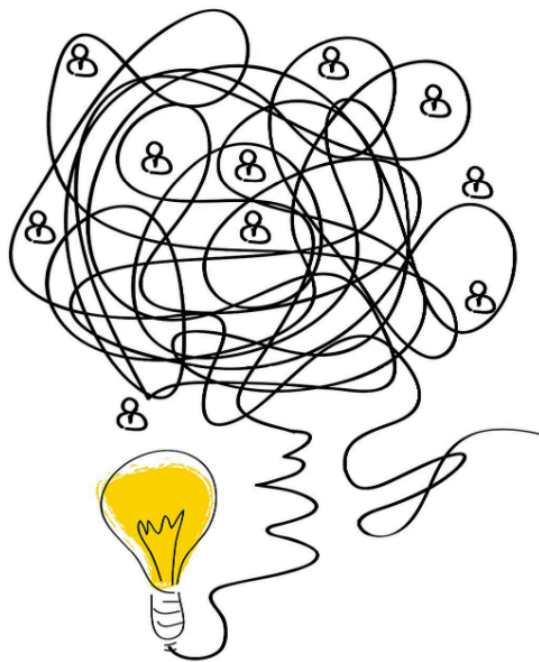


Learning Successfully for Study and Life

Student Workbook



Name _____

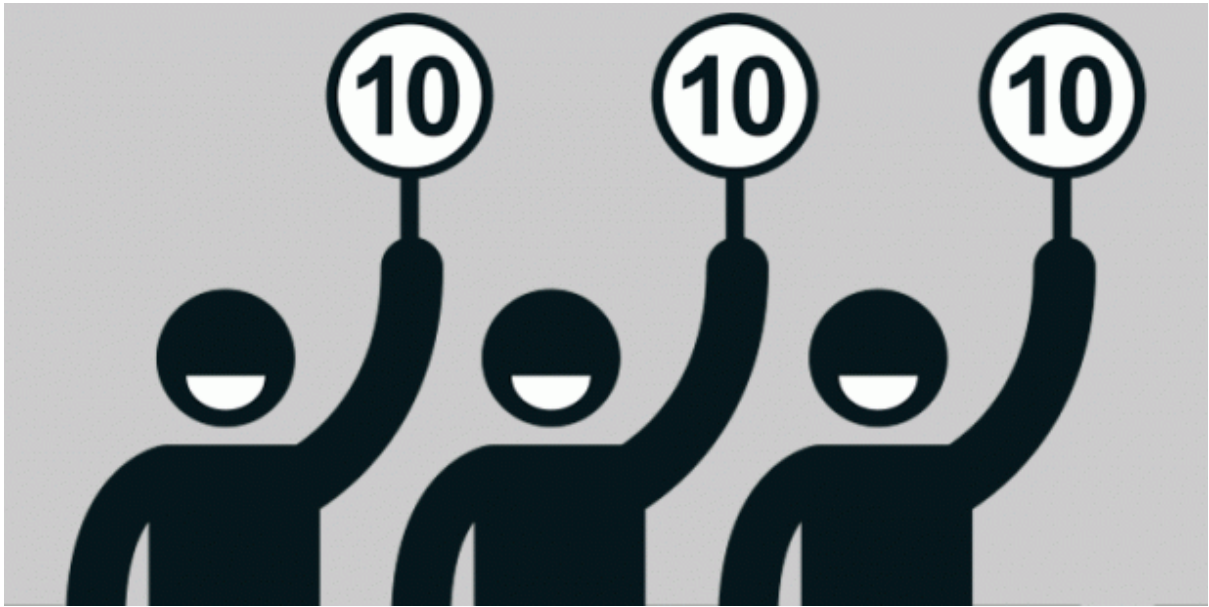
Welcome!

Over the next five lessons we'll introduce you to some concepts about balancing the pursuit of excellence with self-care – to help you achieve your goals in a healthy way. This booklet contains worksheets that will be used at every lesson, so bring it to each class.

There is no test in this course, and you won't be graded on whether you get answers right during discussions. **In fact, this is one course where it is better if you don't read ahead in this workbook** - you'll learn more deeply by taking part in activities and discussions with a fresh mindset. As teachers, we also learn a lot from hearing your differing points of view.

We hope you enjoy this course as much as we enjoy teaching it.






Lesson 1:
**What could be bad about being
perfect?**

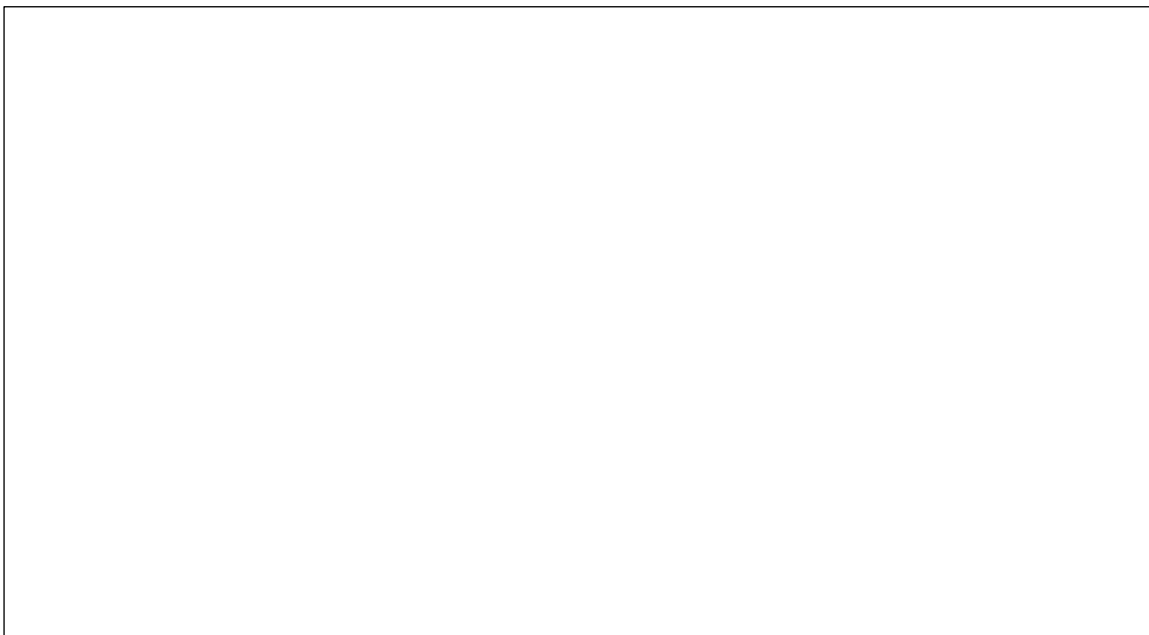
Worksheet 1: What are the advantages and disadvantages of perfectionism?

Small group activity – discuss and then feed back to the class

Advantages



Disadvantages



Worksheet 2: JK Rowling's advice for pursuing excellence

As you listen, write down JK Rowling's ten tips for pursuing excellence in your own words – or just take notes of bits you find interesting/helpful. Then in small groups discuss which tips you liked best, and feedback to the class

#	Tip	In My Own Words
1	Failure helps you discover yourself	
2	Take action on your ideas	
3	You will be criticised	
4	Remember where you started	
5	Believe	
6	There is always trepidation (fear about something)	
7	Life is not a checklist of achievements	
8	Persevere	
9	Dreams can happen	
10	We have the power to imagine better	

Out of class work: Poster or meme

From this lesson (or another source), choose your favourite message about pursuing excellence in a healthy way - turn this idea into a poster/meme to display in class for next week. You can draw or print from your computer. Get as creative as you like!





Lesson 2:

Three elements of good learning

1.	Taking time out will improve your performance
2.	Making mistakes is an essential part of success
3.	Celebrating success is important



Usain Bolt says it's in his nature to remain cool before races, but he also makes a point of creating lots of down time: "It's just my personality to be so relaxed. The majority of the time I'm chillin'. I'm always with friends and laughing — that's just me. If I'm not doing that then I'm playing video games and still relaxing." He stays loose racing, too. "The more relaxed you are, the smoother and faster you'll run. Your muscles get tight when you tense up," he says.

“The harder you study, the better you will do”

TRUE OR FALSE?

Performance



Effort

Worksheet 3: Five things I enjoy

Trace the shape of your hand on this page. Write your name in the middle of the hand. On each finger, list an activity you like to do just for you - not because you're the best at it, but just because this makes you feel relaxed or happy.

Choose from this list when you need a break from learning – this helps get you back to the “optimal zone” of performance

Worksheet 4: Can you think of any advantages of making mistakes/failing?

Small group activity – discuss and then feed back to the class

Here are some comments from famous and highly successful people about making mistakes...

It is impossible to live without failing at something, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all, in which case you have failed by default



JK Rowling: author of the Harry Potter books

I can accept failure, everyone fails at something. But I can't accept not trying.

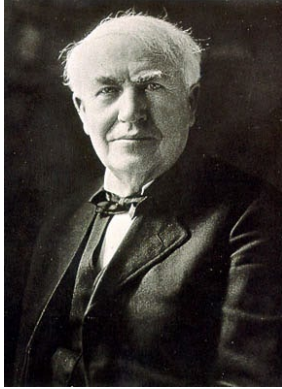
*Michael Jordan:
basketballer*



*Robert F Kennedy:
US attorney general, brother of JFK*

Only those who dare to fail greatly can ever achieve greatly

I have not failed, I've just found 10 000 ways that won't work.



Thomas Edison: Inventor of a whole lot of stuff, including the light bulb

Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm

*Winston
Churchill*



British Prime Minister

Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently

Henry Ford:

Developed and manufactured the first automobile that middle-class Americans could afford



Compare two learning styles...

Mastery Oriented Students	Performance Oriented Students
Main interest: learning the skill/content	Main interest: appearing competent or 'the best'
Willing to take on difficult tasks	Stick to tasks that are familiar
View mistakes as learning opportunities	View mistakes as lack of competence and avoid making them
<u>Achieve more - push the boundaries</u>	<u>Achieve less - never stretch themselves</u>
<u>Enjoy learning</u>	<u>Learning is more stressful</u>

“Learning is not a risk-free environment - it involves attempting to do something you don't already know how to do.



Out of class work: Productivity Experiment

How would you rate your productivity with study before starting this experiment i.e., in the previous week?

Poor	Fine	Good	Great	Excellent!
------	------	------	-------	------------

Day	What helped me get to sleep? <i>See expert tips on next page</i>	How much sleep did I get? 5	Which of my 5 things for myself did I do today?	What was one mistake I made today and what did I learn from it?	What was one success I had today and how did I celebrate it?
e.g., Monday	Avoided caffeine	8 hours	Played guitar	Didn't know answer in class; know what I need to brush up on	Completed assignment; rang and shared with friend

How would you rate your productivity with study at the end of this week?

Poor	Fine	Good	Great	Excellent!
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Ask an Expert: How Can I Sleep Better?

Professor Michael Gradisar is a sleep expert from Flinders University. Here are his quick tips **based on the latest research** for improving your sleep.



- Stop using your phones at least two hours before bed (swap to other devices), and at least an hour before bed, turn off video games, YouTube and social media. Try a movie, book or watch TV instead.
- Lower the brightness on your phone and computer screens at night. Apple's nightshift is one way to do this.
- If you find it hard to wind down, try a mindfulness exercise like one from the Smiling Mind app, or a 15-minute body scan exercise from Insight Timer. This helps your brain "switch gears" from busy thinking mode and start to settle.
- Try to sleep at the same time and for the same amount every night (8-9 hours). One hour more or less, every now and then, is fine – but any more can confuse your body clock.
- If you need to get up during the night, try to avoid turning on bright lights and hop back into bed quickly.
- Avoid caffeine at least six hours before you go to bed.





Lesson 3 & 4:
How to react when things don't go so well:
Self-compassion vs. self-criticism

Worksheet 5: A Sticky Situation

Individual activity – then discuss in small groups

Think back on a recent situation where things didn't go as well as planned... e.g., a sporting match, assignment/test, or a music performance

Thoughts (what were you saying to yourself?)

Feelings (what were your emotions at the time? How intense were they?)

Behaviours (What did you do?)

Worksheet 6: Practising self-compassion

Individual activity: Imagine one of your closest friends has just failed a test they had studied really hard for and really hoped to do well – if you had to write them a letter giving them advice on how to apply self-compassion so they can get back to work and study, what would be in it? Follow the steps below...

First, let them know you understand how they are feeling and thinking

Second, remind them of the bigger picture – why they are special to you, what has gone well in their life in different areas

Third, remind them that it is important to learn from this and be kind to themselves so they can “get back on the bike” and try again e.g., everyone fails sometimes, this is a way of figuring out what to work on in order to do better next time, one failed test doesn’t need to affect your whole life, your self-worth/value as a person does not depend on one test

Fourth, give some practical and helpful advice on where to from here e.g., take a break and do something relaxing or fun, talk to the teacher about what they can do to improve, take home some practice tests

Out of Class Work: Practising self-compassion

Choose a situation this week when things don't go so well to sit down and write yourself a letter practising self-compassion, in a similar way you did during the last lesson to a friend. Use the template below if you need help. Rate how you feel before the letter, and after the letter.

How do you feel before writing this letter?

1 (very low) 2 (somewhat low) 3 (average) 4 (somewhat good) 5 (very good)

Tips for writing the letter

First, acknowledge what you are feeling and thinking

Second, remind yourself of the bigger picture – what are your positive qualities, what has gone well in your life in different areas

Third, remind yourself that it is important to learn from this and be kind to yourself so you can “get back on the bike” and try again e.g., everyone fails sometimes, this is a way of figuring out what to work on in order to do better next time, one failed test doesn't need to affect your whole life, your self-worth/value does not depend on one test

Fourth, give some practical and helpful advice to yourself on where to from here e.g., take a break and do something relaxing or fun, talk to the teacher about what they can do to improve, take home some practice tests

Dear me,

Love, me

How do you feel after writing the letter and re-reading it to yourself?

1 (very low) 2 (somewhat low) 3 (average) 4 (somewhat good) 5 (very good)

Worksheet 7: The two coaches

Small group activity – discuss and then feed back to the class

Basketball Story:

Imagine that you are getting coaching sessions to learn to play basketball. This is something you have wanted to do for a long time and are excited and determined to try hard in the lessons.

Now imagine that you have lessons under two different coaches: Coach Critic, and Coach Compassion.

Coach Critic doesn't say anything to you when you bounce or pass the ball. However, when you drop the ball or miss a catch, Coach Critic calls you names, such as a "you're a wimp," "you're pathetic," and "you're useless." He says that unless you can play perfectly, you are a bad person and no one in the team will like you.

Coach Compassion is different. He doesn't tell you off when you mess up, but instead encourages you and tells you that you are doing well when you catch or pass the ball. He says things like "It's OK to make mistakes because it helps us to learn how to do it better." He takes time with you at the end of practice and tells you what you did well and what skills you can work on and what can be improved. He gives each player specific skills to work on over the week to make them better.

Coach Critic versus Coach Compassion

1. What type of thoughts do you think you would have about yourself after working with each coach? How does this make you feel?
 - Coach Critic
 - Coach Compassion
2. Which coach would you choose for your friends? Why? What about for yourself?
3. Which coach do you think would get a better performance? Why?

Research spotlight:

The effects of self-compassion vs self-criticism on goals and achievement

Warren, R., Smeets, E., & Neff, K. (2016). *Self-criticism and self-compassion: Risk and resilience*. *Current Psychiatry Reports*, 15(12), 18-33.
Powers TA, Koestner R, Zuroff DC, Milyavskaya M, Gorin AA. *The effects of self-criticism and self-oriented perfectionism on goal pursuit*. *Pers Soc Psychol Bull*. 2011 Jul;37(7):964-75.

MYTH:

“If I let go of self-criticism, I won’t achieve my best”

RESEARCH SHOWS
THE OPPOSITE IS TRUE

SELF-CRITICISM

- Focus = avoiding failure and disapproval
- Chew on worries, procrastinate, show poor problem solving skills
- Single minded pursuit of goals – miss out on fun
- Worse progress towards goals

SELF-COMPASSION

- Focus = gaining knowledge and new skills
- Better motivation
- Better resilience (ability to bounce back)
- Better progress towards goals

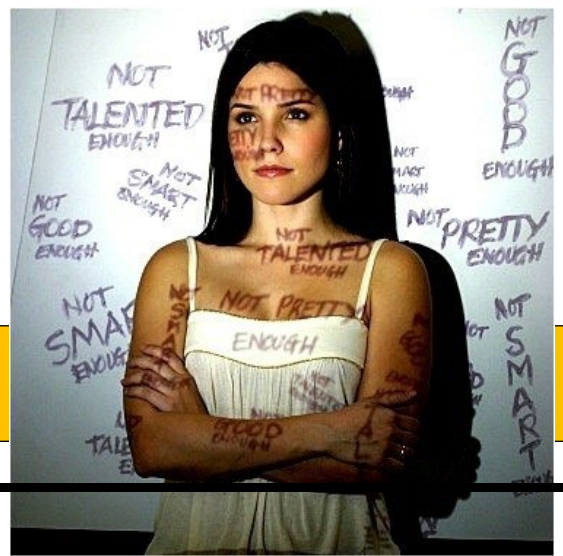
MYTH:

“Self-compassion is weak and soft”

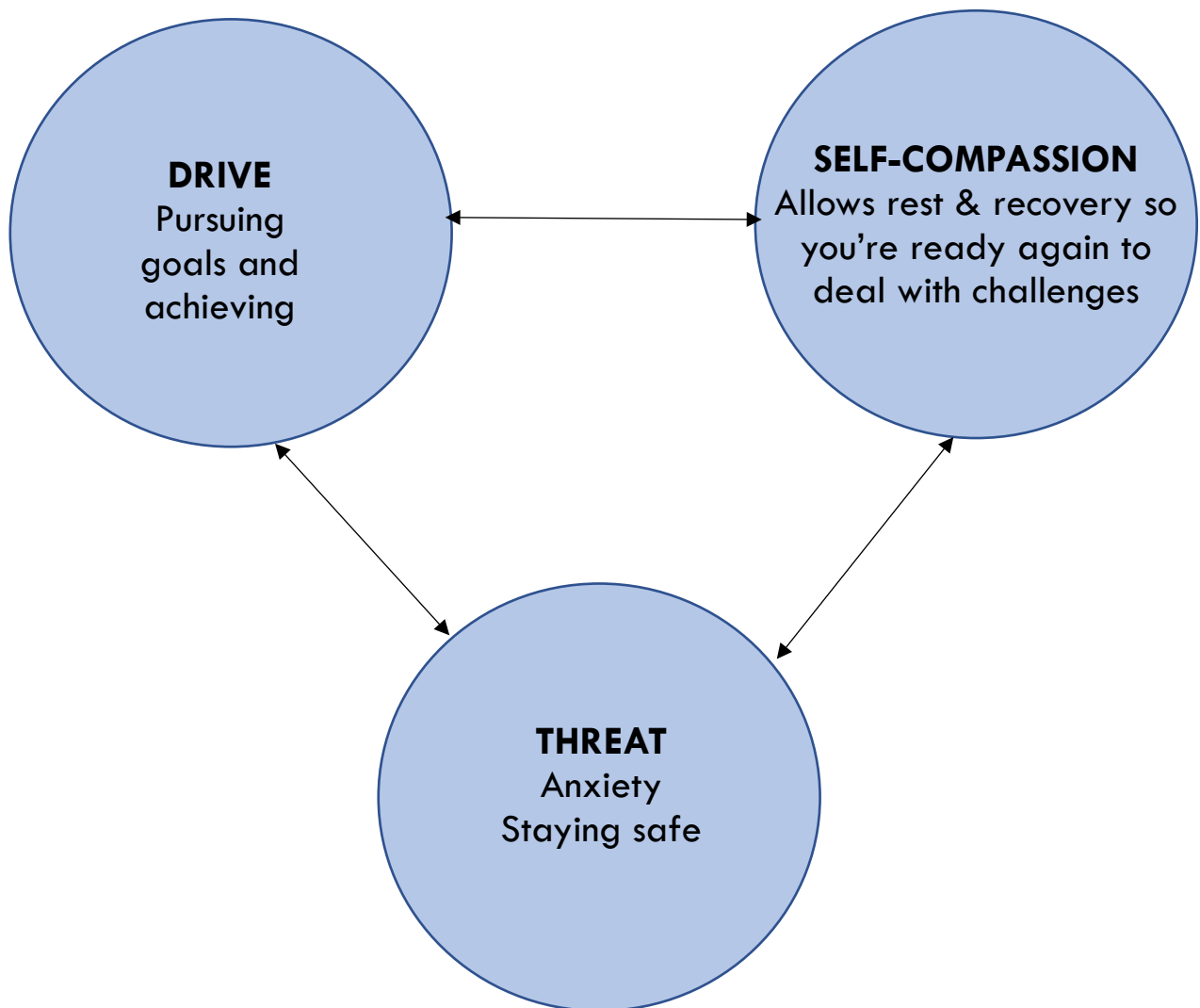
FACT:

Self-compassion is a powerful way to deal with life challenges

the **ugly** side of self-criticism



The key to long term success and achieving goals: A balanced tripod



Worksheet 8: How to combat self-criticism

Small group activity – discuss and then feed back to the class

Brainstorm some activities or things you can do to turn self-criticism into self-compassion.

Ideas can be from these lessons, or any new ideas you come up with yourself

Out of class work: Self-Compassion Journal

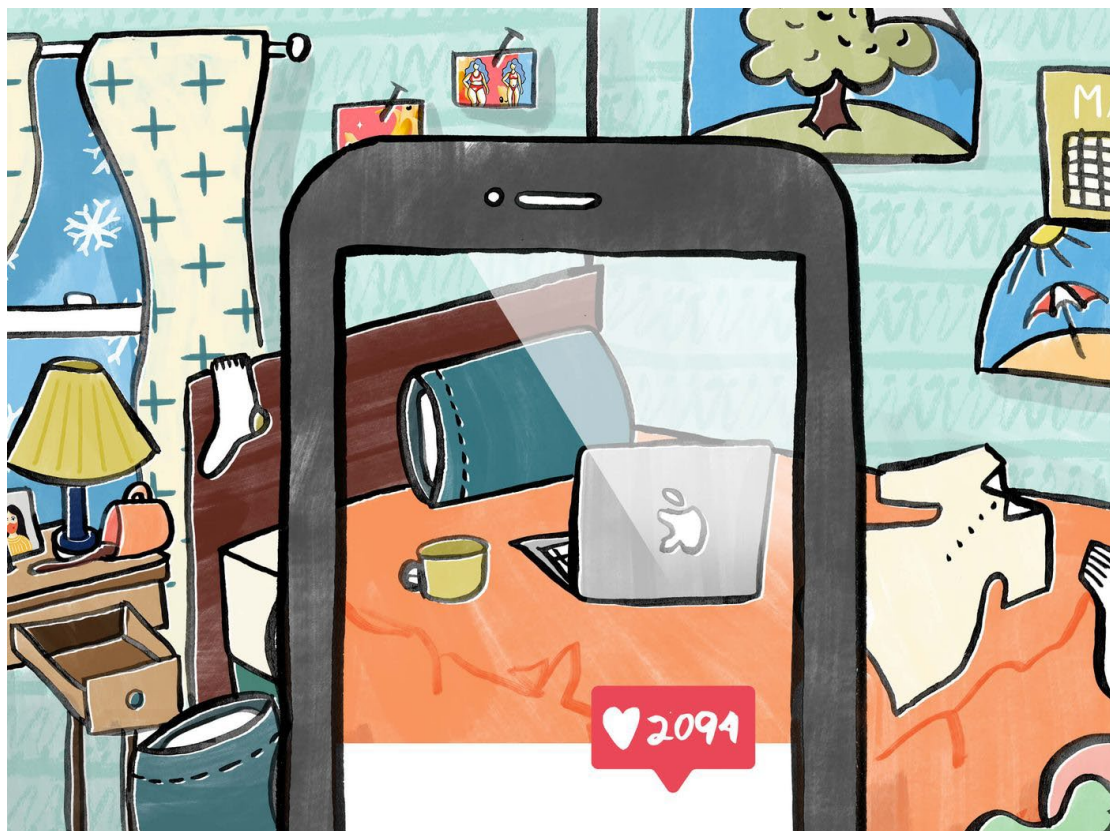
One of the ways to combat self-criticism is to fill out a self-compassion journal. This week, whenever you are feeling self-critical of yourself, fill out a self-compassion journal and see how it makes you feel! An example is filled in for you in the first box.

What was the situation?	What were my self-critical thoughts and behaviours?	What did I feel?	What are some alternative, kind things I could say about myself?	What actions can I do to make myself feel better?
<i>I made a mistake when I put up my hand to answer a question in Math's class</i>	<i>"You're stupid, don't put your hand up for anything again". I didn't talk to anyone at recess because of it.</i>	<i>Ashamed and embarrassed.</i>	<i>I'm smart and I gave it my best shot, I was brave to try and answer that hard question. Everyone makes mistakes.</i>	<i>Taking the dog for a walk and got an ice-cream with dad.</i>

Notes...

Lesson 5:

Keeping up Appearances: Social Media and the Pressure to be perfect



Worksheet 9: How does social media influence us to try and be perfect?

Small group activity – discuss with peers and then feedback to class

Worksheet 10: Social Media and Perfection

Think about the following questions in small groups and write down some dot points to feed back to the class

What are the main messages of the video?

Does your real life differ from your online life? How is it different? Why?

How can this 'perfect ideal' on social media be problematic?

What qualities do you actually value in good friends? Do you need your friends to be perfect?

Summing up....

- Strive for excellence,
but enjoy life too
- Do things you enjoy that are just for fun!
- Taking breaks improves
your performance
- You are more than your
achievements
- Making mistakes makes
you smarter!
- Celebrate success
- Your inner voice - Coach Critic or Coach Compassion?
- The tripod of balance
- Remember the pressures to be perfect on social media
- an edited version of reality – and not what we expect or value from our friends



Worksheet 11: Final Reflection

Using your workbook to refresh your memory, write down some dot points for the following questions:

During this course, what ideas did you find most enjoyable, interesting or helpful?

How will you apply these in your life now?

Out of Class Activity: Social Media and Perfection

During this week, use the Instagram template poster given in class and place a photo inside, with something “real” that happened to you during the week. Feel free to pair it with a caption. Be as funny and as creative as you like! We will place the posters around the room. Below is some inspiration for you

