The choice to be honest.

The choice to let our true selves be seen.

Brené Brown

A photograph of a long, narrow wooden suspension bridge stretching into the distance, surrounded by dense green trees. The bridge has wooden railings and is supported by wooden posts. The scene is captured in a slightly desaturated, dark tone.

The way out of fear
isn't safety. It's freedom.

Martha N. Beck

“ quote fancy



Questions



Growth Goals





Practice makes...



Practice makes...
Perfect



Practice makes...



Practice...

Brings new challenges

Provides more chances for "success."

Can be fun!

Can make things easier later.

Helps us realize what we like and what we don't like.

Creates opportunities to learn.

Lets us realize how much we don't know.



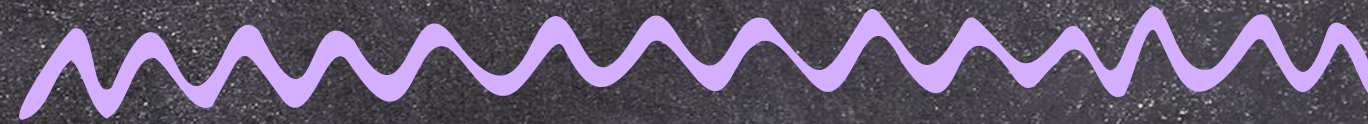
DEVELOPING A GROWTH MINDSET



TO SET
GROWTH GOALS



Growth Goals



IN YOUR CONTROL, CHOSEN BY YOU

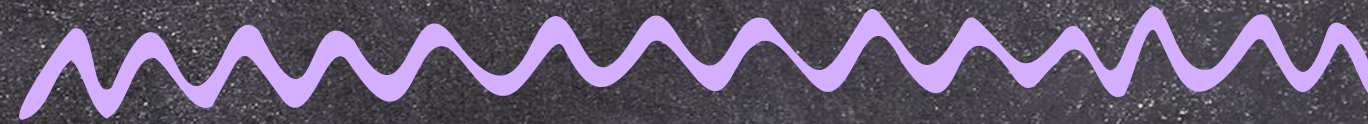
STILL SMART: SPECIFIC, MEASURABLE,
ACHIEVEABLE, RELEVANT, & TIME-LIMITED

INVOLVE “ING” ACTION WORDS

CAN BE FLEXIBLE, NO ONE WAY TO REALIZE
THE GOAL



Growth Goals



I WILL WORK HARD TO LEARN IN ALL OF MY CLASSES THIS SEMESTER.

I WILL DEVELOP MY LEADERSHIP SKILLS BY PARTICIPATING IN MENTORING THIS YEAR.

I WILL TRY TO GET TO KNOW A CLASSMATE I DON'T KNOW WELL IN P.E.

I WILL EXPLORE MY INTEREST AND SKILLS IN PAINTING THIS QUARTER.





IEP Growth
Goals



**Centers around what the adult wants over what the student needs*

**Focuses on compliance over true engagement*

**Identifies what not to do rather than what to do*

WHEN PRESENTED WITH A **NON-PREFERRED** TASK OR DIRECTIVE, STUDENT **WILL COMPLY** UNTIL COMPLETION **WITHOUT ENGAGING** IN **UNEXPECTED BEHAVIORS** (SCREAMING, REFUSAL, HITTING, PINCHING) WITH 2 OR FEWER TEACHER PROMPTS WITH 80% ACCURACY.

**Implies "unexpected behaviors" are a choice instead of a stress response*

**Doesn't recognize dysregulation until student is well beyond their window of tolerance*

**Gives an expectation for self-regulation instead of co-regulation*



**Focuses on student autonomy, voice, and choice*

**Recognizes need for authentic engagement; student-center and strengths-based*

**Prioritizes teaching specific coping strategies when students are regulated*

WHEN SHOWING **EARLY SIGNS OF DYSREGULATION** (WRINGING HANDS, ROCKING, BITING WRIST), STUDENT WILL ENGAGE IN **PREFERRED, SELF-SELECTED, PRE-TAUGHT** REGULATION STRATEGIES **WITH A TRUSTED ADULT** AS NEEDED IN 9 OUT OF 10 OPPORTUNITIES.

**Acknowledges behaviors as signs of stress--not intentional misbehavior*

**Emphasizes supporting regulation while student is still within their window of stress tolerance*

**Recognizes the value in co-regulation and provides it when needed for the student*



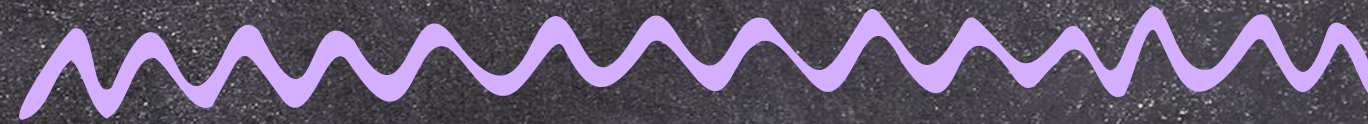
A hand-drawn purple oval frame surrounds the text. The frame is composed of two concentric, slightly irregular lines, with the bottom line extending further to the left and bottom, creating a tail-like shape.

Creating
growth goals

A cyan-colored squiggle in the top-left corner of the image.A yellow-colored squiggle in the top-right corner of the image.A purple-colored squiggle in the bottom-left corner of the image.An orange-colored squiggle in the bottom-right corner of the image.



Growth Goals

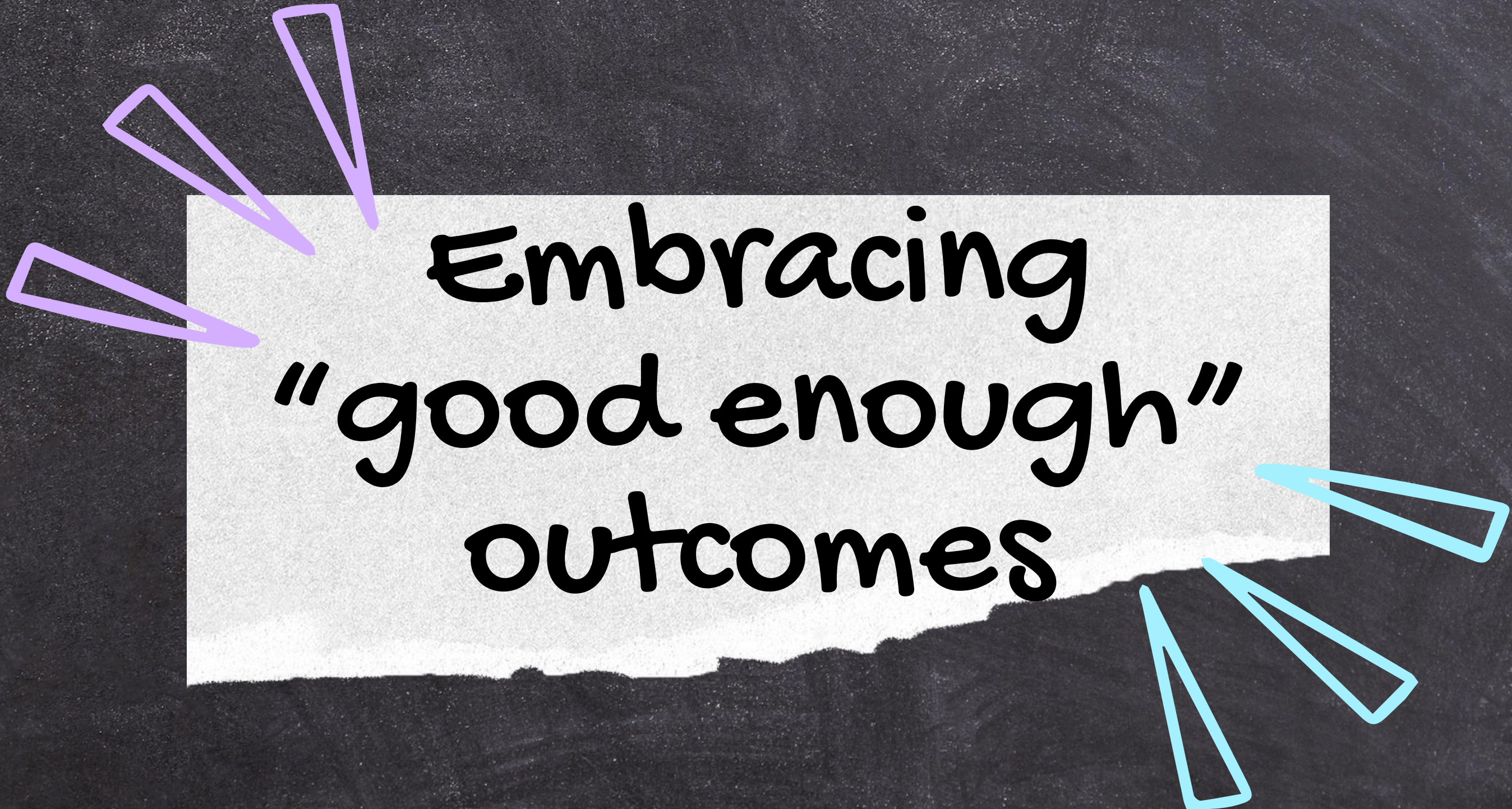


IN YOUR CONTROL, CHOSEN BY YOU

STILL SMART: SPECIFIC, MEASURABLE,
ACHIEVEABLE, RELEVANT, & TIME-LIMITED

INVOLVE "ING" ACTION WORDS

CAN BE FLEXIBLE, NO ONE WAY TO REALIZE
THE GOAL



Embracing
"good enough"
outcomes



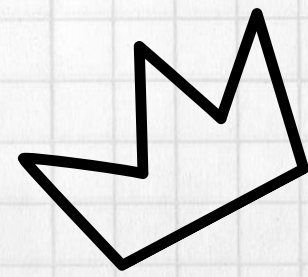
Different goals... Different outcomes

Redefining
standards for
performance
and
achievement

Working
toward “good
enough” instead
of perfection

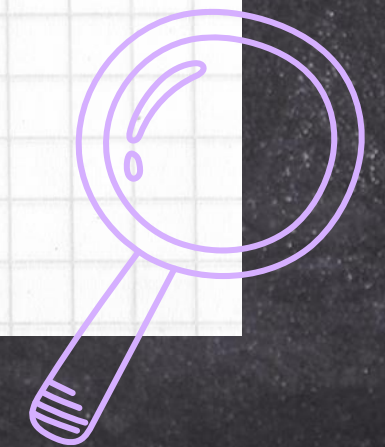
Leaning into
the reality &
vulnerability
of being
imperfect





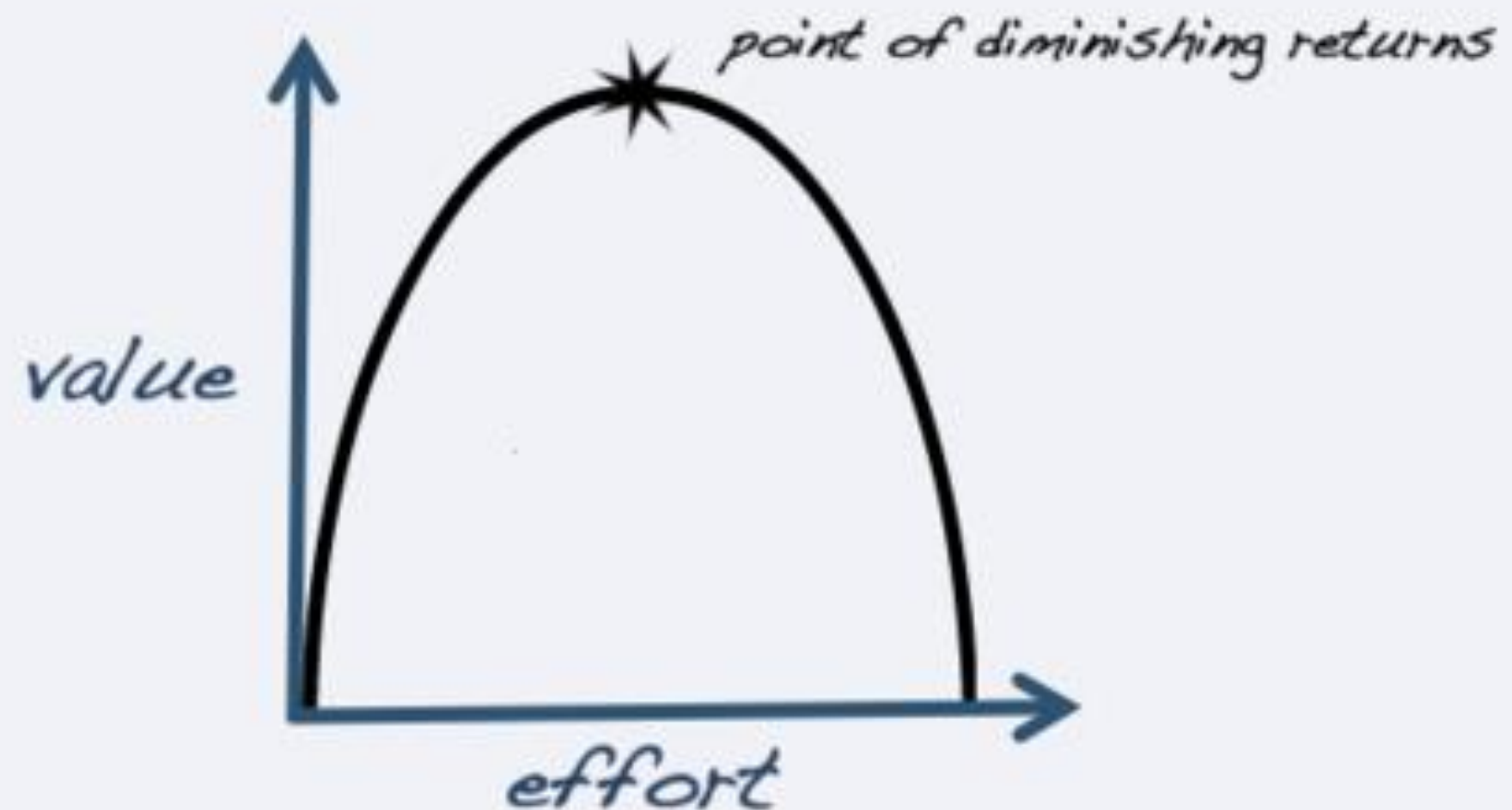
Defining “good enough”

Giving reasonable effort toward achieving one's own individualized goals and meet an external standard (when applicable) while balancing well-being.



"Good Enough" effort

"GOOD ENOUGH"




Balancing
"Good Enough"
and Well-being

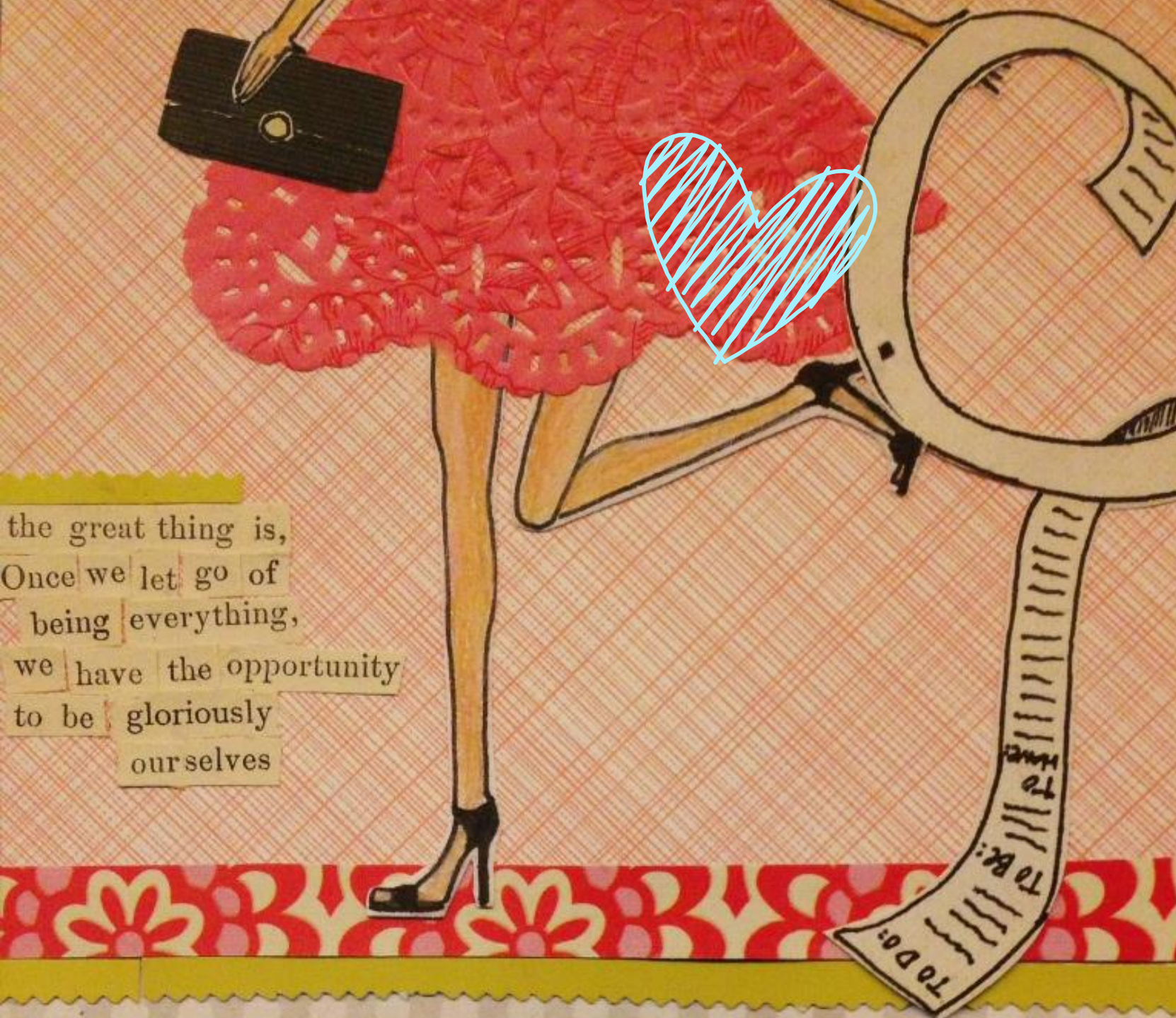
Wellness Wheel





Working on perfectionism

- Understanding perfectionism & where it comes from
 - Practicing shame resiliency: vulnerability, self-compassion, authenticity
 - Working toward freedom from fear
 - Utilizing growth mindset and goals
 - Embracing good enough outcomes
- 



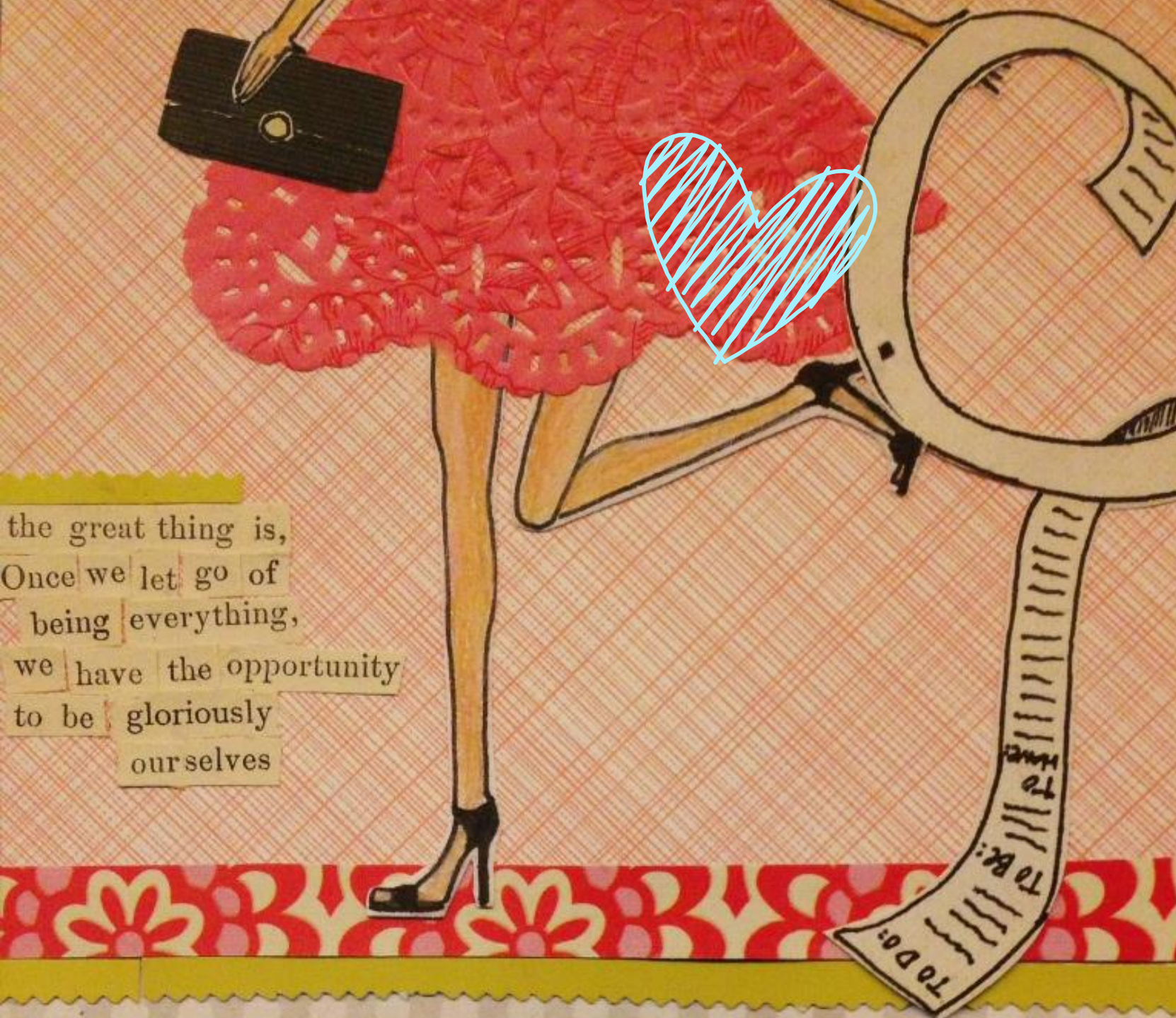
The real secret to
the fabulous life is to
Live imperfectly
with great delight.



Summary

- Perfectionism can be helpful and/or unhelpful.
- Unhelpful perfectionism can contribute to challenges in learning, health, and relationships, including burnout.
- Some gifted children and adolescents may be more likely to experience perfectionism (and there are many factors involved).
- Perfectionism is motivated by fear and shame.





The real secret to
the fabulous life is to
Live imperfectly
with great delight.

Summary (cont'd)



- Shame resiliency can help reduce perfectionism and involves vulnerability, self-compassion, and authenticity.
- Freedom (not safety) is the antidote to fear.
- Growth mindset and goals help reduce perfectionism.
- "Good enough" balances goals, standards, and well-being.





Going Forward





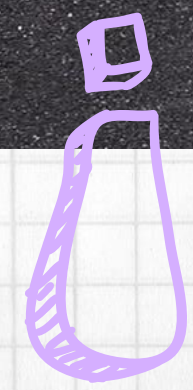
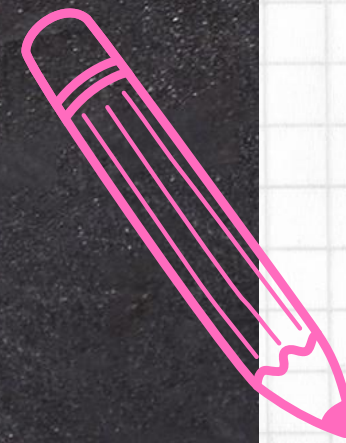
Questions

Thank You





References

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