

Mental Health Awareness Series

Brought to you by **SUTD Wellbeing Services**

Building 1, Level 5 (1.517) @Lobby C

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Perfectionism rarely begets perfection or satisfaction. Only disappointment. *Ryan Holiday*

Perfection{ism}



an occupational hazard of giftedness

We may have been told before: look for the perfect partner or perfect job or perfect house, etc. This may spur our quest for perfection – in our grades, looks, conduct, etc.

There is one major issue though: Humans are not perfect. We all make mistakes and encounter setbacks in life. However, a mistake or setback is an event or experience, not a person. While it is a fact to say that a person has failed, it is erroneous to say that the person *is* a failure.

The relentless pursuit for perfection can stunt the character growth of a person, making the person less resilient and more susceptible to adverse thoughts and emotions. Thus, it is necessary for us to learn to curb perfectionist tendency.

Tips on managing perfectionism more effectively:

- ❖ Reframe your way you look at mistakes and setbacks. We not defined by our mistake or setback any more than we are defined by our success.
- ❖ Facing criticism from others or oneself may not be not easy, but we could learn to take it in stride, and decide for ourselves that our past does not determine our future.
- ❖ Refrain from comparing yourself to others or current situation to the 'good old days', as it is futile and meaningless. An introvert is no better or worse off than an extrovert any more than saying that apple is better than orange. You are distinctly you.
- ❖ Striving for excellence in what we do and aiming for perfection are two different things. One is a healthy attitude, the latter is not. Perfectionism disregards the fundamental truth about humanity – that we err, and will err.

SUTD Wellbeing Services offers professional counselling services for students in a private and confidential setting.

If you would like to see a Counsellor to discuss any issue or challenge, please email us at wellbeing@sutd.edu.sg.

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