

# Is Perfectionism Making You Feel Stuck?

This holiday season, don't let perfect be the enemy of good.

Holiday stress and the pressure of perfection can impact our mental health. Many people feel compelled to create the ideal festive atmosphere, give or receive the best gifts, have flawless gatherings, and make life seem picture-perfect on social media. You might be worried about disappointing others or not living up to your own high standards. It's entirely normal to feel this way, and you're not alone in experiencing these emotions.

However, the pursuit of perfection often leads to overwhelm, stress, anxiety, and even sadness. If you feel stuck in a cycle of unrealistic expectations, there are steps you can take to break free and focus on what's really important.



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## How to embrace imperfection and get unstuck

**Find clarity.** It's common to feel stuck if you don't have a clear vision of what you want. Around the holidays, the increase in social gatherings and questions about your life can cause added pressure. Feeling like you need to 'have it all together' can be overwhelming and make you feel inadequate. When this happens, it's important to reflect on your goals, values, and what truly matters to you. You can journal or make a list of what you want out of the holiday season and other aspects of your life.

**Assess and evaluate your goals.** Once you have clarity on what you want, prioritize the details or activities that align with the goals that truly matter to you. While striving for excellence can be positive, expecting perfection can lead to disappointment and anxiety. Breaking realistic goals down into smaller steps makes progress feel achievable and less intimidating. Focus on these manageable steps, and remember to avoid overcommitment or spreading yourself too thin.

**Acknowledge emotional investments and fears.** The idea of creating perfect holiday moments may provide a sense of control and accomplishment that can be emotionally comforting in the short-term. However, if this perfectionism

comes from a fear of criticism or being seen as average in comparison to others, it can also be self-defeating. It helps to acknowledge your emotional fears, recognize that perfection is subjective, and embrace the fact that flaws are a normal part of life.

**Practice self-compassion.** It's common for perfectionists to overthink and be self-critical, which can cause an even stronger desire for perfection to disprove this negative thinking. It's important to be compassionate with yourself. Try to be patient as you work toward your goals. Understand that it's okay to have limitations—we all do. Treat yourself with the same kindness and understanding that you would offer to a close friend. Remember all the things you're grateful for, even if they may not seem 'perfect' to others.

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If stress, perfectionism, or feeling stuck becomes overwhelming and impacts your daily life, Spring Health can help. Our providers offer personalized support to help you be present, embrace joy, and cope with struggles during the holiday season and beyond. [Activate your Spring Health account](#) to book a therapy session or speak to a Care Navigator about how we can support you.