


Perfection

...the Illusion...

are you sacrificing
health, well-being, family, joy
chasing the unattainable?

Is it worth it?

 **TRANSITION HOUSE**
Changing Lives by Creating Pathways for Mental Wellness
www.thouse.org



*TH Wellness Project's Vision:
to empower personal well-being, improve mental wellness and increase life joy.
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WHEN FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION

STAYING WELL IN A WORLD OF UNREALISTIC, UNHEALTHY EXPECTATIONS

*“When failure is not an option, we can forget about creativity, learning, and innovation. Dr. Brene Brown
“Expectations feeds frustration. It is an unhealthy attachment to people, things and outcomes we wish we could
control; but don’t.” – Dr. Steve Maraboli*

What are Unrealistic Expectations?

- Perfection is not a realistic or healthy expectation... yet we live in a world that often wants and expects it.
- When more is expected than is healthy, ‘humanly possible,’ – the outcomes can include:
 - Increased stress levels
 - Unhealthy eating habits
 - Sleep issues
 - Substance use/abuse/addiction – including but not limited to alcohol, prescription drugs, illegal drugs, caffeine, energy drinks...
 - Health issues
 - Strained and/or damaged relationships

Compromised Support Systems

- The above mentioned outcomes tend to lead to loss of healthy support systems.
- The loss of support increases the unhealthy coping skills to deal with the unrealistic expectations.
- Individual’s sense of worthiness can continue to decline therefore creating a ‘reverse tornado effect.’
- So what is the ‘Reverse Tornado Effect’:
 - start with an unrealistic expectation
 - use of unhealthy coping skills to manage the expectation
 - the result being damage to healthy support systems
 - then reliance on unhealthy coping skills to an even greater degree as the support systems are lost
 - meanwhile the expectations remain while physical and emotional health is compromised
 - the problem still exists, however the person trying to resolve the challenge is dealing with sleep deprivation, perhaps substance use/abuse, increased stress levels, compromised well-being, increase in unhealthy relationships, increased financial challenges because of overspending, etc.



- This can take someone from unrealistic expectation to reverse tornado to complete self-destruction



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Perfectionism

- Perfectionism and unrealistic expectations go hand in hand.
- The disappointment associated with failure for a perfectionist is far greater than to others without this expectation.
- Doing a good job is perceived as insufficient – anything less than perfect is considered failure.
- The thinking – anything other than 1st place is considered failure – 2nd place is the 1st loser.

Stopping the Reverse Tornado

- Wellness Planning and acceptance of imperfection can stop or at least slow down the downward spiral.
- Acceptance that the triggers for these challenges will always exist sets the stage for healthier planning and creation of new ways to cope.

Wellness Plans

- We often hold Wellness Plans in our heads but they may not make it to paper.
- Let's take the time today to see where everyone is at in developing your Wellness Plan.
- The Steps:
 - Identify Trigger Situations
 - Identify Healthy Support Systems
 - Begin Creation of Healthy Alternative Behaviors
 - Create a List of Personal Strengths
 - Have a list of Healthy Behaviors and Strengths written
 - If you want, you can create a decorative "Wellness Plan" – include:
 - Photos of people who are part of healthy support
 - Images of serene environments
 - Reminders of worthiness
 - _____(fill in the blank)

Wrap Up

"Manage your expectations and you'll manage your disappointments." - Todd Lohentry
"Perfection means not perfect actions in a perfect world, but appropriate actions in an imperfect one." – R.H.



Facilitator's Guide:

FOLLOW UP ON HOMEWORK:

- Questionnaire that would provide yourself and facilitators with useful information to help make this a more meaningful learning experience.
- Start developing your Worthiness List.
- Be mindful... Record the times over the next week when you've been able to be more authentic. How did that impact your sense of well-being?

BREAK UP INTO GROUPS OF 2-3:

1. **WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU WHEN YOU BELIEVE FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION?**
2. **HOW HAS PERFECTIONISM IMPACTED YOUR LIFE?**
3. **WHAT RISKY BEHAVIORS HAVE YOU ENGAGED IN WHILE STRIVING FOR PERFECTIONISM/NOT FAILING?**
4. **DEFINE YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE REVERSE TORNADO.**
5. **LIST NEW MESSAGES/BEHAVIORS ARE YOU LEARNING THAT HELP TO MANAGE PERFECTIONISM?**
6. **DISCUSS THE STATUS OF YOUR WELLNESS PLAN.**
7. **WHAT ADDITIONAL TOOLS DO YOU NEED TO HELP DEVELOP YOUR PLAN?**

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT:

- Be mindful... When your Perfectionism button is 'pushed,' try a new behavior. Record how it works.

