

Hi, I'm Captain Perfection!

Do you need everything to be perfect all of the time? Do you get angry or upset when you make mistakes? Do you find it hard to start something because you might not complete it perfectly? If this sounds like you, you might be a perfectionist.

A perfectionist is someone who aims for perfection in everything they do. They might say things like...

- I always want to be the best I can be
- I'm determined to do well
- I'm persistent and focused
- I pay great attention to detail in my work
- I'm motivated
- I always work hard
- I'm very well organized

These are all examples of *Healthy Perfectionism*. Healthy perfectionists have a tendency to do well in what they set out to accomplish because their determination to work hard and be the best helps them achieve very high standards.

Unfortunately, healthy perfectionism is often accompanied by *Unhealthy Perfectionism*. Perfectionists who experience unhealthy perfectionism will say things like...

- I often think about the mistakes I've made.
- I'm not happy if I don't achieve my goals.
- I find it hard to celebrate when I do well.
- I'm often hard on myself when I make mistakes.
- I often think there is only one way to do things.
- I won't finish a task unless it's going to be perfect.
- I think something is perfect or worthless, there's no in-between.
- I sometimes skip eating or sleeping so I can keep working on a project.
- I have a habit of setting unrealistic targets.
- I'm scared of failing/messing up.
- I sometimes feel anxious or depressed.
- I struggle to get things done on time.
- I often feel that others are better than me.
- I avoid doing things when I might fail.

Do you find yourself saying any of these things? Tick the box next to each phrase that sounds like you.

How many did you tick? If you ticked boxes in the healthy and unhealthy perfectionism lists, you're not alone.

Most perfectionists experience a combination of healthy and unhealthy perfectionism.

Did you know?

Over 30% of the world's population are estimated to be affected by perfectionism.

That's more than 2 *BILLION* people!

If *you're* a perfectionist, you're not alone

Managing perfectionism

To be happy and to do well in life, perfectionists need to develop reliable ways to control their perfectionism.

Healthy perfectionism

The healthy part of your perfectionism doesn't need much management at all. You will naturally want to strive to be the very best you can be in everything you do.

Unhealthy perfectionism

The unhealthy part of perfectionism is different. It can cause us many problems and lead to low self-esteem. Low self-esteem occurs when we think we're not good enough, even though we are. This can make us really worried and anxious and can even lead to depression or physical issues with our bodies. There are many issues connected to unhealthy perfectionism, and that's why it's so important to develop ways to control it.

The self-compassion superpower!

One of the most effective ways to control unhealthy perfectionism is to use something called *self-compassion*. Self-compassion is 'the art of being kind to yourself' and it's really useful to use when our unhealthy perfectionism makes us feel angry or upset.

Self-compassion comes in three parts. *

#1 – Self-kindness

#2 – Mindfulness

#3 – Common Humanity

Let's look at these more closely...

#1 - Self-kindness

Self-kindness means to be as kind to yourself as you would be to others. Instead of being overly critical of yourself when you make mistakes, you offer yourself encouragement and support by being more forgiving of your mistake.

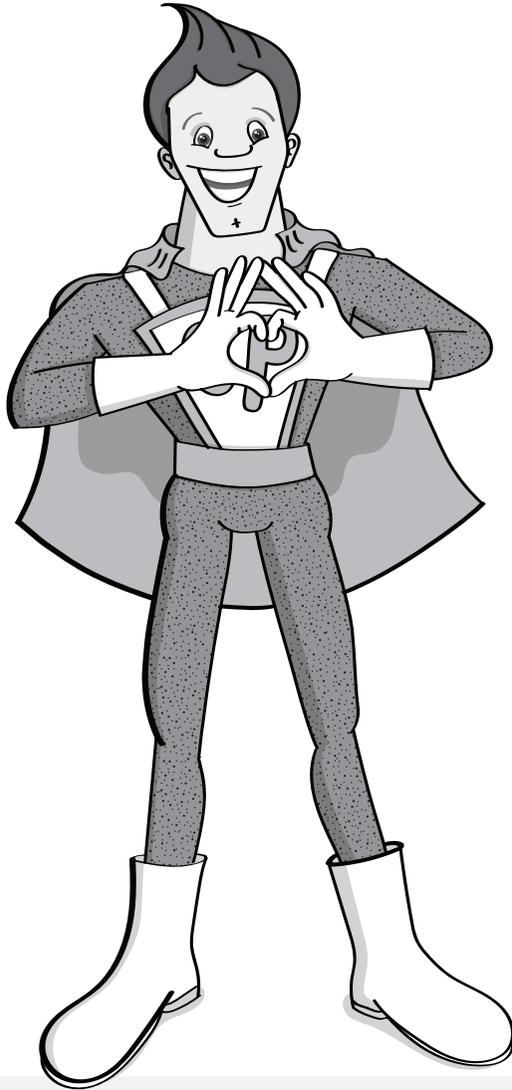
#2 - Mindfulness

Mindfulness means to be aware of what you are feeling in the present moment. It enables you to connect with 'now' rather than the past or the future. When you're mindful, you become focused on what you can see, feel, smell and hear in the present moment. Mindfulness helps to distract you from your unhealthy perfectionism and negative thoughts and feelings.

#3 - Common Humanity

Common Humanity is when you recognize that no-one is perfect and that everyone makes mistakes. It's learning to accept that we are all the same, and that it's completely normal for things to go wrong and for things not to be perfect all of the time.

* *definition by Kristin Neff, PhD*



**Happy perfectionists think
of self-compassion as their
SUPERPOWER!**

Storytime!

Now we've learned about perfectionism and self-compassion, we need to understand more about when we might experience them. Let's read about three young perfectionists, Jack, Alexis and Noah, to see how I helped them use self-kindness, mindfulness, and compassion to overcome their unhealthy perfectionism.





**To buy this book, visit
www.captain-perfection.com**