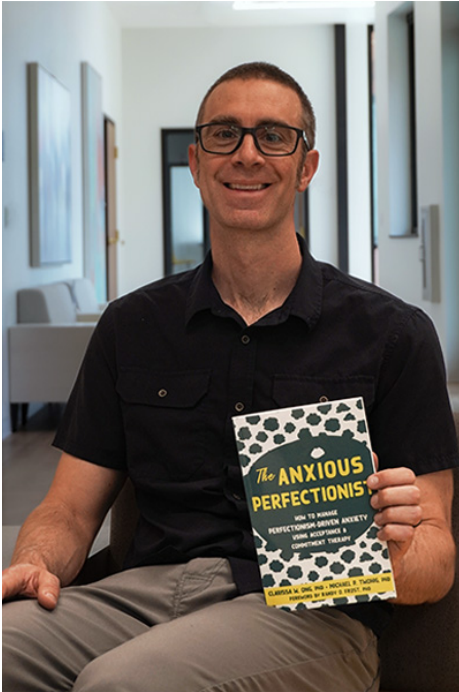


Mike Twohig Co-Authors Book to Help Readers Overcome Perfectionism

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Dr. Mike Twohig

After contributing to numerous academic journals, studies, and articles throughout his career, USU Psychology professor Dr. Mike Twohig recently took his first foray into the world of popular publishing.

Twohig is the co-author of *The Anxious Perfectionist*, a self-help book based in Acceptance and Commitment Therapy that helps individuals recognize how perfectionism may be creating stress, anxiety, and unhappiness in their lives. The book is a collaboration with Dr. Clarissa Ong, a Ph.D. student of Twohig's who has graduated and is starting as a faculty member at the University of Toledo in the fall of 2022. Ong's dissertation, which was funded by the International OCD Foundation, was on the treatment of clinical perfectionism. When she was approached by New Harbinger Publications about taking her research to a broader audience, Ong wanted Twohig on board.

"Clarissa is a superstar and was the leader in writing this book," said Twohig, adding that he enjoyed the opportunity to write for a different audience than he has in the past. "This was my first book for the public, and I really enjoyed writing in the way that I talk in the therapy room rather than how I would for a journal article for other scholars."

The Anxious Perfectionist aims to help those who experience perfectionism as part of other issues such as obsessive compulsive disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, or obsessive compulsive personality disorder. It can also help those who are not at a diagnosable level but struggle with symptoms of perfectionism, such as difficulty getting things done on time, a tendency to overdo things, or having a hard time making decisions. These individuals often don't even realize their perfectionism is contributing to their problems; Twohig and Ong's work can help people recognize where perfectionism is interfering with their ability to live according to their values.

"People who are overly perfectionistic do not see perfectionism as a problem; most likely, they see perfectionism as an attribute," said Twohig. "Like most attributes, there are times they help us and times they hold us back. Look at the outcomes of perfectionism and see if there are parts of it that could use a little adjustment. Are you late on lots of things? Do you worry about things long before you need to? Do you judge others for the way they do things? If so, it might be worth looking at how you interact with your perfectionism."

Because individuals with perfectionism often don't realize the negative impacts of their perfectionism, helping them realize a need to adjust their habits and thinking can be more difficult. Twohig is excited by the challenge to help people see their world in new, healthier ways. "With almost all other diagnoses I work with, the person hates it—most people hate the feeling of anxiety or depression," said Twohig. "But those who are perfectionistic often like their perfectionism, so they can miss the places where it's creating unhappiness. I enjoyed working with people to slow down, look at their lives, see how they were living, and be open to making some changes."

The Anxious Perfectionist: How to Manage Perfectionism-Driven Anxiety Using Acceptance and Commitment Therapy is currently available in print and digital formats on [Amazon](#), as well as on [New Harbinger's website](#).