



# Defining Success

Leaving behind your perfectionist fantasy

## Objectives

- ▲ Define a perfectionist fantasy, and describe one you currently hold.
- ▲ Apply the model: Name the feeling holding onto this fantasy creates for you. Find any thought errors inherent in this fantasy. What actions occur for you and what is the result?
- ▲ Identify a new thought about your goal (review: thought ladder vs bandaid vs turnaround).

## A Perfectionist Fantasy

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So What is a Perfectionist Fantasy? We first heard this described by Kara Loewenthiel, an incredible coach who we've been lucky enough to partner with in the past.

A perfectionist fantasy is an idealized version of how things should go, often rigid, unrealistic, and fueled by "all-or-nothing" thinking. It is created and maintained by the Inner Critic.

Simply put, a perfectionist fantasy is **a fantasy about being perfect:**

- Having a perfect house that's clean all the time
- Eating healthy for every meal
- Starting a workout program and staying consistent with it 100% of the time until your body looks like a hero from a Marvel movie
- Never making an error in your clinical care
- All notes are perfect, concise, but thorough, perfectly outlining your reasoning while also capturing the most complex coding, oh and also all signed the minute you complete an encounter.



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There are some common, what we call “thought errors”, that are hints that you’re in a perfectionist fantasy.

All-or-Nothing Thinking

“Should” Statements

Fear of Judgement

Perfectionism

Over-Responsibility

Catastrophizing

Mind Reading

## **What is one perfectionist fantasy you currently hold?**

*For example, “I should be completely confident before I do X,” “I’ll be a good surgeon only when I never make mistakes,” “I need to have everyone’s approval before I lead a project.”*

This fantasy is likely coming from some values, that on the surface make this fantasy seem important and good. **What values do you think it’s rooted in?**



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Apply the Model by putting the fantasy in the T line

C	.....
T	.....
F	.....
A	.....
R	.....

Does this fantasy live into the values it came from, or does it actually drive you AWAY from those values?

What thought errors are present in that fantasy?

- All-or-Nothing Thinking
- "Should" Statements
- Fear of Judgement
- Perfectionism
- Over-responsibility
- Catastrophizing
- Mind-Reading

What's unrealistic, unhelpful, or distorted about this thought or fantasy?



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## Identify NEW Thoughts about your REAL Goal - that's NOT a Perfectionist Fantasy

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What is it you really want?

Why do you want it?

What do you think you'll feel when you get there?

How do you choose to define success in this goal? Be specific.



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## Practice a New Thought

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Let's shift the narrative using one of the following methods:

- **Bandaid Thought:** Notice the old one, and pull it off like a bandaid. Replacing it entirely. This is tricky! Works best for thoughts about OTHER THINGS or PEOPLE (less well for thoughts about ourselves)
- **Turnaround Thought:** Flip it completely.
- **Thought Ladder:** Start small. Create a thought that feels just a little more true. Works best for thoughts about ourself that are hard to change.

What is a more supportive and believable thought about this goal or transition?

**New Thought:**

**Feeling this new thought creates:**



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## 5 actions you can take from this feeling:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

How does letting go of your perfectionist fantasy create space for real growth?

How do you want to define success moving forward?