

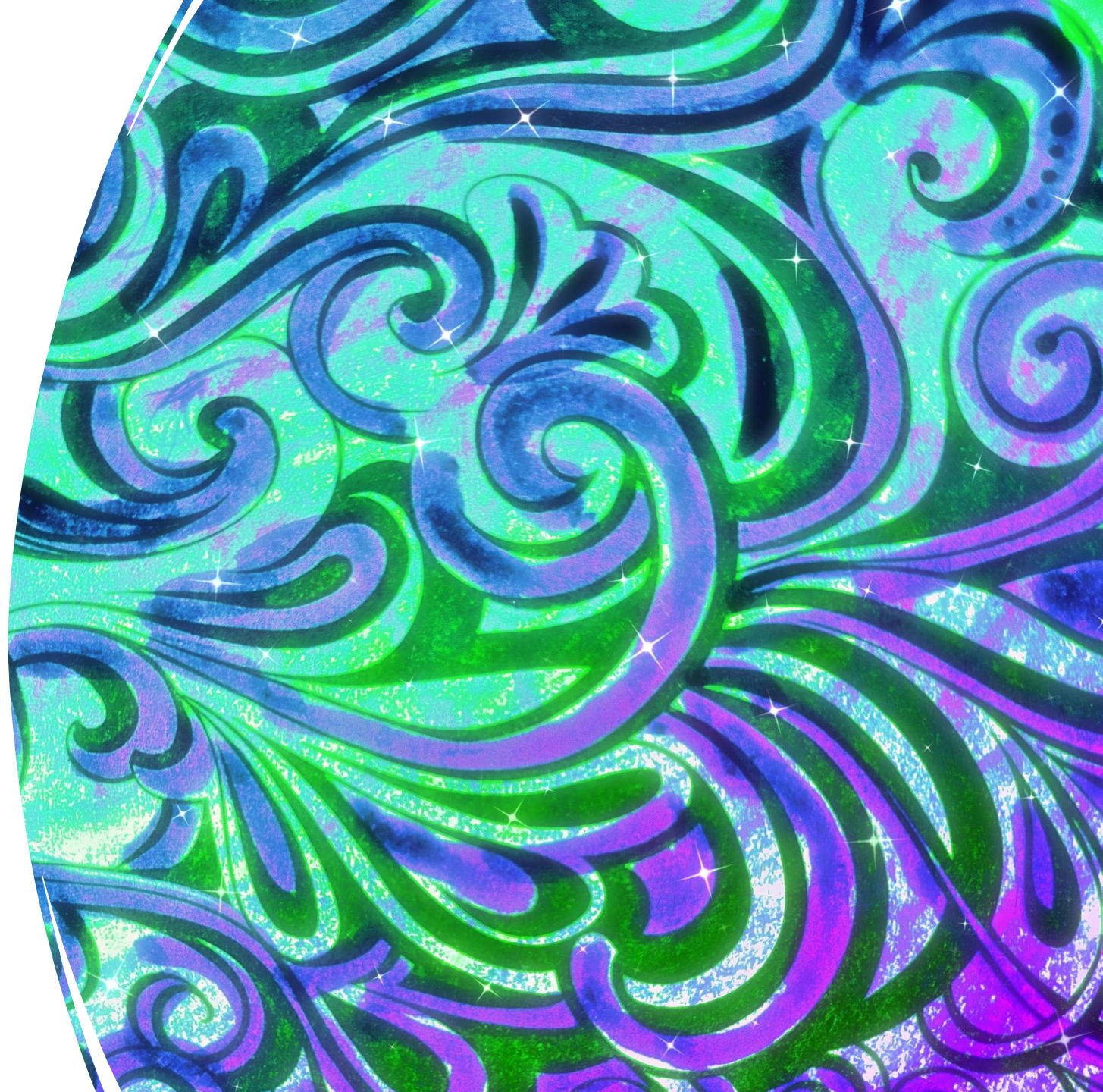


Behavior Change : Self-Efficacy

We Thrive Together

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is a person's belief in their ability to complete a task or achieve a goal. It spans a person's confidence in themselves to control their behavior, influence their environment, and stay motivated in the pursuit of their goal.





Self-efficacy is important

Self-efficacy is important because it has a role in how you feel about yourself and whether or not you achieve your goals in life.

The concept of self-efficacy is central to Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory. According to Bandura, self-efficacy is part of the self comprised of a person's attitudes, abilities, and cognitive skills.

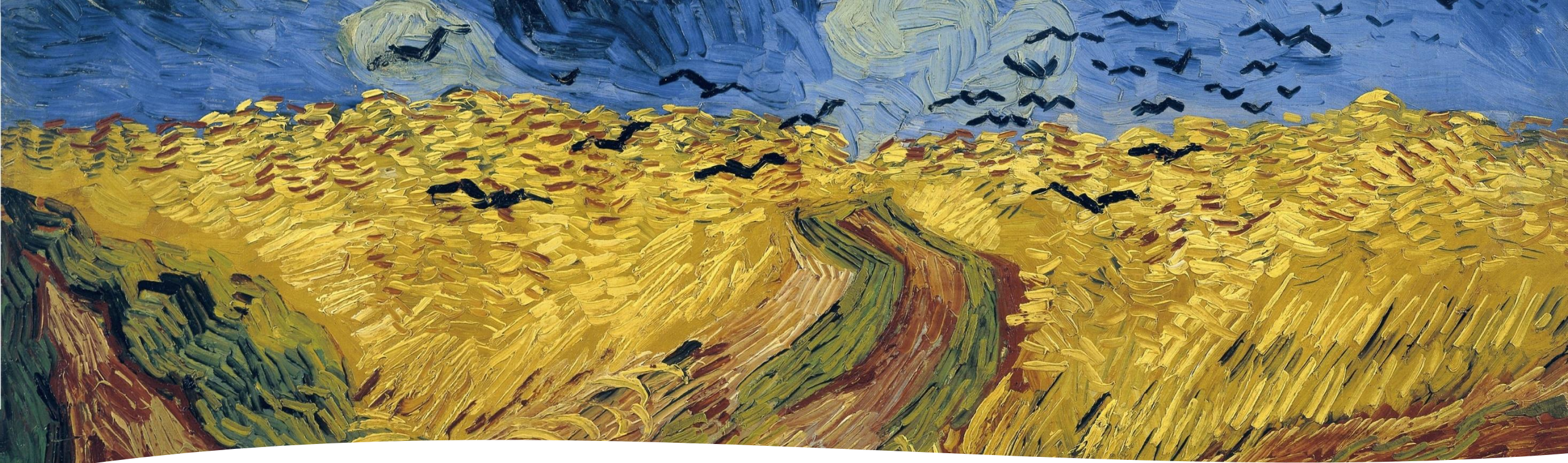
Our belief in our own ability to succeed plays a role in how we think, how we act, and how we feel about our place in the world.

Challenges

When facing a challenge, do you feel like you can rise-up and accomplish your goal or do you give up?

If you tend to keep going in the face of obstacles, you probably have a high degree of self-efficacy.





Building Self-efficacy

Fortunately, self-efficacy is a psychological skill that you can foster and strengthen.

Start by looking for ways to incorporate sources of self-efficacy into your life.

- **Acknowledge and celebrate your success**
- **Observe your mentors and peers**
- **Get positive feedback**
- **Practice positive self-talk**



Four major influences on self-efficacy

- Mastery of experiences – learning opportunities that arise when you take on a new challenge and succeed at it.
- Social role-models – seeing people with a high level of self-efficacy succeed because of their efforts can inspire you to believe that you too can succeed.
- Imaginal experiences – visualizing yourself behaving successfully in a given situation can help build self-efficacy
- Emotional and physiological states – learning to regulate your anxiety and mood, especially while facing challenges, can help enhance your self-efficacy.

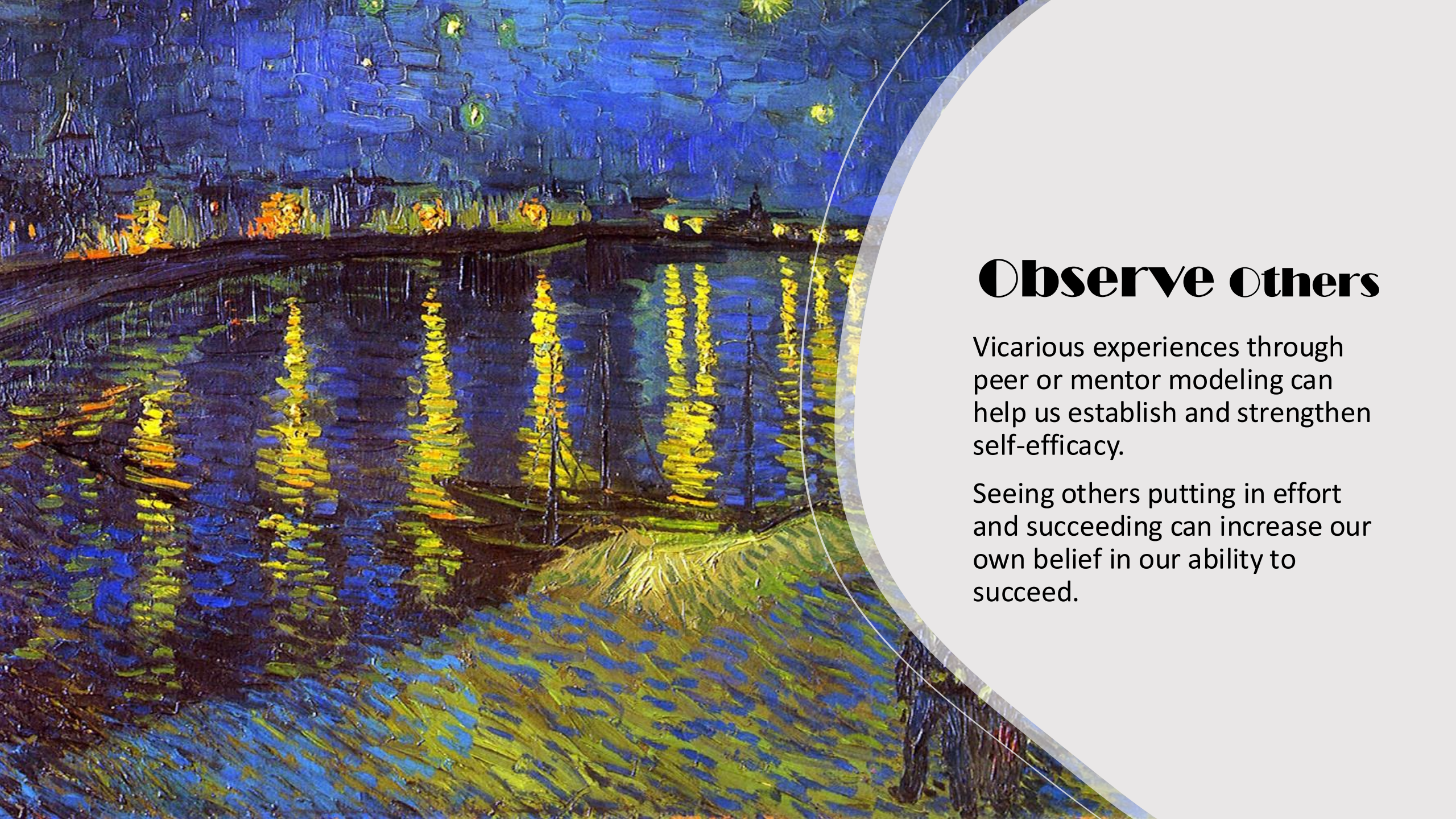
Celebrate YOUR SUCCESS

“Mastery experiences” play a critical part in establishing self-efficacy because they create a strong sense of self-belief.

When you succeed at something, you are able to build a powerful belief in your ability.

Work on setting goals that are achievable, but not necessarily easy.





Observe Others

Vicarious experiences through peer or mentor modeling can help us establish and strengthen self-efficacy.

Seeing others putting in effort and succeeding can increase our own belief in our ability to succeed.

Positive Affirmations

Seek positive affirmations. Hearing positive feedback from others can help improve your sense of self-efficacy.

Examples: your doctor telling you that you are doing a good job sticking to your diet plan can be encouraging.

Feedback from friends, mentors, health practitioners, and people who you respect can help you feel greater confidence in your own abilities.





Thoughts and Emotions

Pay attention to your thoughts and emotions.

Of you find yourself getting stressed out or nervous before a challenging event, you might feel less sure of your ability to cope with the task at hand.

Looking for ways to manage your emotions and thoughts about what you are trying to accomplish is another way to boost your self-efficacy

Positive self-talk promotes self-belief.

Positive self-talk

Self-talk is the way your inner voice makes sense of the world around you and the way you communicate with your inner self.

If your self-talk is generally negative, you may be perceiving events in your life as more stressful than they need to be and creating unnecessary anxiety and stress for yourself.

You also may succumb to rumination, a pattern of negative thinking that can consume your idle time and bring stress from the past into the present unnecessarily without leading to any resolution.





Ways to stop negative self-talk and use your mind to boost your productivity and self-esteem

Notice your patterns – the first step toward change is to become more aware of the problem

Journal writing – journaling can be an effective tool for examining your inner process, thoughts, and feelings

Thought-stopping – as you notice yourself saying something negative in your mind, you can stop your thought mid-stream by saying to yourself “STOP”.

Rubber-band snap – another therapeutic trick is to walk around with a rubber band around your wrist. As you notice negative self-talk, pull the band away from your skin and let it snap back.

Replace Negative Statements

A good way to stop a bad habit is to replace it with something better. Once you are aware of your inner dialogue, you can frame it in a positive light.

Milder wording – instead of using words like ‘hate’ and ‘angry’, you can use words like ‘I don’t like’ and ‘annoyed’

Negative to neutral or positive – As you find yourself mentally complaining about something, rethink your assumptions. Are you assuming something is negative when it isn’t necessarily?

example: having your plans cancel at the last minute can seem like a negative, but what you do with your newly-freed schedule can be what you make of it.





Self-limiting statements to questions

Self-limiting statements like “I can’t handle this!” or “This is impossible!” are particularly damaging because they increase your stress *and* they stop you from searching for solutions.

The next time you find yourself thinking something that limits the possibilities in a given situation, turn it into a question.

“how can I handle this?” or “how is this possible?” sound more hopeful and open up your imagination to new possibilities



Benefits of self-efficacy

Self-efficacy has significant influence in fields like education, research, and medical practice, but is a beneficial trait for anyone to cultivate in themselves.

Resilience to stress

Having a high level of self-efficacy can help you change your perspective on stressful issues. Instead of allowing self-doubt to bother you at stressful times, you may be inspired to develop solutions that work for you.





Healthy Lifestyle Habits

High self-efficacy can help you lead a healthy lifestyle.

For instance, if your exercise routine is hard, you may find the internal encouragement to finish your routine.

Educational Achievement

Students with high self-efficacy feel that if they put their minds to it, they can overcome any difficulty. A Learner with high self=efficacy will create objectives for themselves and employ tactics to assist them in reaching these goals.





References

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