

The Inner Critic

Swapping perfectionism for positivity



Roadmap



1. Welcome, Check-In
2. The Inner Critic
3. Perfectionism + Cognitive Distortions
4. Positive Emotion + Self Compassion
5. Inspired Actions
6. Closing

CHECK-IN



On a scale from sticky note to megaphone, how loud is your inner critic today?

1. Sticky Note
2. Passive-Aggressive Text
3. Full-blown Megaphone





“We’re not silencing the inner critic—we’re learning to talk back with truth and kindness.”

The Inner Critic

The inner critic is that internal voice that points out your flaws, doubts your decisions, or tells you you're "not enough."

Job Functions:

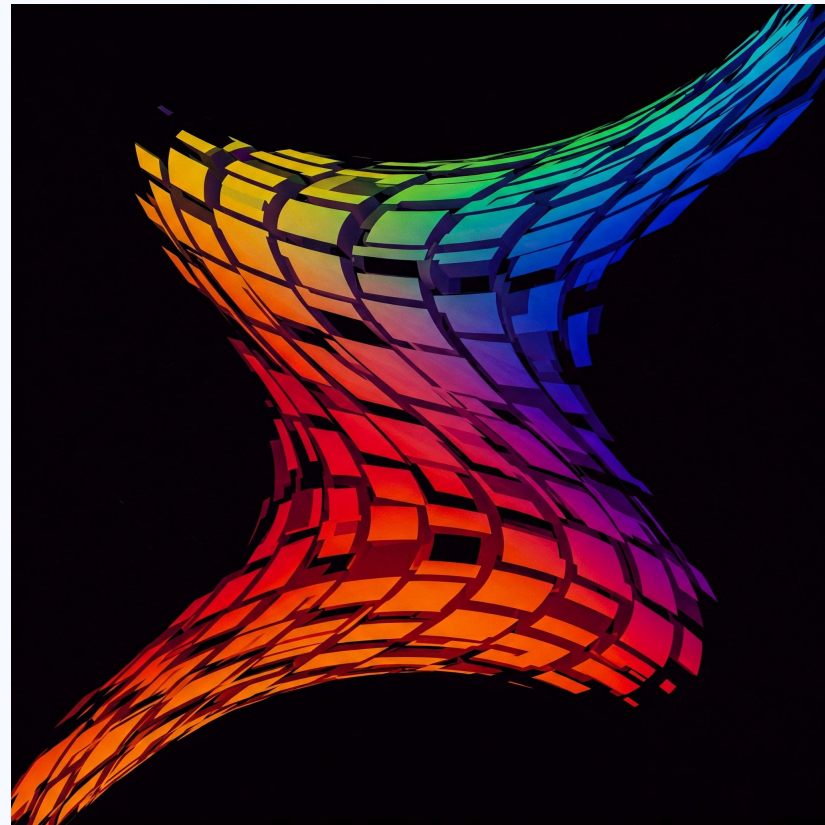
- *Protection*
- *Threats*
- *Managing Pain*



Perfectionism



Cognitive Distortions



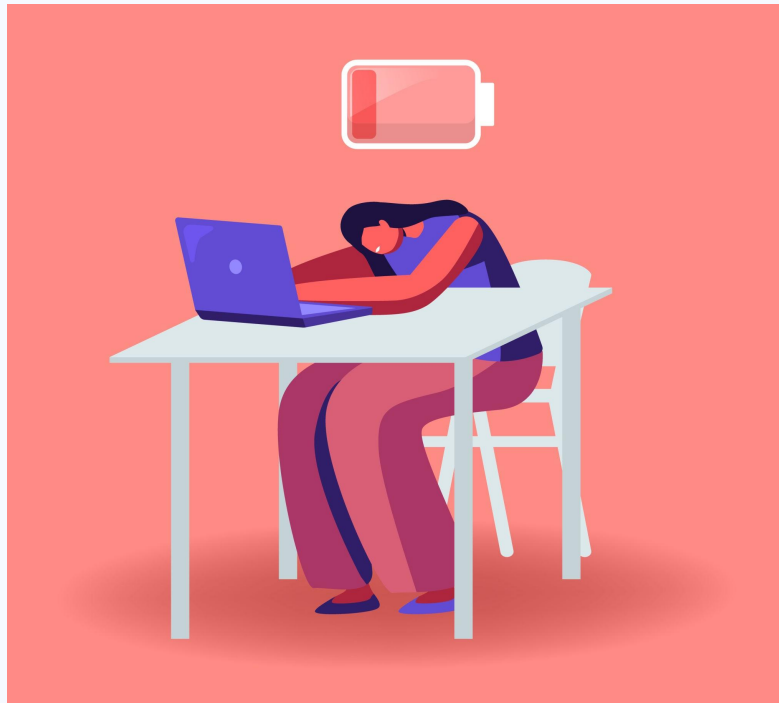
Healthy striving is self-focused.
“How can I improve?”

Perfectionism is other-focused.
“What will they think?”

–Brené Brown

Perfectionism: Cause + Effect

Fear of
Judgement or
Disapproval



Burnout
Procrastination
Low Self-Worth

Cognitive Distortions (Thinking Traps)

Our Inner Critic is really good
at these...

All-or-nothing thinking

Mind reading/Fortune telling

Catastrophizing

Personalization/Blame

Discounting the positive

Situations are viewed in extremes—either all good or all bad, with no middle ground.

"If I fail this test, I'm a complete failure."

Leads to negative emotions + unrealistic expectations by ignoring the gray areas and complexities of real life.

All-or-nothing thinking

Mind reading/Fortune telling

Catastrophizing

Personalization/Blame

Discounting the positive

Assuming you know what others are thinking or predicting the future without evidence.

"They must think I'm stupid," or "This will definitely go wrong."

Fuels anxiety and insecurity by treating guesses as facts.

All-or-nothing thinking

Mind reading/Fortune telling

Catastrophizing

Personalization/Blame

Discounting the positive

You expect the worst possible outcome, no matter how unlikely.

"If I screw this up, I'll lose my job and never recover."

Increases stress and fear by blowing problems out of proportion.

All-or-nothing thinking

Mind reading/Fortune telling

Catastrophizing

Personalization/Blame

Discounting the positive

Taking excessive responsibility for events outside your control or blaming others unfairly.

"It's my fault they're upset," or "Everything goes wrong when they're involved."

Can lead to guilt, shame, or resentment by distorting accountability.

All-or-nothing thinking

Mind reading/Fortune telling

Catastrophizing

Personalization/Blame

Discounting the positive

Dismissing your achievements or good experiences as unimportant or unearned.

"That compliment doesn't count—they were just being nice," or "I only succeeded because I got lucky."

Undermines self-esteem and prevents a balanced, accurate view of oneself.

All-or-nothing thinking

Mind reading/Fortune telling

Catastrophizing

Personalization/Blame

Discounting the positive

Self Reflection



All-or-nothing thinking

Mind reading/Fortune telling

Catastrophizing

Personalization/Blame

Discounting the positive





If your Inner Critic was
a character from a
movie or TV, who
would they be?



Positive Emotion



Self-Compassion



Positive Psychology Principles

Wellbeing is the topic of positive psychology, and has five measurable elements (PERMA):

- **Positive Emotions**
- Engagement/Flow
- Relationships
- Meaning/Purpose
- Achievement

When we make choices in life to maximize these elements, we are more able to handle challenges and more likely to flourish.

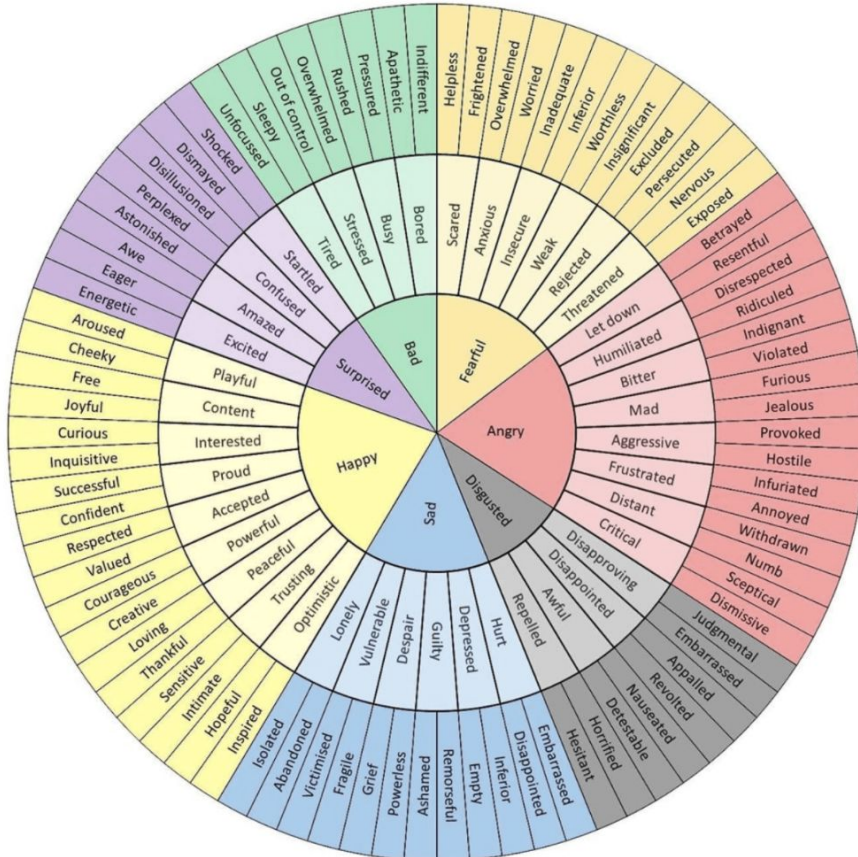


Positive Emotion

*Cultivating positive emotion
is a powerful antidote* to the
impacts of Inner Critic



Positive Emotion



- Cheerfulness is 50% inherited genetically. We all live in a range of cheerfulness.
- Positive Emotion is subjective.
- Not just “happiness”, what other positive emotions can we identify?



<https://positivepsychology.com/perma-model/>

The Power of Positive Emotion

1. Broaden possibilities

- Elevates our minds to see bigger picture.
- Leads to: more creativity, collaboration, win-win situations.

2. Build resources

- Changes how brain functions – increases activity and learning and creativity centers.

3. Strengthen stress recovery

- Never about denying negative emotions.
- Better able to undo the impact of negative emotions on our body, thinking and choices.

**Based on Dr. Barbara Fredrickson's Broaden + Build Theory*

“Your brain is like Velcro for negative experiences, but Teflon for positive ones.”

- Rick Hanson

The Positivity Ratio



<https://www.positivityratio.com/single.php>

The Positivity Ratio

- What Positive Emotions live in you most easily?
- What brings you into a state of (insert your favorite PE here)?



Tools for Cultivating Positive Emotions

Gratitude Journaling Prompt:

*What did I do well today,
even if imperfect?*

Savoring Practice: Recall a
recent joy.

Acts of Kindness: Small acts
have a big ripple

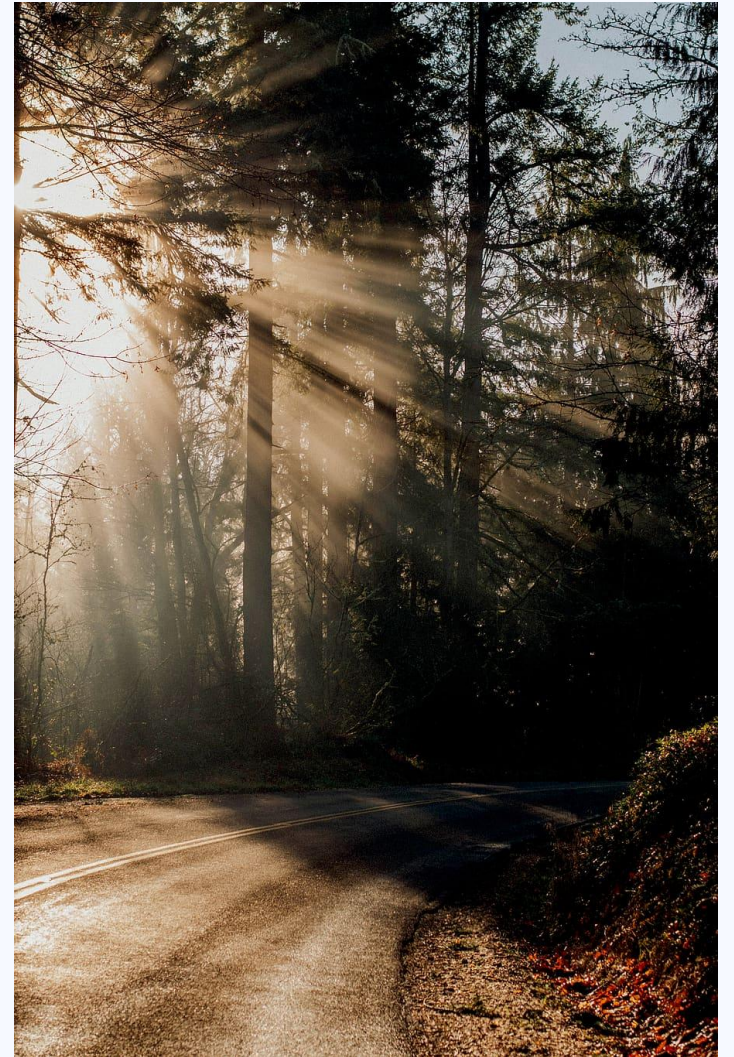


Self-Compassion

Self-Kindness

Shared Humanity

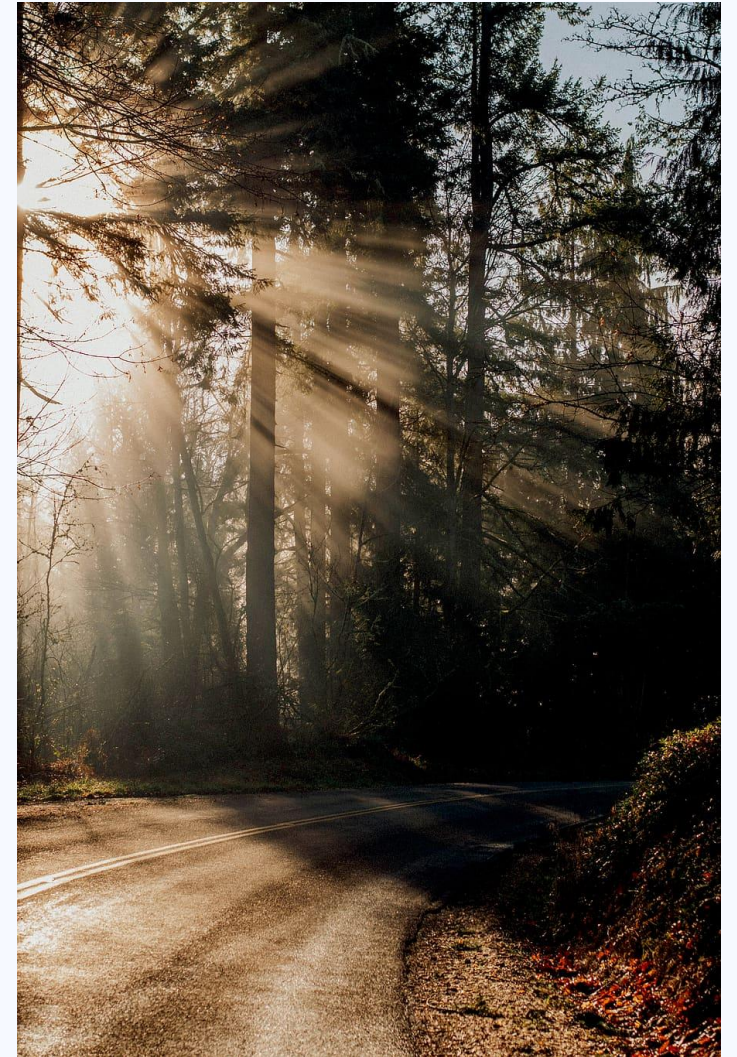
Mindfulness



Self-Kindness

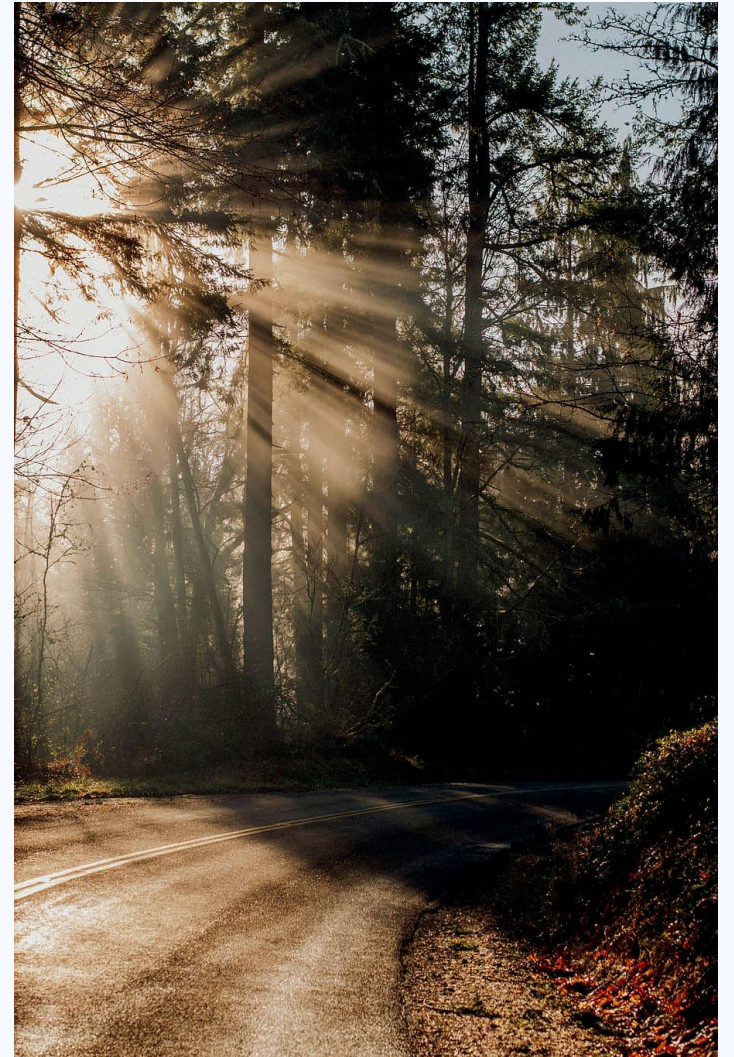
Dear Me...

What would your dearest friend
say to you?



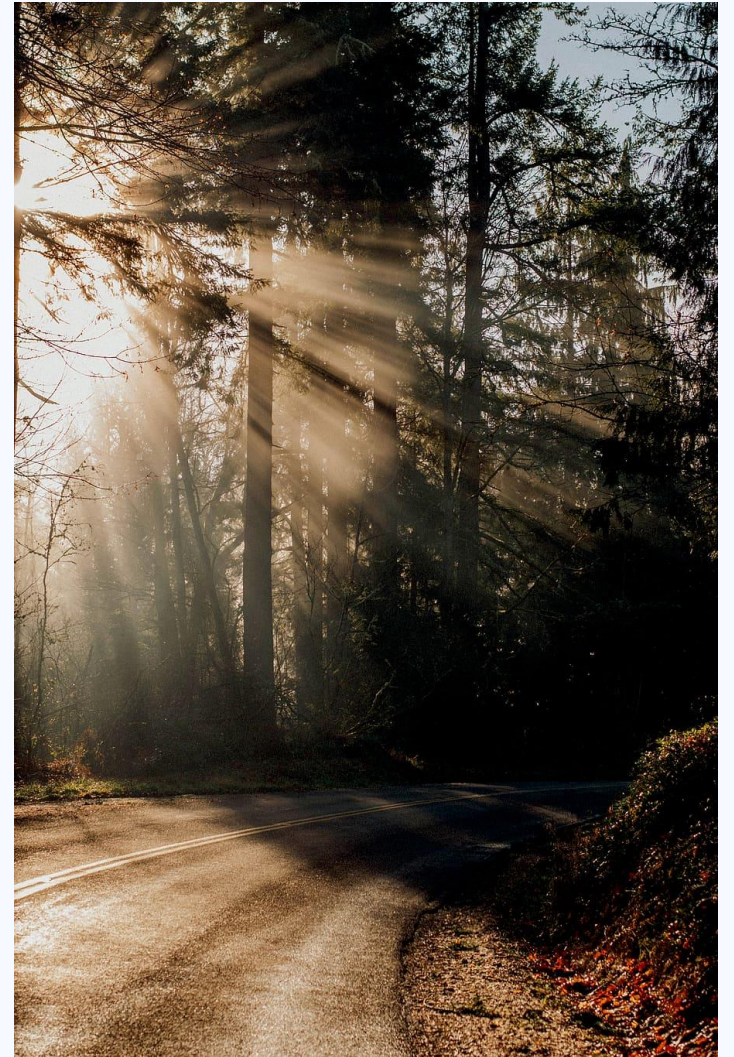
Shared Humanity

“Just like me” Reflection



Mindfulness

Notice and allow.



Closing our Time Together

What's one thing you're taking with you today, or one word to describe how you're feeling?



Thank you for being a part
of this community.

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