Nicola Currie: 2029342

Module 6 BMPF7010

Presence Over Perfection: A Mixed-Methods Evaluation of a 30-Day Mindfulness Course for Perfectionistic Music Performance Anxiety

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Appendix A - Participant Consent Form full participant responses

A 30 Day Mindfulness Course for Singers

33 responses

Publish analytics

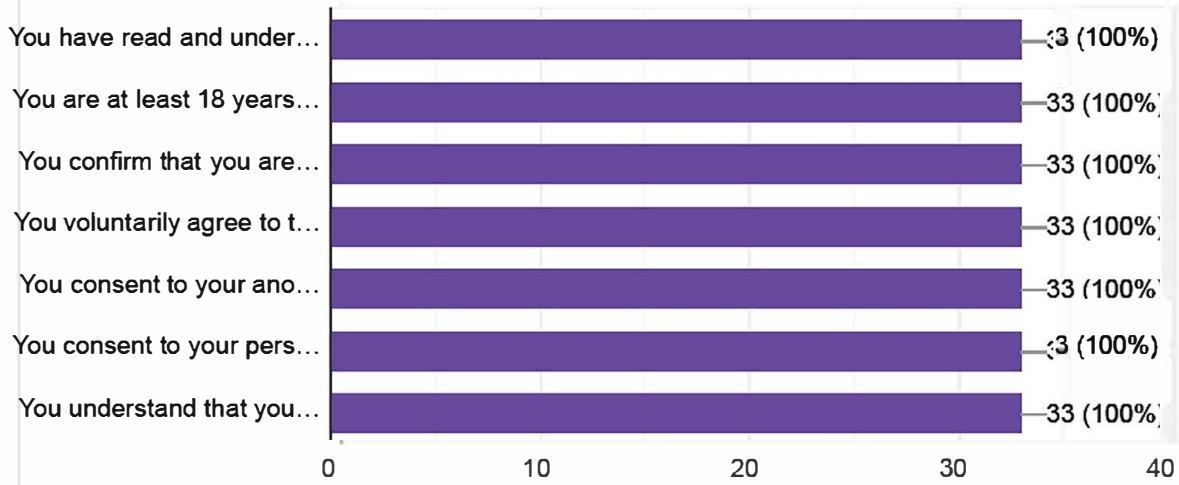
Presence Over Perfection - A 30 Day Mindfulness Course for Singers.

Consent

Copy

By signing below, you confirm that:

33 responses



Full Name (to serve as your digital signature):

33 responses

Tolu [redacted]

Michelle [redacted]

JUNE [redacted]

Maria [redacted]

Judith [redacted]

Lou [redacted]

LIBBY [redacted]

Rebecca [redacted]

Denise [redacted]

Chris [redacted]

Jackie [redacted]

Linda [redacted]

Justine [redacted]

Rachel [redacted]

Caz [redacted]

Laura [redacted]

Suzannah [redacted]

Bridget [redacted]

Caroline [redacted]

Sally [redacted]

Maninder [redacted]

Jenny [redacted]

Jessica [redacted]

Lisa [redacted]

Jane [redacted]

Jill [redacted]

Nutun [redacted]

Sally [redacted]

Karen [redacted]

Coral [redacted]

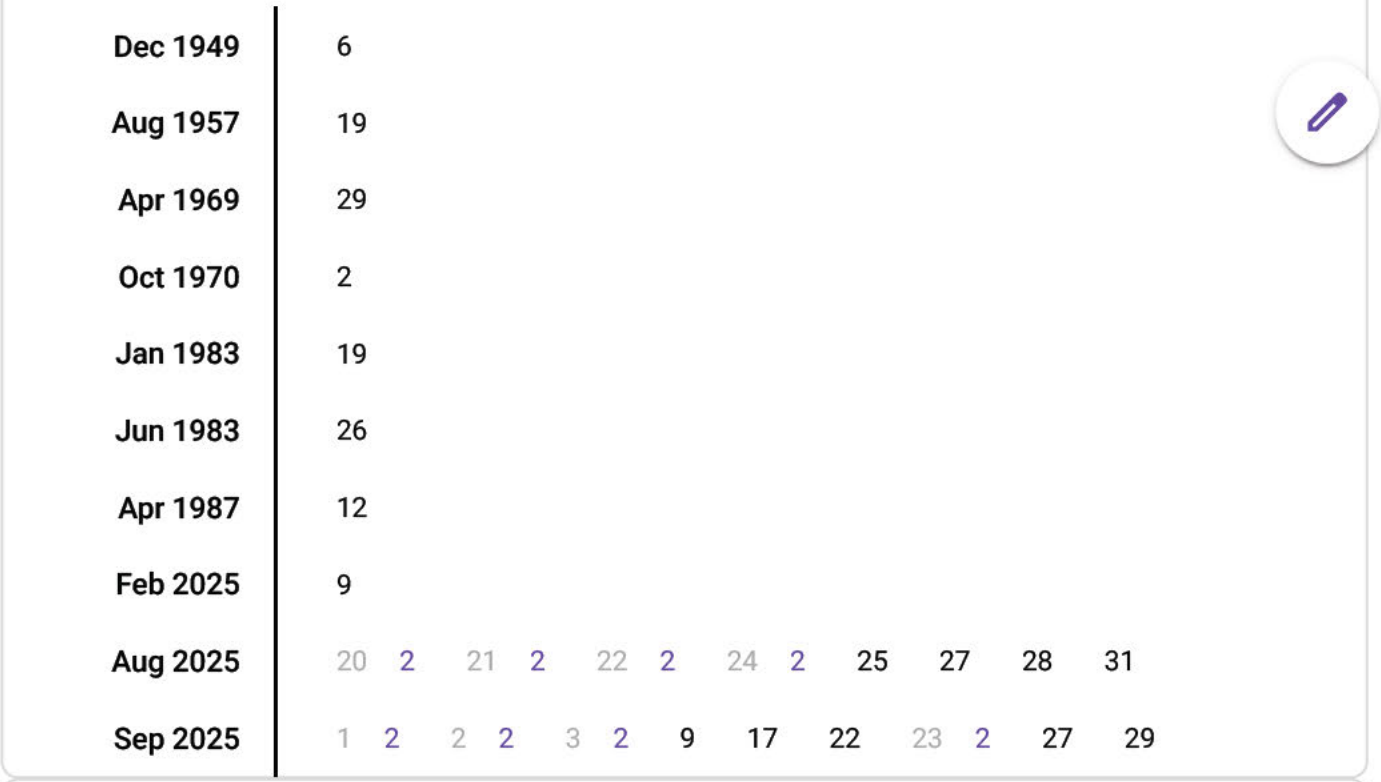
Chrissy [redacted]

Mel [redacted]

Lynsey [redacted]

Date:

33 responses



Please can you state your full name and a very brief description of your singing experience.

33 responses

Tolu [redacted] i have been singing for a years, but the one thing I struggle with is being present during my live performances and end up rushing to finish so I can leave the stage. I would really like for my nerves to chill so I can connect authentically with my audience.

Michelle [redacted] - I have been a member of MK Women's choir for 9-10 years and have enjoyed performing many times. I would love to perform a solo part but I still lack the confidence as I don't like the sound of my voice. I hope the mindfulness course will change this view.

June [redacted] I always sang in choirs as a child and young adult into my early 20s. Then when work took over, I didn't sing in a choir again until I retired. I now sing in 2 choirs and get so

much enjoyment from both the musical and social experience. While I adore singing in my choirs, and feel it does so much for my personal well-being, I've never been confident enough in my ability to sing on my own, and the thought of it fills me with dread.

Maria [redacted] Sing for fun, sing in a choir.

Judith Carole [redacted] I sang in the school choir to quite a high standard, singing madrigals. I sang with the Orpheans and St Mary and St Giles Church Choir and with my husband on guitar

Lou [redacted] I've sung in choirs and small groups since school. I've performed a few solos over the years, but most of my experience is group singing

Libby [redacted] I am a professional singer, trained at Guildhall in Jazz Vocals and in Musical Theatre.

Rebecca [redacted] - amateur singer, member of choir and soloist.

Denise [redacted] I have been a hobby folk singer most of m life.

My name is Chris [redacted] I sing unaccompanied a capella traditional and contemporary folk songs, by myself with my husband and a group of 5 friends in folk clubs and on stage. I struggle terribly with nerves before, during and after performing, which exascerbates my anxiety and can manifest as voice and body tremors. If you require any further info Nicki I'm happy to supply. Kind regards Chris W

Jackie [redacted]
I love to sing with choir and at other events but always feel I'm putting everyone around me off.

Linda [redacted] - choir member

Justine [redacted] sing with a choir and have always loved singing in private

Rachel [redacted] choirs, bands, operatic society, open mics

Caz [redacted] - Was in bands in the 80s and 90s fronting and backing singing, sang at uni, was in a choir that performed Georgian folk songs, performed at numerous events from small to huge audiences, recording studio, couple of TV appearances, played Anita in a small tour of West Side, part of MK Women's choir, done a couple of solos at Vaults session but was v nervous and had a few beers first, sang carols with the Acabellas at Stony Lights switch on. Perfectly happy doing backing and choir but solo freaks me out, I really want to do it but by throat closes up - what is stupid is that I enable actors to do get over this, just can't manage it myself.

Laura [redacted] classically trained with a scholarship (from age 15-18) and had intense stage fright which has improved as I've gotten older. I sing mostly jazz, soul and contemporary music now (at 39). Regularly sing in large and small group settings with a mix of amateur, semi pro and pro singers and semi regularly do gigs on my own, mostly as background and would like to

manage my nerves better especially at solo gigs. I have a solo wedding booking in late September and another in late October so it will be interesting to compare how I feel during each

Suzannah [redacted] - few solos within choir/with choir. Was in a band but only had 3 gigs. Had a few solos/duets within theatre and solo gig at a party.

Bridget [redacted] I enjoy singing with the MK Women's Choir, but have not felt confident enough to sing on my own. I have attended a few singing workshops in the past, including Gospel.

Caroline [redacted] - amateur groups - singing in choir, acting and singing in pantomimes

Sally [redacted]
As a teenager, I sang weekly with a church choir and as a soloist for several years. I did not feel nervous at that time as nobody could see me in the balcony.
I joined Milton Keynes women's choir 3 years ago and love singing with the girls but don't have the confidence to sing solo.

Maninder [redacted] - enthusiastic amateur with relatively frequent recent performance experience

Jenny [redacted]
Active choir member since 2019. Performed solo as part of stage performance, and parts of songs solo with choir. Solo full performance in front of small audience.

Jessica [redacted]
I sing in a choir but am very nervous when singing on my own in front of anyone even family

Lisa [redacted] sing in choir, in trying to push myself I have done a couple of solo performances but find them so stressful I'm considering stopping.

Jane [redacted] An amateur choir singer (approx 8 years). Some one on one singing lessons and one solo performance 6 months ago.

Jill [redacted] - very amateur, only sing quietly with choir, never performed solo

Nutun [redacted]
I have been a member of the me time pop choir since its Inception May 2015.
I have always struggled with singing in front of anyone even my own family, This is what led me to joining the choir, If I am surrounded by people I get confidence. Over the past 10 years I have on three occasions pushed myself to sing solo in showcase events and never been happy with my performance and known That I can sing better and do when on my own in a safe space.
It's always flumoxed me as I don't have the same problem with speaking to people.
During my time at choir I have realised that I have a large vocal range and have sung in the Tenors, Altos and Sopranos, even The Sopranos say I can get to chipmunk level.

I used to do piano lessons as a child, I had a very strict Czechoslavian teacher who I believe beat out most of my musicality, I hated my music lessons. I also had a primary school teacher who once told me I must be tone deaf. I do understand, as an adult, that I shouldn't dwell on stuff like this.

Sally [redacted]

Currently a member of a choir and have been for approx 5 years.
Member of school choirs for 5 years .

Karen [redacted] I have been a member of Milton Keynes Women's Choir since September 2023. I have also performed two solos since becoming a member of the choir. Prior to membership of this choir I was a member of Milton Keynes Community Choir for a short period during 2018/19. Have always sung in church as a member of the congregation. Have always had a little anxiety about singing 'a part' in case I 'got it wrong'. Left the Milton Keynes Community Choir as found it stressful being a member of second sopranos and not being able to hear myself sing (which I didn't know was normal in a choir) and therefor left as I found it stressful. Currently this anxiety has eased when singing as a member of the choir but the fear of 'getting something wrong' is always there when singing solo.

Coral [redacted] - singing on and off over many years and had a long break before starting again in 2025.

Chrissy [redacted] - school choirs, pantomimes in late teens and early 20s. Some solo performances until age marriage late 20s. Then nothing until reached 64 when wanted to get back to love of music. Joined choir have performed couple of solos but v nervous now.

Mel [redacted] - regular singer (worship, harmonies, choirs previously 25+y) but struggle with confidence leading so I don't! Having vocal issues at mo (croaky) - under investigation.

Lynsey [redacted] - I have sang in choirs for many years, sang with a few bands and had a few short solo performances.

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Google Forms

Kenny Music Performance Anxiety Inventory (K-MPAI) Pre-Course

32 responses

Publish analytics

Please create for yourself a **unique anonymous code** using the first two letters of your mother's name and the last two digits of your birth year. Use this same code each time you complete the survey

32 responses

Je49

Maroon

NI75

je61

WI48

Ka71

Ra78

st59

LY83

IT63

AL76

Jo87

DE70

Br56

WO60

CA60

Ja70

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RO56

GL1957

SM69

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Na63

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EL57

Su73

BU86

44

VA79

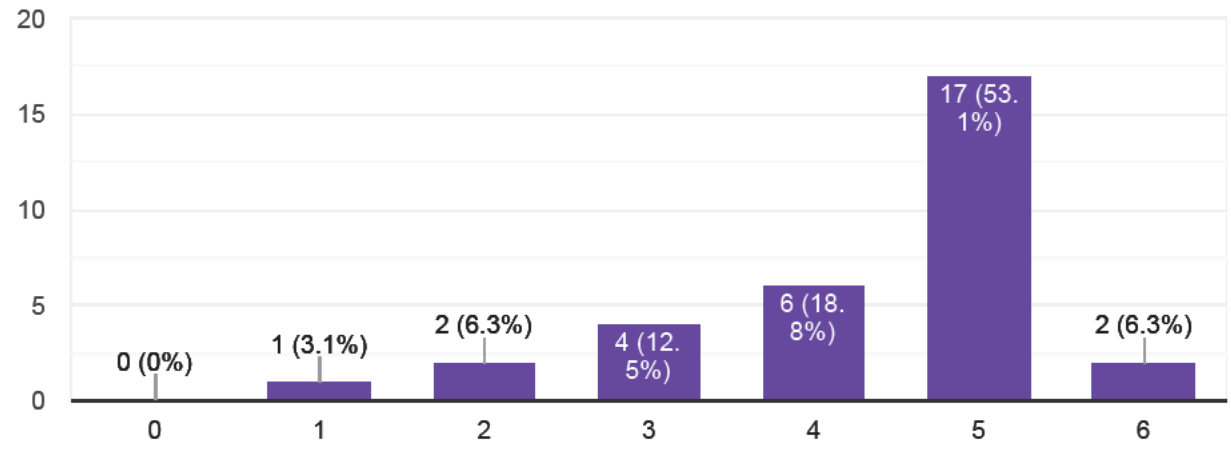
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1. I generally feel in control of my life

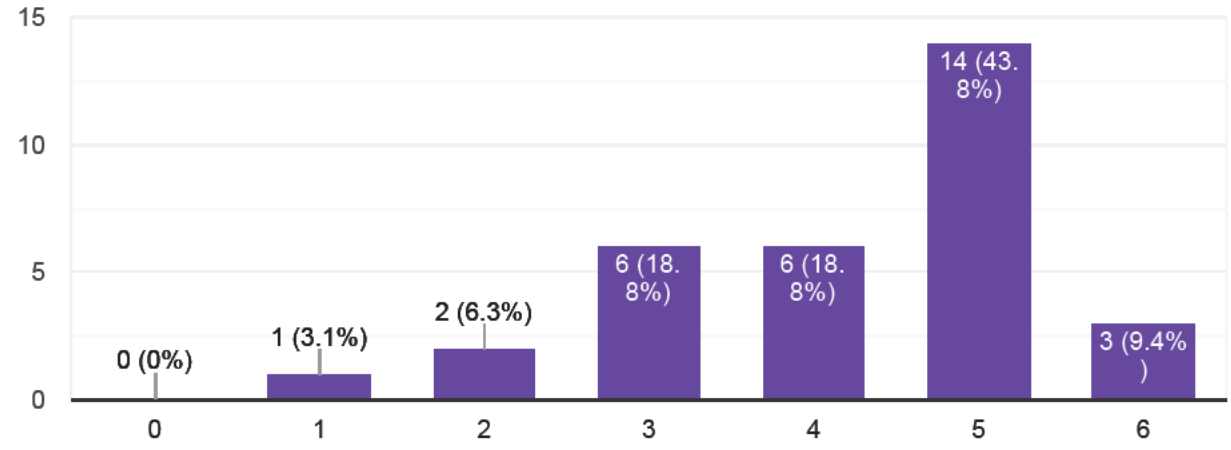
32 responses



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2. I find it easy to trust others

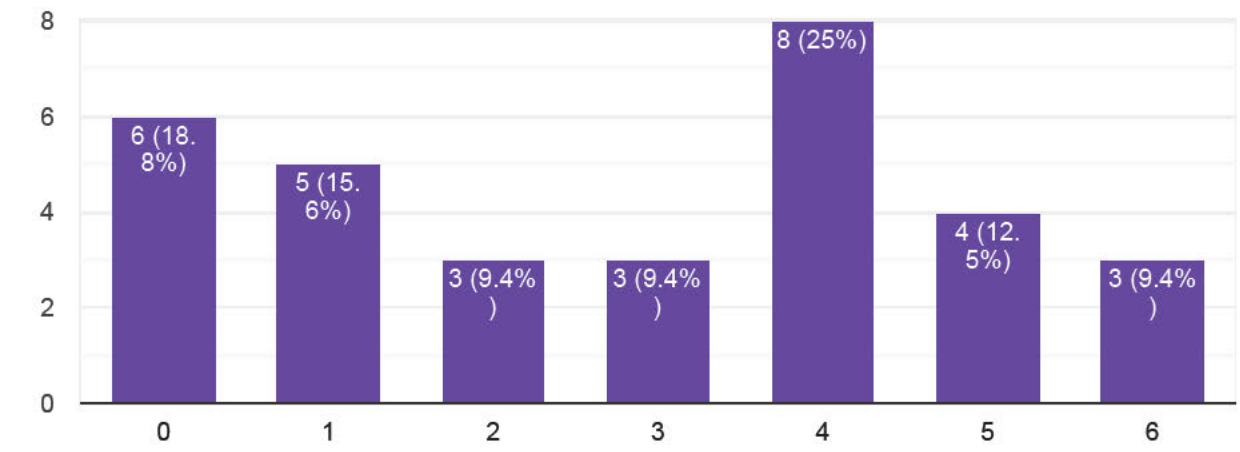
32 responses



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3. Sometimes I feel depressed without knowing why

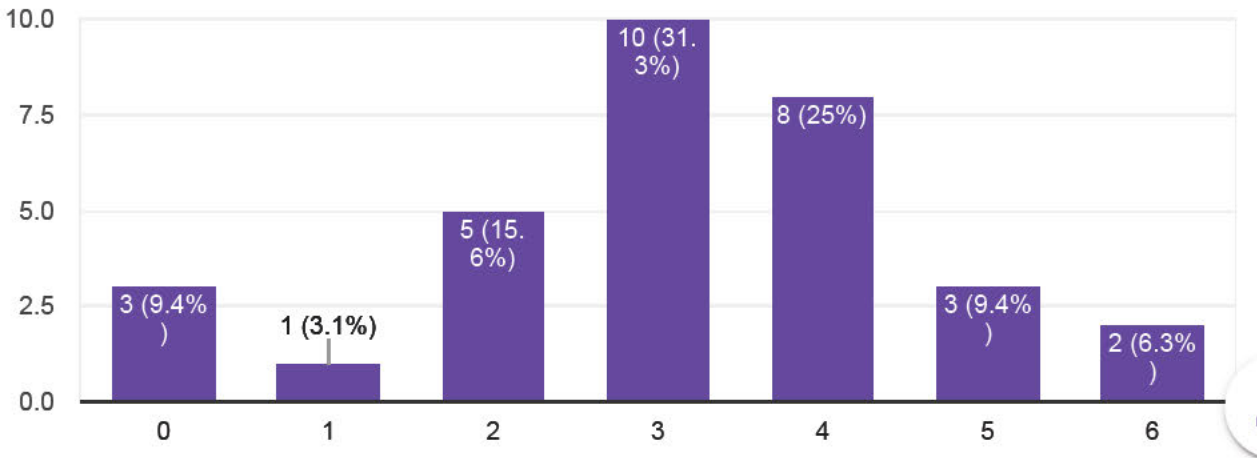
32 responses



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4. I often find it difficult to work up the energy to do things

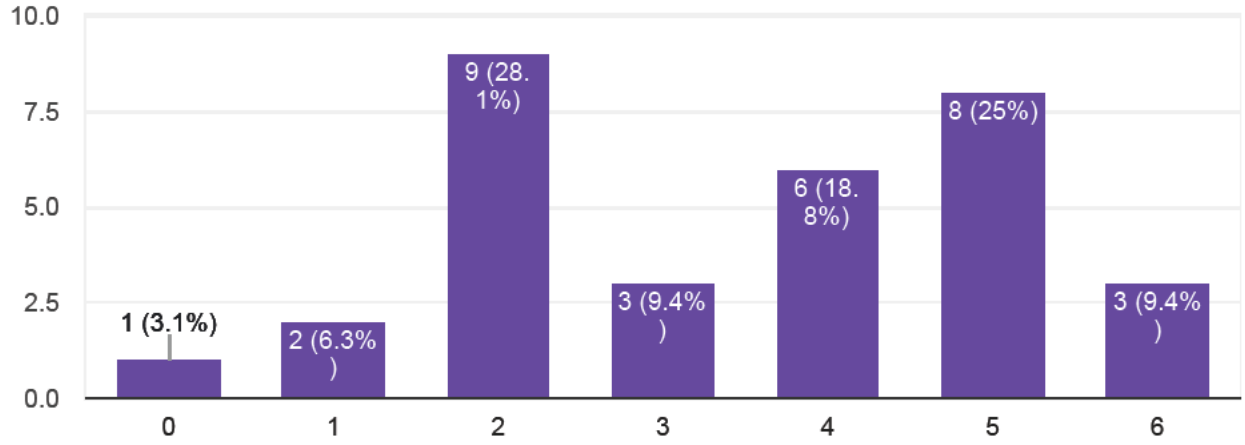
32 responses



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5. Excessive worrying is a characteristic of my family

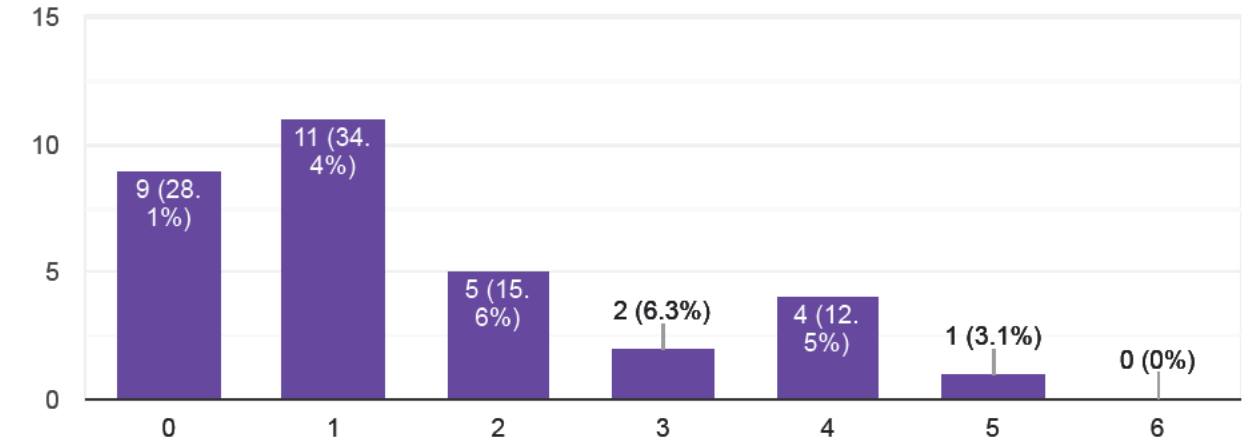
32 responses



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6. I often feel that life has not much to offer me

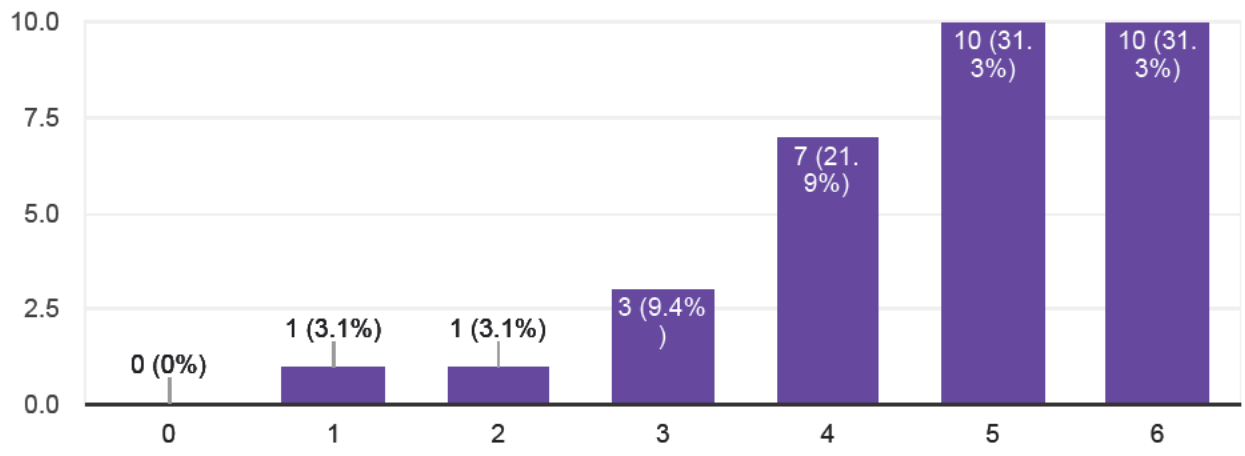
32 responses



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7. Even if I work hard in preparation for a performance, I am likely to make mistakes

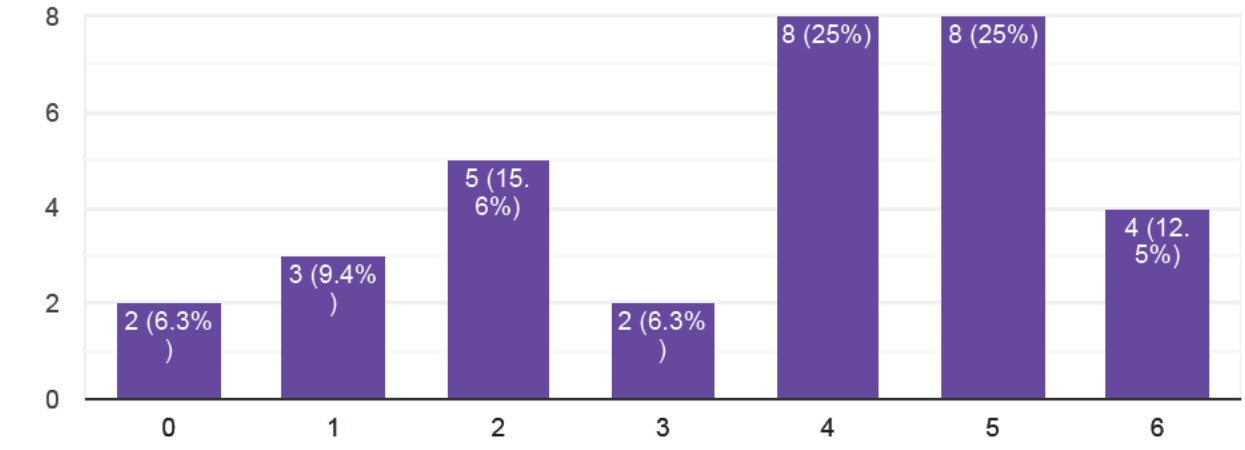
32 responses



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8. I find it difficult to depend on others

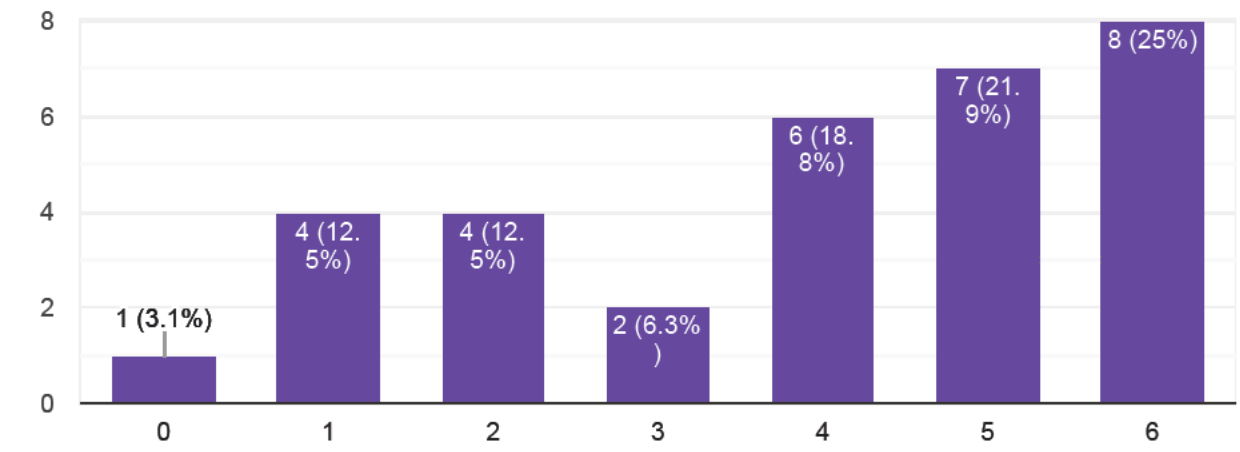
32 responses



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9. My parents were mostly responsive to my needs

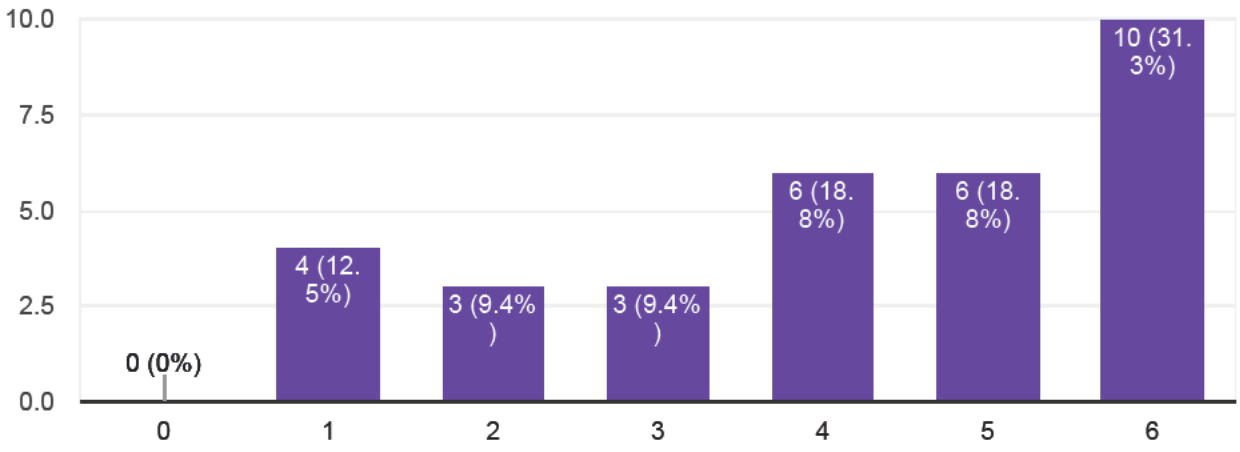
32 responses



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10. Prior to, or during a performance, I get feelings akin to panic

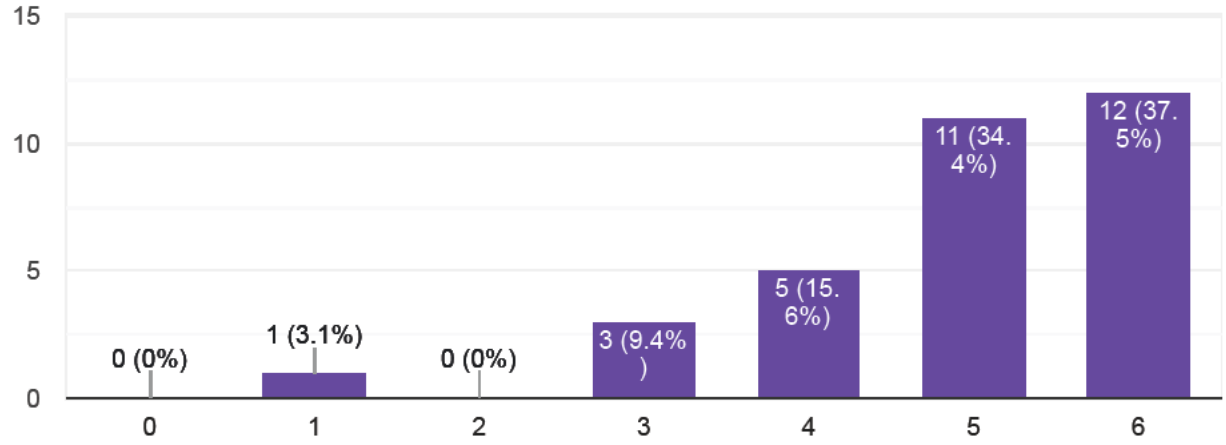
32 responses



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11. I never know before a concert whether I will perform well

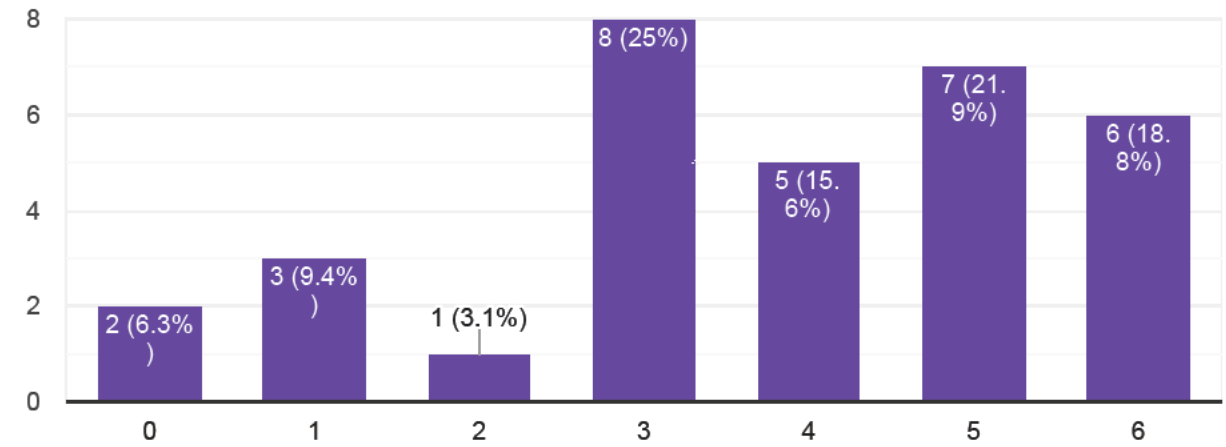
32 responses



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12. Prior to, or during a performance, I experience dry mouth

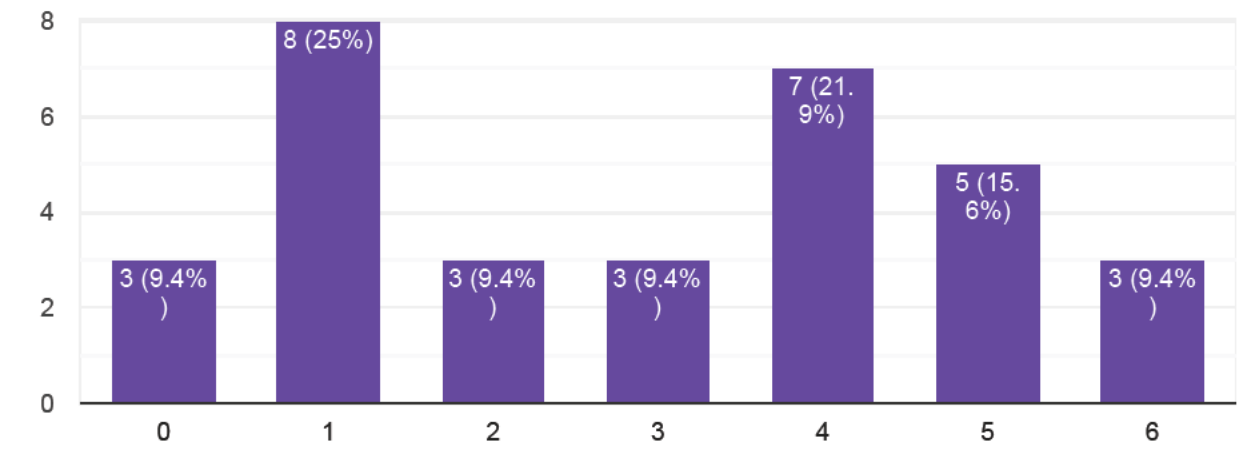
32 responses



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13. I often feel that I am not worth much as a person

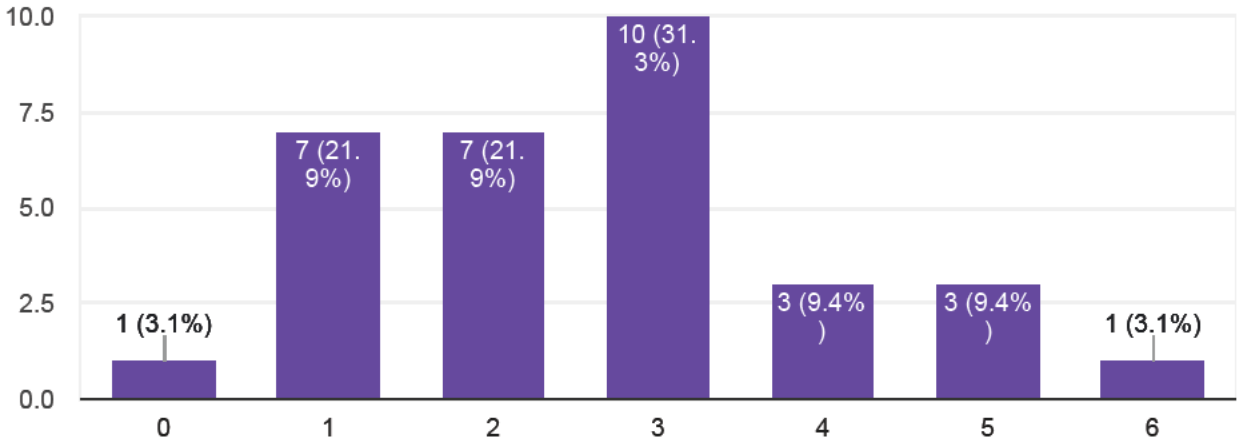
32 responses



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14. During a performance I find myself thinking about whether I'll even get through it

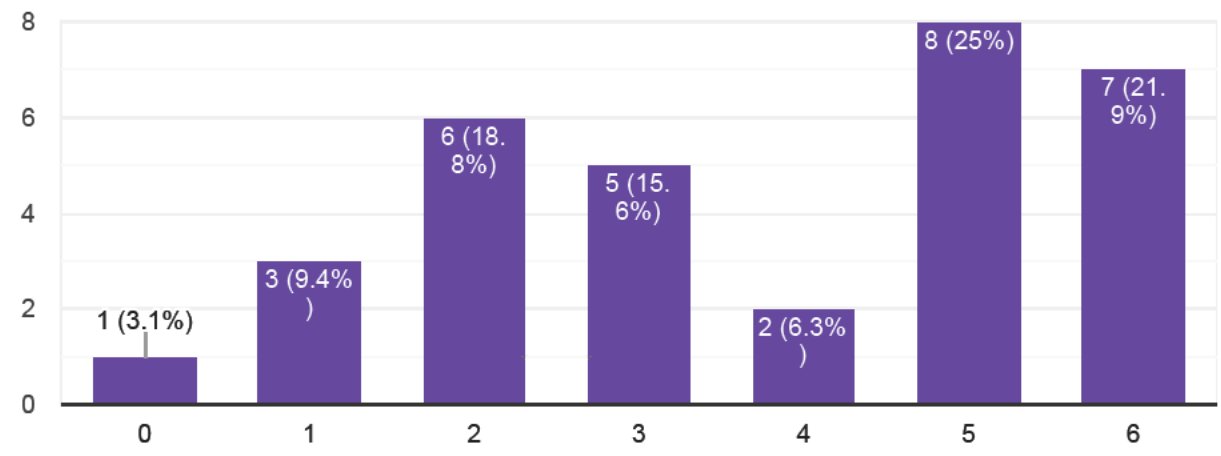
32 responses



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15. Thinking about the evaluation I may get interferes with my performance

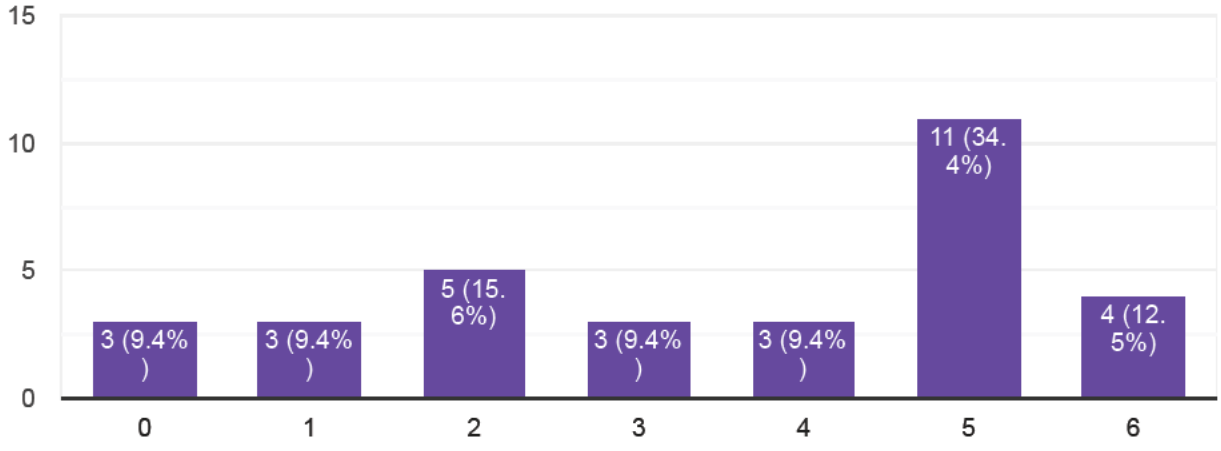
32 responses



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16. Prior to, or during a performance, I feel sick or faint or have a churning in my stomach

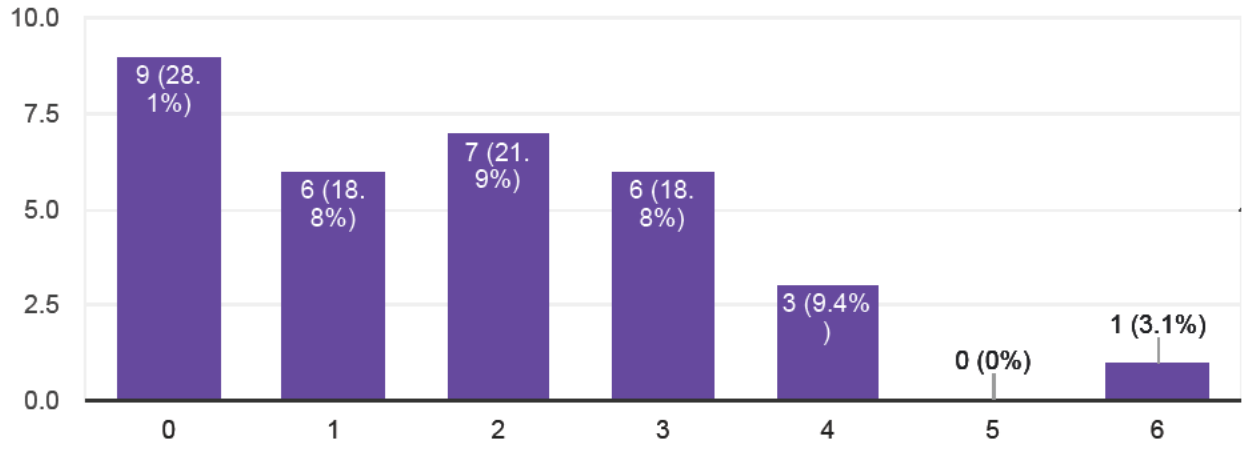
32 responses



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17. Even in the most stressful performance situations, I am confident that I will perform well

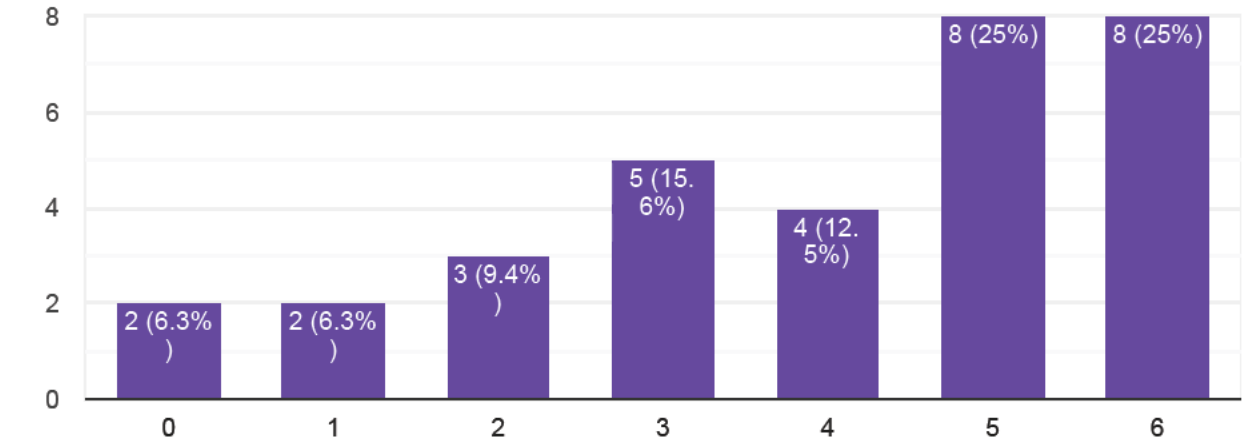
32 responses



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18. I am often concerned about a negative reaction from the audience

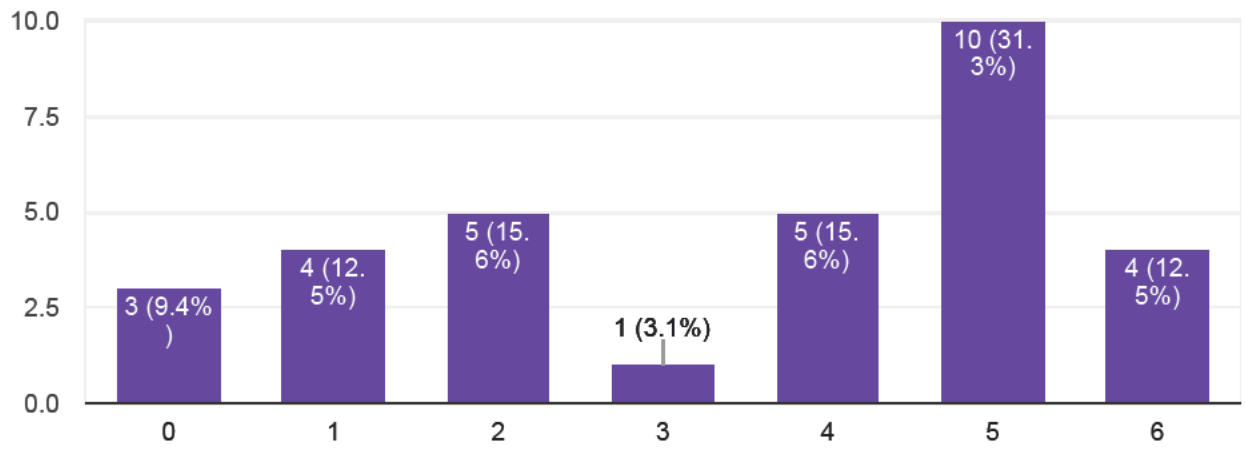
32 responses



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19. Sometimes I feel anxious for no particular reason

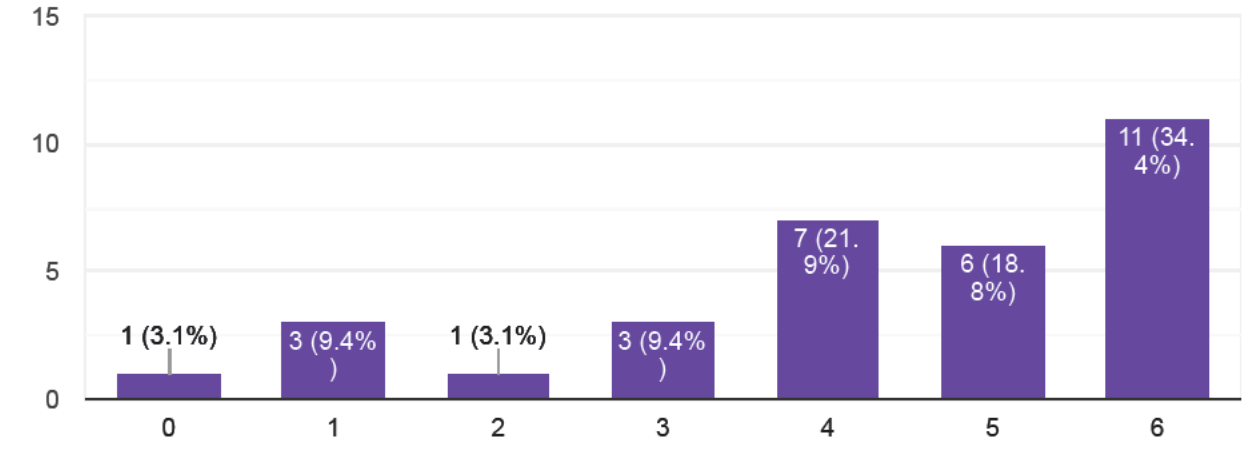
32 responses



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20. From early in my music studies, I remember being anxious about performing

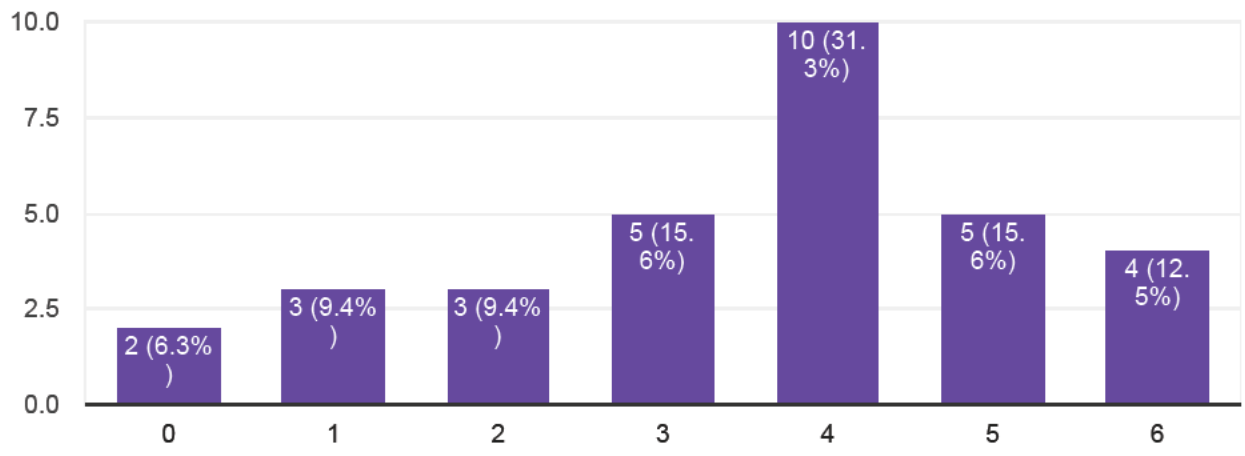
32 responses



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21. I worry that one bad performance may ruin my career/performance opportunities.

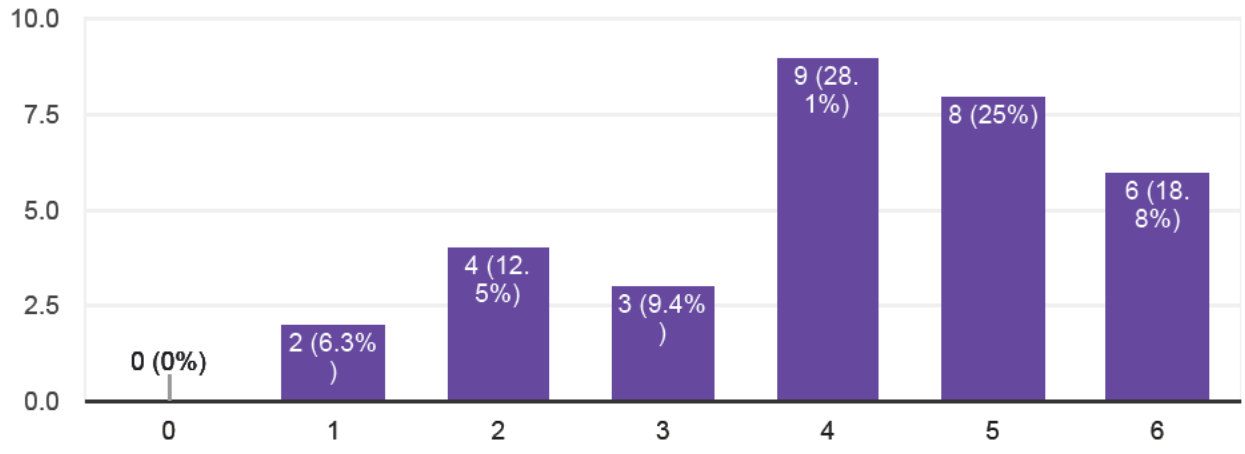
32 responses



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22. Prior to, or during a performance, I experience increased heart rate like pounding in my chest

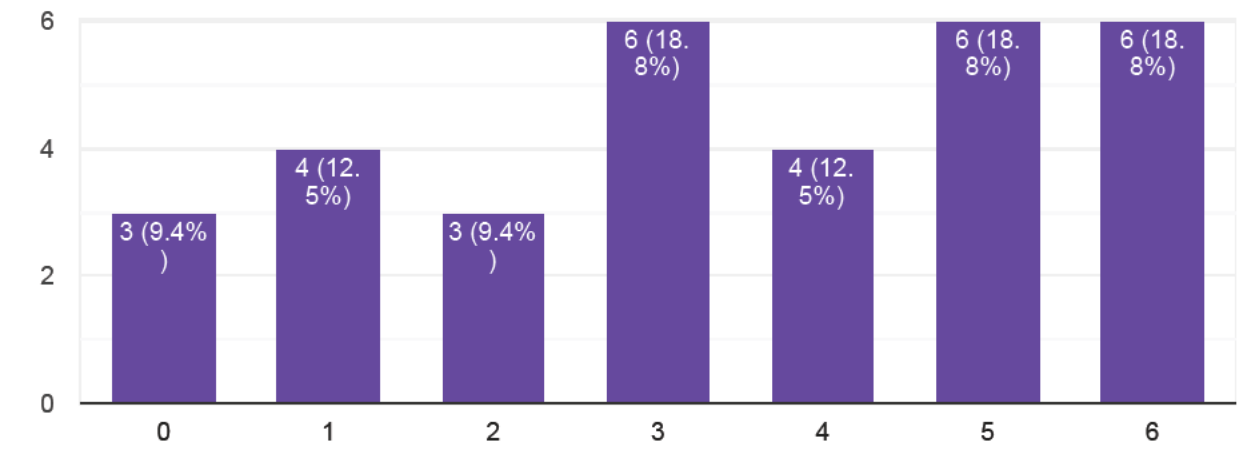
32 responses



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23. My parents almost always listened to me

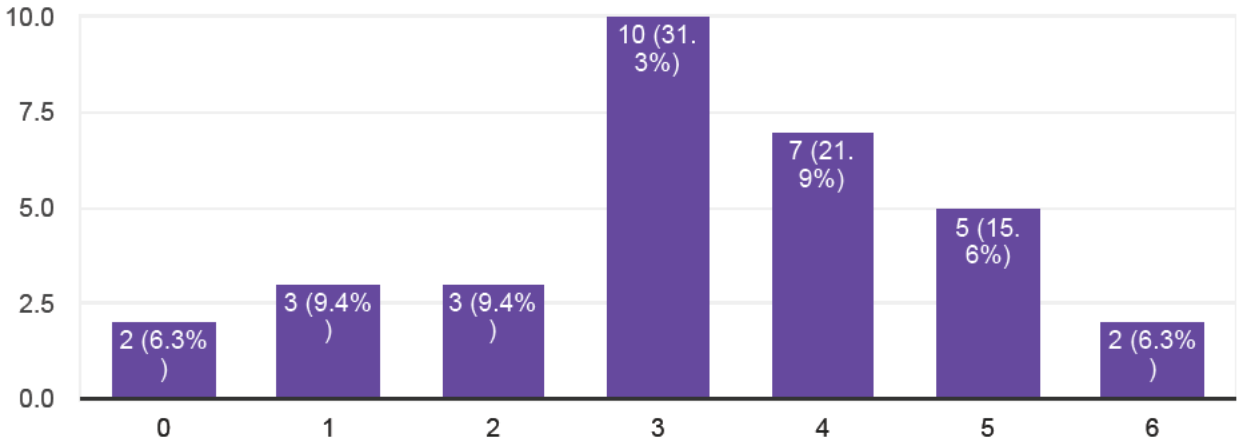
32 responses



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24. I give up worthwhile performance opportunities

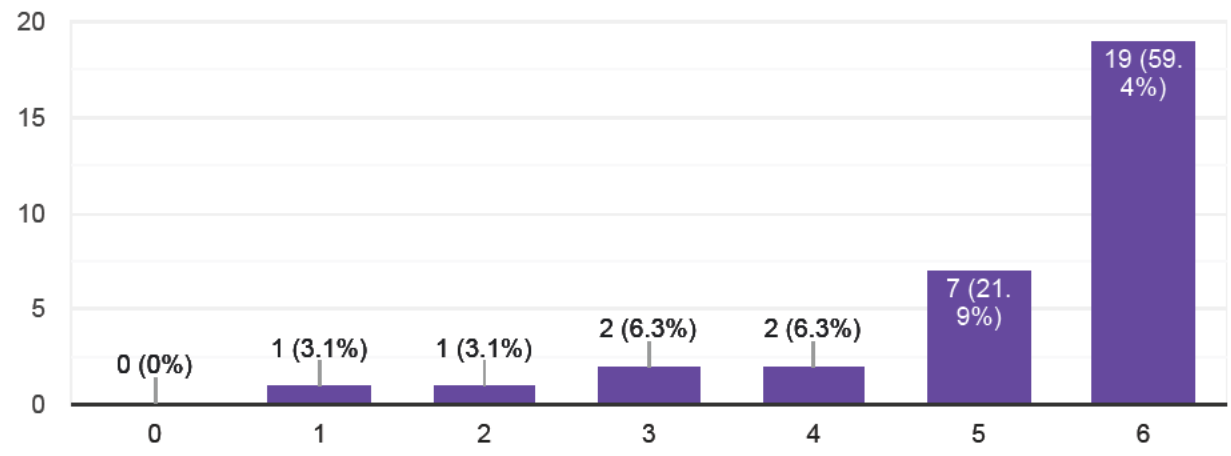
32 responses



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25. After the performance, I worry about whether I played/sang well enough

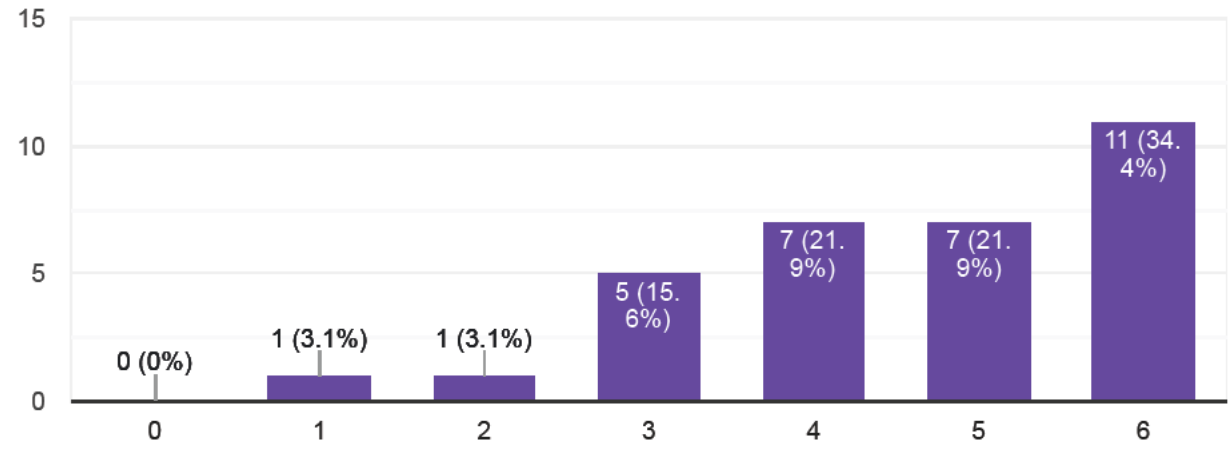
32 responses



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26. My worry and nervousness about my performance interferes with my focus and concentration

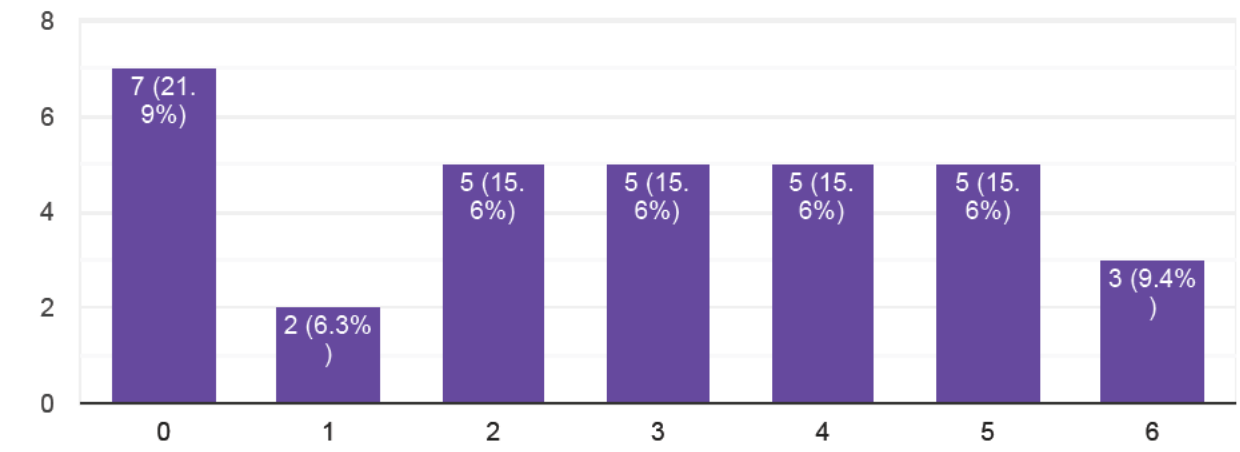
32 responses



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27. As a child, I often felt sad

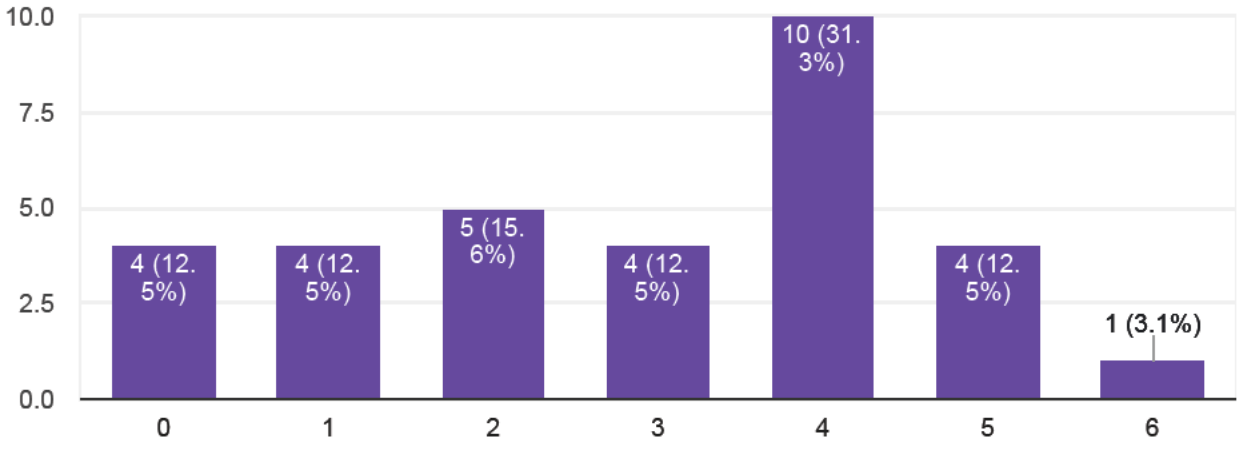
32 responses



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28. I often prepare for a concert with a sense of dread and impending disaster

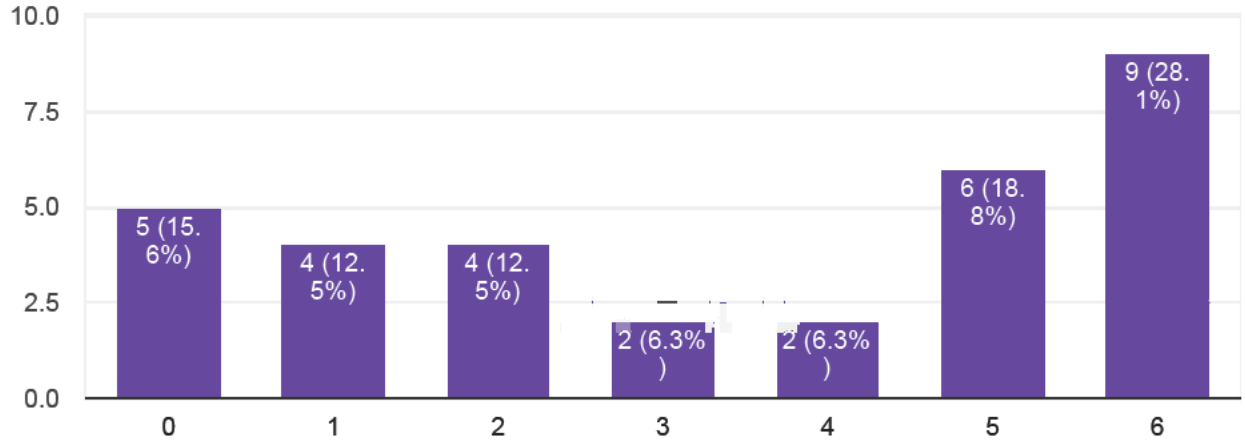
32 responses



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29. One or both of my parents were overly anxious

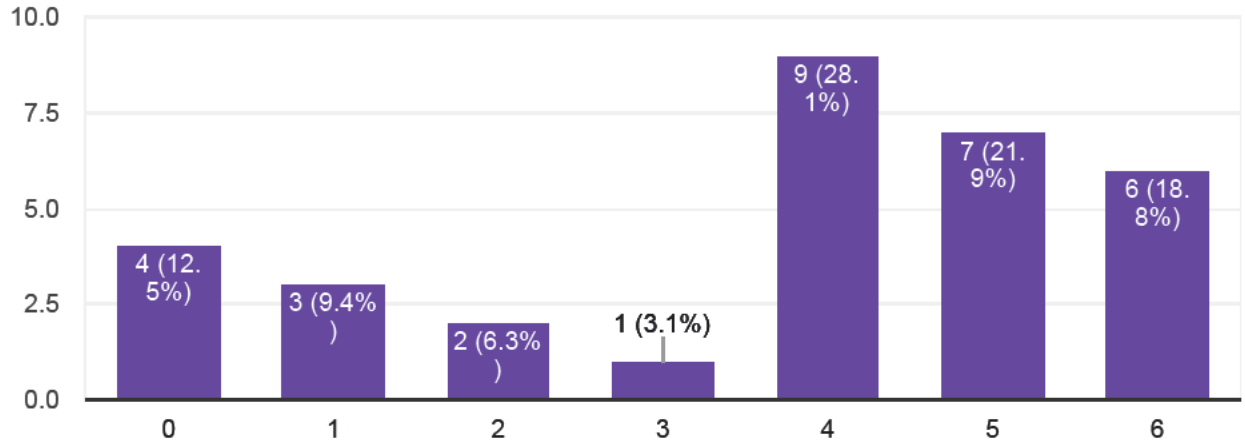
32 responses



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30. Prior to, or during a performance, I have increased muscle tension

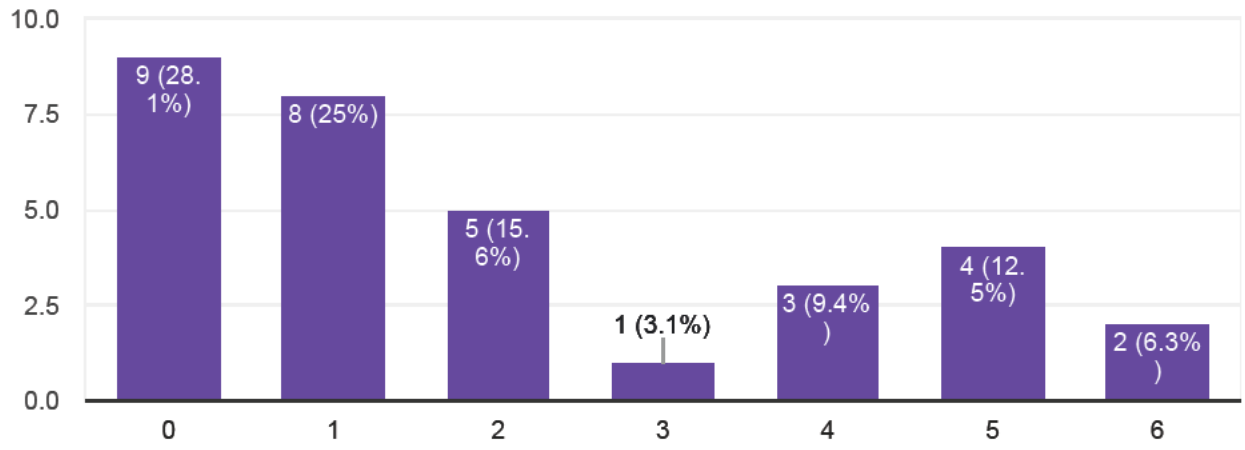
32 responses



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31. I often feel that I have nothing to look forward to

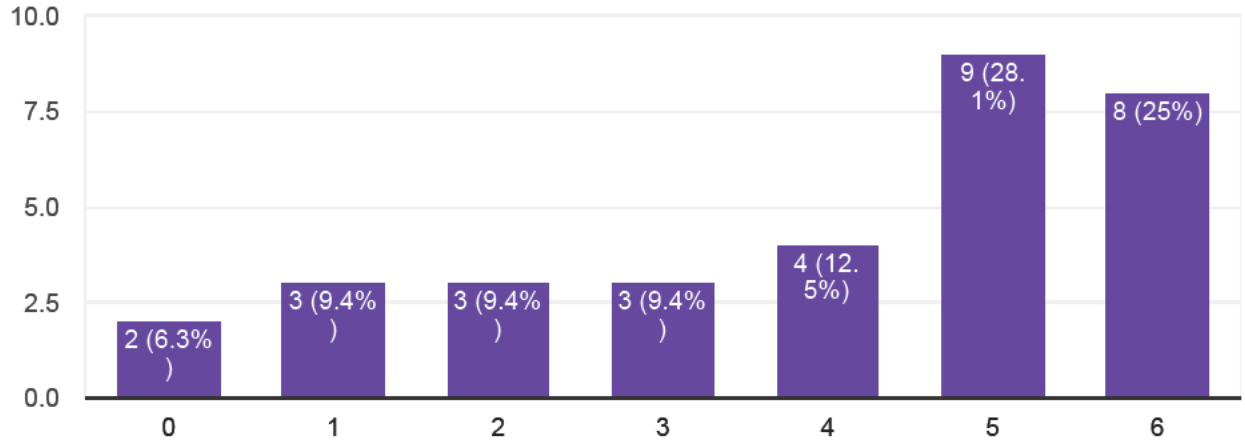
32 responses



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32. After the performance, I replay it in my mind over and over

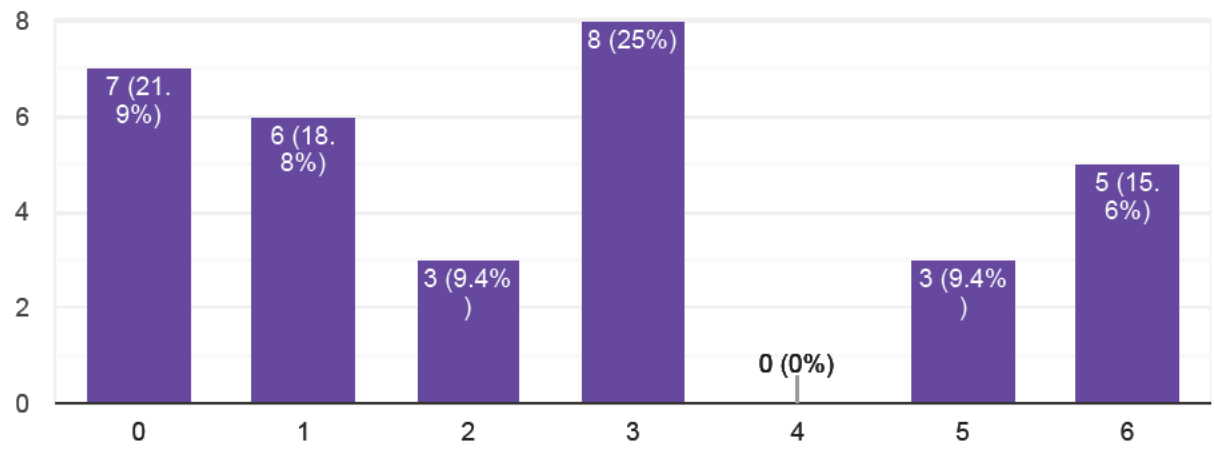
32 responses



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33. My parents encouraged me to try new things

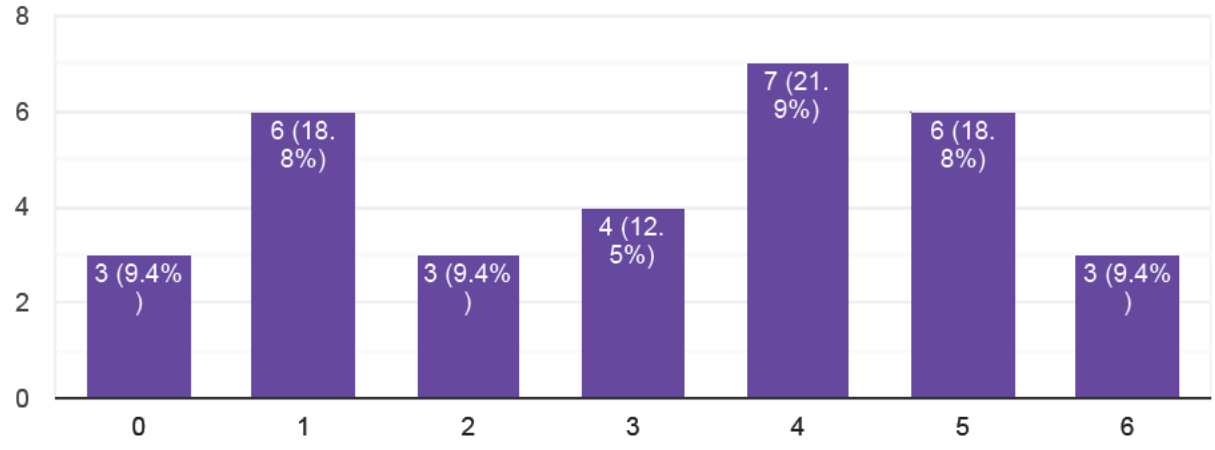
32 responses



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34. I worry so much before a performance, I cannot sleep

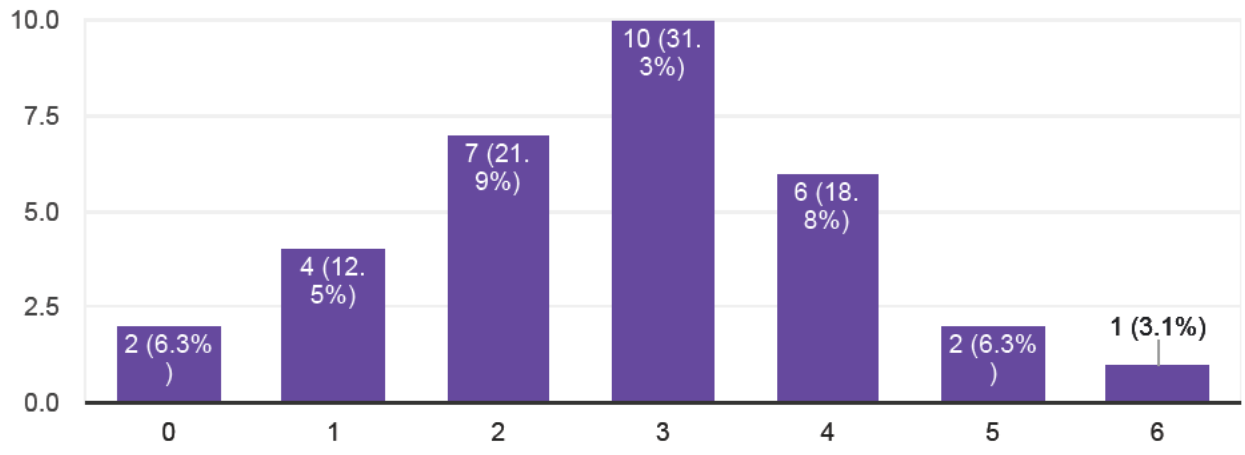
32 responses



35. When performing without music, my memory is reliable

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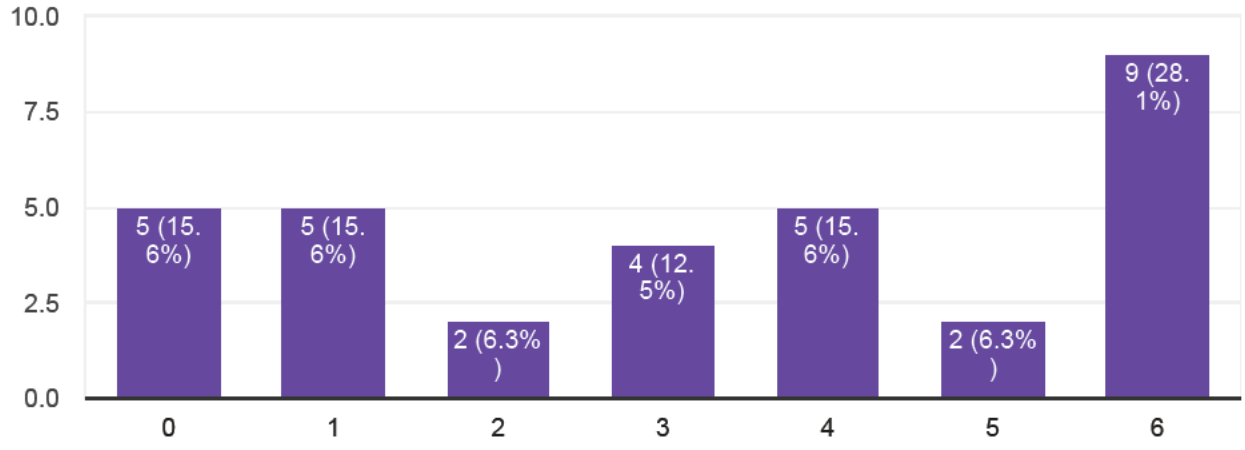
32 responses



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35. Prior to, or during a performance, I experience shaking or trembling or tremor

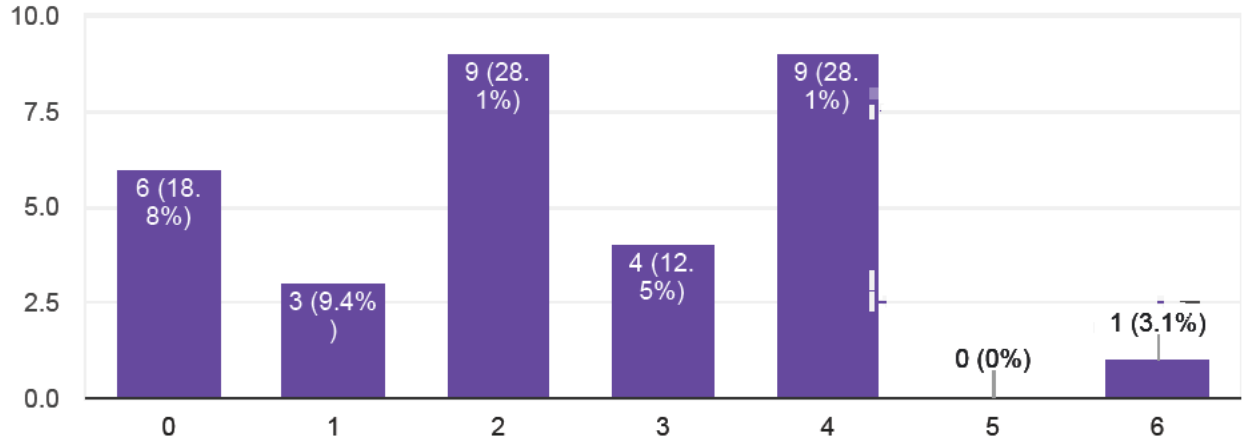
32 responses



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37. I am confident playing from memory

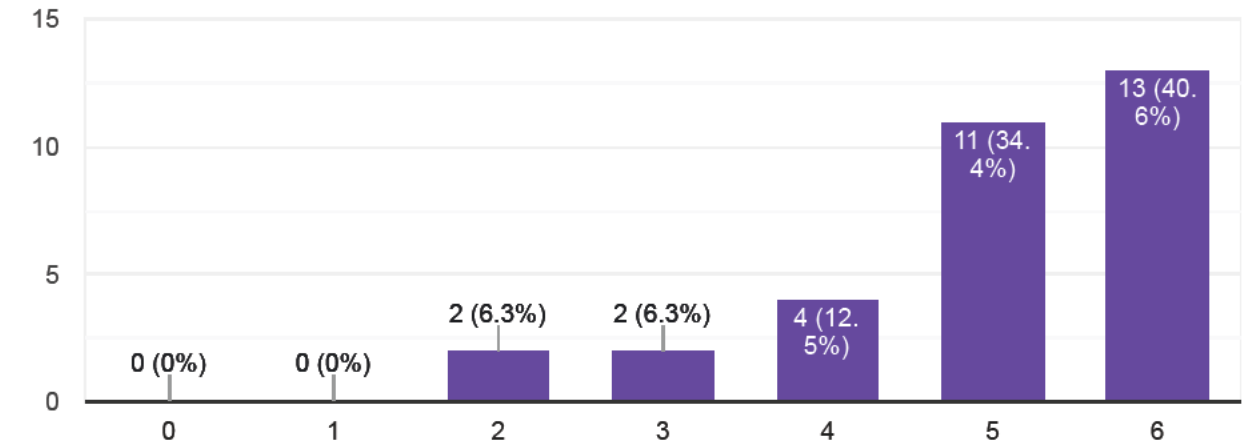
32 responses



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38. I am concerned about being scrutinised by others

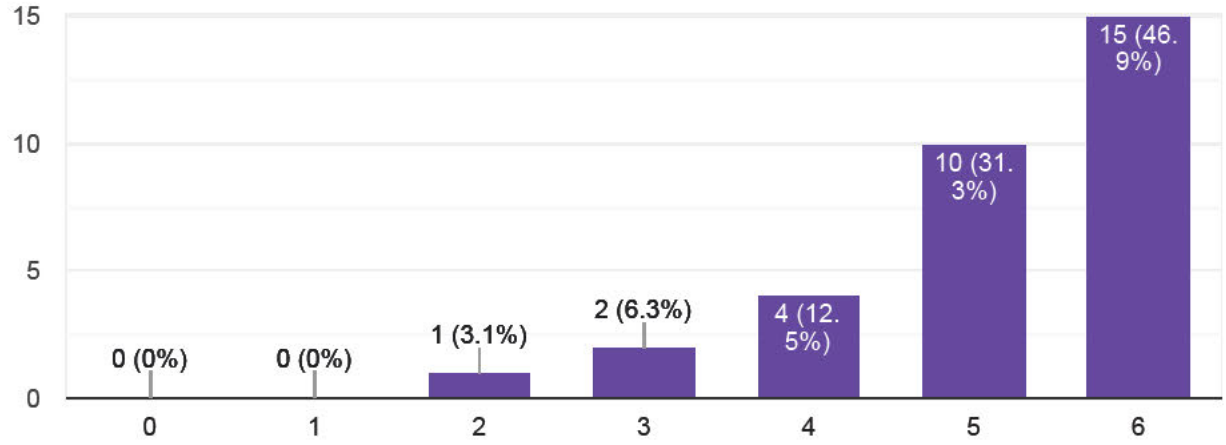
32 responses



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39. I am concerned about my own judgement of how I will perform

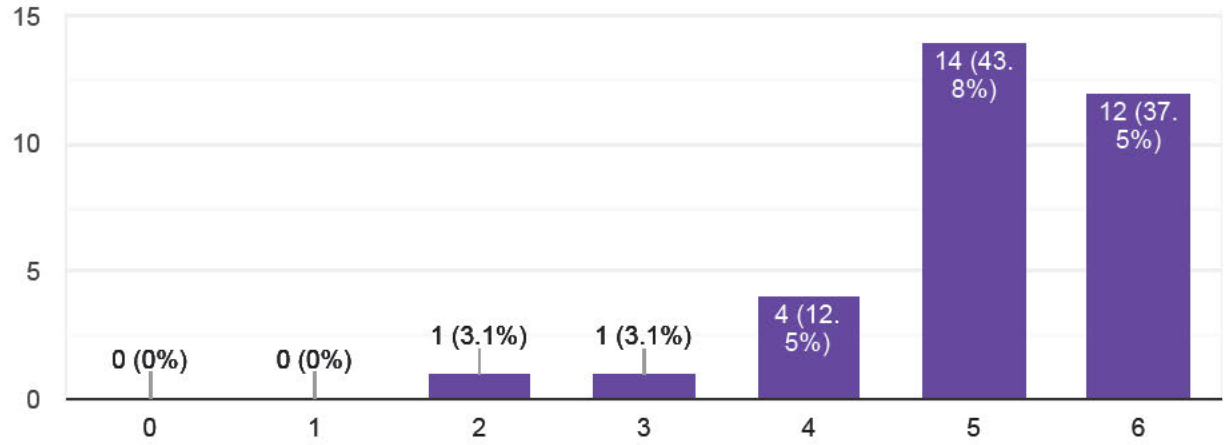
32 responses



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40. I remain committed to performing even though it causes me great anxiety

32 responses



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Kenny Music Performance Anxiety Inventory (K-MPAI) Post-Course

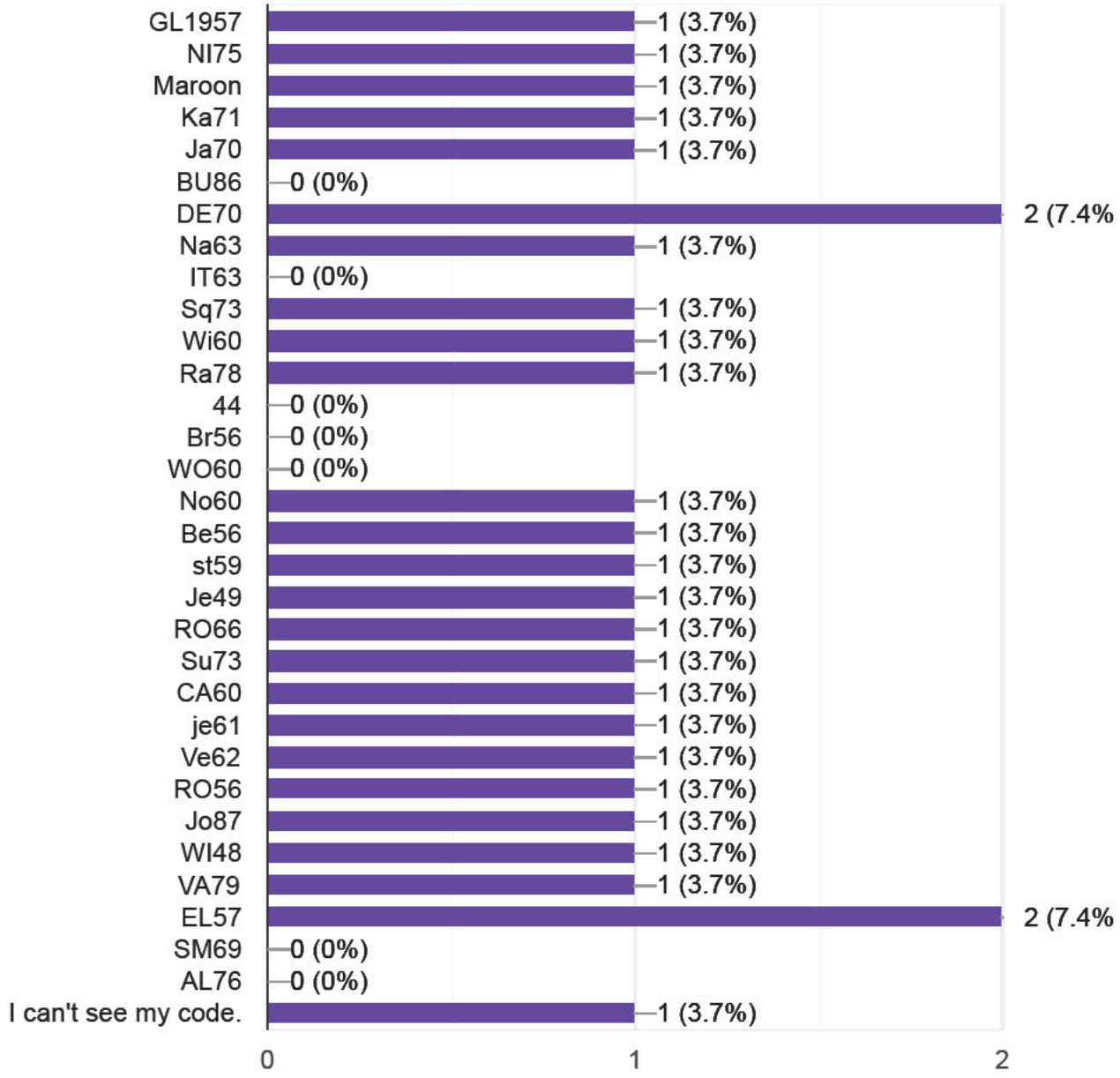
27 responses

Publish analytics

Please select your unique anonymous code from the list below **- Please be VERY accurate - some codes are very similar to each other.**

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27 responses



If you couldn't see your code can you tell me what you think it may have been

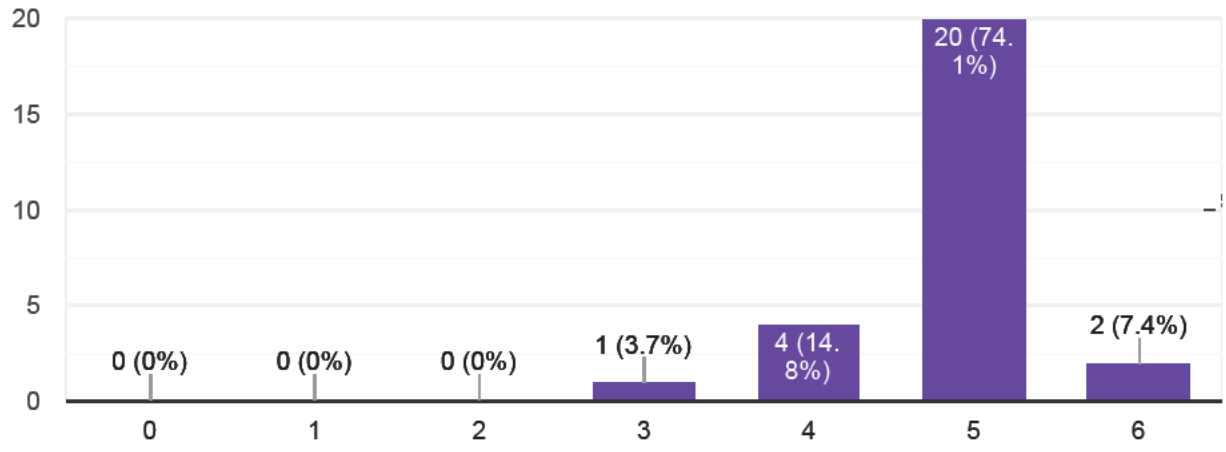
1 response

Can’t remember or find it

Copy

1. I generally feel in control of my life

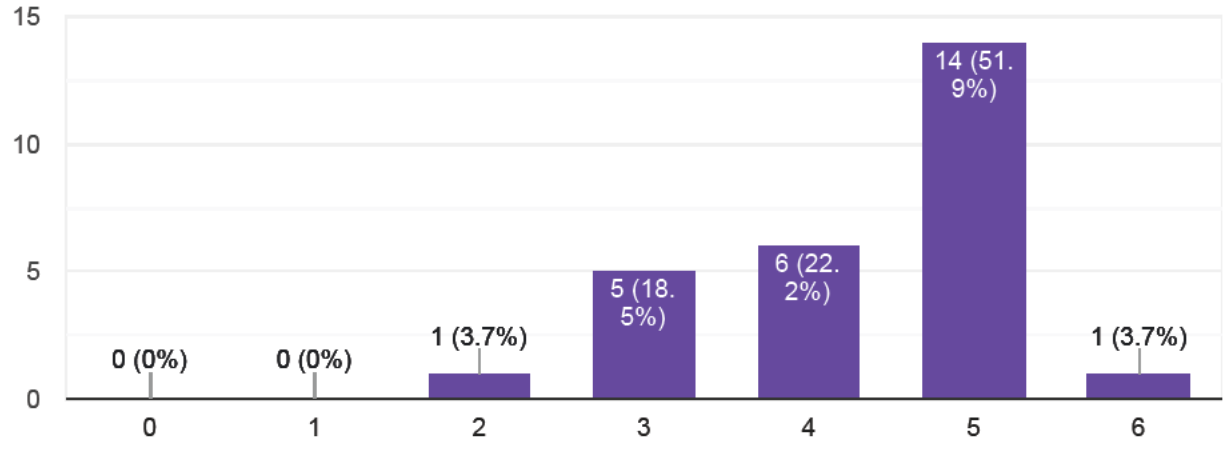
27 responses



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2. I find it easy to trust others

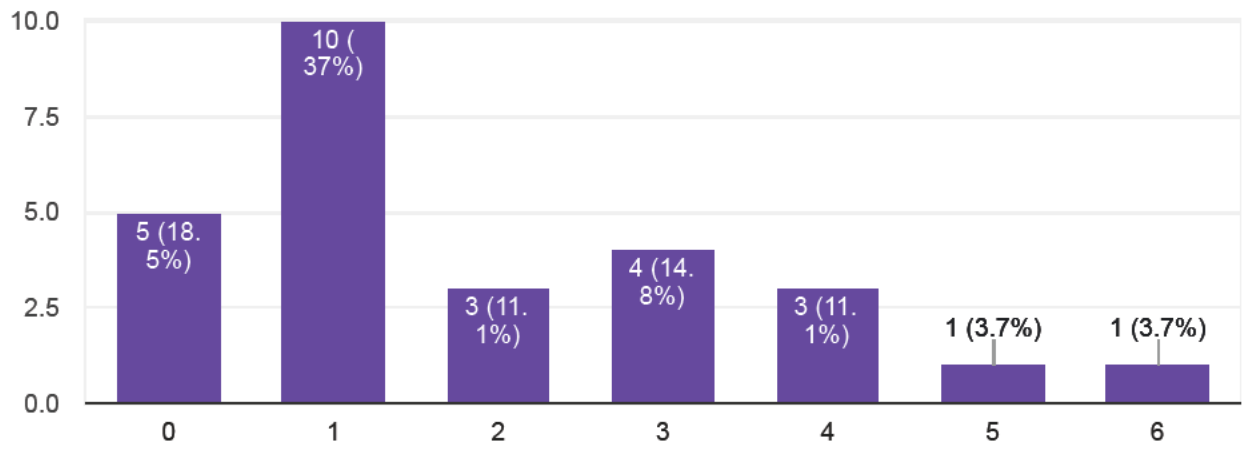
27 responses



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3. Sometimes I feel depressed without knowing why

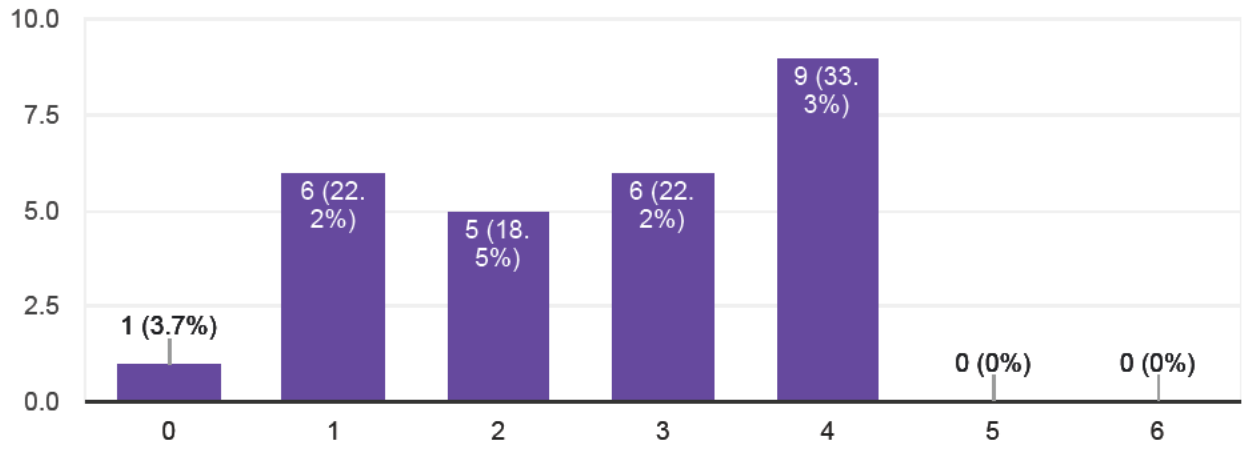
27 responses



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4. I often find it difficult to work up the energy to do things

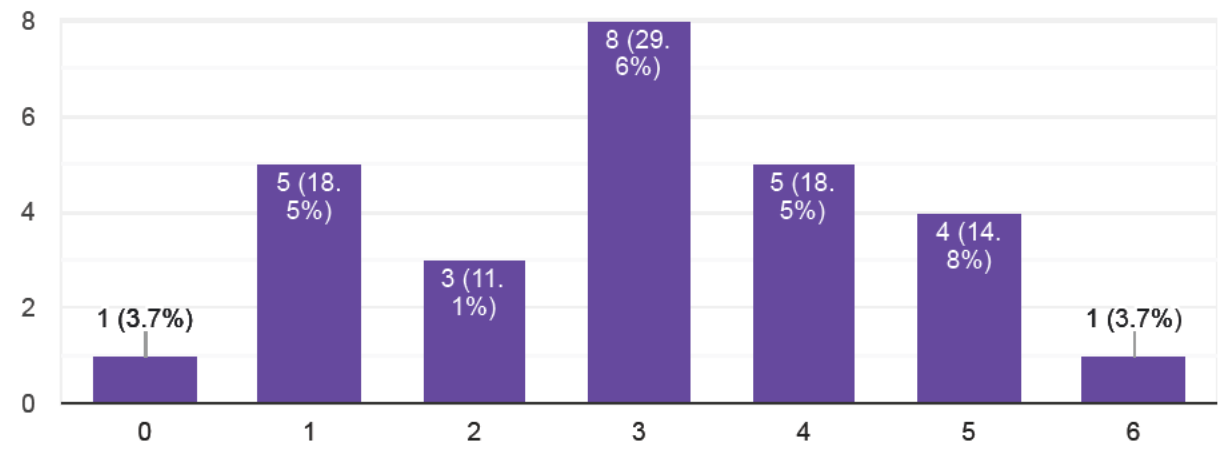
27 responses



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5. Excessive worrying is a characteristic of my family

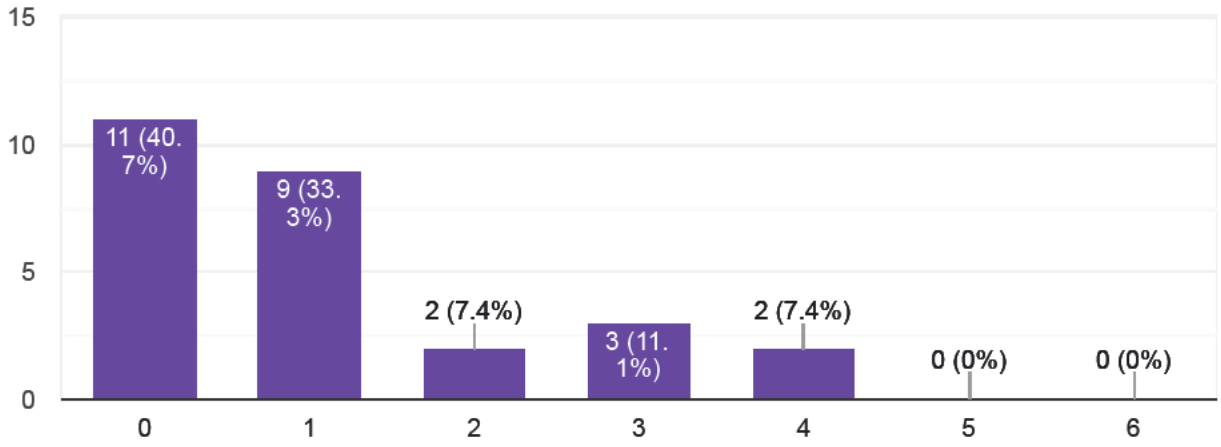
27 responses



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6. I often feel that life has not much to offer me

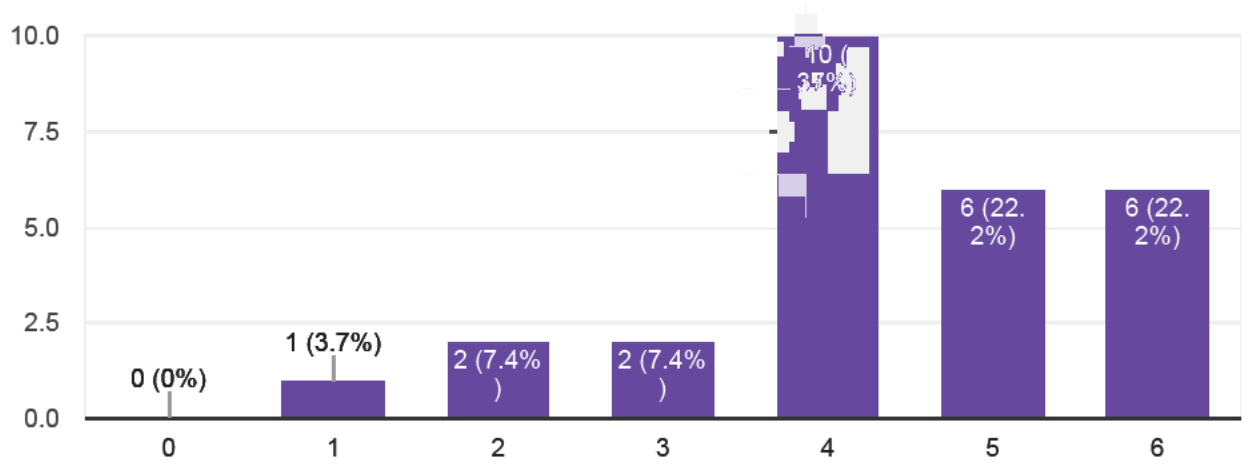
27 responses



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7. Even if I work hard in preparation for a performance, I am likely to make mistakes

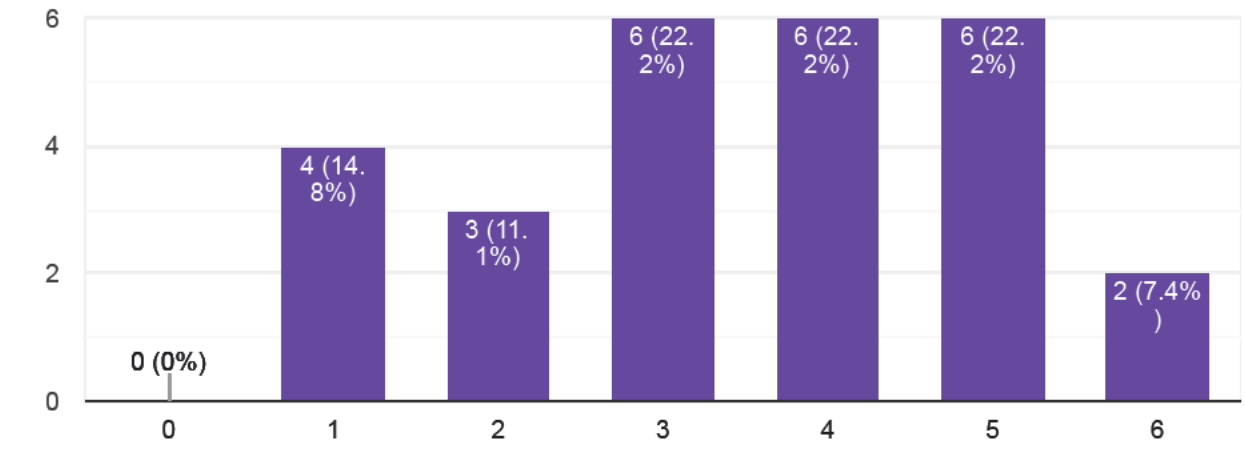
27 responses



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8. I find it difficult to depend on others

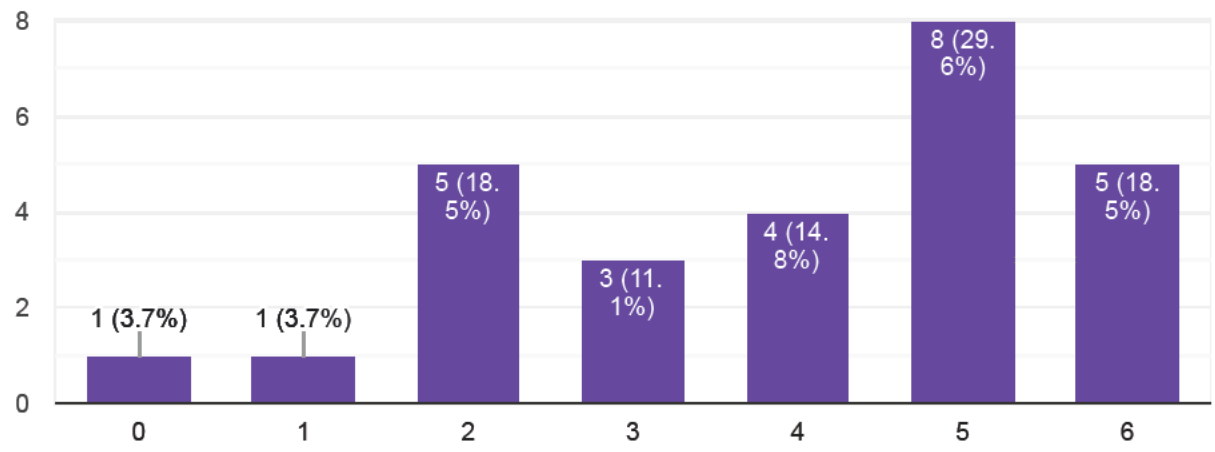
27 responses



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9. My parents were mostly responsive to my needs

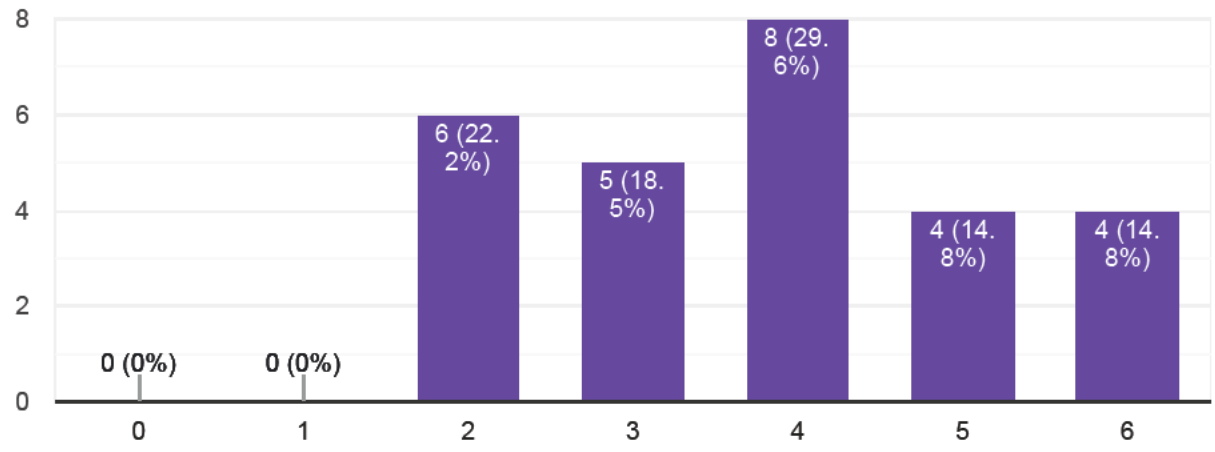
27 responses



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10. Prior to, or during a performance, I get feelings akin to panic

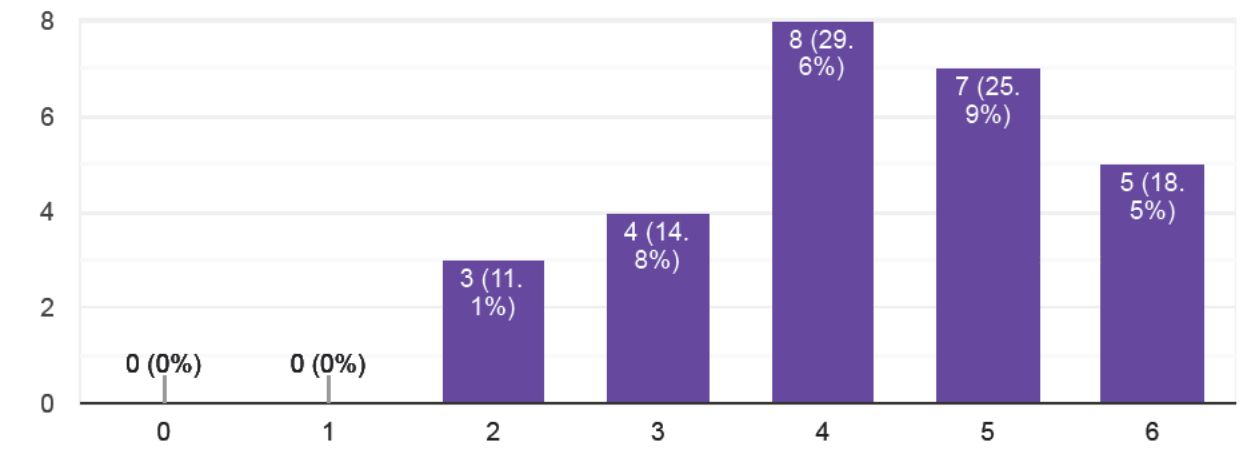
27 responses



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11. I never know before a concert whether I will perform well

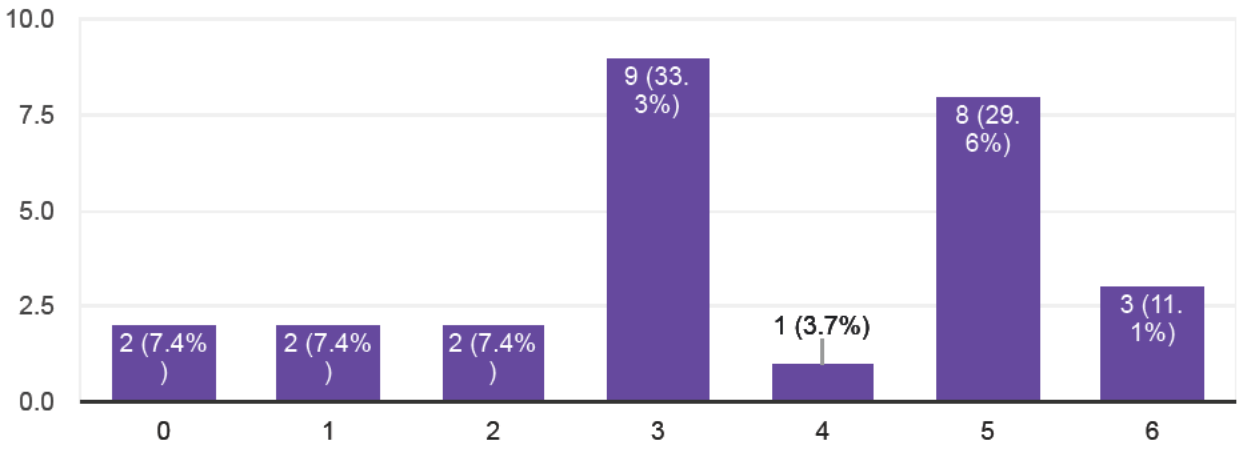
27 responses



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12. Prior to, or during a performance, I experience dry mouth

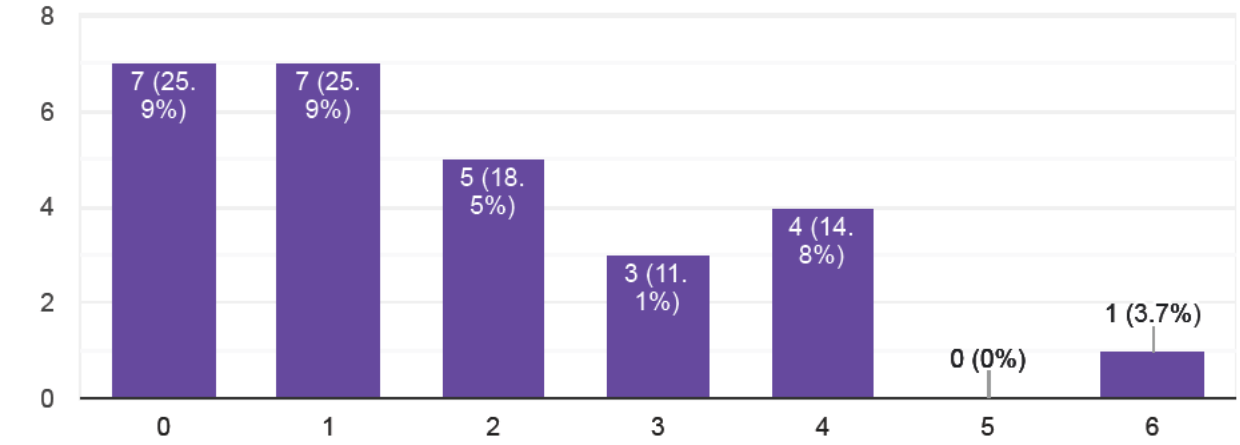
27 responses



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13. I often feel that I am not worth much as a person

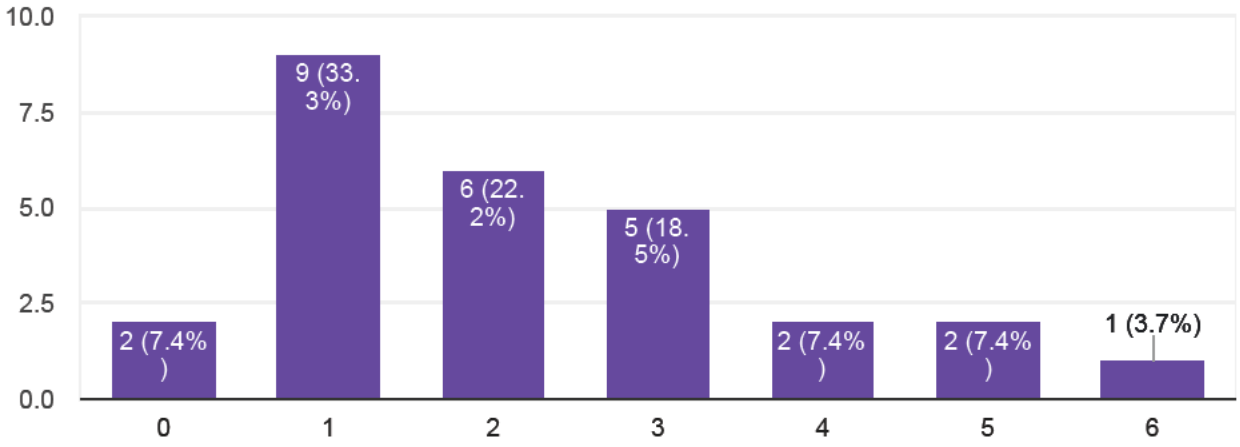
27 responses



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14. During a performance I find myself thinking about whether I'll even get through it

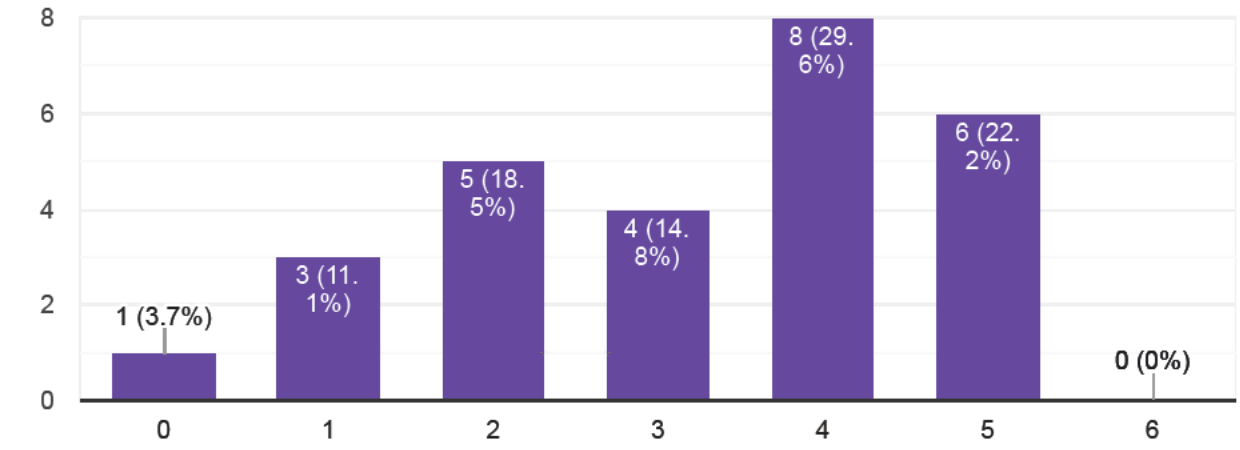
27 responses



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15. Thinking about the evaluation I may get interferes with my performance

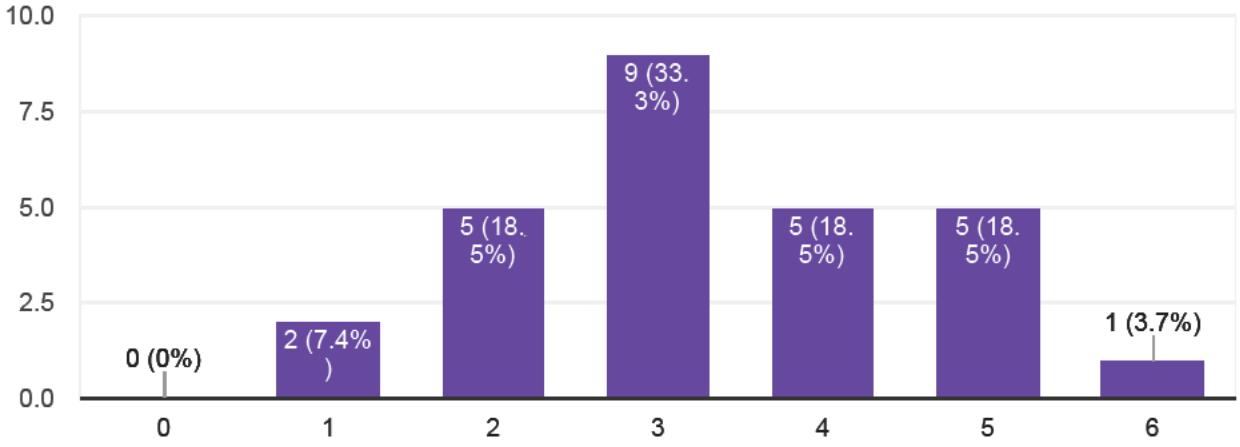
27 responses



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16. Prior to, or during a performance, I feel sick or faint or have a churning in my stomach

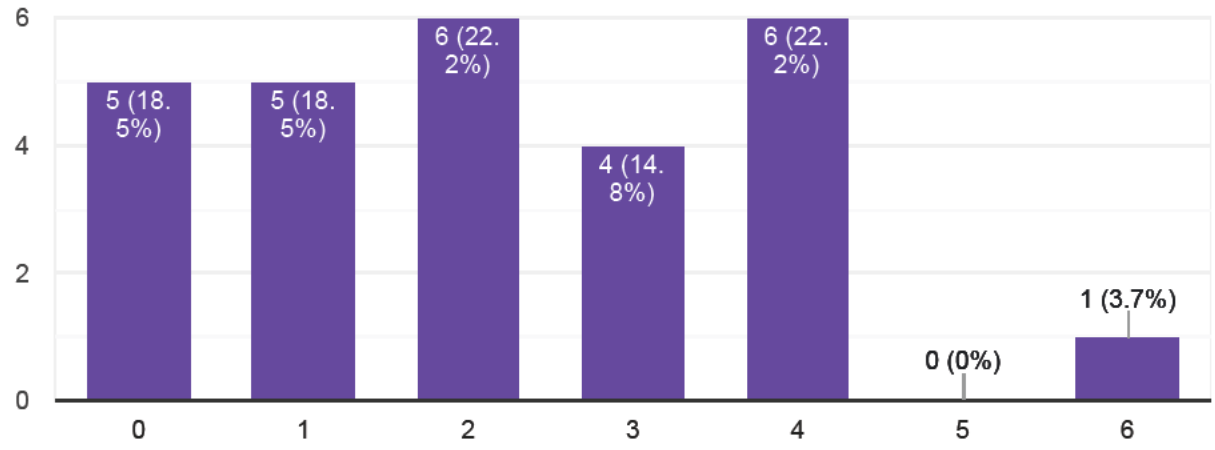
27 responses



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17. Even in the most stressful performance situations, I am confident that I will perform well

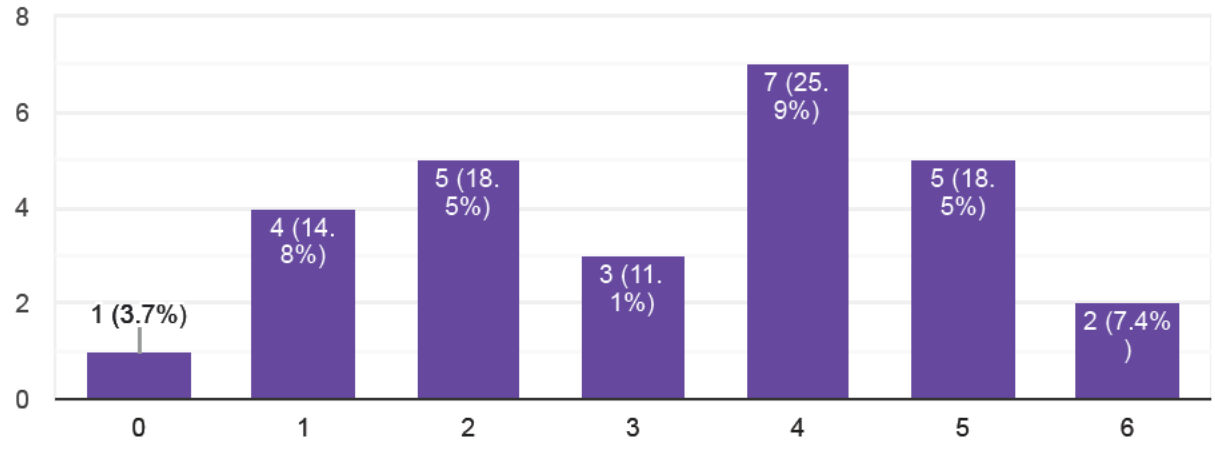
27 responses



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18. I am often concerned about a negative reaction from the audience

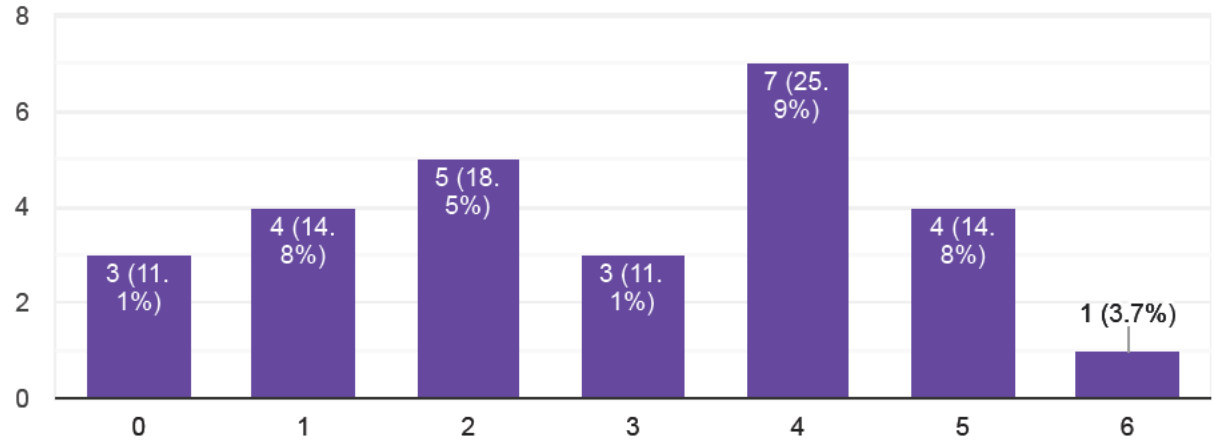
27 responses



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19. Sometimes I feel anxious for no particular reason

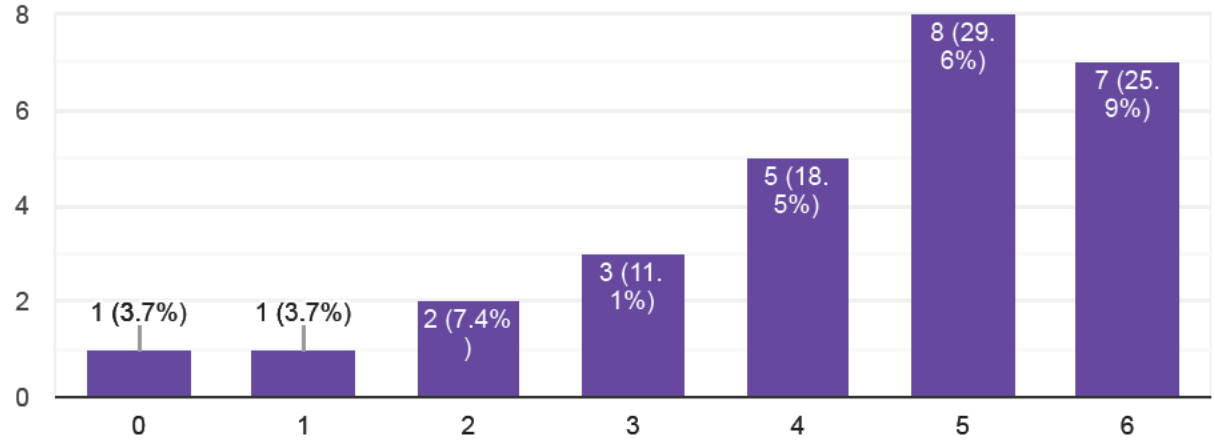
27 responses



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20. From early in my music studies, I remember being anxious about performing

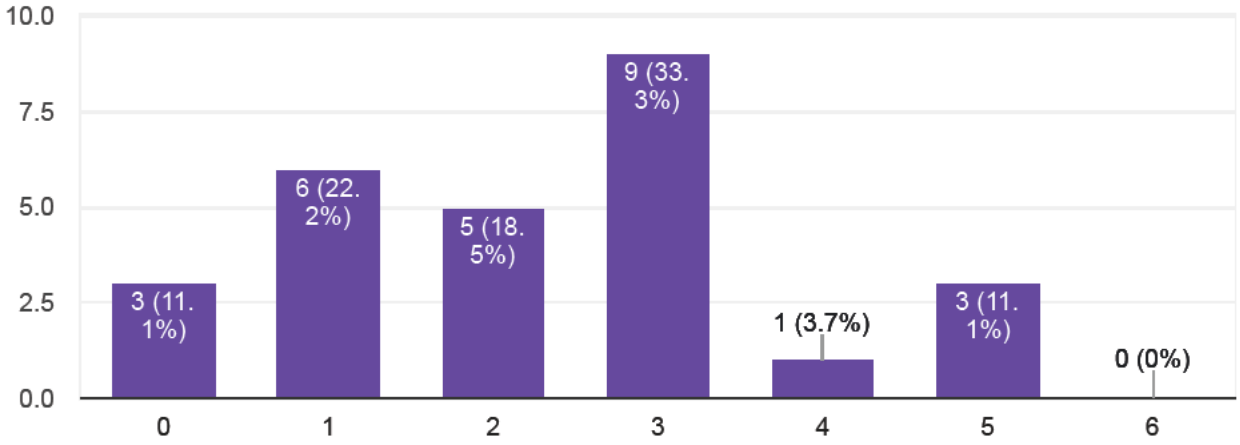
27 responses



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21. I worry that one bad performance may ruin my career

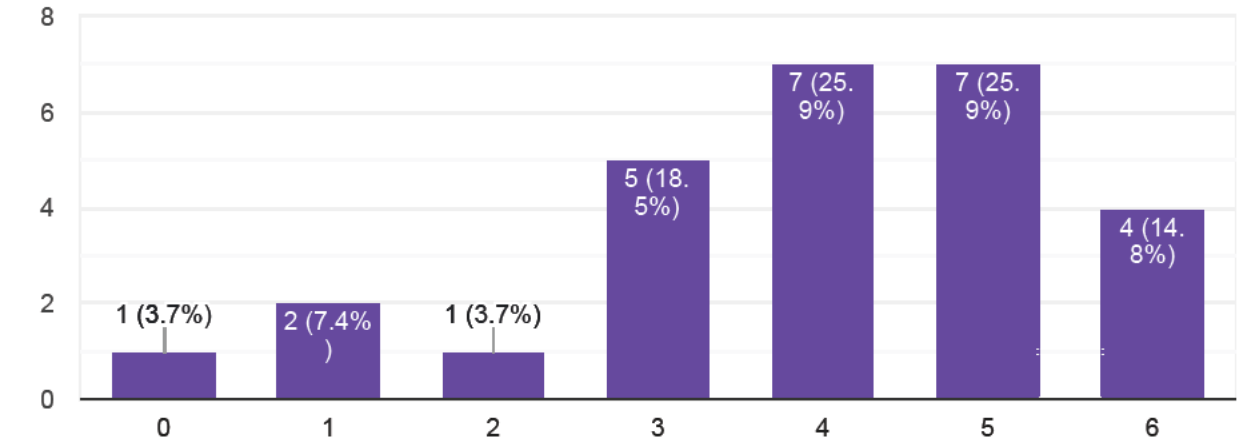
27 responses



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22. Prior to, or during a performance, I experience increased heart rate like pounding in my chest

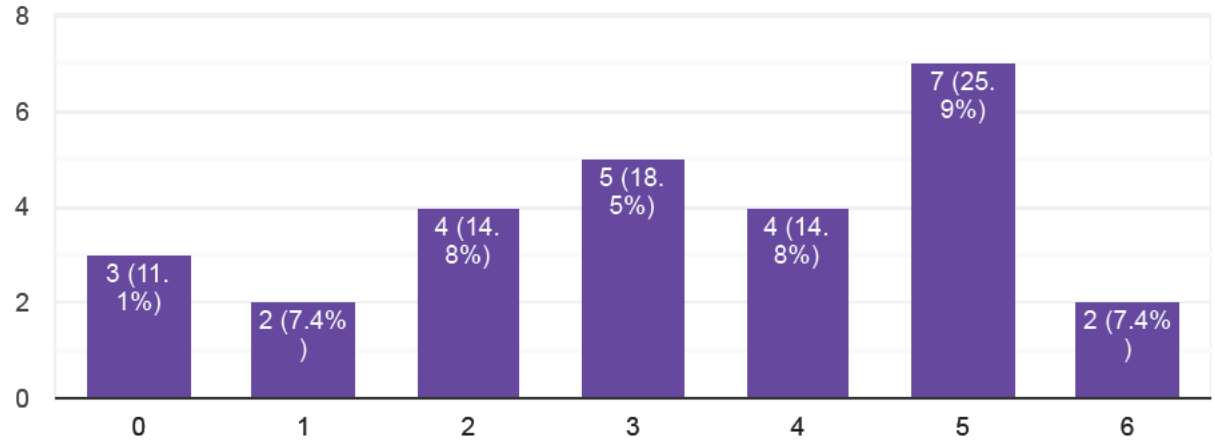
27 responses



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23. My parents almost always listened to me

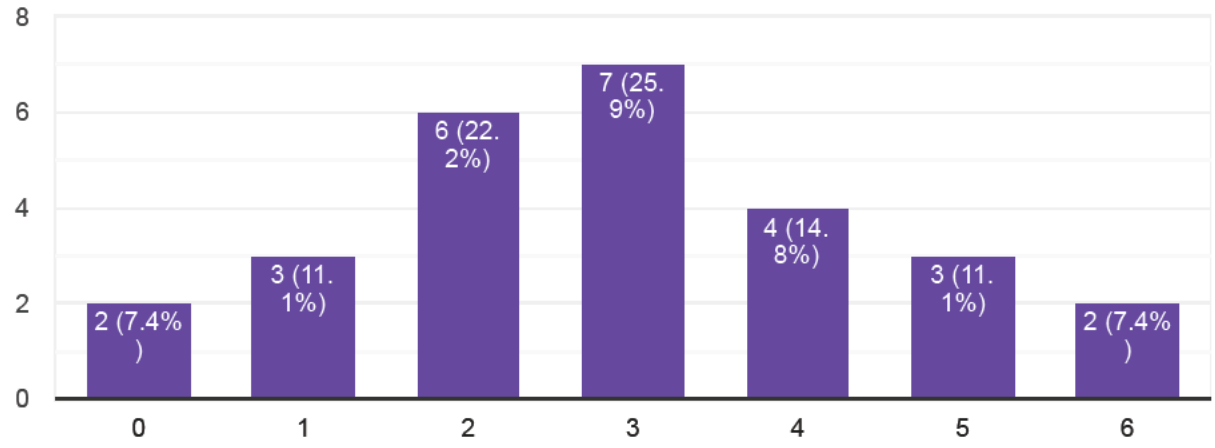
27 responses



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24. I give up worthwhile performance opportunities

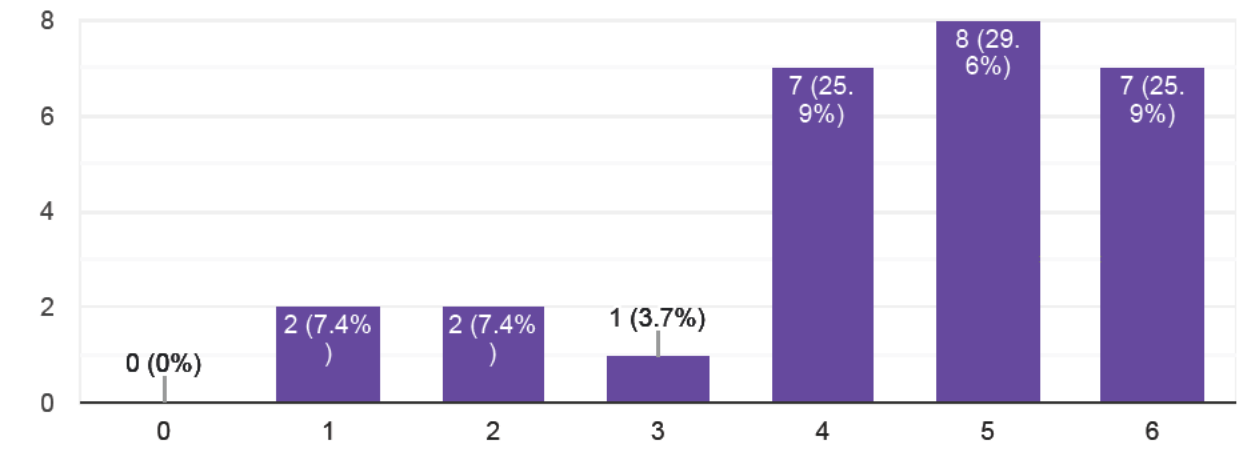
27 responses



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25. After the performance, I worry about whether I played well enough

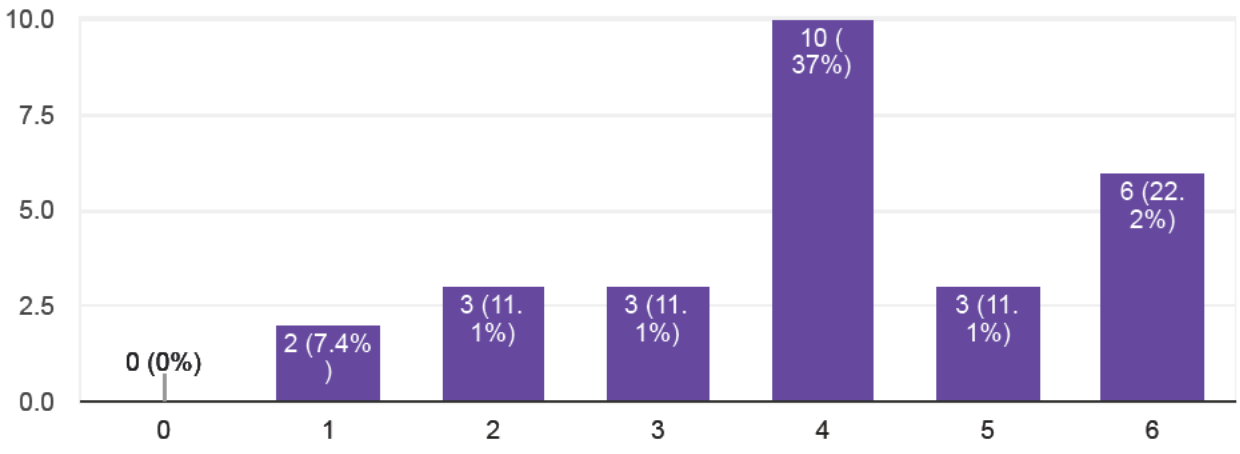
27 responses



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26. My worry and nervousness about my performance interferes with my focus and concentration

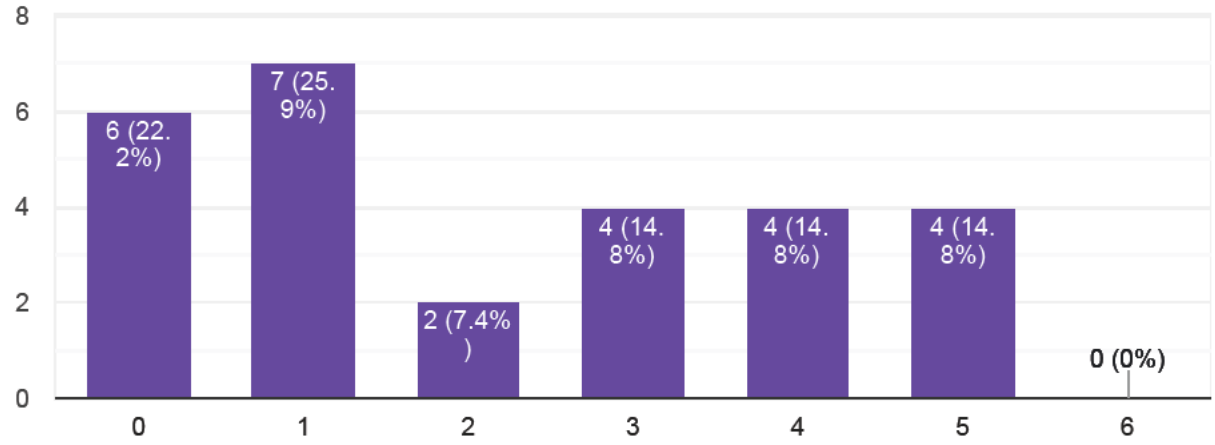
27 responses



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27. As a child, I often felt sad

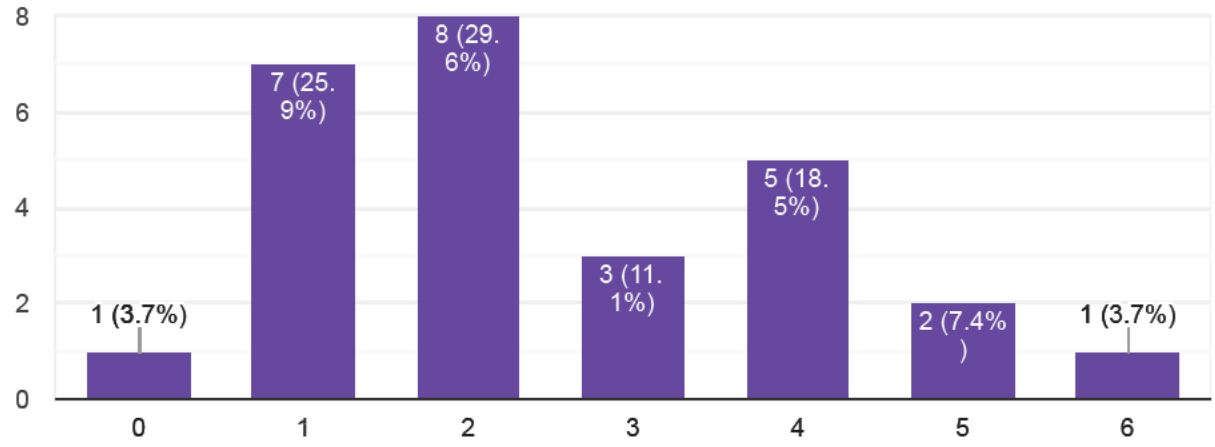
27 responses



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28. I often prepare for a concert with a sense of dread and impending disaster

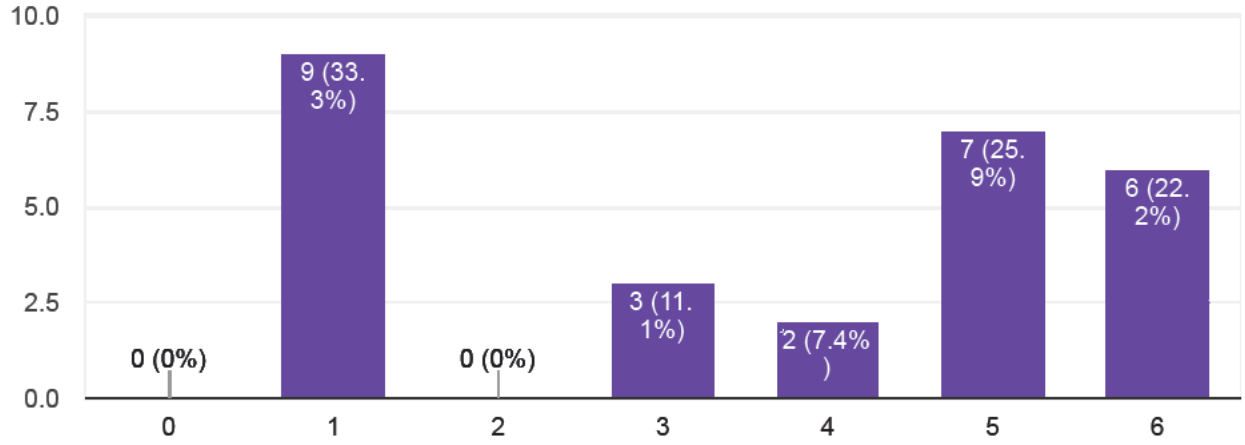
27 responses



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29. One or both of my parents were overly anxious

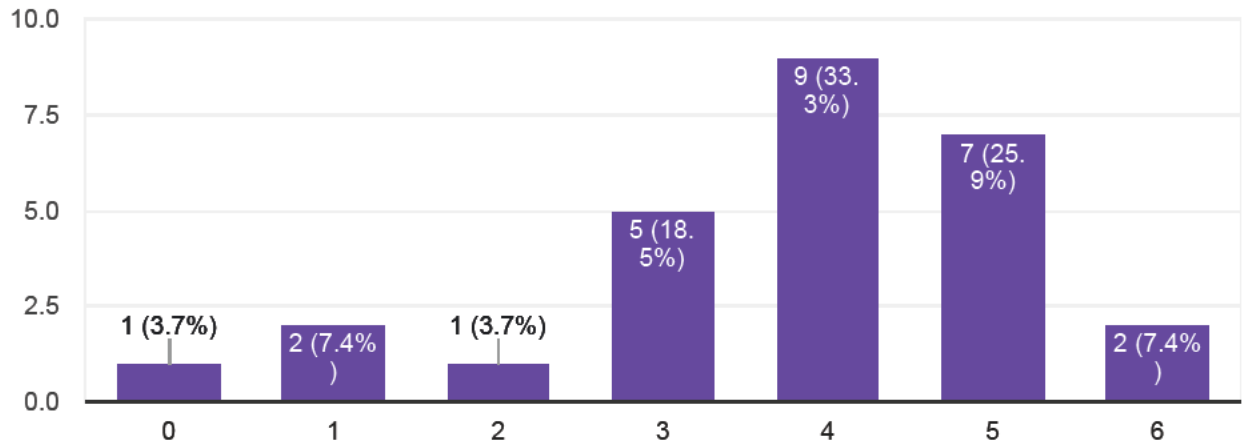
27 responses



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30. Prior to, or during a performance, I have increased muscle tension

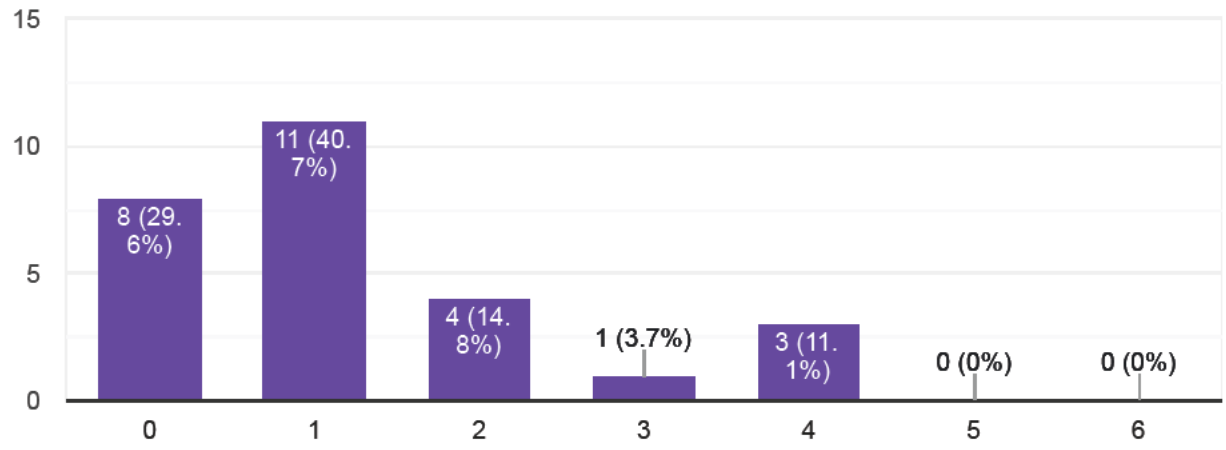
27 responses



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31. I often feel that I have nothing to look forward to

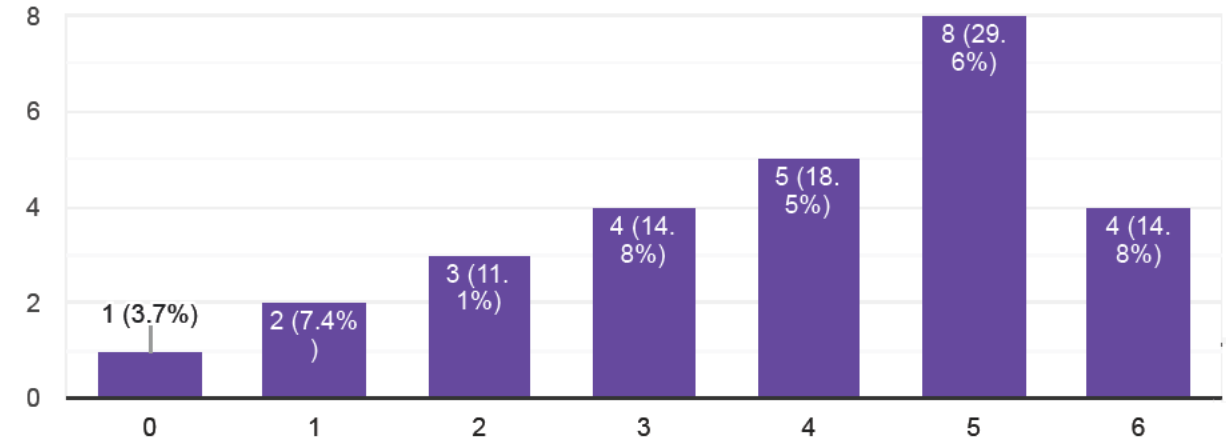
27 responses



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32. After the performance, I replay it in my mind over and over

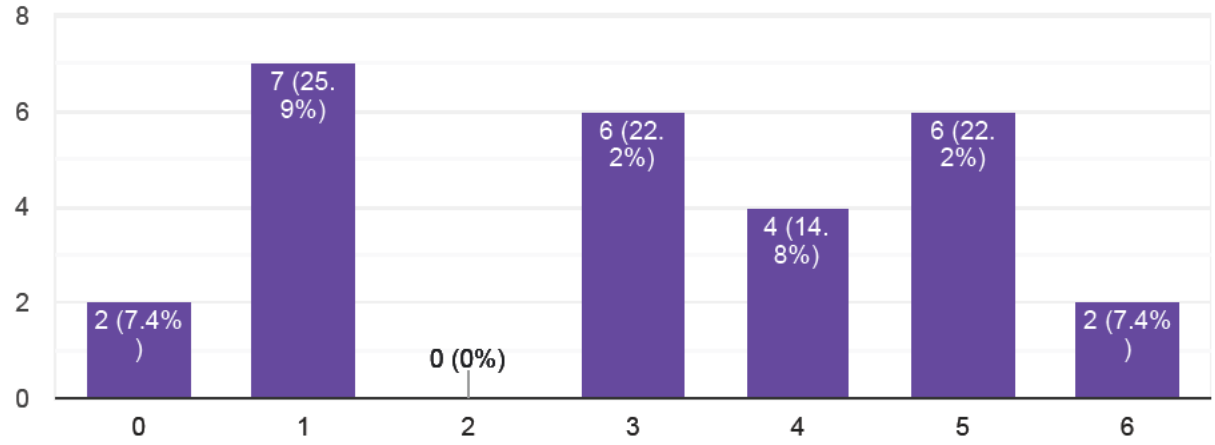
27 responses



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33. My parents encouraged me to try new things

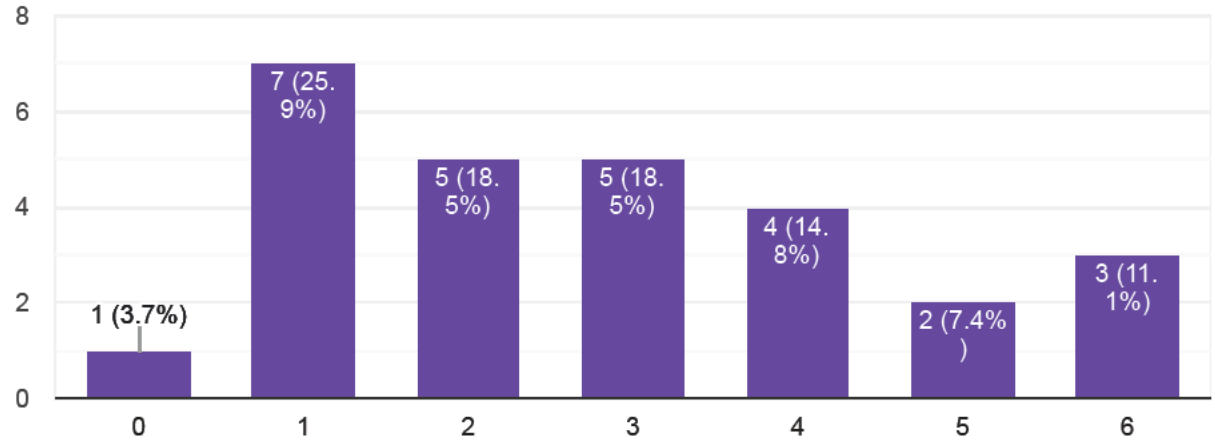
27 responses



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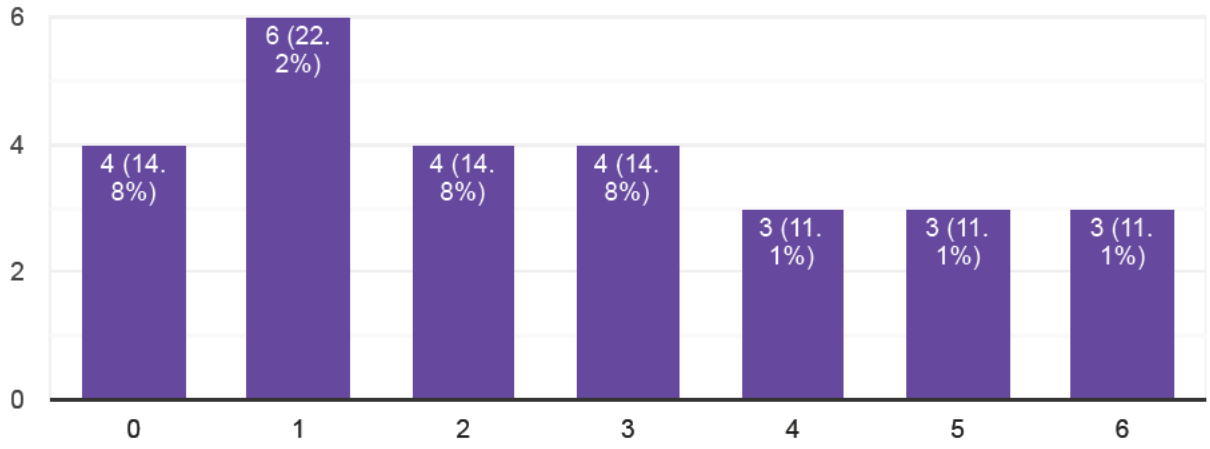
27 responses



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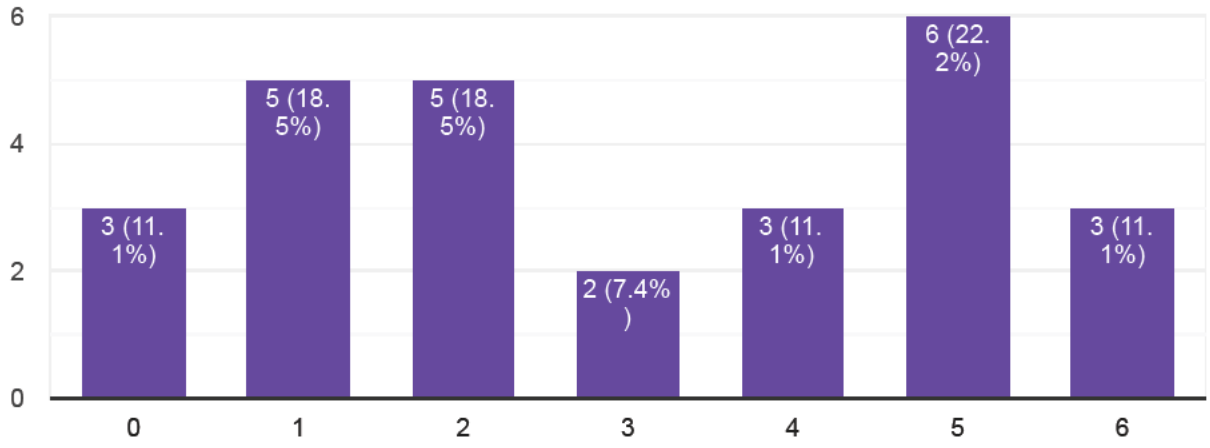
27 responses



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35. Prior to, or during a performance, I experience shaking or trembling or tremor

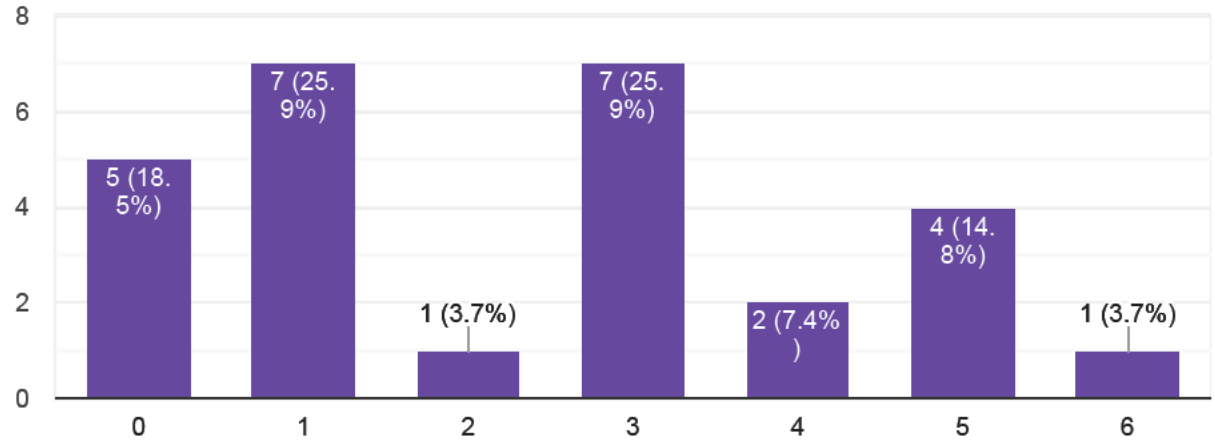
27 responses



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37. I am confident playing from memory

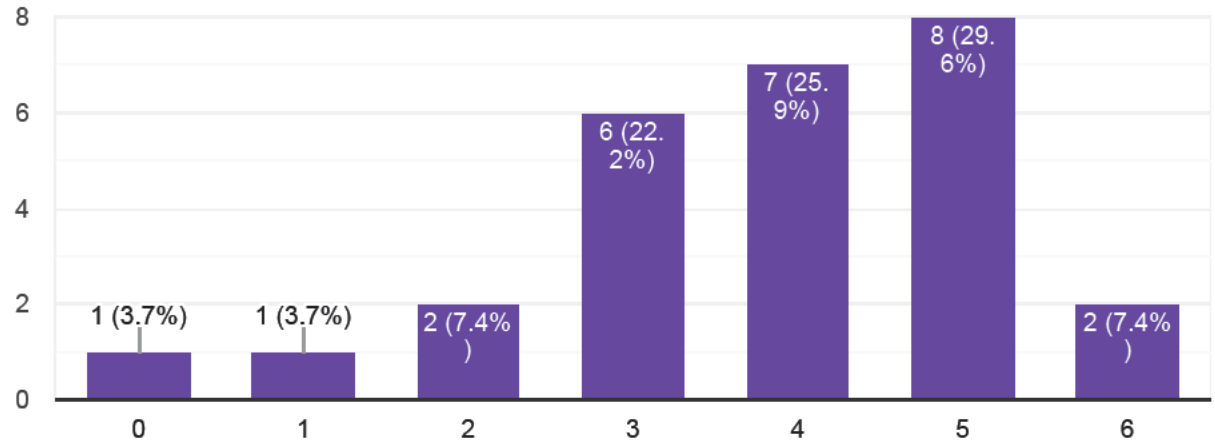
27 responses



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38. I am concerned about being scrutinized by others

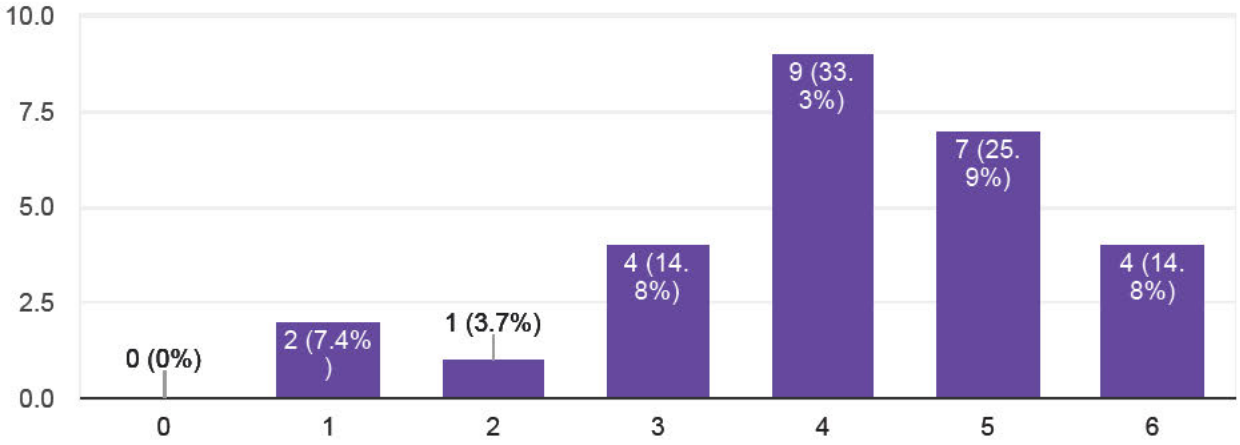
27 responses



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39. I am concerned about my own judgement of how I will perform

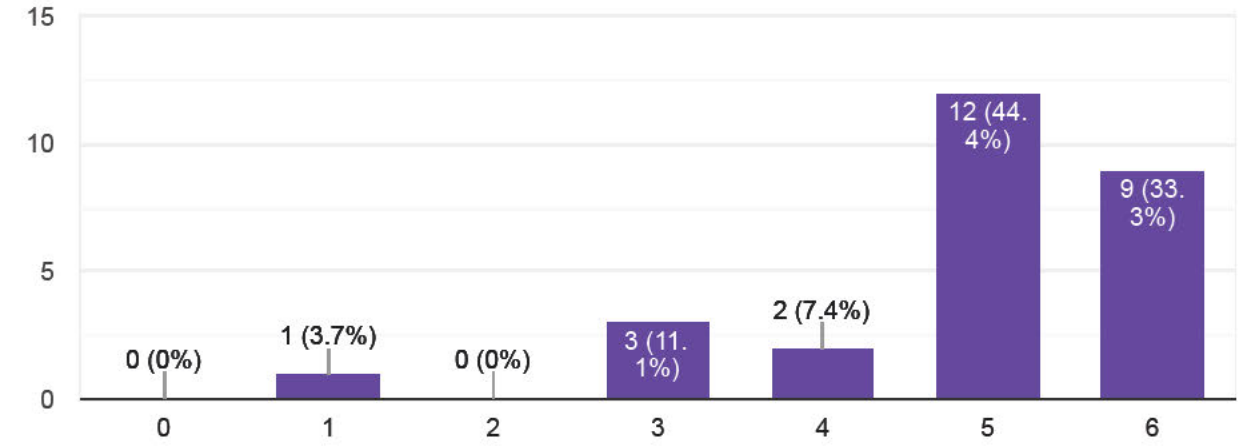
27 responses



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40. I remain committed to performing even though it causes me great anxiety

27 responses



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Perfectionism Questionnaire - Adapted from the FMPS - Brief (Burgess et al., 2016). Pre-Course

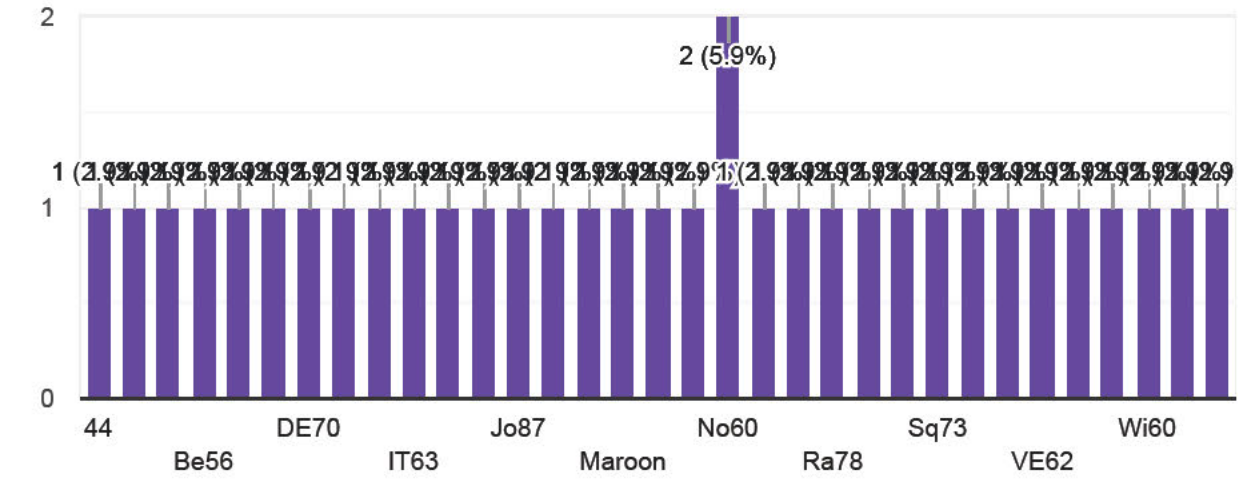
36 responses

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Please create for yourself a **unique anonymous code** using the first two letters of your mother's name and the last two digits of your birth year. Use this same code each time you complete the survey

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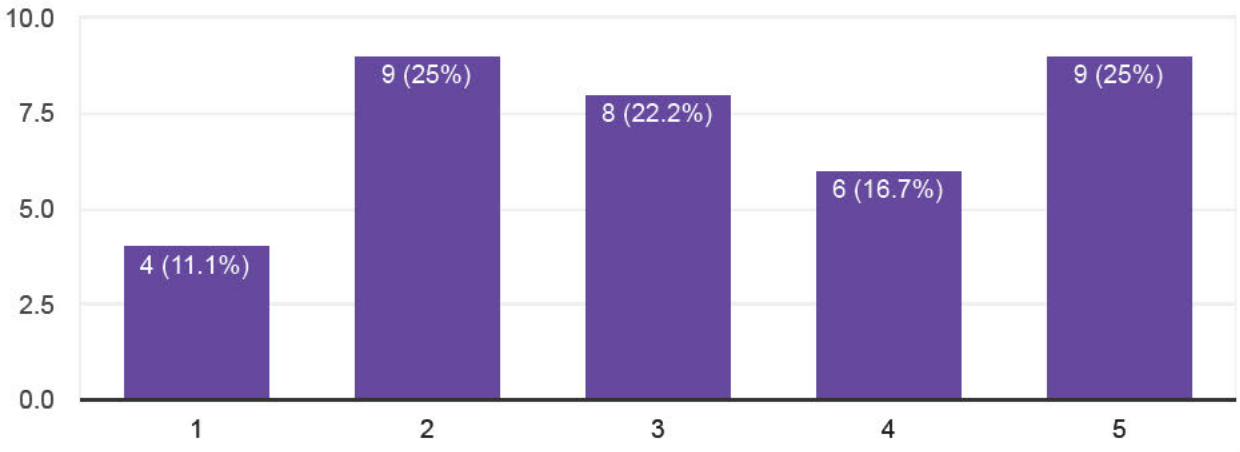
34 responses



If I fail at work, I am a failure as a person.

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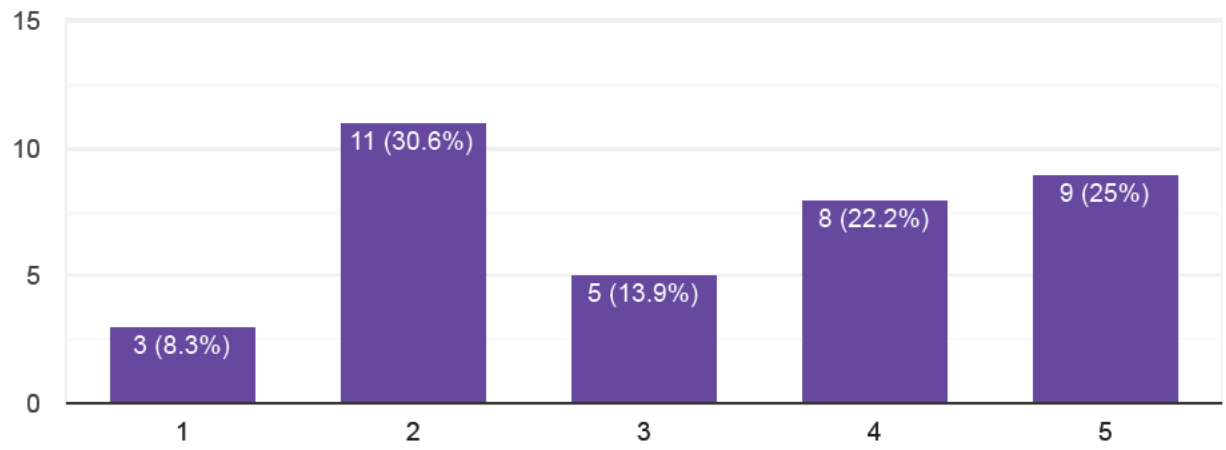
36 responses



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If someone does a task at work better than me, then I feel like I failed at the whole task.

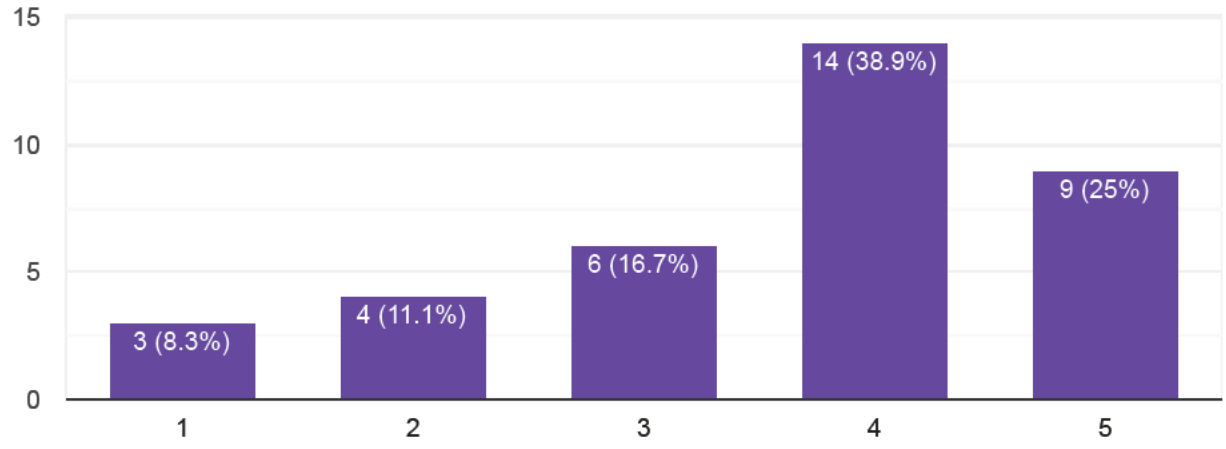
36 responses



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If I do not do well all the time, people will not respect me.

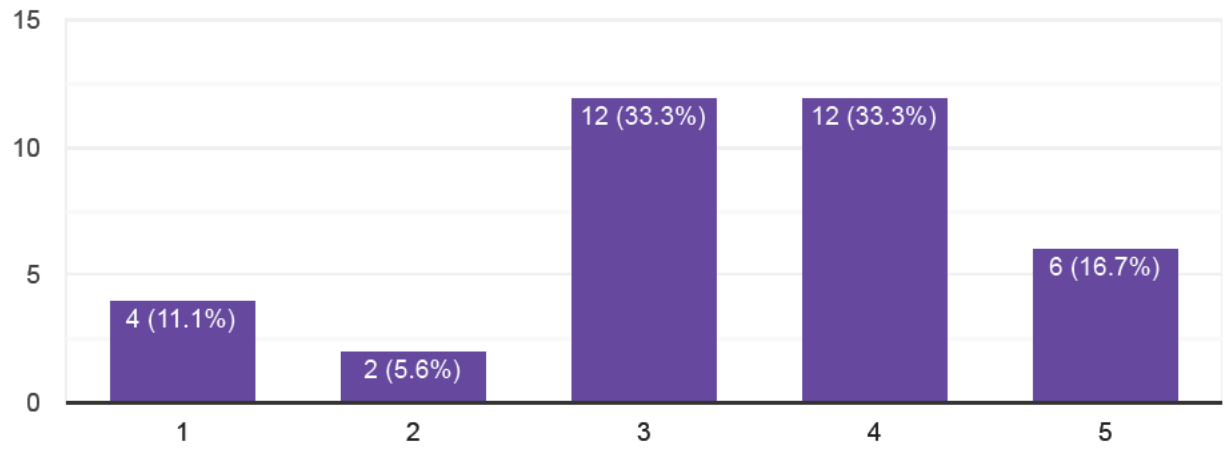
36 responses



The fewer mistakes I make, the more people will like me.

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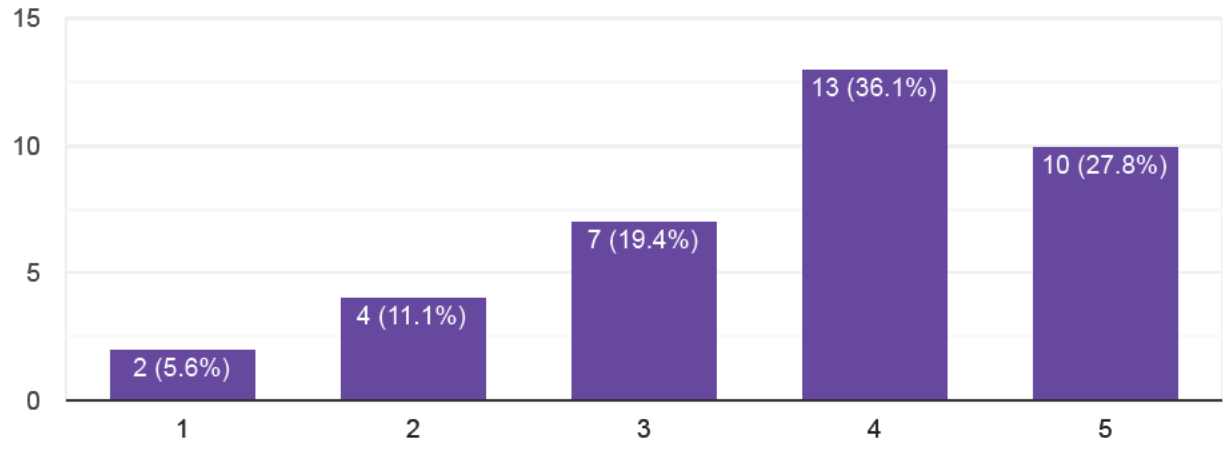
36 responses



I set higher goals for myself than most people.

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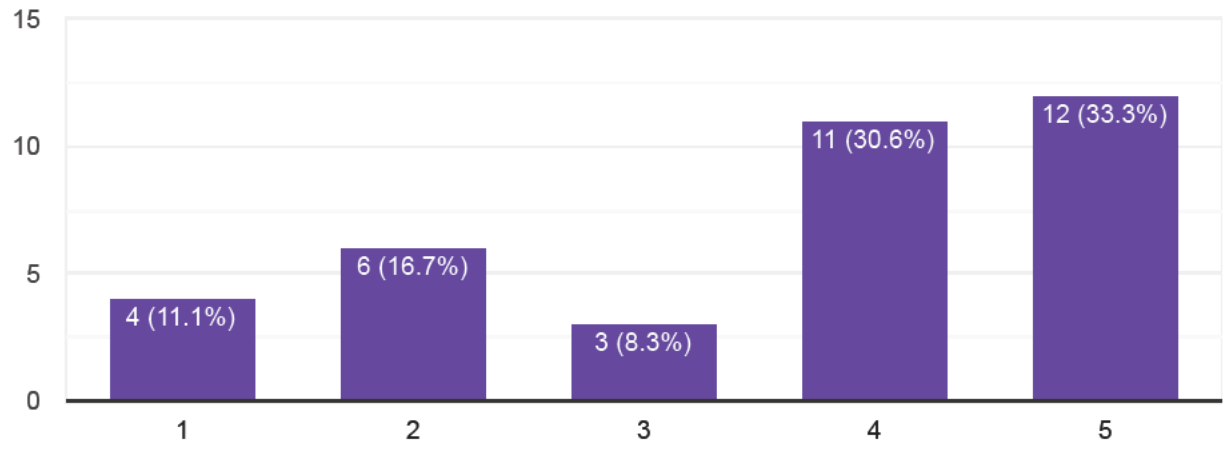
36 responses



I have extremely high goals.

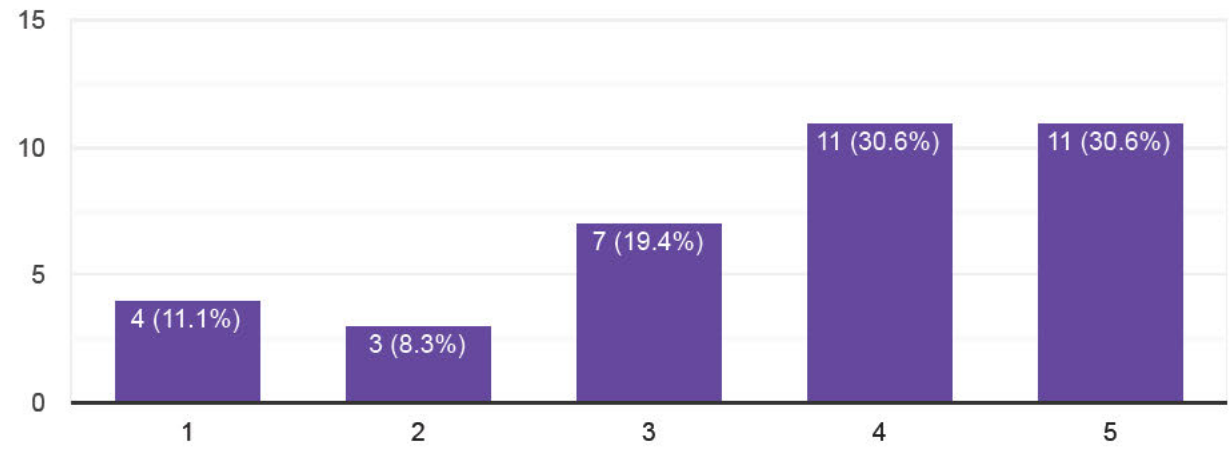
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36 responses



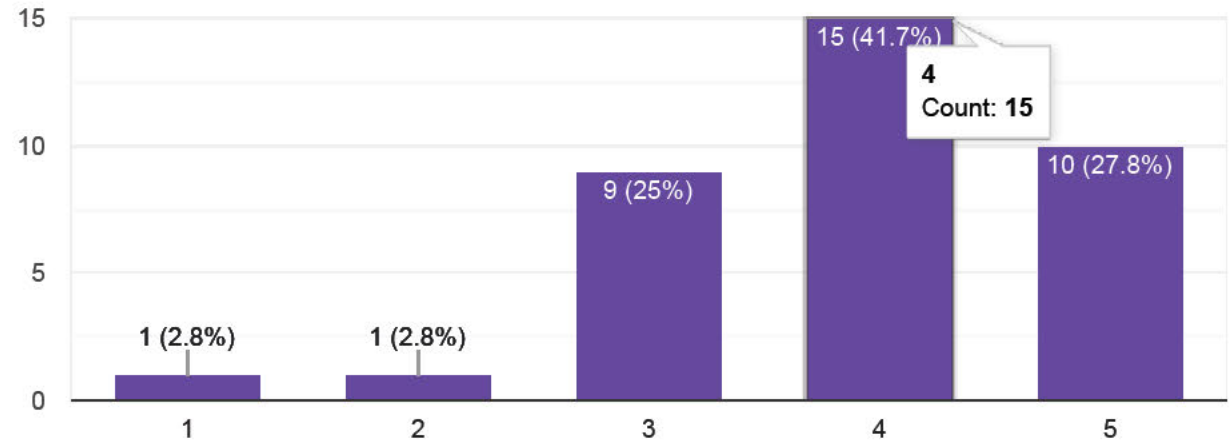
Other people seem to accept lower standards from themselves than I do. Copy

36 responses



I expect higher performance in my daily tasks than most people. Copy

36 responses



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Perfectionism Questionnaire - Adapted from the FMPS - Brief (Burgess et al., 2016). Post-Course

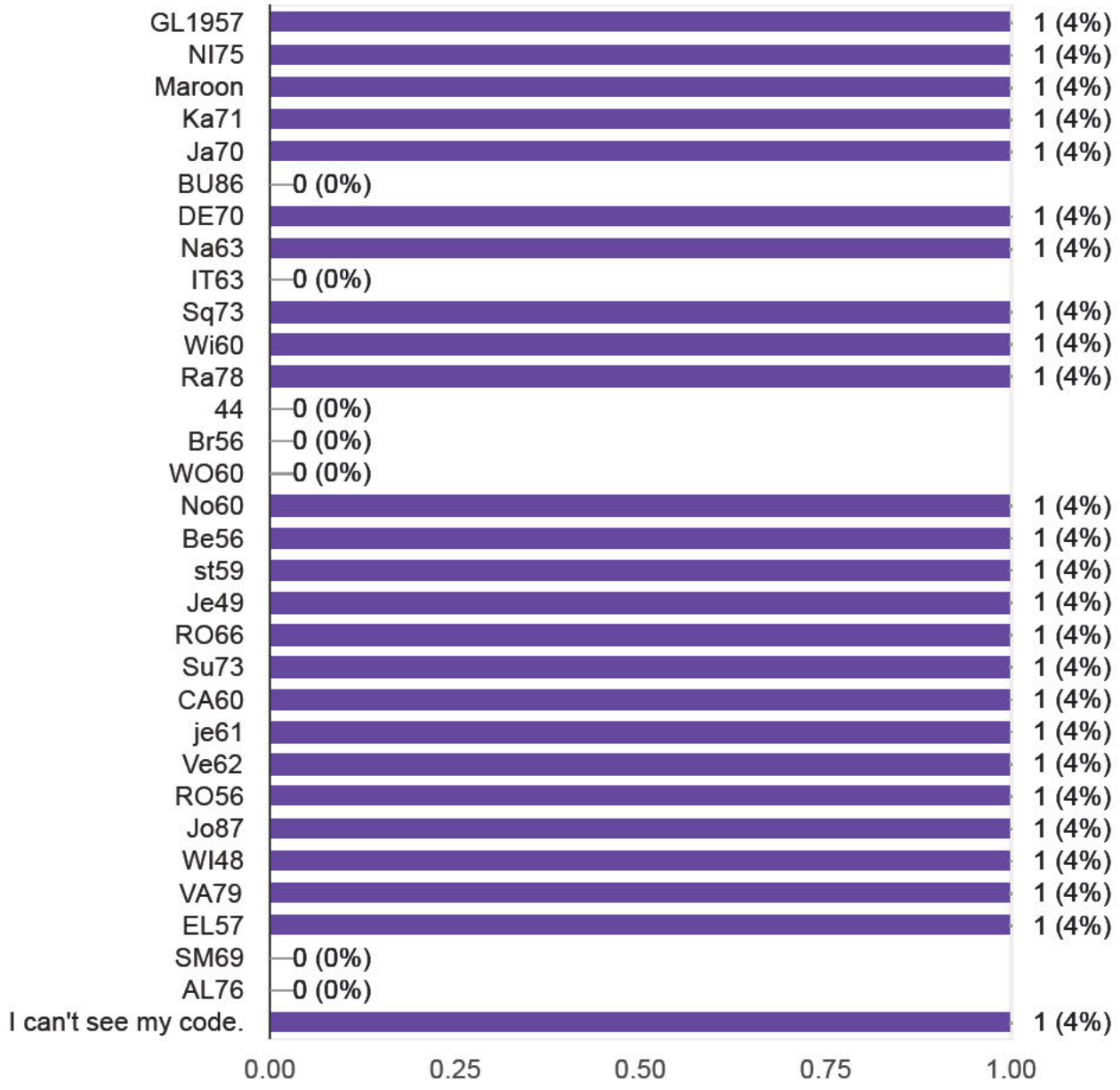
25 responses

Publish analytics

Please select your unique anonymous code from the list below - **Please be VERY accurate - some codes are very similar to each other.**

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25 responses



If you couldn't see your code can you tell me what you think it may have been

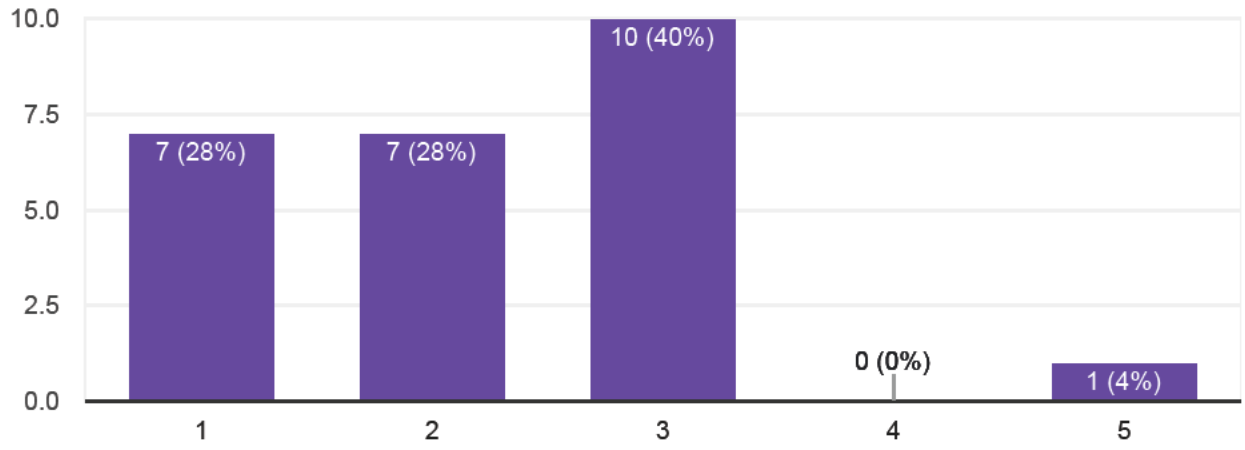
1 response

I just can't remember or find it

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If I fail at work/school, I am a failure as a person.

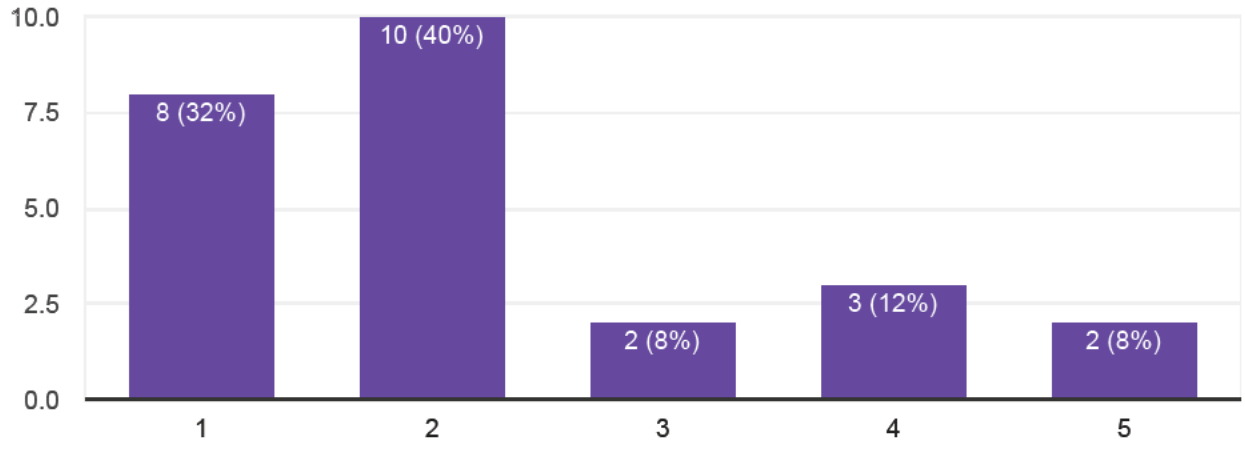
25 responses



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If someone does a task at work/school better than me, then I feel like I failed at the whole task.

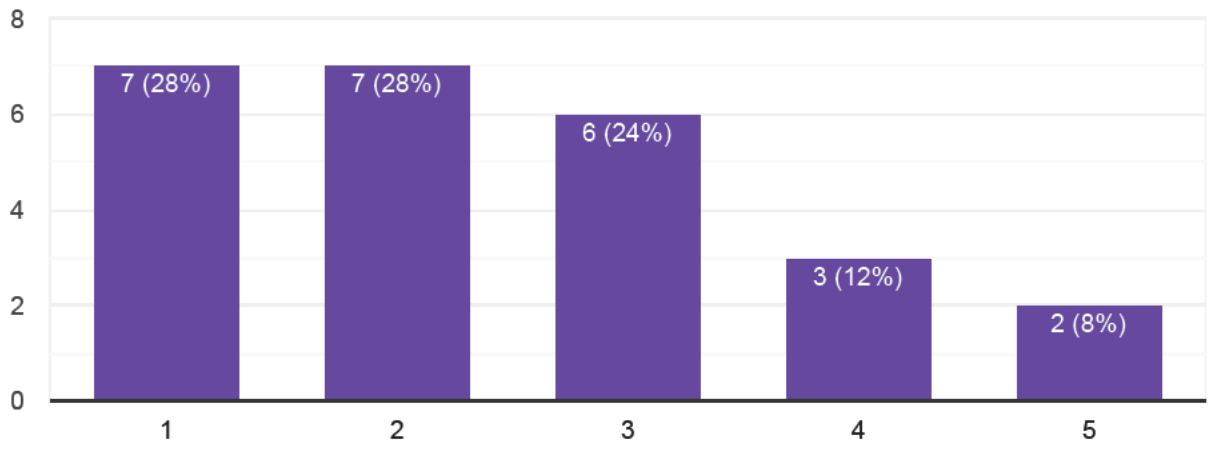
25 responses



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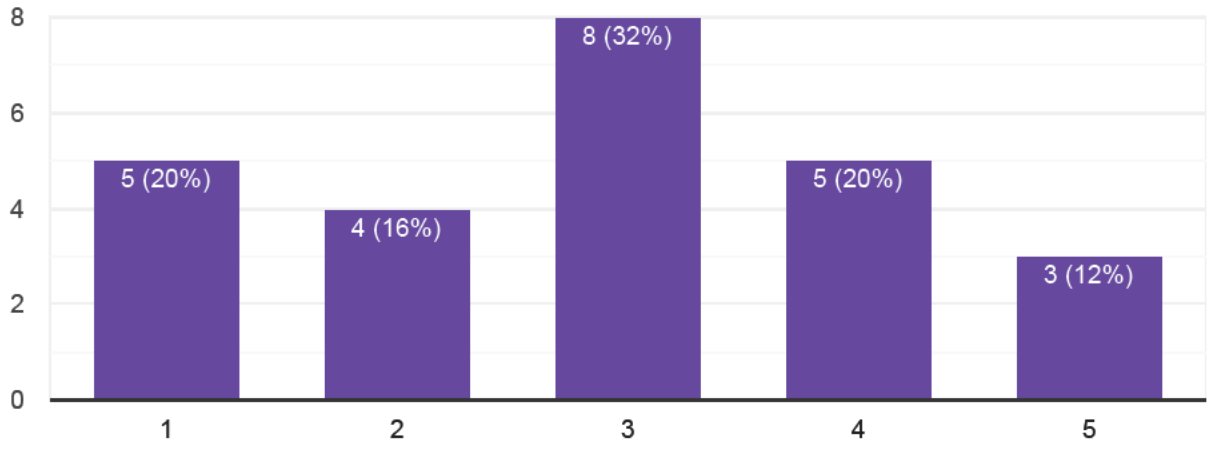
25 responses



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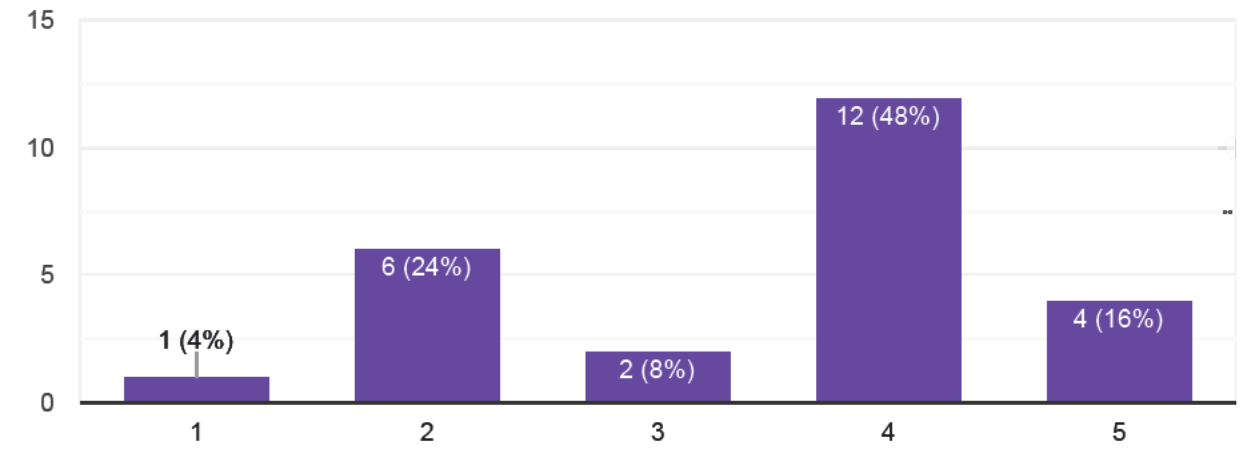
25 responses



I set higher goals for myself than most people.

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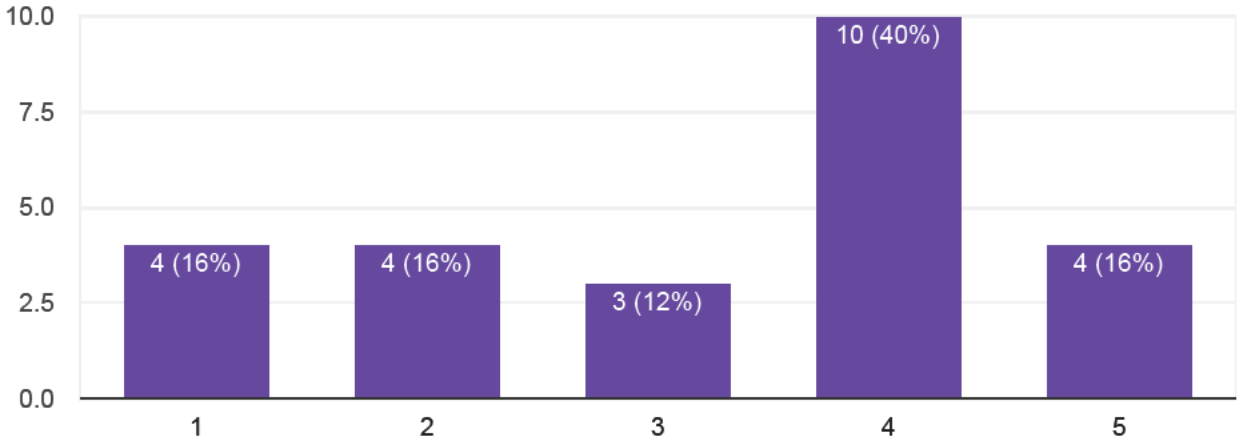
25 responses



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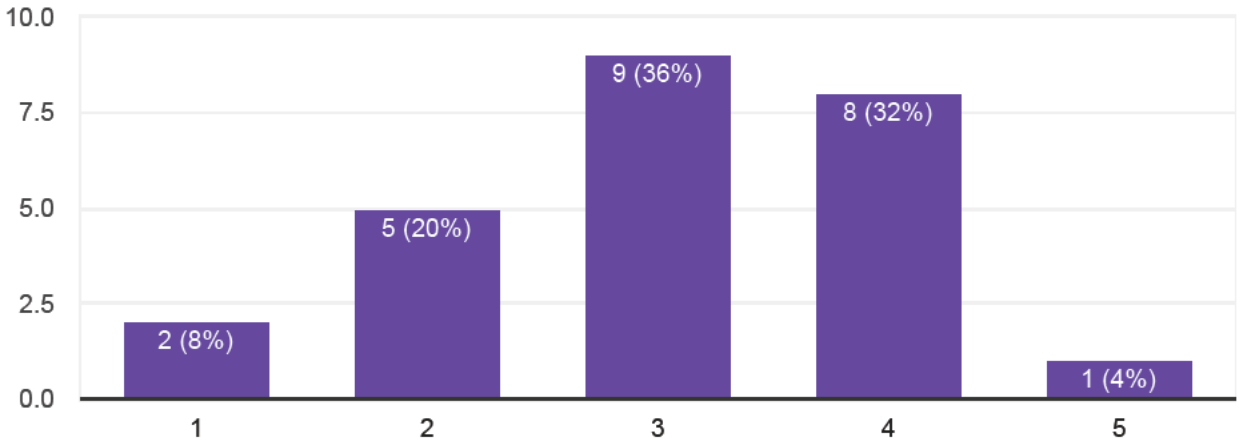
25 responses



Other people seem to accept lower standards from themselves than I do.

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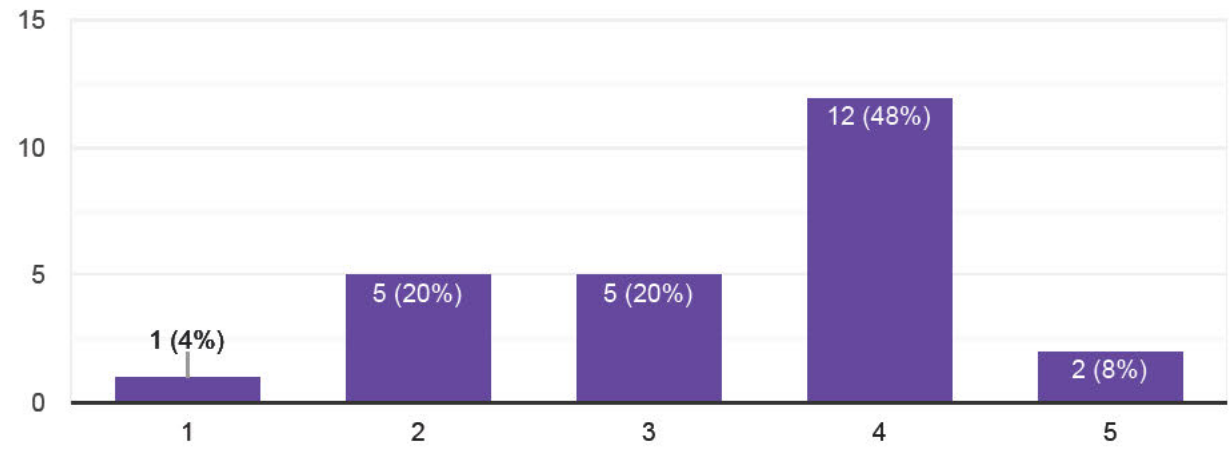
25 responses



: I expect higher performance in my daily tasks than most people.

Copy

25 responses

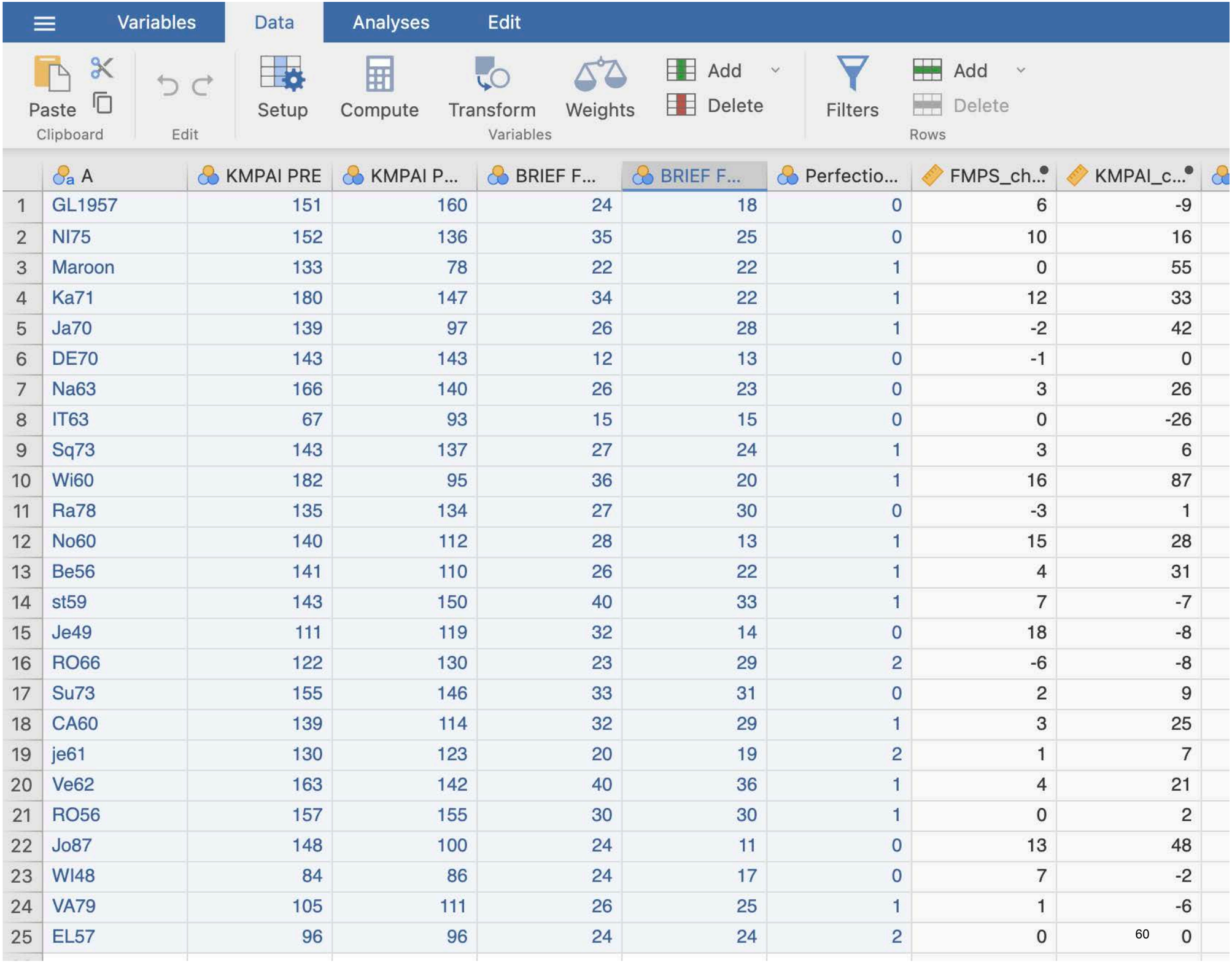


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Appendix D - Full data set Quantitative



Variables | Data | Analyses | Edit

Paste | Clipboard | Edit | Setup | Compute | Transform | Weights | Add | Delete | Variables | Filters | Add | Delete | Rows

	A	KMPAI PRE	KMPAI P...	BRIEF F...	BRIEF F...	Perfectio...	FMPS_ch...	KMPAI_c...
1	GL1957	151	160	24	18	0	6	-9
2	NI75	152	136	35	25	0	10	16
3	Maroon	133	78	22	22	1	0	55
4	Ka71	180	147	34	22	1	12	33
5	Ja70	139	97	26	28	1	-2	42
6	DE70	143	143	12	13	0	-1	0
7	Na63	166	140	26	23	0	3	26
8	IT63	67	93	15	15	0	0	-26
9	Sq73	143	137	27	24	1	3	6
10	Wi60	182	95	36	20	1	16	87
11	Ra78	135	134	27	30	0	-3	1
12	No60	140	112	28	13	1	15	28
13	Be56	141	110	26	22	1	4	31
14	st59	143	150	40	33	1	7	-7
15	Je49	111	119	32	14	0	18	-8
16	RO66	122	130	23	29	2	-6	-8
17	Su73	155	146	33	31	0	2	9
18	CA60	139	114	32	29	1	3	25
19	je61	130	123	20	19	2	1	7
20	Ve62	163	142	40	36	1	4	21
21	RO56	157	155	30	30	1	0	2
22	Jo87	148	100	24	11	0	13	48
23	WI48	84	86	24	17	0	7	-2
24	VA79	105	111	26	25	1	1	-6
25	EL57	96	96	24	24	2	0	0

Mid-Point Questionnaire (Day 15)

28 responses

Publish analytics

Please enter your user code exactly the same as you did before, so your answers can be matched up. (e.g. if you used the first two letters of your mother's name and the last two digits of your birth year, use the same again now). Reminders are in your day 15 email.

28 responses

NI75

Je49

Ka71

SQ73

Ja70

Wi60

WI48

Bu86

Ra78

RO56

Presence2025

GL57

Maroon

st59

CA60

NA63

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RO66

VA79

DE70

No60

EL57

je61

Jo87

44

VE19

Su73

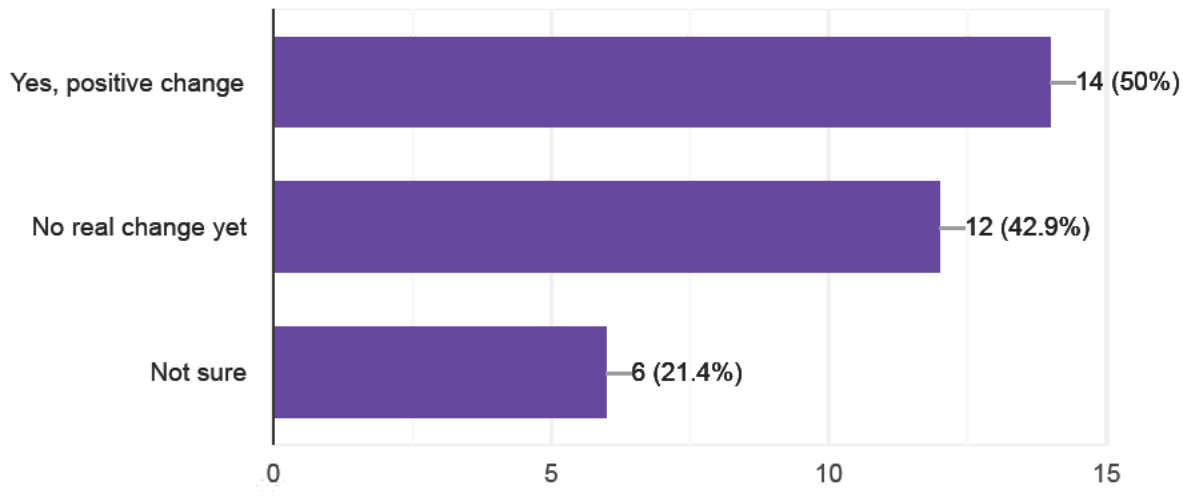
Br56

Early Changes

Since starting the course, have you noticed any changes in how you relate to your thoughts or feelings?

Copy

28 responses



Please say a few words about your answer if you would like to. I've given you more space here just in case you want to expand.

19 responses

Generally more aware of how I'm feeling and able to deal with my emotions as they occur

Interesting techniques - even just 'stopping' and listening to my breathing

More aware of wanting to be positive in general

Im not reacting, calmer in last couple of days

I am more focussed on my breathing. I find the 3 part breathing challenging, but the Nada technique helps

As some context I'm also working with a therapist at the moment and a lot of the work I'm doing crosses over. I wanted to be transparent to allow you to code appropriately

A little more open to appreciating myself and the people around me.

I already do a lot of those exercises from time to time

No real change noted in relation to thoughts or feelings at the moment.

I am more accepting of them

I feel more centred and balanced. The guided nature of daily breathing has encouraged me to consider following a daily metitation process. I feel it has helped lift my mood.

A small change in terms of negative thoughts about others. I am more conscious of negative thoughts. I'm not yet doing anything other than noticing and making a mental note of these feelings.

I find the exercises relaxing but find some aspects difficult to stay focussed. My mind kept wandering when selecting a person.

I'm not used to mediation so everything is new.

It has been useful to revisit and practice mindfulness techniques that I have used. I've been feeling relatively positive at the moment in general. I feel quite level which is nice.

I do feel calmer and a little more connected after doing the meditations in the morning, but as the day progresses I feel it fades and I'm myself. That said, I don't have a lot of stresses in my

life at the moment.

Feel gerally more positive & calm

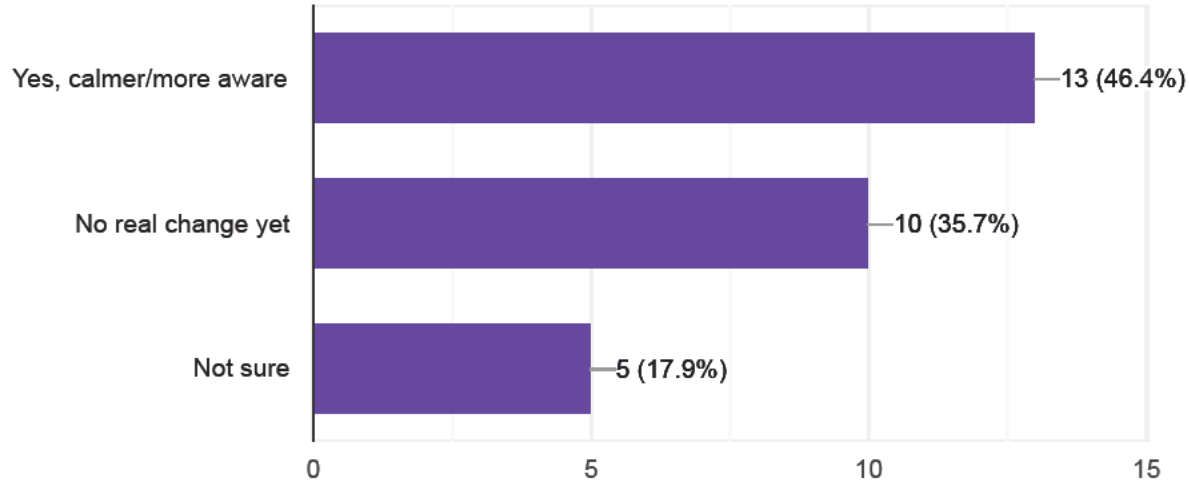
New to mindfulness so I can relate to my feelings but do drift a bit sometimes

Feeling slightly more grounded

Have you noticed any changes in your body or breath when stressed or singing?

Copy

28 responses



Please say a few words about your answer if you would like to.

17 responses

I'm able to deal with my stress quicker - I had a situation that occured at work and I just let it wash over me rather than feeling or getting stressed about it.

I've not really done any singing yet but will be next week

I haven't sung in a performance context since the start of the month.

I got v nervous when watching the showcase recording and it came to my solos. Not sure if that would have been worse before starting this

Not so on edge

I sang last night at a rehearsal and was so much more connected to my body. I was relaxed and able to sing a solo without feeling my usual perfectionism, my breath felt supporting and I was less concerned about what others thought.

Using breath to get calmer, more confident to try new songs, styles.

I'm going through health issues at the moment so am doing the breathing anyway

My Breath feels more in control

I am finding that deep breathing can help when stressed, when I remember it's not a natural habit yet, but getting better.

In terms of stress, I feel I am less anxious and irritable!

I need to apply the technique to a practical situation before I can comment

Realising when I'm tense to relax and breathe differently

Haven't been in a stressful situation yet.

I am much more conscious of my breathing while singing now

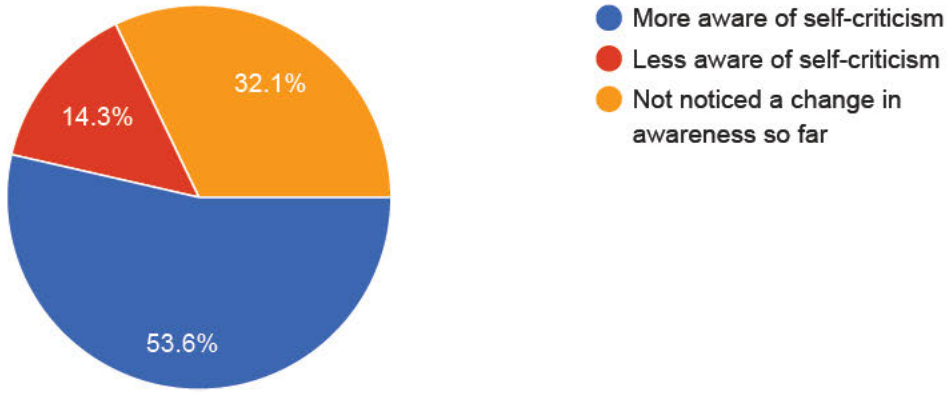
If I feel stressed, I have taken myself away from the situation to reflect and breath. Which is calming. But I have felt more stressed lately. And unsure if it's working for long.

Above answer is during practice

Have you become more aware of self-critical thoughts or feelings?

Copy

28 responses



Please say a few words about your answer if you would like to.

17 responses

rather than letting myself critise how i am feeling, I was able to take a step back and go - ok that happened - what can I learn from this and how do i move on?

I've always been highly aware of my own self-criticism, it's controlling that or learning to turn that into a positive that I struggle with

I'm always aware lol - not sure any change there!

As above

I think ive been taking things as personal rather than constructive

Noting this is likely also connected to my therapy as I'm working a lot on naming my feelings there so finding it difficult to separate what change is driven by therapy Vs the breathwork as it all feels so interconnected

Beginning to realise how negative self criticism is

I'm fairly good at being practical about myself and don't do myself down

I have become more aware but thankfully it is improving how I show up for myself with patience and kindness

Have begun to tone down self criticism but have a way to go.

My inner critical voice seems quieter

I am catching myself in the middle of negative thoughts and consciously noting this behaviour.

I think it's a process that started before the course.

I do notice if I am feeling a little uncharitable towards someone and pull myself up and wish them well, which makes me smile.

Yes, but definitely needs more work.

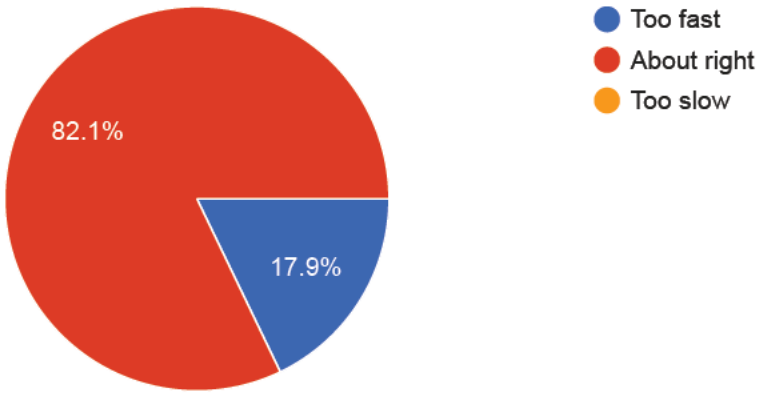
I am quite self critical anyway but I feel like day 15 was hard to imagine myself in scenarios.

Able to stop the negative thought & replace with a positive tjought

The pace of the course so far feels:

Copy

28 responses



Please say a few words about your answer if you would like to.

13 responses

Your voice is very soothing and helps me relax

I like the gentleness

Need to use techniques. Any faster would be too fast

It helps me to be silent for a while before the practice starts

I've struggled with the length of the sessions and noticed I'll often have a reaction when I see how long the session is and can find it difficult to commit daily. Ive missed some days because of this and have sometimes chosen a shorter alternative from my therapist or not to do it when it's felt too overwhelming...which I'm sure are the days I most need to do it! I think knowing the length before pressing play would help so maybe I'll just plan to check so I can work out the right time of day when I'll have enough time

To start with I found it tricky to give myself the switch off time to "fit" in every day.

It's an introduction so is a recap for those who do this kind of breath work ax well as an intro for those who don't

Require more practice/time to feel confident in the techniques to become second nature

I particularly love the opportunity to repeat a session twice. It gives us the chance to really feel the benefits of each topic.

I need time to think ahead of certain situations. For example, thinking of the right person/creature/situation isn't always immediately possible. I found it really hard to quickly identify someone who was difficult to like, or who had made performance more difficult in order to send them kind words. Due to this taking time, I lost concentration and felt I was falling behind. Weirdly this stressed me, thereby undermining the relaxation and calm I had been working towards. The next day, with my examples readily identified, the session worked much better. For me, more specific advance notification of the situations and questions might have helped.

The body scan is different from my previous experiences. I have found other methods more relaxing. This technique has helped me feel more focused, which I hope is the point!

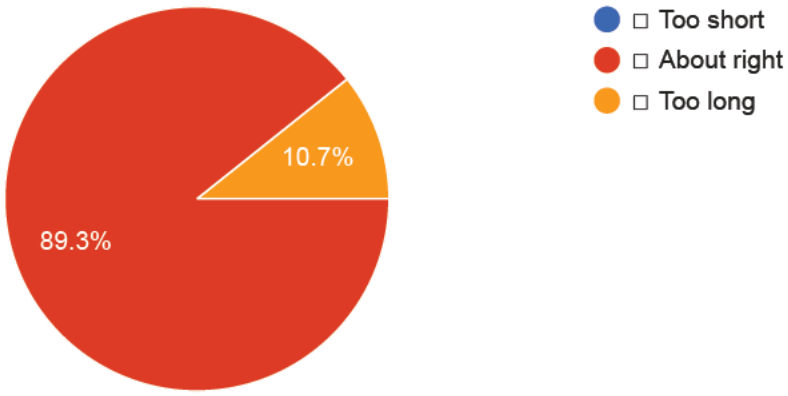
I have made time to practice each morning, even if I'm keen to get on with other stuff. It helps calm my brain a bit and settles me.

I have not been able to use do the days one after another. Usually only being to fit 1 out 2 days i.e day 3/4 I could not do day 3, but did on day 4 and so on. I have done day 15 on day 17. I find it hard to find moments to fit in 'sit down and shut off from the world time' and listen and practise the techniques given.

How are you finding the length of each practice so far?

Copy

28 responses



Please say a few words about your answer if you would like to.

14 responses

I manage to fit it into my busy day

I've struggled to find time - more than I thought. Any longer and I might have given up (no reflection on the content)

Would be useful/commected to keep the practices together in one session, rather than 'do this one and then come back'...

Its long enough to be doable. I have shed a few tears days 11+ which is strange as i dont cry.much. find it strange.

I have learned not to do it immediately after eating! I have enjoyed it most when doing it before bedtime

See explanation above

It's a reasonable time to fit into a day

Long enough to feel real benefits in calming the nervous system without pressure

By the end of each session. I usually feel better.

The focussed part of each practice is exactly right. The only draw back is having to repeat the initial introduction to the breathing practice. There needs to be a shorter introduction to the breathing practice after the initial introduction to the practice.

A couple of the sessions were lomgwr than expected

The last few felt a little long at first with the nose breathing exercise plus the new exercise, but I had a talk with myself and told myself I was investing the time in me which helped.

Most of them are about 20 mins. I think the techniques voiced would be difficult to shorten for the same outcome. So it's about right. I would not recommend any longer though.

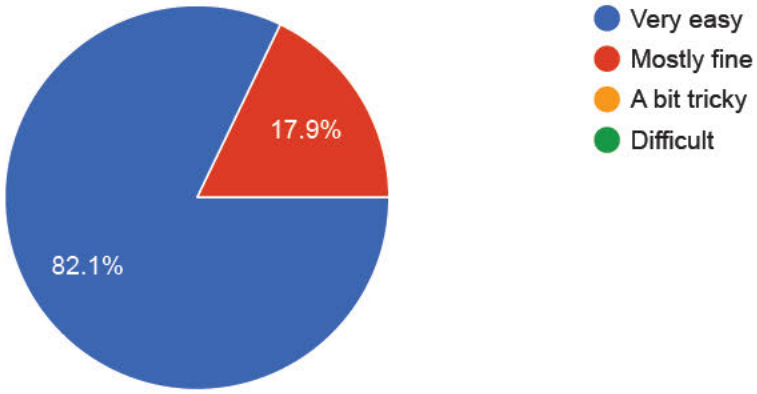
Short session are easier to fit around life.

Would prefer 10 mins sessions as an struggling a bit to fit them in

Accessing materials (emails, website, audio, diagrams) has been:

Copy

28 responses



Please say a few words about your answer if you would like to.

4 responses

Would have been good to have a the Nadi Shodhana built into each exercise, even if that's just a 5 min space in the recording. Having to restart the LKCM recording breaks the flow a little, especially as I have to put my glasses back on to find the play button LOL

It is very straightforward. I really appreciate how easy it is to maneuver the website.

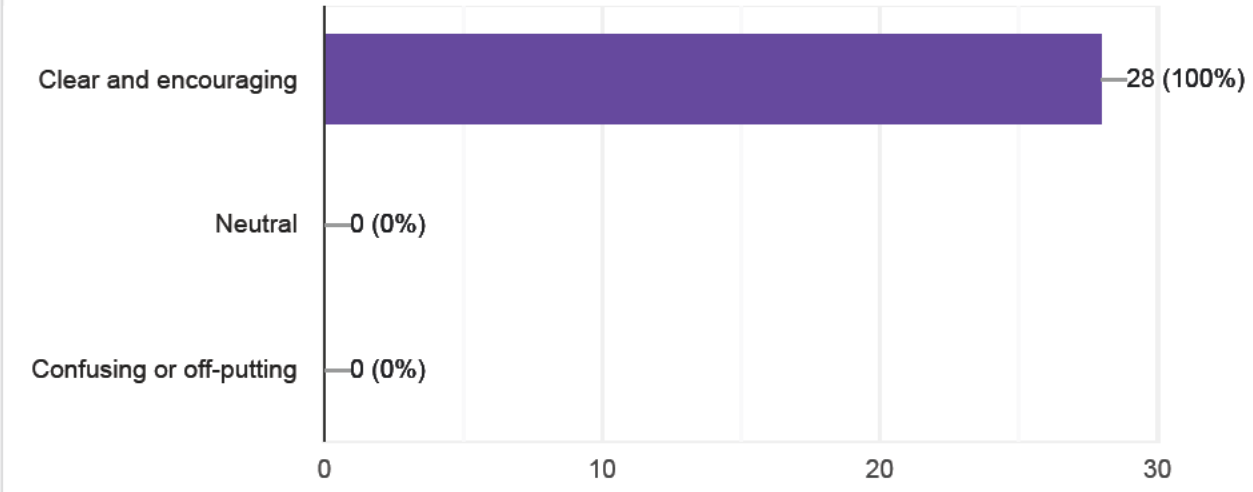
Nicely designed

I'm reasonably tech savvy and make sure I have good access to the internet. The next few days will be interesting as I'll only have intermittent access to the internet. It would be helpful if I could download the next 2 weeks in advance as I may struggle with access.

The delivery style feels:

Copy

28 responses



Please say a few words about your answer if you would like to.

15 responses

Would like more scientific reason as to any known benefits - for example what a body scan actually does, or why some people use thumb and index finger for nasal breathing

Great tone and pace

Very understandable

Delivery is very encouraging, but also accepting of distractions. This is my first time doing anything like this, and I have found the guidance very helpful and non judgemental.

The guidance is spot on and Nic's voice is perfect

Paced and supportive

The diagram for the body scan is great.

I really love the style, and your voice is very smooth and calming

Also very warm and calm.

Very calm voice

The tone and structure of the sessions is easy to follow. Initially on the first body scan I found it a bit quick, but on the second practice it felt less frantic. I like that we can practice each section over 2 days.

Clear concise instructions delivered in a beautifully calm and positive manner

The delivery style is also soothing.

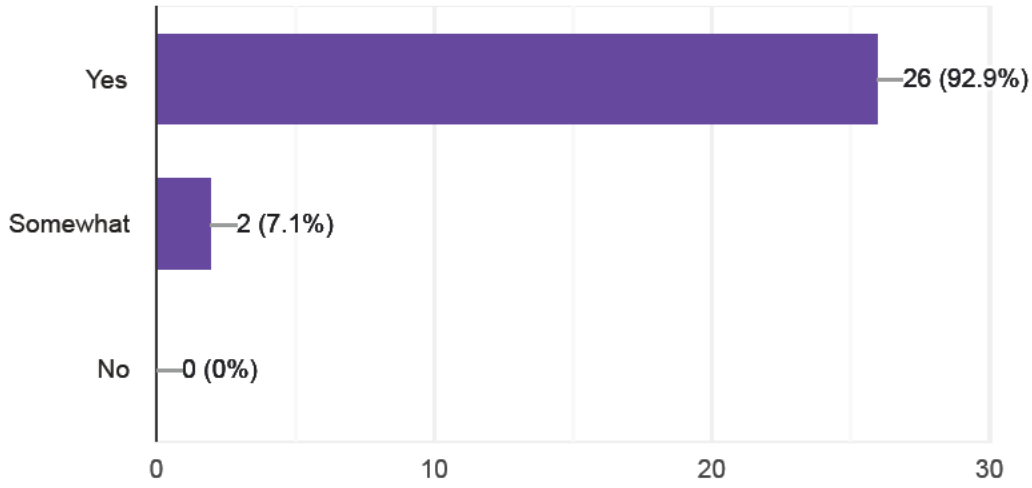
Your Soft/calm voice helps.

Lovely, clear, soothing voice.

I feel supported and encouraged to continue:

Copy

28 responses



Please say a few words about your answer if you would like to.

10 responses

It's a good tool to slow down and be present

Your voice is calming...

Some overwhelm but that's me and the fact my life is very full at the moment not you!

It's become something to look forward to

Although not yet really experiencing any benefits feel hopeful and keen to continue

I am looking forward to the rest of the course.

I am planning to access more guided meditation, as a regular feature of my day/week

I enjoy the sessions and am usually reluctant to 're-enter' normal life.

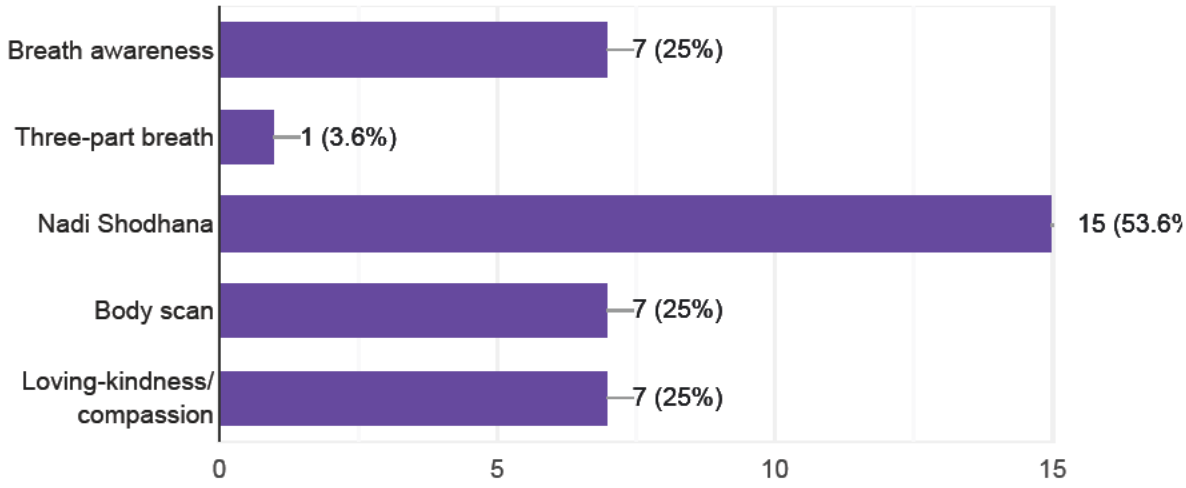
I feel those last few weeks have been preparing me for the next two, and I'm interested in continuing to gain the benefits of the whole experience.

I am curious what it will bring out and hope to get more time.

The practice that has appealed to me most so far is: (please choose just one option).

Copy

28 responses



Please say a few words about your answer if you would like to.

16 responses

Doing Nadi Shodhana before bed is really helping me to relax and switch off

I like the simplicity of focused regular breathing.

Ive been using breathing to get back off to sleep. The whole body was interesting as i felt i could feel those parts of my body except wrists. I like the nadia technique, it does help regulate. The loving and kindness - why do i have tears ? V strange, but feel calmer agter.

Concentration on the breathwork is very calming, but also thinking about times of safety and love is a very life affirming experience.

I've always done body scan naturally with the breath and it's nice to be guided through it

Has opened my mind and given me a new approach to things I may never have considered as being beneficial to me

This exercise has improved my breath control, and focus. It was difficult at first, but after day 2 I got a hang of it. Its a brilliant exercise not just for breathing but it increases focus and regulates the nervous system. This is one of the reasons I do it on the go, whenever I feel anxious

The focus and structure helps me to cancel out distractions and totally concentrate.

I had heard of alternate nostril breathing before but had never applied it properly. It was nice to have a "talk through" for this.

It has really surprised how quickly I become focused, and how untroubled I am by other thoughts while working on this.

The body scan gave me the ability to completely focus for this first time in this type of practice without my mind wondering

I've done a little breath work before, but the body scan made me get in touch with the whole of me.

I feel tangible benefits from doing this, both for my mood and breathing. I will certainly continue with this.

I feel like the 3part breath helps de-stress and calm my breathing more.
And the LKC is bringing more focus on what matters

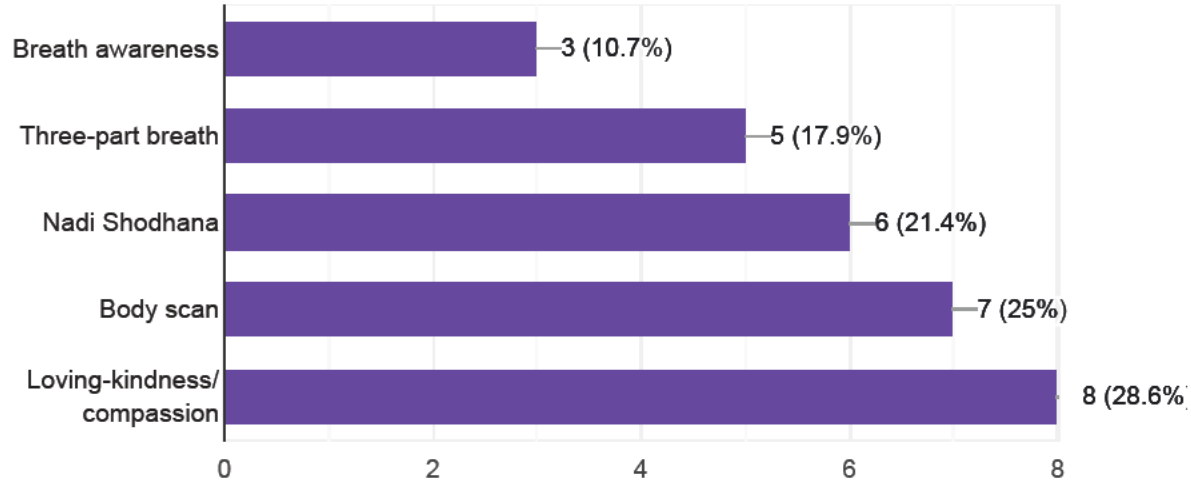
Led to deep relaxation.

The breathing technique is really helpful

The practice that has appealed least to me is: (please choose just one option).

Copy

28 responses



Please say a few words about your answer if you would like to.

20 responses

I've struggled with this part

I am a yoga sceptic - would want to understand the actual physical benefits and scientific reasons. Some of it seemed a bit airy fairy.

Im not sure i feel that as i should

I found this challenging, probably because I have not been breathing correctly for years

I found one of my nostril's blocked and ended up thinking about that - ie I didn't know I was congested / what's wrong with me / what does it mean etc!

I found it difficult to concentrate , but I'm sure this is a useful tool once you're able to stay in the body, and not let your mind wander.

Just don't feel I need that

Have found difficulty in leaning in to body parts.Hasnt felt natural to me and has therefore not felt particularly relaxing

Particularly Day 13 and 14. Extending loving kindness and compassion to difficult people and situations. I didnt know I was holding on tightly to my hurt. Wishing them ease, joy and safety etc. Freed me from that prison.

I find it difficult to "send" my breath to my lower body!

I'm not sure I was doing this properly, maybe I should try again, but overall it was still relaxing

I found it too difficult to remain focused.

I find it very difficult to do this without my brain wondering.

It has been challenging to come up with people or situations, I feel like I overthink it, which leads to me losing focus.

I have found this difficult due to having a cold and blocked sinuses. However it is getting easier

I found wishing loving kindness on people who weren't very kind themselves quite a challenge.

I found it hard to focus and felt I was not getting much out of it compared to the other sessions

I found body scan relaxing but had fell asleep during it as I was laying down so missed half the recording

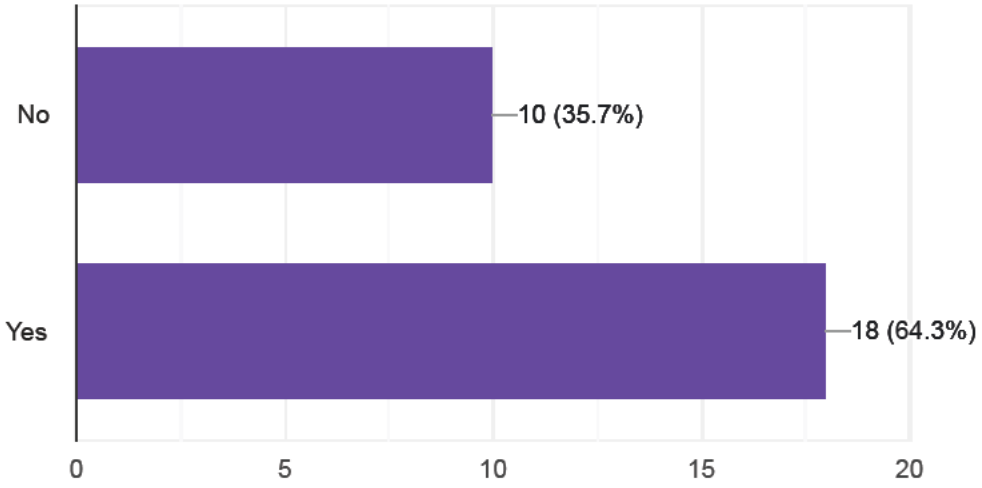
Struggling with this and drift but could be because I am new to mindfulness

Struggling with 3 part breath, understand the concept but.....

Have you experienced any barriers to practice (time, clarity, motivation, etc.)?

Copy

28 responses



Please say a few words about your answer if you would like to.

19 responses

Often time, but I like have dedicated time to this - and knowing it's only for 1 month helps. If this was longer, I would do day 1/2 for a whole week then move on.

Time is an issue for me due to work commitments

Working days, other distractions, other priorities

Can't always do this systematically every day, life gets in the way, trying to play catch-up if I miss a day

Time so have sometimes done at night or once did morning and night so didnt miss out

Time! Motivation with competing methods of self soothing and just in general I find it difficult to do something daily

Time! When I am home taking myself "off" and away to do this on my own

I found I needed to be in quiet room with no distractions, not always easy.

My neighbours can be noisy so they are a distraction I have to acknowledge and regain my focus on the exercise

I look forward to the practice. Recognising that it will take time and reinforcement to reap

benefits

Not to a large extent, but finding the different points of the body scan. Especially the half body scan the diagram was helpful but maybe i needed more clarity in finding the hollow of my throat, left and right center of the chest etc.. But I usually just focus on the general area you describe in each session.

Trying to find a quiet space without external distraction or interruptions has been harder this week.

Often on a very busy day I've forgotten to do the practise and had to to catch up on the past day in the morning.

Finding the time or the quiet is sometimes challenging

Not so far, but internet access will be a challenge for the next few days.

I found it hard to imagine certain people in my life quickly. Or certain memories especially whether good or bad.

Sometimes, difficult to fit, as busy.

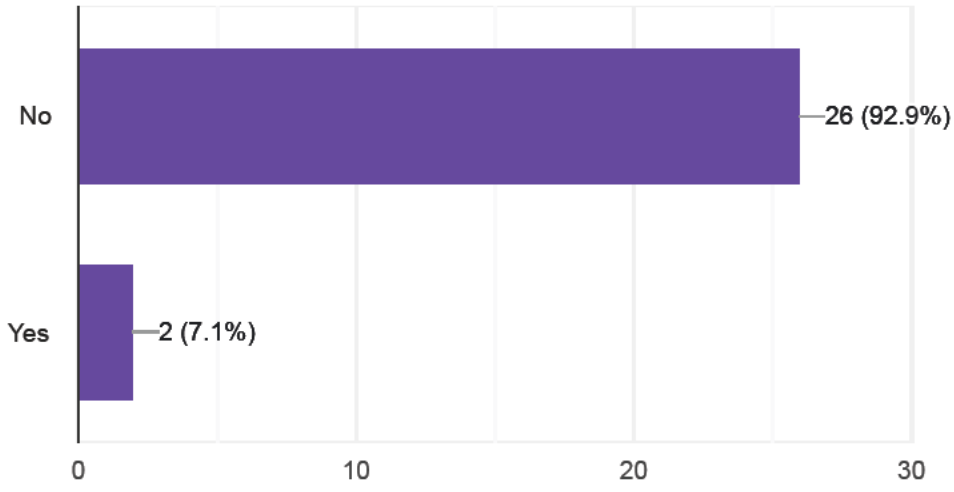
Time is a factor

Currently having intermittent Internet problems which has slightly impacted. Beyond our control

Have you used any of the practices before or after a performance so far?

Copy

28 responses



If yes, please could you say a few words about how you found this?

10 responses

whilst in a situation that was almost performance - take time to breathe and not overthink

No performance since starting

Not a performance but during rehearsals I've felt more connected to my body. I do have a performance coming up so I'm curious to see how that goes

I haven't had a performance in the duration so far but i think I will use some mindful breath moments in future ones

Not done any since the course

I mostly use the alternate breath to calm my nervous system when I get anxious. I guess its preparing my body for performance situations.

N/a

I haven't performed since the start of the programme.

I have used the first breathing technique before to try and calm my breathing

Not sung anywhere, which is unusual

Expectation Check

10. Is this course what you expected so far?

Copy

28 responses

Please say a few words about your answer if you would like to.

18 responses

Didn't really know what to expect

I didn't know what to expect - keeping an open mind

Doesn't yet feel very connected to performance, having you have trailed that this will happen in the second half

I didnt know if it would help.me, but i believe it is

I think just the amount of time needed

I didn't come in with expectations, it was very much a lets try this as never done anything like it - it will help Nicki and it might help me.

I have never done anything like this before, so wasn't sure what to expect. However ,I assumed breathwork.

Wasn't really sure what would come up

I am familiar with some aspects like loving kindness, 3 part breath, body scan etc. But the instructor presented them in a creative and refreshing way that made me see them from a new perspective.

Wasn't expecting the Loving Kindness meditations

There was more focus on breathing that I expected, but I like it!

I expected breathing and relaxation techniques. I did not expect the kindness & compassion towards others sessions. Perhaps I mistakenly thought this would purely focus on me and my feelings

To be honest I'm not sure what I expected but it's not what I thought it would be. I think I thought it might be a bit more CBT?

I am enjoying revisiting some mindfulness principles I have used before. The breath work is quite new for me, and feels like it helps me focus very easily.

I didn't really have any expectations of what it may be

I didn't really have expectations, but I think what's been experienced so far is the ground work 8 on which future lessons will build.

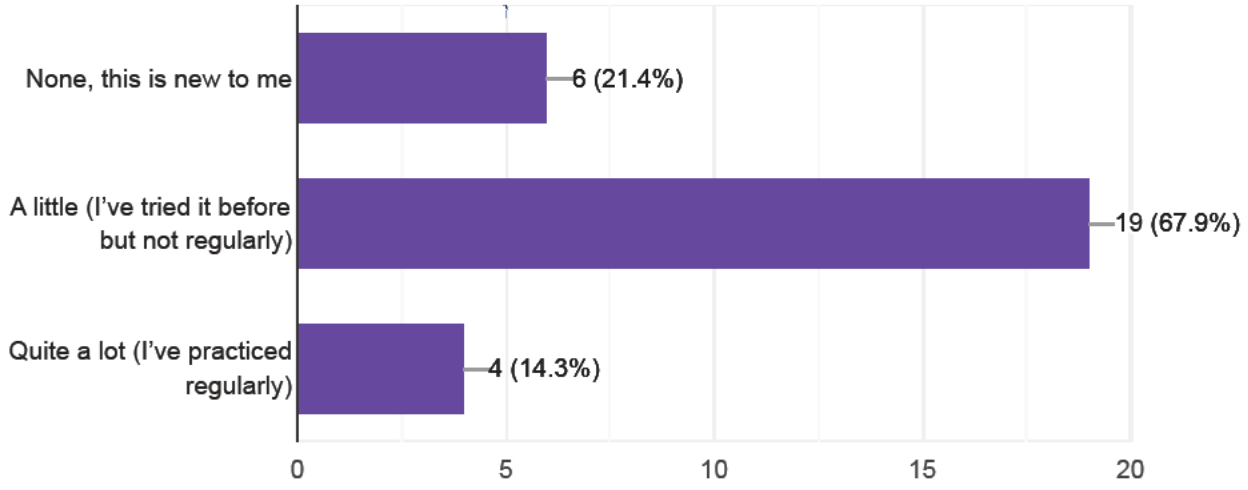
I'm not sure what I was expecting :)

I wasn't sure what to expect

Copy

Before this course, how much experience did you have with mindfulness?

28 responses



Please say a few words about your answer if you would like to.

9 responses

I should practice more than i do!

I've used some before, to de-stress and relax before sleep. Prayer is my usual route.

I have always found it difficult to try and 'quiet' my mind

Very little experience and only for short sessions or used to help me sleep

I just do it naturally

But never one tailored to singers. So this is great.

Have done a previous course on a different subject.

Several sessions delivered through work, some years ago. Mainly seated in a group in a break-out room, deep breathing, and practicing inner focus. Not really successful as far too many distractions.

I did a short course a couple of years ago.

How does the course feel so far in terms of engagement, given your experience?

28 responses

Good

It feels good.

It makes me take time for myself even if it's only 10 minutes

I've made sure to do the practices every day, and as I struggle for time I feel this is about right

Busyness has been the biggest battle.

I enjoy having this to do each (most) days

Good so far

It feels good

The intros are possibly a little longer than others I've done but I don't have much experience so it's difficult say

Breathing awareness and body scan, great; Nadi Shodana i struggled with because of blocked nostril and being confused about that. The Meditation is taking some getting used to. I had a someone on my mind that kept coming back to despite trying to move away from those thoughts . While I 'got' why it was understandable, I still felt frustrated with myself and a bit sad.

I have found it interesting and helpful.

Grateful for the guidance and keen to continue

I feel encouraged to keep going anytime I receive a reminder email.

The course is engaging and wish to continue to it's conclusion.

I like the guided nature and the taking the time for peaceful breathing and reflection.

Much better to do frequent short sessions than longer sessions once a week. Also better alone than in a group.

I hope that I shall be more focused during the next half.

I think the courses well designed and Nikki is very engaging. I've found my own time commitments and tiredness of sometimes being obstacles, but that's nothing to do with the course itself. It's more a lifestyle thing to do with me.

It feels good to make time for myself, and shut the rest of the world out while I focus on me.

First time I've been able to completely focus

I love your delivery of the practices. This motivates me to immerse myself in the practice

I am engaged as it's exploring and learning new experiences and challenges in an area not in my comfort zone.

I find a structured course really useful to have as focus on mindfulness compared to my previous self-led attempts.

When I settle in occasionally and concentrate I engage quite well. There have been couple days I have drifted in to sleep during half and full body days. But engagement is pretty good.

It's a complete new experience which I love

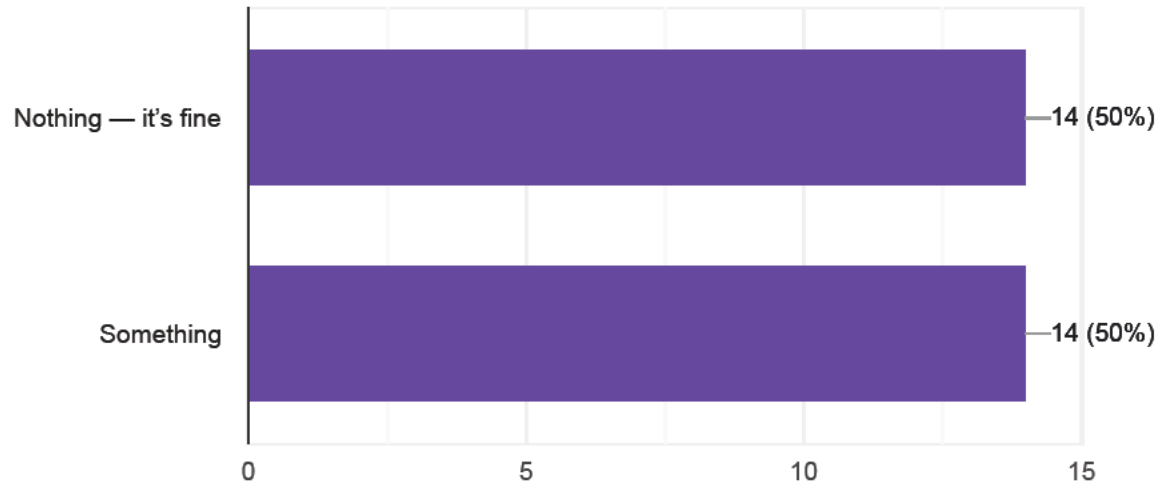
Excellent

Enjoying it. Will probably revisit properly when Internet sorted. Although I do intend to contjnue

Copy

Final question: If I could change one thing about the first half of the course, it would be:

28 responses



Please say a few words about your answer if you would like to.

18 responses

It would be like suggested above, to do a whole week at a time rather than 1/2 days. Helps me to embed.

More info about the 'why' of things

See answer re: integrating Nadi Shodhana. Definitely not a showstopper!

I live the music too. Im imaging waves rolling in the shore and help with the breathing

Number of days a week to practice and varying length of sessions. I have some from my therapist which are 2-5 mins and I find them really useful when I'm overwhelmed as it feels like a manageable amount of time to sit with my feelings and connect with my body Vs 15-20 mins which can feel very uncomfortable or impossible!. Knowing the way I engage in other areas of my life like fitness this is a strategy I use when I'm struggling with motivation for exercise ill choose a shorter session and then often will do more but it's getting started that is often the barrier (for context I'm neurodiverse)

A bit more of a lead in time to get used to the idea of getting this kind of away from it all, focused/ in my head 'me time' .

I have felt the pace so far to be about right, and the content has been useful.

A little more practice before moving on to the next phase

Just creating a slightly different introduction to the regular breathing practice in place of the intro to the introductory practice, of the Nodi Shodana /3 part breathing technique in order to help the user maintain the focus of the sessions. Other than that the presentation of the course is extremely good.

See previous answer about having a heads-up (the day before?) to identify your 'people', loved and unloved.

I found it difficult to think of a person or pet to focus on due to the short notice.

I found Nicky's voice relaxing to the point that I kept falling asleep during the full body scan.

My previous experience of body scans focused more on how different body parts feel, rather than just focusing on specific points very briefly. For me this is very grounding and highlighted the importance of recognising all and any sensations, and acknowledging them, even if they are not positive.

I would like to be able to down load the lessons though

I feel I just need more help with the body scan sessions in terms of understanding the benefits.

To include a minute of a breathing exercise in each recording, as I had less time, sometimes I had to skip going back to the breathing exercises recordings as instructed and continue with that 'day' recording more for the LKC days.

Maybe do each exercise over 3 days. As would give busy people more time.

Shorter burst sessions

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Presence Over Perfection: Post-Course Questionnaire

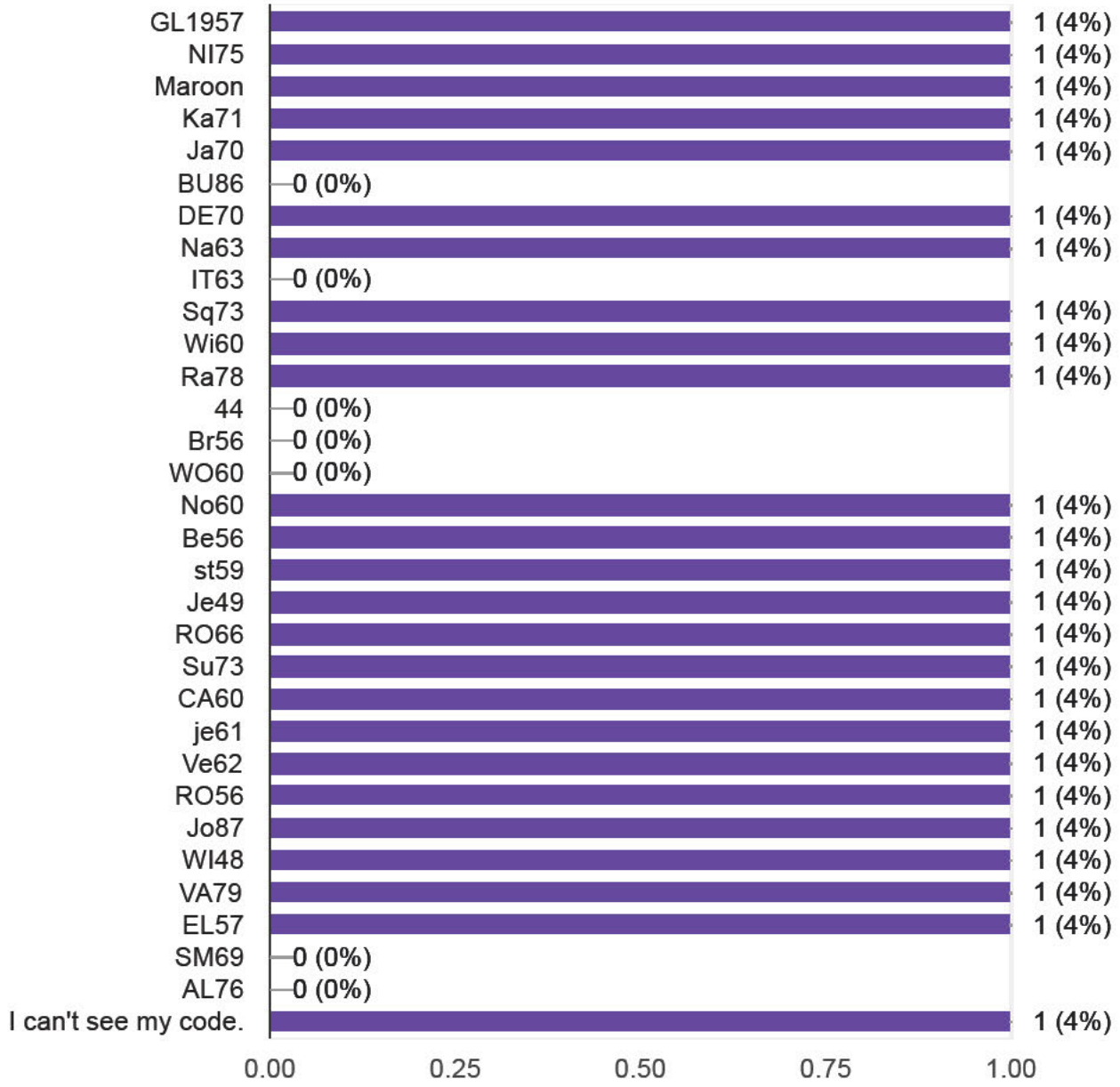
25 responses

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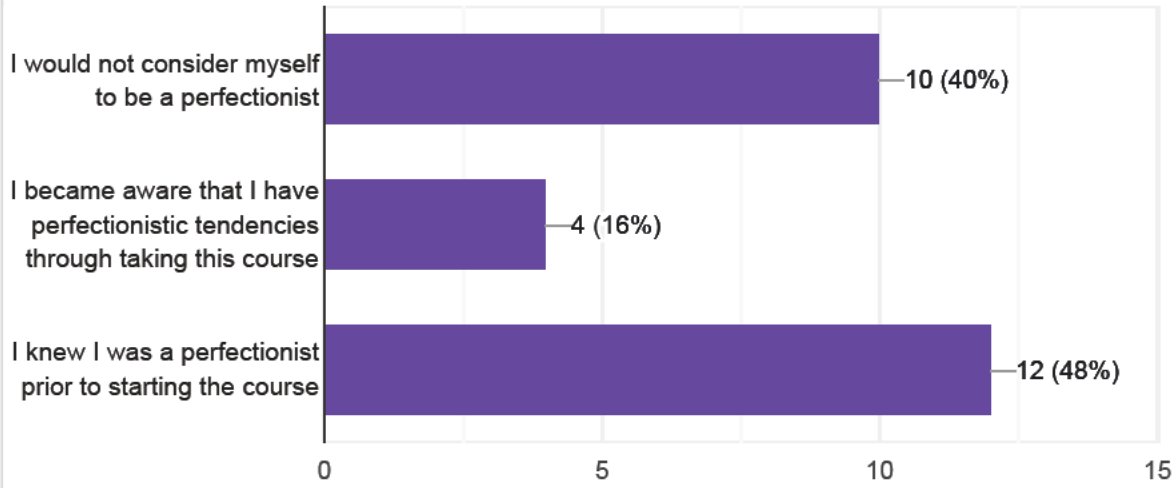
25 responses



Would any of these following statements be true to you?

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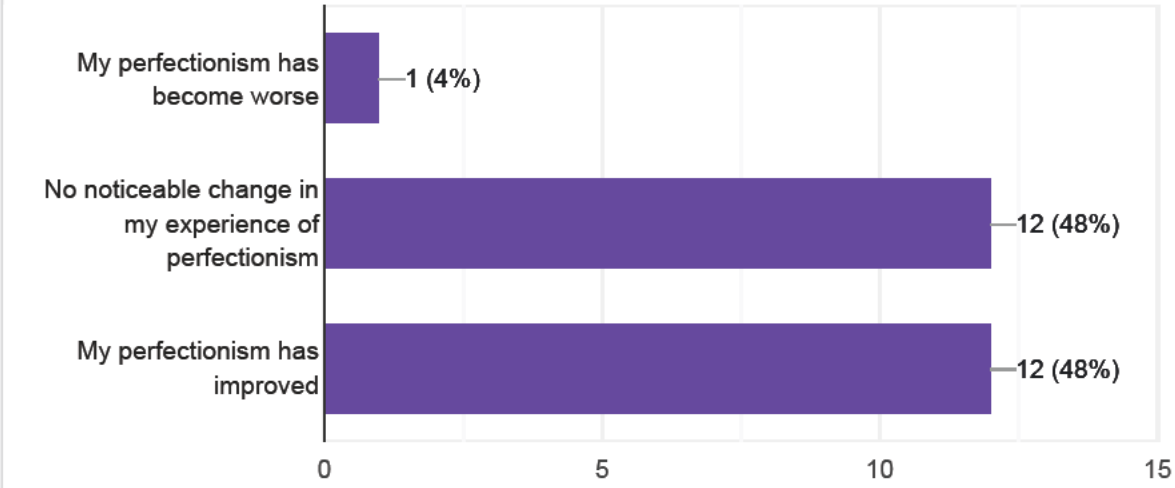
25 responses



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Broadly speaking which of the following statements most closely matches your experience or sense of perfectionism over the last 30 days?

25 responses



Would you like to expand on the statement above? Please note section 2 - 3 go into more detail.

19 responses

I am beginning to appreciate my voice for being uniquely mine alone and to accept authenticity can result in imperfection.

Before perfectionism would paralyse me and then i would be upset with myself for allowing it to. Since the course started, i noticed how much that pressure kept on reducing. Now I am learning to channel it better. To use it as a strength rather than an excuse to procrastinate.

I have always struggled to let other people take on tasks or responsibilities, as I tend to like things done a certain way. It the last 12 months I have been making a conscious effort to let others do things their way. It can be challenging, but it has helped reduce the pressures I sometimes put upon myself. I send a lot of focus of kindness to others, I am able to more easily reflect some of it back towards myself x

I see the potential in some of the techniques to manage my perfectionism. Learning to better accept the voice I have been will make me less critical.

It's hard to say what you mean by perfectionism but what I have managed to do is accept who I am and whether that means making a mistake or not - I am human and humans make mistakes.

The course has helped me realise I don't need to be so hard on myself. That I have been thinking people are judging me when it's my perception rather than reality.

The course has helped me to understand perfectionism, and how I can try to achieve a better outcome

I am letting things more and being slightly more relaxed over little things

I feel I am less worried about perfectionism as I grow older, and having retired I have less pressure on me, so do things from choice not because I have to or because it's expected if me.

I don't think I've fully had a chance to test whether the course has made a difference on my wanting to sing or perform "perfectly"

I've never been a perfectionist, seems like a waste of energy and unobtainable. I just do my best and that's enough. When I know I've not done my best through a lack of focus or effort I get cross with myself but I'm not a perfectionist.

I still strive to do my very best but maybe I will be kinder to myself going forward.

I have realised areas where I apply too much "perfectionist pressure" on myself, and can now see that I can change this.

I've always known that perfection is impossible for most people but have always thought I should be better than I am. The course has reminded me that I am losing out by constantly aiming for something I am never going to achieve. Just enjoying performing and relaxing into it will improve my performance.

My last performance felt a little less stressful and I am consciously telling myself that others don't judge me as harshly as I judge myself.

As well as the positive impact from this course, I have found my willingness to try songs that

aren't fully performance-ready has improved. I'm OK saying that it's a work in progress and that feedback would be appreciated. It helps. Obviously this is in a safe space and not in a formal performance scenario.

No

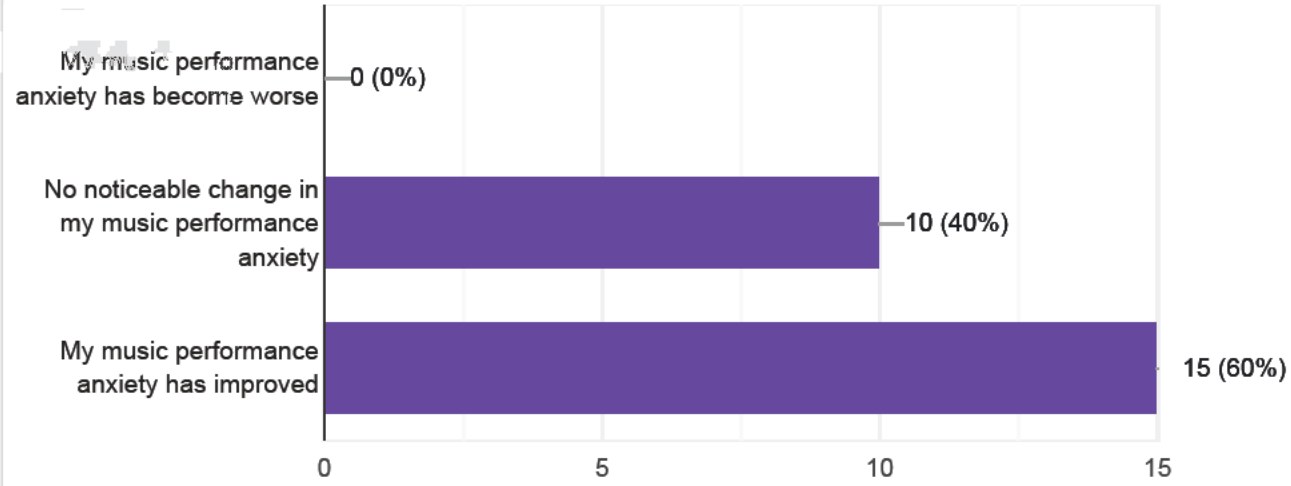
i dont consider myself to be a perfectionist as I wouldnt do half the things I do if I had to be perfect as I dont have enough time to be! But I think I have been more compassionate and had more perspective over the month with my rehearsal and performance

I think I may have taken on board that “I am enough” and changed my approach to life slightly.

Copy

Broadly speaking, which of the following statements most closely matches your experience or sense of music performance anxiety over the last 30 days?

25 responses



Would you like to expand on the statement above? Please note section 2 - 3 go into more detail.

17 responses

Accepting that an error is a mark of authenticity means I worry less about making mistakes

My awareness of my breathing and energy in the whole of my body has made me feel stronger and more confident when singing.

I feel like now that I understand what is going on. I have a better relationship with it. During the course I was able to use the alternate breath technique to ground myself before performances and it was beneficial in keeping me centered in other areas of my life

During performances during this time I have still been feeling nervous before hand. I have used

breathing techniques to try and focus my energy. I still find I have tremor in my hands when performing. I thought using a mic stand would help, but I felt my mouth tremored instead!! I feel singing without lyrics will help me relax and focus more on the song, I worry about forgetting the words, habit I struggle to break. I will perhaps try to focus on moving this tremor to a less disruptive body part, or use arm movement to disperse it. I still try hard to believe others when they give positive feedback, as I still have self doubt, and worry that people are just being nice, even if I'm not very good! Using the positive affirmations is a help, and a reminder to be kind to myself x

I have not had many opportunities to put the the practice to the test. Although I understand the theory I did fall into the same traps, think it is habitual. It will take more time to harness the practice while actually practicing/performing.

When I think about performing/how ill perform, I believe i wont be as panicky.

I have never really been anxious about performance, as I have always performed as part of a group and felt secure in that group

I feel If there is time, I have developed the skills for breathing and anxiety exercises for a performance

I'm not sure it has improved as yet as I haven't had the opportunity to test this, but I am confident that I can quell anxiety a little better now.

I don't think I've fully had a chance to test whether the course has made a difference on my wanting to sing or perform "perfectly"

I'll know better when I perform but this has helped me unwrap/expand on my anxieties - in a group I don't get anxious but for a solo I absolutely would. It matters to me to sing well and I allow anxiety into my throat, it'll take time but I reckon one day I'll go for it.

No change at present but I feel I need more time to develop coping strategies using the tools provided.

I have found the breathing exercises very helpful to centre myself

I've seen a slight improvement but have only perform once during this course

No

I have had a bit more patience and understanding

I think I am a little more relaxed.

How has your **awareness** of self-critical thoughts or inner dialogue changed during or after the course?

25 responses

I realise that I judge myself too harshly; more harshly than I judge others. I was setting my standard higher for myself.

It's shown me that it's OK to be aware of them and acknowledge them.

Awareness has become more accute, although self critical thoughts haven't really altered.

I now understand how powerful our thoughts are and that the way we speak to ourselves does indeed affect our quality of life.

I am aware this still there, I am better at being kinder to myself, and trying to be less critical.

Although I still have an awareness of self criticism I am more willing to begin to learn to accept my own voice.

Ha - now I get to answer that question. I think my self critic is learning to be quiet.

No, I was always very self-aware

It hasn't changed

I believe I'll am now thinking that all those anxiety moments are normal energy and that if my performance isn't perfect, it's okay. That if I've sung true to me, that's what is important.

Yes, I have become more aware.

I am feeling happier about myself and feel less worried of people's thoughts. I hope this helps with future performances.

I feel I am a little more accepting of myself, but I am pretty accepting generally anyway.

Yes, my awareness has somewhat changed in theory. I know that I'm overthinking but I'm not sure if I've changed in practical terms.

I am more aware of them and try to listen to them and use them

It's hi-lighted them, I knew they were there but this has enabled me to perhaps be ready to consciously know they going to come (if I choose to sing solo) and can hopefully acknowledge them in advance to head them off.

I am not aware of change so far.

I was able to identify times when I have been hyper critical of myself and considered how it would feel if I gave myself more self-compassion. I liked the compassionate mantras you can use for others being also valid for myself (Be well, Be kind to myself, be joyful etc.) I am still not 100% there with feeling safe - but this did imporve during the course. I recognise that I have nothing to be afraid of - I just need to channel anxiety (which feels like fear) into positive energy. Practice required!

I am finding that I am noticing quicker when I am being self critical.

Yes

Yes, definitely more conscious of critical thoughts.

I feel able to catch myself when self critical, and replace the negative thought with a positive thought.

I have been more aware

I'm more aware and feel able to deal with them better

I am more likely to notice self critical thoughts, and try to deal with them.

How has your ability to **relate to and accept** your thoughts, feelings, and experiences changed (for example, before, during or post performance)?

25 responses

I understand that I dont need to be completely calm in order to do well. I accept that I will be nervous and that's OK. I experience thoughts & emotions relating to my performance as a natural reaction to being in the spotlight. And I try to allow these things to occur without them taking over,

I've actually noticed this more through instances where I need to talk to/address groups of people in my volunteering role. In the past this has filled me with dread and worry beforehand, but I am finding it much easier to deal with now.

Noticed a greater ability to relate to and understand my thoughts and feelings as now more aware of them

Before and during feels alot easier but maybe I need to practice more kindness to myself after performances.

Still working on receiving feedback without suspicion! I do make sure I appreciate my own

efforts that I have put in. On the flip side if I haven't perhaps rehearsed or practised as much as I should, then I should not be as hard on myself if it is not as I had hoped.

Yes I more willing to accept that the physical feelings of nervousness I have before presenting myself is part of the performance and not a failure of preparation.

Everyone is different and accepting who I am has been a big part of this journey. I recognise when my mind is racing or my head is spinning and have accepted that this is going to happen but I can regulate now and look like that swan - yes I appear confident on the outside and down below am paddling hard - just I've now got a motor boat to help paddle efficiently.

No difference

I'm sorry I don't understand the question

I haven't performed recently. But I feel quite excited to do so. Im not imagining g all the demons I usually do. Im not thinking I would be as nervous, im not thinking people would be unkind if I my voice wasn't the most incredible thing they'd heard. Im not so scared, I think i would be more in control of my nervous energy.

No

I know get a nervous before a performance but usually get shaky and cannot control my breathing as well as I should. I know this will happen occasionally but I want to repeat breathing exercises and repeat the words to myself to help me get past the anxiety.

I think it will help most when prepping for a performance and being able to accept that what will be will be in advance of the performance.

Funny enough. I'm not sure if I've changed within myself but I've managed to spot perfectionism in others close to me and also pass on things that I've become aware of during the course.

Slightly changed I have tried to accept these more

I don't think they've changed, I think I've become more solidly aware. It's more the in the moment of singing or the critical few seconds before I sing that it happens.

I think I will be more accepting of thoughts and feelings now.

I reflected on how I find performing as part of the choir or in a small group compared to performing alone. I learnt techniques through the course and had thoughts during the meditative sections which are helping me to work through "solo" fear, so I can hopefully enjoy singing in all its forms. I also need to tackle the desire to be perfect and recognise that I may hit a bum note sometimes or forget something and that's OK. That's normal.

I now have techniques to use if I find myself having negative thoughts. I find the mantras very useful, thank you!

Yes

Because I know they're happening, and what they're all about, I can more readily acknowledge and accept them. I haven't quite got to the point of converting them to energy to fuel my performance, but at least I can stop them taking the wheel.

I have realized the negative thoughts aren't necessarily true. That I am my harshest critic.at

Yes I have been more understanding of my feelings and accepting of them. A little calmer/ resigned perhaps

Same

This course has certainly made me think! I have realised that a lot of criticism of myself is self fulfilling.

Have you noticed any changes in your **physical awareness** or **ability to regulate your body and breath** during performance or practice?

25 responses

I believe my breath control has improved

Most definitely. It's something I think about now using the techniques learnt on the course, and I am feeling tangible benefits when singing.

Focusing on breath work definitely helps in calming trembling and concentration

Yes the three part breath, Nadi sodhana, and of course the body scan. Were all effective exercises for me. The body scan made me more aware of and present with my mind and body.

I am still happy with my breathing, I need to relax my body or move it differently to help manage my physical manifestations of anxiety.

The failure to regulate my breath during a performance is still troubling.

Many of these exercises Ive done before, but for me, it's always returning to basics that remind me that I actually know what I'm doing and what i need to do. Practice has become easier and feeling more comfortable in my self - which means that performance has also become easier.

Have yet to apply it

No

Ive not performed since the course but I have used the techniques to regulate my breathing when I've been unable to sleep.

Yes, I have found the 3 part breath difficult

I do feel more relaxed and less stressed as I take more time to breath and calm myself

I haven't performed since starting the course, but I am confident I will be able to calm myself more by regulating my breathing.

I have always had insomnia breathing techniques have helped me relax before sleeping.

Much better at regulating my breath and using breathing techniques to regulate how I feel

No, I've always done these kinds of exercises before performances and rehearsals.

I learnt to practice some good breath regulating activities during the 30 days.

I am more aware of my breathing and using that effectively.

I find myself using the 3 part breathing when I am stressed.

Not yet but not had much chance to put it into practice

It's better before I perform, but had a recent experience where something triggered me during the song and I became overly self-conscious. Couldn't address it during the performance though, would have derailed me completely!

A little, takes conscious effort.

more concious of breath

Breath awareness has improved

I have really enjoyed trying the different types of breathing, and feel it has given me a useful tool to promote relaxation. I find the "nadi shodhama" easy and therapeutic.

Specific mindfulness practices and your experience.

Which mindfulness practice or combination of practices did you find **most helpful**, and which did you find **most challenging**?

Here are a reminder of the practices:
- Mindful breathing (e.g., simple breath awareness, 3-part breath)
- Body scan (half scan, full scan)
- Guided imagery (e.g., body as instrument, energy of performance, gratitude & grounding)
- Loving-Kindness and Compassion Meditation (LKCM)
- Nadi Shodhana (alternate nostril breathing)

25 responses

I enjoyed nadia shodhana and gratitude/grounding the most. I found the 'energy' sessions tougher to engage fully with.

I've found Nadi Shodhana most helpful, and probably the practice that had the most immediate and tangible benefits. I have found myself using it outside of the course, and it's great for calming me down, and giving me focus and perspective.
The most challenging has been the full body scan. The first few times, I found it extremely hard to concentrate on it and my attention would wander. By the end I would be feeling very sleepy, which is not the idea! I found I had to work the hardest on this part of the course.

Mindful breathing and Nadi Shodhana were the most helpful to me closely followed by loving kindness and compassion

They were all really helpful, though I found the three-part breath a bit challenging. I plan to revisit it during my second round of the course.

Most helpful = Nadi Shodhana. A very quick way to focus and regulate my breathing and self awareness, very easy to develop a good rhythm. Combined with body scan very effective.

Most challenging = LKCM. I found it quite challenging to find a specific memory/person to focus on. My focus would tend to waver much more with this than other meditations.

Both breathing techniques and loving kindness and compassion meditations have been helpful, even though have not managed to completely master breathing techniques when actually presenting myself. Found the body scan and the guided imagery less helpful.

loving kindness was the most helpful. Body scan was the most challengin (mainly because I fell asleep)

Mindful breathing - most helpful. Nose one - least helpful due to a blocked nose!

Nadi Shodhana was useful but in some of the days the music was too loud

I found the 3 part breathing most challenging in terms of feeling it.
Body scan. Initially I wasn't feeling around my wrists, but this did change. Im not sure i quite understand it, but I did find it a relaxing technique.
Guided imagery- this was mind blowing. It made so much sense and helped pull the other exercises together. It helped me understand my voice is enough, my playing an instrument is enough. That being nervous is energy and it needs acknowledging but isn't there to control.
Loving and kindness helped me deal with some issues. I did find myself with tears. It helped me look at some bad experiences differently and challenge my recollection and perspective.
Loved Nadi, im using that quite a lot.

3 part breath was challenging
The body scan was helpful, and I found it easier to scan on the right side
Guided imagery was challenging too, but found it easier as the course progressed
LKCM took a while, as I find it difficult to clear my mind of things, but slow breathing helped
Nadi Shodana was really helpful, and I found it easier to concentrate after that exercise. I will keep doing it

I found all it helpful in different ways. Breathing and nostril breathing really settles me.
The full body scan, fully relaxed the mind and body.
The guided imagery and LKCM is the most helpful in giving me more compassion for myself and others. And helping with any past issues.
I only found some of the things challenging in finding the specific people or issues that negative to mind but eventually I did.

Nadi Shodhana was the most helpful. I found it centred and calmed me so I was ready for the next stage.

1.Loving kindness. I think I naturally do this but when made to think about it I found it quite hard.

2. I enjoyed the guided imagery.

3. I preferred the N.S breathing to the 3 part breath, it was easier to control And not to break out into normal breathing.

4. I found the body scan. The easiest exercise to do.

Nadi Shodhana was so useful and impactful, I found the body scan hard as I didn't feel it added much and I found my mind wandering more through this than anything (could just be me)

Mindful breathing and body scan

I found the alternate nostril breathing the most helpful and this an be done anywhere. The body scan was the next helpful. However, I did not get on with the Loving-Kindness and

Compassion Meditation (LKCM) or the guided imagery. I was explaining the LKCM technique to a relative and made a faux pas of calling it "mindlessness" which we found very funny.
I did feel disappointed initially that some of the techniques didn't work for me but having reflected, I accept that everyone is different and it may work for others.

I enjoyed mindful breathing, LKCM and Nadi Shodhana. I found the guided meditation very relaxing and I am planning on carrying on daily guided meditation through an app as a result. This really made me feel balanced and calm and ready to deal with my day.

I found the concept of those fearful feelings being the same energy as excitement quite helpful. If I can amend how I perceive that physical feeling that should help me look forward to performing with a sense of happiness rather than nervousness. Physical feelings before performing are part of the normal preparation getting into "stage mode" - it is how you use them that matters!

I found the body scans challenging as I couldn't really feel what I thought I was supposed to feel!

Most helpful - LKCM and 3 part breath
Most challenging - Nadi Shodhana

Nadi shodhana

Most helpful: nadi shodhana and LKCM. Most challenging: 3-part breath (made me feel a little claustrophobic) and body scan as my timing and yours on the breathing was a little out (I was a lot slower than the guidance so I ended up speeding up and being overly aware of the instructions rather than the practice).

3 part breath, Loving kindness & compassion meditation

LKCM and mindful breathing and guided imagery. least helpful: Nadi Shodhana

Body scan guided imagery

I found nadi shodhama breathing and loving kindness meditation very helpful. The full body scan was the most challenging.

Considering your answer to the above questions in the **midway questionnaire,** did your preferences change or surprise you in any way by the end of the course? Please expand.

25 responses

No

I had initially struggled with the LKCM but found this easier and easier towards the end.

By the end of the course, I was finding the full body scan much easier in terms of maintaining my focus right to the end. It's probably something I would still need to practice, but I had started to feel the benefits and appreciate awareness of the whole body in relation to performance.

Not really. Felt very much the same but more practised and relaxed overall.

I think it was solidified by the end of the course.

I think further practice of the body scans helped me utilise this to better effect, it took me a few attempts to find the rhythm and timing. Once I'd mastered this I could feel more in different body parts.

Found both the breathing and the loving kindness compassion meditations increasingly meaningful over the whole course.

I can't remember how I answered last time!

Being able to slow down was great!

Yes, in that it's became more of a revelation. At the midway point I was curious by the end I felt lightened mentally. It's been a fabulous course....

No, as I felt the course built up on practices in the first part of the course

I remember thinking the LKCM was helpful but found the breathing exercises difficult but now I'm used to it more, i found it more helpful.

I don't think my preference did change, as Nadi Shodhana leaves me more open to what follows, whatever it may be.

Sorry to sound vague but I'm not sure.

I didn't think I would like the breathing exercises but found these most impactful and surprising

Sorry, I can't remember what I wrote.

Not really. I liked the breathing in the first half of the course and that has remained. The LKCM appreciation has grown as the course has gone on.

I am surprised by how my body now automatically changes my breathing to 3 part breath when I'm stressed.

I found the second half of the course more applicable to performing, but I understand the first

half was a lot about landing the fundamentals so they could then be applied to performing.

No.

I'm surprised that I was able to focus for the full body scan

I have been very surprised by how much this course has made me think about myself in relation to performance, and try to be kinder to myself and less critical.

Which practice helped you **focus** most successfully and which was the **hardest to find focus** during?

Here are a reminder of the practices:
- Mindful breathing (e.g., simple breath awareness, 3-part breath)
- Body scan (half scan, full scan)
- Guided imagery (e.g., body as instrument, energy of performance, gratitude & grounding)
- Loving-Kindness and Compassion Meditation (LKCM)
- Nadi Shodhana (alternate nostril breathing)

25 responses

Focus was easy during all of the breathing exercises, including nadia shodhana. I found my mind wandering during the guided imagery (with the exception of grounding/gratitude).

Nadi Shodhana was most successful. I just find this great as a way of concentrating on breathing and blocking out external noise.
The hardest was the full body scan during the first half of the course, although as previously mentioned this vastly improved when repeated throughout the course.

Breathing practices helped me focus best.Body scan was challenging.

3 part breath was fairly difficult to find focus. But I intend to revisit it again

Best focus = Nadi Shodhana.
Hardest to focus = LKCM

The alternate nostril and mindful breathing was the most helpful for focus. Found it hard to concentrate during the body mapping.

Guided imagery - my mind went off on a tangent and was thinking of other things related but not part of the grounding. It didn't mean to go off on a tangent - it just did.

Breathing was enjoyable, found mind wondering more with guided stuff

Nadia Shodhana was the easiest to do and LKCM was the hardest

The 3 part breathing for some reason the hardest to focus/feel
All the others I found either a calmness or an understanding or were challenging but gave me an awareness or the tools to perceive a situation differently and with more compassion.

Mindful breathing was most difficult, Nadi Shodana the most helpful. I liked the LKCM as it challenged me to think about situations in the past that I had not really given thought to

Nostril breathing was easy to do but I found my mind wondering off away from it.
I think the most focus I had was the LKCM and mindful breathing and body scan.

Nadi Shodhana helped me focus most.
I found LKCM the hardest to find focus during. I find it hard to be kind to myself, but don't really know why.

LKCM

Body scan either full or half I found very difficult to focus

I found it hard to focus on the kindness and compassion bits, they didn't gel with me and took me outside my focus on the breath and internalising. I found it distracting to try and remember the phrases to repeat. When I chose just one or two it was fine but trying to remember 5 took me out of it.

Nadi Shodhana was the most successful, next the body scan. The most difficult to fpcus with was LKCM and guided imagery.

Most successful for relaxation - three part breathing and Nadi Shodhana
Most successful for mindfulness - LKCM
Least successful - Body scan

Focus - mindful breathing
Hardest to.find focus - guided imagery

Nadi shodhana was the best and the body scan was the worst

Successful: nadi shodhana and LKCM. Least: 3 part breath and body scan

Focus best with three part breath & Nadi Shodana.
Most difficult was full body scan, as it seemed slow and hard to maintain focus.

body scan

Body scan guided imagery

Both the loving kindness and guided imagery were best to help me focus. The body scan was very difficult to focus on, and my brain was constantly wandering.

Can you describe any particular practice that had a significant impact on your **emotional wellbeing?**

25 responses

No

Nadia shodhana had immediate effect in making me feel less overwhelmed and stressed.

Loving-Kindness and Compassion Meditation. I really appreciated this as a good way of focusing on my inner emotions and being kind to myself and others.

Loving Kindness and Compassion had the biggest impact on my emotions. It made me much more aware of my emotions in general.

LKCM especially the session where we had to extend kindness to people that are difficult and the sessions that took us to our past performances. But I am truly glad I did. I feel so much freer.

Guided imagery. Helped me feel more content with myself and what I can achieve.

Thinking about the acceptance of my own voice and from there thinking about self acceptance has had the most positive impact on my emotional wellbeing.

loving kindness and compassion - remembering to be kind to myself too.

The LKC whilst brought some tears. Also helped me understand that many of fears and judgements were unfounded.
The guided imagery has I believe given me confidence in my ability to control that nervous energy and welcome my voice and performance as a gift

Nadi Shodana and LKCM

some of the LKCM for finding negatives but it was not a too much of impact, I was ok.

LKCM for someone I love, it really made me realise how important they are to me.

I think the breathing techniques have helped.

The breathing exercises helped me with grounding and calming - I will continue to use these

As always with me, breathing and body scan is helpful. I began doing this many years ago when I was struggling to sleep due to money worries.

Maybe Nadi Shodhana.

Three part breathing and Nadi Shodhana - made me feel very relaxed and emotionally calm

Definitely LKCM

I felt more relaxed after Nadi shodhana

No one in particular. I think the regular practice was the biggest impact. Historically I haven't been good at regular practice outside of a class-style environment

Loving kindness and compassion brought me to tears. Good, cleansing tears.

LCKM and guided imagery

Loving kindness and compassion mediation

Loving kindness meditation was helpful.

Can you describe any particular practice that had a significant impact on your experience of **mental rumination, apprehension or critical thinking**?

25 responses

No

Grounding/gratitude helped me see that my voice is good enough. That I should not strive for a different voice but work on the one I have. That I should not over-think or over-criticise mistakes but should be curious about them.

Again, Loving-Kindness and Compassion Meditation. I found the practice reminded me of messages and advice my late Dad used to give me with regards to my own self criticism. I could almost hear him saying the phrases to me! That is something I miss in my life, so I found it very impactful.

LKCM. It has taught me to treat myself with more kindness

Nadi Shodhana made my feel very clear minded, and made me more ready to focus, and consider the next task or practice ahead.

If I am really honest I know in theory that self acceptance will enable me to be less critical but it hasn't had time to really have a measurable impact in general.as yet.

For me mindful breathing helps with this and often doing simple exercises like box breathing helps.

I think it's necessary to go thru the whole journey so that we are in the right mindset and able to focus on these inner demons. But the standouts are LKC and guided imagery.
LKC helped me untangle some negative misconceptions which have been with me and which I think has always made me think I have to be the best, that anything less is an embarrassment and shameful
The guided imagery helped me understand the racing heart, stomach churning is energy. That it's okay cos you've practiced to beyond. Welcome it but it's not okay to let it impact how you sing or perform. It can be there but nit take over.

The body scan allowed me time to think about my body and be aware of isolating different feelings

Not sure, alot of the 2nd half of LKCM and guiding (instrument)

LKCM for those who have harmed me. It was difficult to draw them out of my memory, and I had to remember why I felt that.

Not sure

Not really but breathing techniques helped

No.

Not really

LKCM - very useful in bringing things to the front of my mind for me to later consider.
Especially when something pops up that I hadn't realised (that "Oh! didn;t know that" feeling) which then led to compassion for others during the session and a mindful exploration after the session to look at how that issue/topic could be dealt with differently.

Definitely LKCM

Not that I can think of

Same answer as last question

Loving kindness & compassion meditation.

LCKM

Loving kindness and compassion meditation

The guided imagery and loving kindness meditations have both given me considerable food for thought.

Can you describe any particular practice that had a significant impact on your **physical awareness** or your **ability to regulate your body and nervous system**?

25 responses

No

Body scan

Full body scan made me aware of tensions, aches in places I hadn't realised.

The full body scan. I was really struggling to notice any benefit or impact at all during the first half of the course, but by the end I was definitely much more aware of my whole body and how to concentrate and draw strength from it. Still needs more work though.

Body scan resulted in a much more heightened awareness of my physicality although I found it a challenge generally.
Both breathing practices were impactful in calming my nervous system significantly

Nadi shodhana, my breath as a singer feels supported and controlled. And I feel calmer every time I do it

Nadi Shodhana, felt very calm and balanced after completing this.

The mindful breathing is beginning to be of help in some circumstances and I'm sure it will begin to have an impact on how I cope with presentation in the future. Unfortunately it has yet to become a habit.

the nasil breathing definitely helped to regulate my physical awareness and nervous system.

Madonna Shodhana followed by regular breathing is what seems to work best for me.

The full body scan, helps find the focus on different parts and was fully relaxing me.

Body scan was the practice as I really had to focus to breathe in and out for smaller body parts that it was hard to visualise.

Not sure yet

The breathing exercises did help with my nervousness

Only that actually regularly spending time to switch off from what's going on in life has been very helpful for relaxation and peace.

Nadi Shodhana and the full body scan.

Guided imagery (e.g., body as instrument, energy of performance). This imagery combined with breathing was helpful in making me reevaluate where I feel things in my body and how I can harness thise feelings differently.

Breathing alone helped me calm down from stressy moments and thus regulate my level of anxiety or upset. This lasted for some while after the session and therefore made the day better as a result.

Mindful breathing

Nadi shodhana - which is a shame because you can't exactly do it sneakily LOL

Full body scan

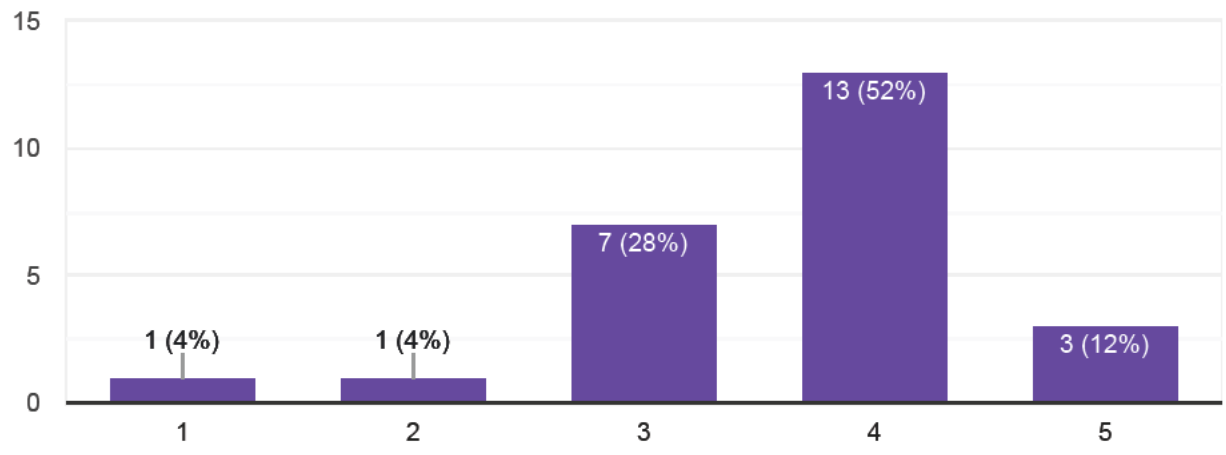
Full body scan

Nadi shodhama was very helpful for relaxation and calming heart rate.

How effective do you feel the **combination** of mindfulness practices was in addressing your **performance anxiety?**

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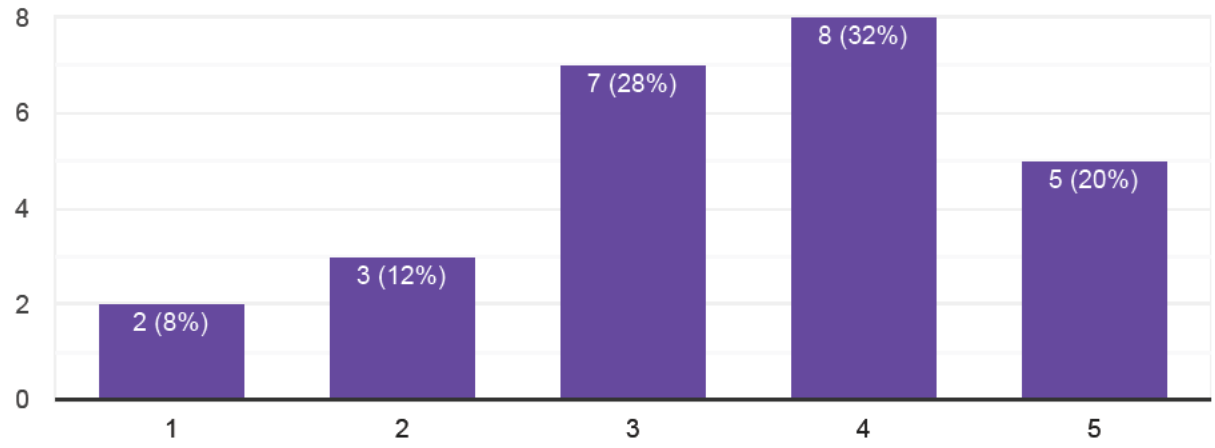
25 responses



How effective do you feel the **combination** of practices was in addressing your **perfectionism or self criticism.**

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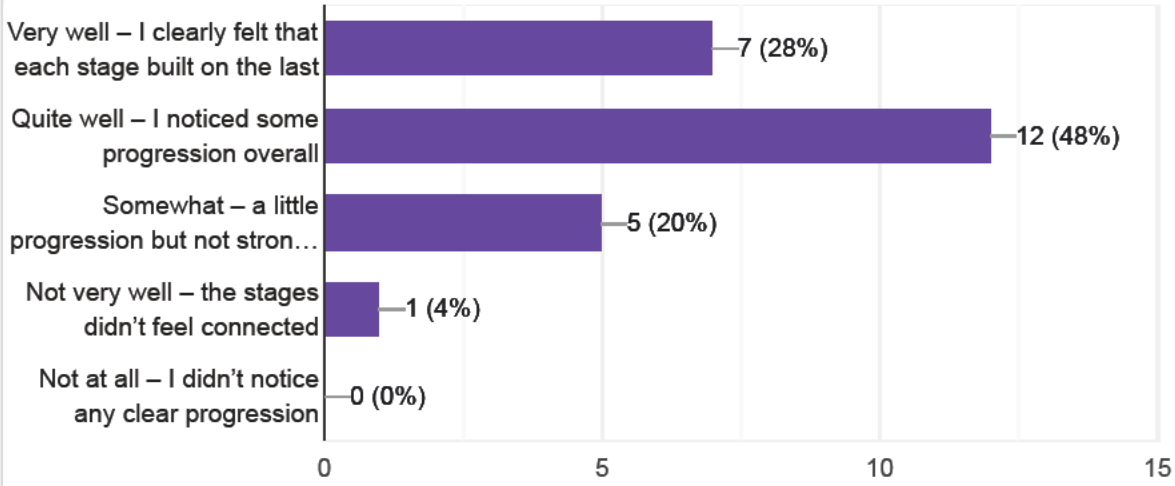
25 responses



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How well do you feel the pace and progression of the course supported your mindful development journey — from focus, to awareness, to regulation?

25 responses



Please feel free to expand on your answer to these questions.

17 responses

For me, I feel my focus is greatly improved but would have liked more time repeating the second half sessions to increase awareness. I also would have welcomed some advance notice or more time to select my people/animals for the LKCM as this distracted me for valuable minutes during the sessions.
I havent had many opportunities to sing recently so would like more time to put this learning into practice. hope to strengthen my responses to some of the questions placed here, so

perhaps a follow up questionnaire in a month's time?

During the second half of the course I found some of the sessions a little repetitive, but overall I found the pace really good, I noticed that there was progression and I felt I was able to build on the practices learnt.

It was very effective because it provided examples of situations that I was familiar with and that helped me to work through those feelings. It also made me aware of how critical I am of myself and how to handle it. I was worried that I would get bored and quit. But the email notifications were very inviting and encouraging. I am glad I stuck it out. It was a rewarding experience

It was good to master the basics before combining them, some combinations worked better for me and I would like to continue to use some of them moving forward.

I feel it's a new skill to be honest. Difficult to break old habits

I would have prefered to have completed the same number of exercises but over a longer period - so instead of doing them for 2 days each, do for 4 days or exercises twice a week. I prefer to build slowly on that and focus on these before moving on - or perhaps this is some perfectionism in me!

I loved this course, the pace, tbe techniques. Im so glad the course is going to be there to revisit as I feel I'd like to go thru it all again

The course helped me to reflect on what we did during the day, and take lessons from it

It was put together well, mixing up the different practises but keeping the balance of different techniques together and at a good pace.

Meditation doesn't come easily to me and I do have to fight getting distracted while I am practicing. I did find I was getting better over time and also, over time, the practice seemed to be completed more quickly. My awareness of time changed.

I would like to take the whole course again.
I think with work, travel and life I did not get the full benefit of the course. Also, it's difficult to comment on whether I have gained any benefit from the course as since doing it and I have not been in a performance situation and that would be the real test of whether the course was useful to me or not.

I think moving into the humming and making sound more and developing that would have been better for me as a singer over the sending out kindness and forgiveness vibes - they didn’t suit me and I found thinking if people who had annoyed me jarred, I didn’t want that in my headspace with this.

I have been reading the research and I am keen to learn more. I feel I need more practice.

I missed some of the meditations due to time. I feel it would have helped if you could choose between a 10min meditation and the longer ones for each stage. I liked the progression and mostly felt calm & refreshed after each session.

I think because I was a little eratic starting i missed some of the progression.

I've always struggled to completely focus on practices such as these and yet now I am able to I'm brace the process fully and feel the benefit of them

This course has been very helpful and thought provoking overall. The NS breathing practice is a tool I will definitely be using in the future. The meditations have given me food for thought on why I have the performance anxiety that I do, and may even help me rationalise and use it to my benefit in the future.

Applying, Reflecting, and Moving Forward

Have you found yourself using any mindfulness techniques in daily life or outside of singing? Please give an example.

25 responses

No

I am definitely more aware of self-criticism in many aspects of my daily life. Awareness enables me to address it. I am using LKCM in this.
I find myself using nadia shodhana to help focus and/or reduce stress.

I have used Nadi Shodhana a few times. I've used it prior to a session where I needed to address a group of people giving them information... something which always fills me with dread as I always fear I'm going to forget something. I found it great for giving me focus, and I also felt like I was having less of an out of body experience when I was speaking.

Using the breathing techniques has definitely aided my sleep

Nadi shodhana and loving kindness

Yes, I have used the breathing techniques and body scans to try and quiet my mind when struggling to sleep.

I have used mindful breathing in relation to getting off to sleep and getting back to sleep. Also mindful breathing has helped with anxiety about minor health worries.

At work - I have regular meetings online and also where I'm leading a group (effectively performance) and was able to use time and breathing to get in to a 'zone'

Tested the nose one but still blocked

Oh my, Yes! Ive been going thru a challenging health issue which has given me hypersensitivity. The Nadi Shodana and full body scan breathing exercises have been a life line and have helped give me some calmness.

I will use Nadi Shodana

Yes breathing when I'm stressed. Mainly the 3 part breathing to calm me. And sometimes I repeat the LKCM mantra I wish you well....etc or turn it back on myself.

When I wake up, I like to have a coffee and just sit and watch the trees and birds out of the window for a while. It makes me happy and sets me up for the day.

Yes definitely.

The breathing techniques are helpful throughout all aspects of my life

I do mindfulness fairly regularly, particularly managing stress and irritation by breathing through it.

No but I intend to.

I use the breathing techniques during my day when I feel anxious. We went to dinner with a couple who mu husband know, but I don;t know very well. I wanted to make a good impression. I did three part breathing on the way there in the car to help me be ready.

I've often used LKCM and 3 part breath. When my mind is running away with itself. When Ive felt someone has treated me unfairly Ive used LKCM to balance my thinking. 3 part breath to slow my thoughts down during the day when the day is running away with me.

The three part breath I am using at night to help switch my mind off for sleeping

Yes, I had an interview (which is a type of performance) and I was apply to apply kindness when the classic stress symptoms started.

Yes, after an exercise session, by way of cool down & re centering.

mindful breathing

I have kissed half body scan to calm my overthinking before sleep and it has proved successful

Did anything make it difficult to fully engage with the course (e.g., time, space, emotional factors)

25 responses

Initially, finding a comfortable space without any noise distractions for a full 20 mins was tough. This says more about my ability to focus since towards the end of the course, I realised I was much less easily distracted by outside influences.

No, this was mainly fine. I think I just had 1 day when time constraints meant I had to do 2 parts of the course the next day.

No. The course was enjoyable and I was always happy to make time for it feeling that I gained something each time I engaged

It took some time at first, but I eventually managed to stick to a specific time every day

There were days where I procrastinated about doing it, and ended up missing time that would have been appropriate. I tended to do them in the evenings.

Unfortunately the course has coincided with some positive distractions of family interaction and learning a new skill and the less positive distraction of learning to effectively manage a minor but intrusive minor ongoing health condition.

Time - my prefered time to meditate is usually in the evening - but I'm often found with headphones on asleep!

Too much going on in personal life at the moment

I'm quite emotional at the moment, I've got eye surgery happening soon and find it hard to concentrate

Due to health issues. Yes. Sometimes I did miss a day or I repeated a day. I finished the course 2 days after the end date. But I wanted to continue because it was helping with my perspective and giving moments of calmness in my day.

Unfortunately I missed 1 session at the end of the course, and revisited it when I could

Time was difficult so felt like I had to catch up sometimes and some of them I was had to listen to while doing something else. But engaged well, if it was not the full body scan.

I was travelling and had a busy schedule so a few days were more difficult.

I would say time the course came at a particularly busy.period.

I found it difficult with the time and so struggled a bit with completing all of them but it has opened my mind to mindfulness practices and I will do these more

As mentioned previously the kindness and forgiveness don't work for my and I found it a distraction/irritating. I'm going through some health issues at the moment, doing this course has been super helpful but I've not managed to to it every day so some days I did a catch up and did 2 or 3 sessions one after the other which was actually very good - really enabled me to focus and chill out/heal.

Time was an issue and finding a quiet area to focus.

A few times I slipped behimd the daily schedule, but then I made time to catch up. Ultimately, finished the sessions two days late! But I kept coming back to it and wanting to finish it as I liked the benefits. Nicki's voice is very calming!

I did sometimes have to do two in one day to catch up when I didnt find time.

Yes, work and health issues really made this tough for me

I missed 3 sessions early in the first half due to other commitments and not having it embedded in my daily rhythms.

Time was sometimes difficult.

Time. Yes emotional factors too I found some difficulty in focusing or getting past a person in my head on quite alot of the compassion/ guidance sessions

It was hard to find the time and space unless I completed before starting my day.

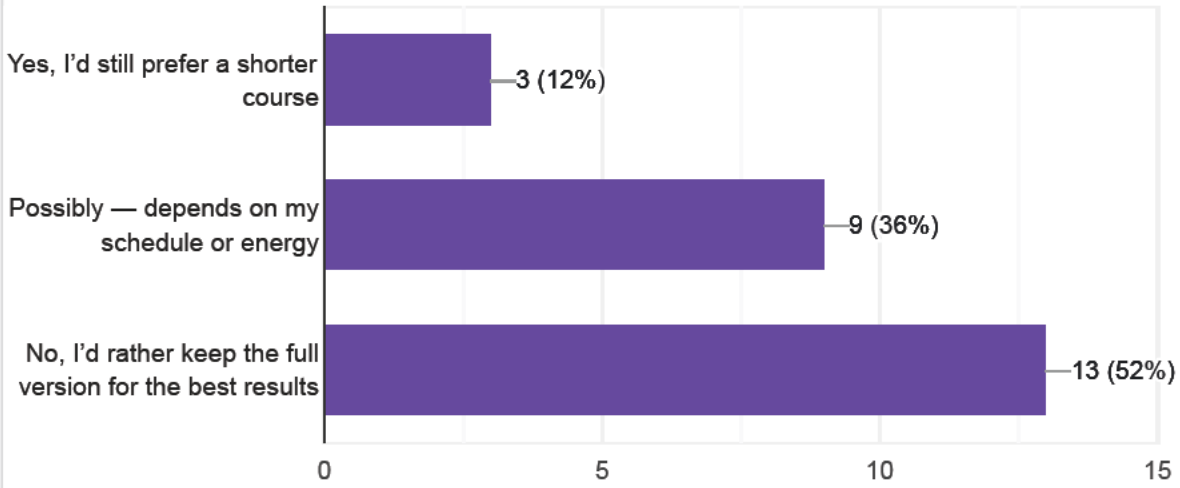
Time

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The course length and daily practice time were designed to give the best chance for mindfulness changes to take effect in a short form course.

If you knew that **shorter or less regular sessions** might make progress slower or smaller, would you still have preferred a shorter course?

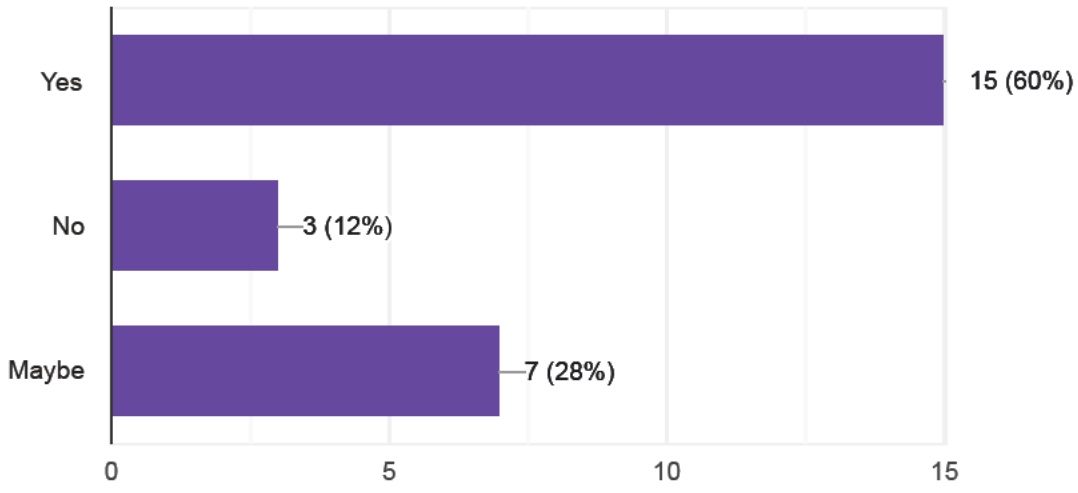
25 responses



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Do you think having a short performance opportunity before and after the course would have helped you notice changes in your confidence or anxiety more clearly?

25 responses



If yes, what kind of performance setting do you think would best reflect your real experience (e.g., informal group, recorded video, live audience)?

19 responses

Live audience

Live audience

I'd suggest an informal group beforehand, then the same group immediately after, followed by a live audience after a given time to embed good practises to truly test it to the max.

Informal group

Just any performance would do. Especially if the person also feels performance anxiety before posting covers on social media.

Informal group.

informal group

small group sharing with others

I think an informal group. Recording potentially beneficial as the individual could also see if they appeared more relaxed & confident after the course.

Live audience/ informal.group

I am not really sure. Live audience would be too daunting. Recorded video removes the face to face so is probably not a good reflection of where you want to be. Informal group is probably the best bet - but would need to be small

Informal group

Any of these as long as the audience didn't feel too safe LOL

Informal group of peers, recorded would be good.

live audience

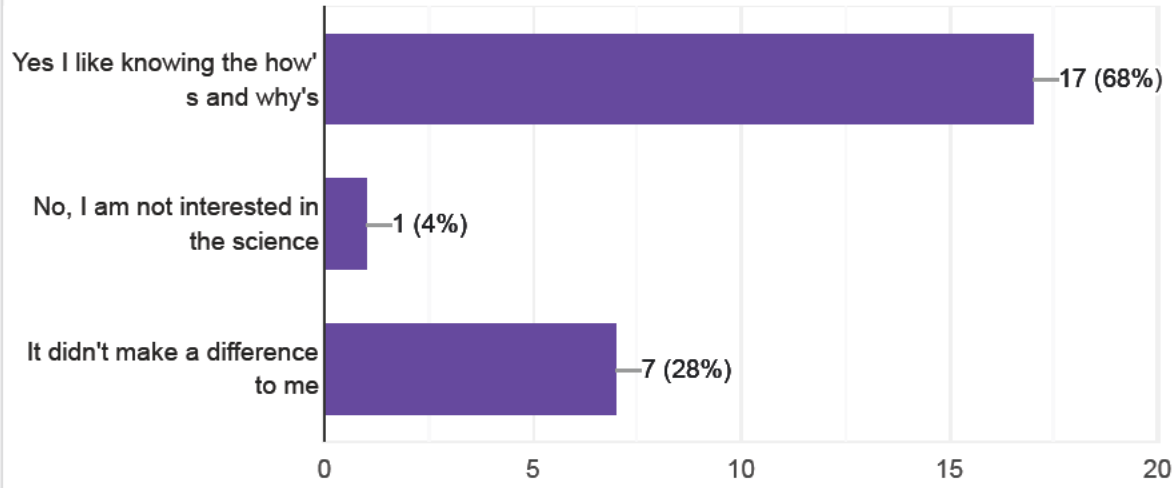
Informal group or live performance

Recorded video

Was the addition of having a webpage to explain mindfulness techniques and their scientific basis helpful to you?

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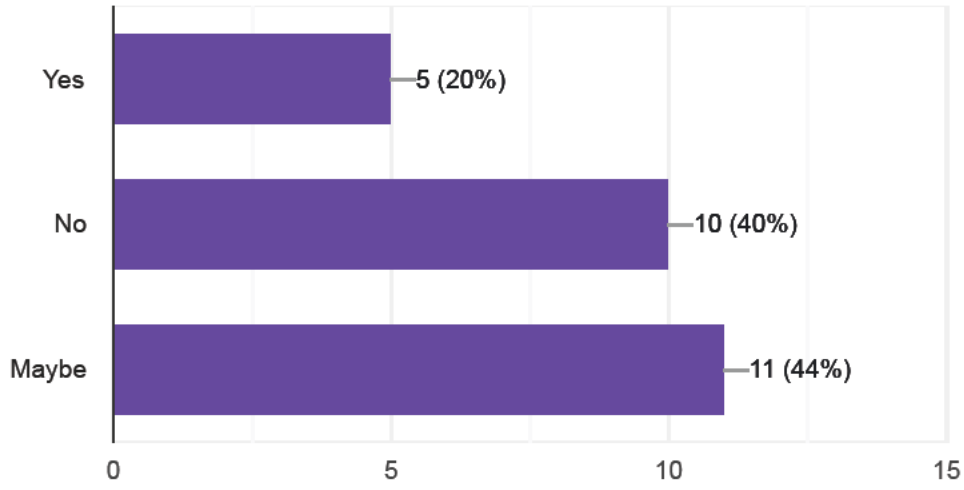
25 responses



Would being in a mindfulness community via online group forums be something you would have liked throughout the course?

Copy

25 responses



Do you intend to continue using any of the mindfulness techniques? Why or why not?

25 responses

Yes. I will use 3 part breathing and nadi shodhana as regular tools to aid focus. I will also use the grounding & gratitude in my approach to performance as the messages about authenticity resonated so strongly with me.

Yes, definitely Nadi Shodhana as I find this a quick and easy technique, but has real benefits for me, both in terms of breath awareness and focus. I find it both energising and calming. I also intend to continue practising the full body scan, as this is one practice I've definitely been on a journey with. I've still not fully got there with it, but I was starting to appreciate its purpose and feel I need to practice further to feel the full benefits.

Will definitely continue with the breathing excersises as these have had a significant impact on calming my nervous system.

Definitely, because I can see how these techniques could make a big difference if I remain consistent.

Yes, I definitely want to develop my use of breathing techniques.

Think I will continue the mindful breathing as hoping this will become a habit and really helpful me breathe better during a performance

I've been implementing mindfulness techniques for over 10 years now and love revisting ones from past - as we change so our practice needs to change to support us in the here and now!

Would like to retry at a calmer time

I might use the nose breathing, it might help

I do. I want to know more. It's a bit like I've had this body for so many years but never really understood it. I want to continue on the journey.
Ive said maybe to the question above re mindfulness community whilst going thru the course.My reasoning is that I felt I needed to do the whole course to feel enlightened. If there was a community during, I'd be distracted and likely going off on a tangent with other people views.

Yes, it has given me the experience of mediation and mindfulness that I had not had before, and I was able to relax into it and give myself some space

Yes, I intend to use them regularly if needed, like performance or stress

Yes. I think I will use the breathing most days and the body scan pretty often. It's good for me to centre before the rush of the day.

I would like to try the course again.
I found some of the course repetitive and if I did do it again I may skip a few of the days.

Yes I am going to look more into mindfulness and the techniques as this has opened my eyes to things that I had not done before and will continue going forward

Absolutely! Re the option about the science of it, I am interested but wanted to do the course on face value abs absorb it fresh.

Yes I do as it has helped me learn about myself.

I have taken out a subscription to the Calm app and plan on continuing daily meditation. I also plan to use the compassion statements as part of my daily routine. Breathing - will use all 3 types regularly. Planning to apply the performance energy stuff to choir performances.

Yes, because I have found my preferred practices very calming and grounding.

Yes I find it helps clear my mind of racing thoughts

I certainly plan to try! Again, I haven't been great historically at maintaining practice without some external stimulus

Yes, have loved having a structured format to follow

yes i think its beneficial!

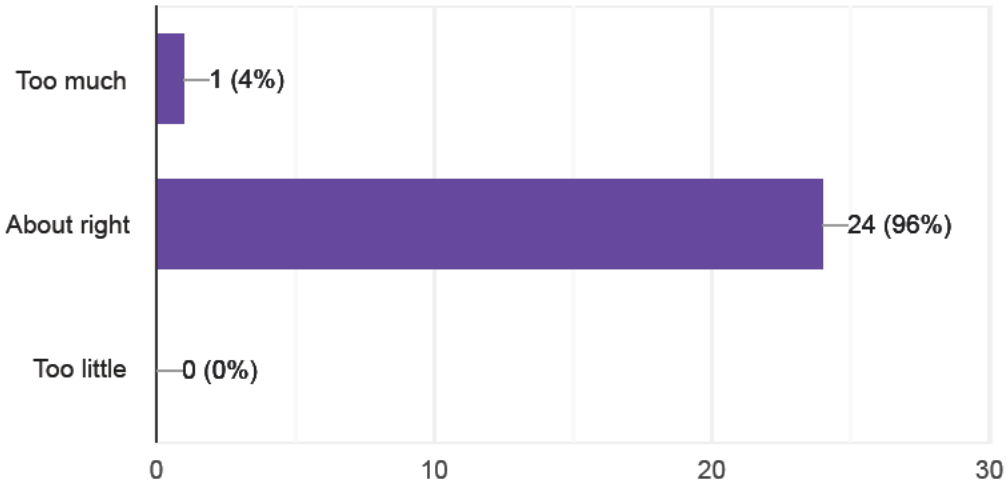
Yes as some of them definitely help me ease anxiety and overthinking

Yes, I think I may benefit from using some of these techniques in the future.

How did you find the level of **contact and support** during the course?

Copy

25 responses



Is there anything that would help you stay motivated or supported in continuing a mindfulness practice?

25 responses

No

A follow up (questionnaire or discussion) after an agreed length of time and/or a remarkable difference in my performance anxiety

I personally find it hard to stay motivated to practice any techniques on my own. Ongoing online guidance, not necessarily daily, maybe weekly or monthly might help me maintain motivation.

Occasional re-enforcement and guidance would ensure the practises were consistently undertaken in the correct manner to ensure the best possible results and would also offer motivation.

Remembering how grounded i feel after each practice will keep me going

Little posts of positive affirmations can sometimes provide a little lift that we need. Or reminders/prompts to revisit previously used techniques or combinations.

I think the current level of encouragement offered in the course is good. Also having a positive welcome at the begging if each session is good.

Can I say Chocolate? I really think we need a mindful chocolate where we break a bit off, eat it and breathe through it. IN all honesty something tactile. So a breathing exercise where i physically fold or unfold paper helps me focus better than 'imagining' I'm tracing a door etc.

No, I kept motivated.

I think occasional’top up’ guided sessions would be helpful to keep me on course

Not sure, maybe an occasional email to remind us or keep in contact.

Not sure.

I guess something like a star system or reward system would encourage certain people.

Not really

More free time. If I was at work over the last month I would have struggled to do the course. Being off sick has enabled me to do it even though I didn’t manage every day.

I think I am sufficiently motivated.

I already feel quite motivated after the course, thank you.

Using the course recordings going forward will keep the techniques fresh in my mind

It would be really useful to have all of the affirmations, and things to say/think to ourselves. I couldn't remember them all. I know I can say other things, but would be useful for a reference

Not really, eedto have self motivation

perhaps personal check ins

I do need the accountability!!

I think this course was very supportive.

Would you recommend this course to other singers experiencing performance anxiety? Please can you say why you gave your answer.

25 responses

Yes. It is a blended course with a variety of exercises, tactics, language and instructions. This ensures there is something that everyone can engage with and learn from.

I'm not a solo performer and don't generally get anxious when performing in choir, but I have been able to relate to it in terms of other aspects of my life when I need to verbally address groups of people (which I guess is a kind of performance) and I can see how this course and some of the techniques will help me feel less anxious and strengthen my focus. So I would definitely recommend it to singers experiencing performance anxiety.

Yes. The collection of slightly differing guidance would most likely offer something beneficial for different people in a variety of ways.

Yes, I would. This course helped me manage my performance anxiety and strengthened my breath control at the same time. I believe other singers would find it just as valuable.

Yes, it is important to remember our voice is not just created by our vocal cords, it is a whole body experience. Developing more awareness of the different components can be very beneficial in making them work better together.

I think I would recommend the mindful breathing and also learning to accept your own voice. These are the two key features that I think I would recommend for someone experiencing performance anxiety.

yes

As a tool I would recommend it but not sure I benefitted personally

Yes it’s worth a try but it didn’t work for me

Yes!

It helps a person understand their drivers, triggers. Reminds us we can be in control. It's unlikely we're being judged in the way we think we are, that nerves are fine, but they are not to drive our performance.

Yes, maybe this is not for everyone, but it is worth giving some time to this to see if it helps

Yes, I think will help people with any anxiety.

Definitely, I have come across a number of singers who are really talented, but doubt themselves and overthink. I feel this would really help them.

Yes, I know a couple of people that would be very interested in this course from a performance/ acting/ presentation/ public speaking perspective.

Absolutely

Yes but I think more focus on actual vocal practice - warm ups, exercises would be better than the kindness/compassion/forgiveness bits - esp the forgiving others bit.

Yes, I would with the caveat that not all techniques work for everyone. Although you did say that you struggled with some of the activities. It's a good taster for continued practice. I would not have taken it up if I had not done this course. I'm also starting a 30 day yoga course online which has been recommended, so thanks Nicki x

Yes, I would. There is lots there which can help. It is like a toolbox from which someone can take the bits that help tem.

Yes. It is good to give yourself time to focus on yourself and to open yourself up to new tools that might help your performance anxiety

Yes, I feel there is some benefit to the techniques

Yes, if they are able to stick to it for 80%+ of the time. I think the odd session here and there wouldn't have the same impact.

Yes, useful for anyone who has anxiety. I believe we all have this sometimes. A useful way to help regulate your emotions, to stop them controlling you.

Yes - take the time to try to make a difference

I find it hard to comment on this as I’m not a performing singer really but I certainly think that anything that calms overthinking and focuses the mind as I found this course to would be beneficial

Yes, I found this course challenging, but useful. It taught tools for relaxation, and also

challenged me about where my anxiety was coming from.

Do you have any suggestions for improving the course? You may have mentioned these suggestions midway, can you briefly mention how you feel now.

25 responses

No

As mentioned previously, I would have liked more explanation of each session ahead of time. That would have helped me identify people, situations, examples in advance so that I didnt waste time and focus scrabbling around in my memory during the session.
Also, I wished I'd kept a (brief) journal of my experience each day during the course

I found some of the talking sessions in the second half a little repetitive, although overall the content and pace was really good and I noticed there was a progression throughout. My only other minor comment is that on some of the sessions, I found the volume of the background music a little bit loud/intrusive.

No. The practices were well timed and calmly delivered.

I would have found a daily progress journal helpful, because it would've made it easier for me to track my growth and stay aware of how much I was improving each week.

Maybe some variation in the style of body scans, I have found previously that developing awareness of how the body feels in connection with surfaces can be as useful as focusing on specific body parts.

Apart from smoother introductions to a couple of the very early sessions which were just a little marred by having to use the introductory explanation about breathing once the practice had been taught, I have no further recommendations.

only that I prefer courses that change a little less often to give me time to ground the ideas in the first place and then move on (much like c25k having at least 3 session before moving on a level and having a day off in between)

More emphasis on needing to make time, or a set time a day

The background music could be quiter

The only mute thing I can think of is to say a yoga mat or something g to lie comfortably on the floor might be helpful in the preamble.

Sometimes during the practice, I found the interruptions stopped me from concentrating on what I was going, but having said that, I appreciated the way each session was guided

It would be difficult to cut them down but for people who don't have a lot of time, maybe a 10 min option for some of the recordings.

Not really.

Maybe an overview of what is expected.
Possibly splitting the course into more stages (3 or 4) rather than 1-15 and 16-30.
This would allow people to get a sense of achievement. I've completed section one etc.
Rather like when you read a book and come to the end of a chapter or section.

I found it difficult to find time always so struggled with the length but on the whole the course was fantastic

See above re vocal exercises.

An outline of the content would have been helpful before the course in order to manage expectation.

I have no suggestions

I have a few other thoughts: a daily email in the first half would have helped keep it front of mind. Would be useful to have a standalone guided nadi-shodhana and 3-part breathing for those few sessions where you say go and do one of those and come back, I found fiddling about with the different sessions to get just the bit I needed a bit distracting. I couldn't lie down for the body scan (which wasn't an issue), it might be worth incorporating this as an option for those like me. One point that would be useful to get clarity on at the beginning (became clear by the latter stages), is this practice for daily use or only before performances. Hope that helps!!

I think for singers to have a performance before the start and at the end would be useful. Not sure how easy that would be to do.

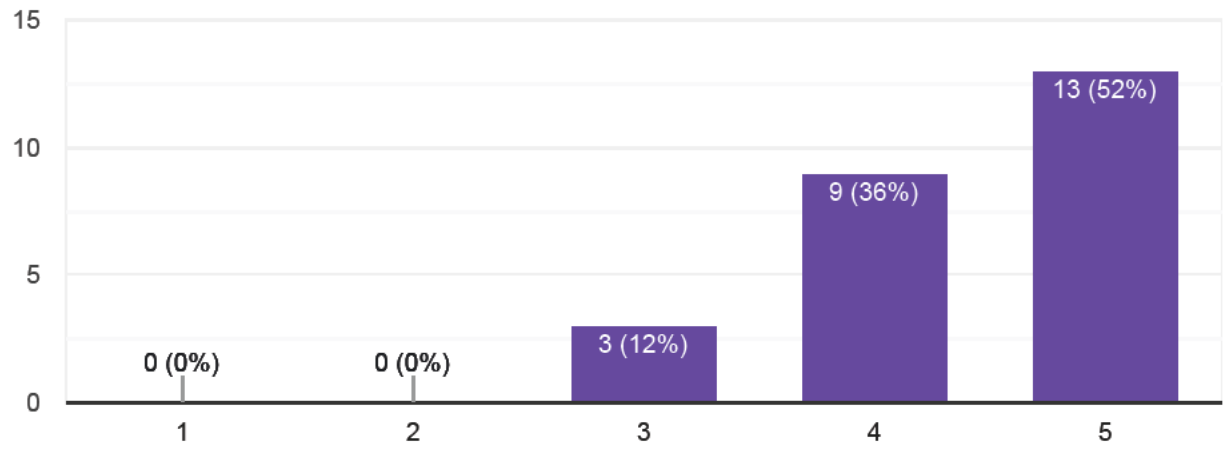
i had trouble with nadi shodana and with time but for a while I didnt know I could reach out in case it spoiled the anonymity. so maybe being clearer on FAQ might have helped. That said it felt quite personal so I didnt want an online forum

My only comment is that sometimes I found the background music difficult to listen to, which altered my concentration. The pith of some of the notes seemed to jarr , and prevented me from fully concentrating and relaxing.

Overall, how would you rate your experience of the mindfulness course?

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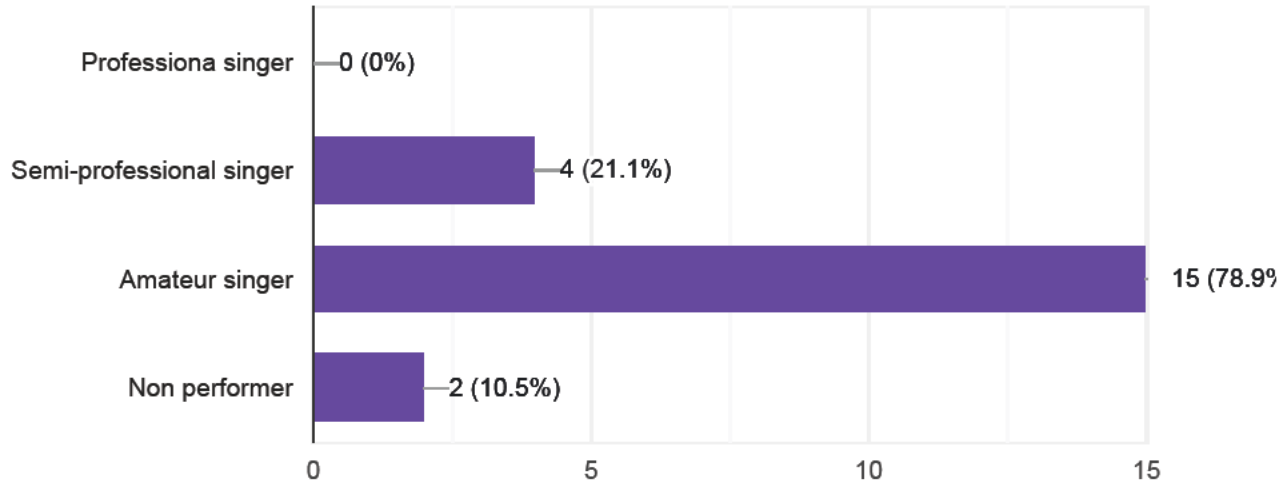
25 responses



Could you state which of the following best describes your professional status.

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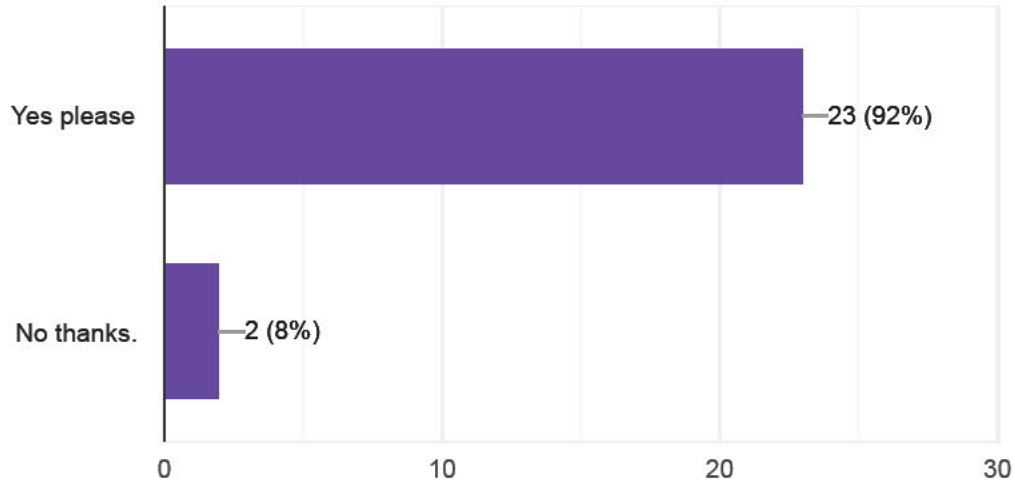
19 responses



Finally would you like to stay connected to Presence over Perfection and receive life long access to future iterations of the course?

Copy

25 responses



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Focus group application for post 30 Day Mindfulness Course for Singers

* Indicates required question

1. Email *

Sign-Up Form



2. Please can you give your full name (not your secret code) *

3. Please can you give your preferred email address *

Presence Over Perfection - focus group

Thank you for your interest in taking part in the focus group! 💬

This will be a relaxed and friendly in-person session where up to 10 of us (including me, Nicki!) will gather to reflect more deeply on your experiences of the *Presence Over Perfection* course.

🗓️ **Date**: Saturday 8th November
📍 **Location**: Milton Keynes (venue TBC)
🕑 **Time**: 2:00–2:45pm (please allow up to an hour including arrival)

Everyone will be known to one another by first name during the session, but please rest assured that **any comments used in my research will remain fully anonymous.** I'll be asking open-ended questions to help us explore your thoughts and reflections in more depth. The course will be recorded so that I can remember and code the information you give me.

If you'd like to be considered, please complete the form below. Participants will be randomly selected from those who express interest.

Confidentiality & Data Protection

• Recordings or notes from the focus group cannot be fully anonymised because voices are audible to other participants. We will ask everyone to respect each other's privacy.

• Data will be kept on encrypted, password-protected university servers and destroyed five years after the end of the study.

By submitting this form, I confirm that:I understand this focus group is part of the research study "Presence Over Perfection."

I understand that the discussion will last approximately 45 minutes and will take place in person in Milton Keynes.

I am happy to be known by first name to other participants and to the researcher (Nicki Currie) during the session.

I understand that while the discussion is not anonymous in the moment, **any data or quotes used in research reporting will be anonymised**, and no identifying details will be included in the final dissertation or publications.

I understand that participation is voluntary and I can withdraw from the focus group at any time withou giving a reason.

I agree to keep what is shared by other participants confidential and will not repeat personal reflections outside the session.

I consent to the session being audio recorded for analysis purposes. Recordings will be securely stored and deleted after transcription.

4. Please tick to agree below: *

Check all that apply.

- [ ] I agree (to serve as your digital signature)

5. Please can you date your submission *

_____

Example: January 7, 2019

Official University of Wales Supervision Contacts

Contacts

Primary Researcher: Nicola Currie, MA in Voice Pedagogy -The Voice Study Centre part of University o Wales, Trinity St David

Email: nicki@nickirogers.com Tel: 07766148802

Academic Supervisor: Joshua Lee-Cummins UWTSD

Email: joshua@voicestudycentre.com

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Focus group application for post 30 Day Mindfulness Course for Singers

12 responses

Publish analytics

Please can you give your full name (not your secret code)

12 responses

Lisa [redacted]

Jane [redacted]

Coral

Jessica [redacted]

Denise [redacted]

Rebecca [redacted]

Sally [redacted]

Christine Patricia [redacted]

June [redacted]

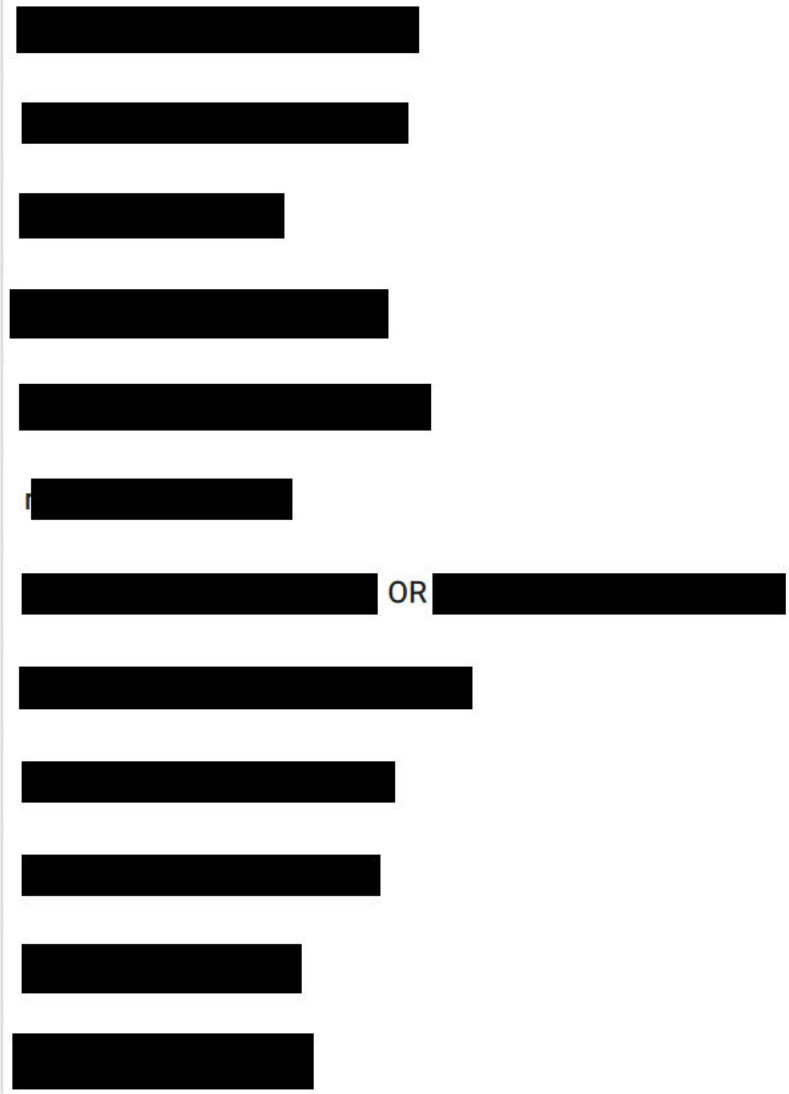
Jenny [redacted]

Justine [redacted]

Caroline [redacted]

Please can you give your preferred email address

12 responses



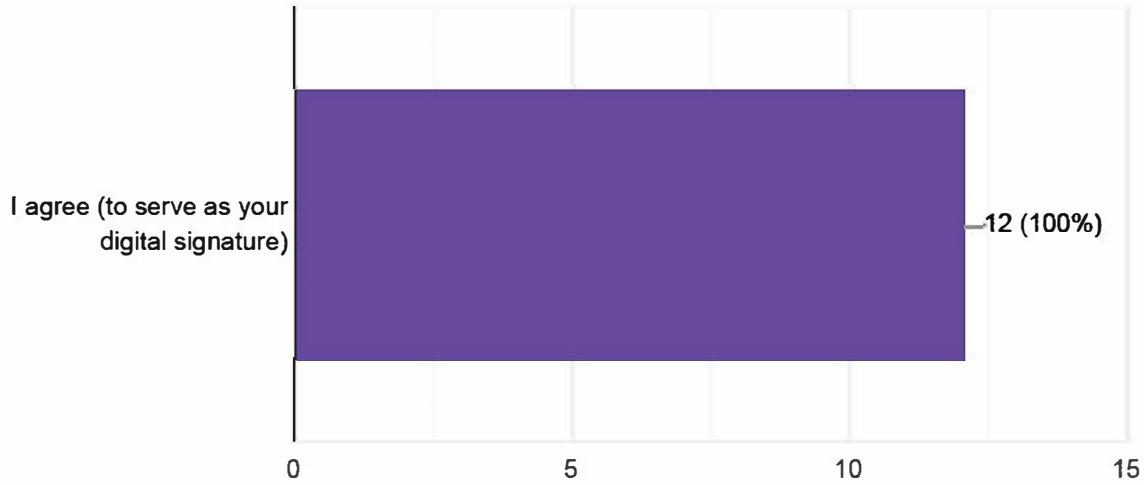
Presence Over Perfection - focus group

By submitting this form, I confirm that:I understand this focus group is part of the research study “Presence Over Perfection.”

Please tick to agree below:

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12 responses



Please can you date your submission

12 responses

Oct 2025	25 5
Feb 2026	3
Mar 2026	3 6

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Presence Over Perfection – Focus Group Guide

These questions are meant as guide only, the group will be relaxed, and conversation may flow away from these questions. Please have a read simply to get your mind engaged with your experience and to highlight anything you feel is important to share!

1. Motivation to engage

If Nicki wasn't running this course….would you have been interested? What was your motivation? (it's totally fine to say… 'to help Nicki' if that's true!)

2. Fit of Measures, focus and experience

- Who would say anxiety plays a role in their lives more broadly?
- Who would say perfectionism affects their lives outside of singing or performance?
- How might this show up in your relation to singing?
- As mostly amateur singers, do you feel the **K-MPAI** (music performance anxiety) and FMPS short (perfectionism) were the right measure for you?
- If you don't perform much, what kinds of questions might have captured your experience of anxiety more accurately?
- Would a measure of more general anxiety or self-evaluation have felt more relevant?

3. Barriers to Engagement

- Mindfulness can feel repetitive, as you're learning to notice and be without the stimulation your brain usually seeks.
  → Do you think understanding this before starting would have helped?
  → Would it help if participants were told that mindfulness can sometimes feel worse before it feels better — almost like a "side effects" section of a medication leaflet?
  → What kinds of things made it harder for you to engage fully on certain days or with certain practices?

4. Expectations and Quick Results

- Some people hoped to "feel better" quickly.
  → How did your expectations about results shape your engagement with the course?

5. Emotional Responses to Mindfulness

- Most participants found mindfulness calming, while one or two found it uncomfortable or irritating and even disappointing.
  → What do you think made it feel that way for you?
  → Did your experience of discomfort change over time?

→ How do you interpret irritation or restlessness — as resistance, awareness, or something else
- →What would you say to someone who is wrestling with discomfort

6. Authenticity, Self-Connection, and Self-Care

- Authenticity was a strong theme in participant reflections.
  → What did authenticity come to mean for you during this process?
- Many reflections linked acceptance to the integration of positive and negative experiences.
  → What do you think the hallmarks of self-acceptance might look like for you?
  → How did your relationship to self-care change (if at all) through the 30 days?

7. Perspective and Performance

- Did your sense of what's at stake in performance change?
- What is your strategy now with thoughts and emotions? Has it changed?

8. Breath and Body Practice Outcomes

Nadi Shodhana (Alternate Nostril Breathing)
→ Many participants found this the most helpful practice. What do you think it was about it that worked or didn't work for you?

Body Scan
→ The body scan was more challenging for many people. How did you experience it personally?
→ Would a more open or flexible version (less detailed, more spacious) have suited you better?

Loving-Kindness and Compassion Meditation (LKCM)
→ Some participants said this practice was emotionally difficult or uncomfortable.
→ Do you think it came at the right time in the course, or was Day 15 too early for you?
→ How did you relate to the practice of offering kindness or compassion — was it easy, or did it bring up resistance?

9. Letting Go and Taking On

- Looking back over the 30 days, is there anything you feel you've let go of that previously stood in your way of freedom in performance, self-acceptance or moving forward?
- And conversely, is there something you've taken on — maybe one thing — that now supports you in a healthier or more grounded way?

10. What Would You Call the Course?

- Would you still call it *Presence Over Perfection*, or would another name capture it better?
- If you could rename it, what ideas or words would you include?

11. Practicalities: Audio, Delivery, Diary, and Preparation

Audio and Delivery
→ Some participants mentioned the background music was loud at times — did you find this?
→ Thinking about the guided tracks — did you ever feel there was too much spoken guidance, would you have liked more silence and space?

Mindfulness Diary or Reflection Journal
→ Some of you mentioned the idea of keeping a mindfulness diary — do you think that would have benefitted you?

Preparation for Practices
→ Do you think it would have been helpful to know more about what Loving-Kindness or other practices might feel like beforehand and perhaps time to consider who you may imagine?
→ Would more explanation of potential emotional responses have supported you?

Performance Opportunities
→ Would integrating live or shared experiences (like group practice or a performance) help embed learning?

12. Looking Ahead

- If I came to see you in three months, how many of you think you'd still be practising mindfulness in some way?

13. Closing Reflection

- In a few words, how would you describe your journey through the 30 days?
- Is there anything you wish others knew before beginning the course?
- Any final reflections or surprises about what you discovered in yourself?

Nicola Currie 0:00

There we go. That's just as well. So if

you're happy to say your first names, should we just go around and say first names, and then I can make sure that this is picking that up. Justine killing Bonnie, face,

Lisa 0:14

Lisa, Denise,

Rebecca 0:15

Sally, Jen, Rebecca, June, Jess Jen, Jane,

Jess 0:24

I might be as Jeff.

Nicola Currie 0:32

I will go back through the recording and obviously just make sure that everything's correct. It's going to take a long time, but it's picking stuff up, so we can ignore that now, that's great. Here we go. Are you ready? First of all, thank you so much. Thank you so much for doing the course like I'm so grateful, and I know it like compared to lots of the things that my colleague, that my my fellow students are doing. This was a big ask, this one. So I'm so grateful. And thank you for falling asleep and waking up

again. So

one thing that's really important when I'm considering the data is that I know you all so there's a little bit of that thing of just looking at bias and an honest kind of appraisal of who came on to the course in the first place. So

can you just maybe, one by one, just in like one sentence, tell me what motivated you to do the course? And it absolutely can be because you asked me. That's

totally fine, but if there was something about it that just piqued your interest, what would it have been?

Justine 1:39

Anything that's a confidence booster appeals to me. So for confidence, yeah, yeah, that's great.

Lisa 1:46

Completely motivated by fear,

Nicola Currie 1:50

fear of performance,

Lisa 1:51

fear of performance, of of

even, not even singing. But I mean, I am terrified when I get up and sing, but even getting up and speaking in meetings and stuff like that can be quite anxiety provoking for me. Okay,

Denise 2:07

I'm a bit like Lisa, but it was a little bit more pointed for me. Definitely about performance anxiety. I don't think I would have picked a course like this if I hadn't known you and you had specifically offered a course tailored to this kind of thing.

So for me, I probably only did it because of you, but it appealed to me because it was targeted at confidence boosting and performance anxiety. Excellent,

Sally 2:35

Mum. Is primarily because of you, but also though I don't actually want to do solos. I want to have the confidence to be able to do it if I ever change my mind. Sure.

Nicola Currie 2:45

So it's like that freedom to choose,

Sally 2:48

yeah, because it's the one thing. That's one thing, you know, I can stand up talk about my own work to 1000s of people, 5000 people, but I can't get up and sing.

Jenny 2:57

I look at the others about performance anxiety, but a big thing for me is being able to listen to myself after the fact and be content with what I hear. It's really cool.

Nicola Currie 3:14

Yeah, so you could really specify exactly what it is about performance that bothered you. That's interesting. I

Rebecca 3:22

had two distinct reasons. One was I used to do a lot of mindfulness. Haven't done in a long time, and this was a good catalyst to get me back into the rhythms of it. Second one was the word perfectionism. It's it's above bear of mine, and if it's not perfect, it's not anywhere near good enough. Okay, so and perfect to me is like steps and steps beyond what anyone else thinks it needs to be okay. So, yeah, that was my bit,

June 3:49

partly because of you, and it's not because I'm former in being a soloist, but I thought it might help in other aspects of my life, because I volunteer and have to speak to large groups of people and convey information, and that usually sends me in a spin, because I really panic that I'm going to forget things, and I just thought that it might help

give me a bit more confidence.

Nicola Currie 4:20

So more generally, in life, yeah, yeah.

Jess 4:23

So mine was partly, I've never really done mindfulness, and I wanted it was a good opportunity to see if it was something that suited me and I wanted to do. But also, I'm a great

mind talker. I have a lot of mind to talk that tells me that I'm not doing the right thing or doing the wrong thing, or

not good enough sometimes. So it really helped with that.

Nicola Currie 4:50

That's good curiosity for me.

Jane 4:54

I probably wouldn't have gone looking for this course. So it's partly because you were.

But even if you'd recommended it, or someone in the group had recommended it, I probably would have done it, even if it were nothing to do with it. So apologies. Curiosity to see, I don't really get nervous with public speaking, but I do terribly with singing, as you know, and so curiosity to see if this would make a difference to that.

Nicola Currie 5:19

That's great. That's nice that everyone's different, isn't it? One thing that you don't have to answer this at all, but if you wanted to, you can one thing that is kind of in the literature is that music performance anxiety is classed as a social anxiety,

but there is disagreement over that as far as the research, and one of the things that people, certain researchers, think is far more to do with a broad Generalized Anxiety disposition,

which I identify With. Would anyone else say that they would, more generally, be anxious. Yeah, do you want to say anything?

Denise 6:07

Well, I am anxious generally. And for instance, I come across really confident. Everybody thinks I'm really confident. But put me in a party scene where I don't know anyone, and I won't speak to anyone, not a soul. I will just stand in a corner and drink my drink and want to go home. I'm if I know people, I'm absolutely fine, but so I know that I am. I still push Phil in front of me if we walk into a pub

first. Yeah, because, because I feel, you know, I have to, I struggle in some circumstances. If I'm on a bus, say, or a train, I need to go to the loo. But if I stand up, everybody will look at me. So things like that. It's, it is definitely generally social, okay,

Jess 6:55

so I would say I'm the opposite of that. I really in that I

can sit in a room and talk to people, and I can talk to people like as a PA, I sit and talk to people coming in, and I say hello, and I have all of that, and then I get in a room with people that I know, and my my mind tells me that if I'm not good enough, they'll judge me.

Nicola Currie 7:20

So it's other oriented. Yeah, it's not about I don't I almost don't care about people I don't know judging me, but I care about the people I do know judging me, and I know they don't judge me, but it's my mind talk

Lisa 7:35

I mask, and I'm well aware that I mask as well. I'm the life and soul of the party, if you know me,

otherwise, I just don't want to speak to you at all. Yeah, it takes a lot.

Justine 7:48

I can relate to all three of those. Yeah, in every single like and I think, I think you would also, and I just think she talked to anyone. But that's not who I am at my core at all, and until I feel completely comfortable with a group of people, that's when you start to see who I actually am. Before that is very much

not filtered, but I'm just the same as you I was still, if I'm with Andrew, he goes first, because I don't want to be that first center of attention. And he's a talker, so I've always relied on him to make those initial once that's done, that's fine, but I can't do a struggle with that. But I every all three of those, I thought, Oh, that's a bit me.

Lisa 8:33

I wonder if we're always like that, or whether we've grown into that as we've grown.

we've grown into that as we've grown.

Justine 8:39

I think I hide it better. Now, I was the girl that when you, if you, when you walked into assembly and the rest of the school were in there, I would have to find something to do with my hands to cover my face in some shape or form. Hated being the center of attention. Hated being the situation where people weren't looking to be, but I felt they might be, but I think I cope with that better now a feeling still

a lot of the time, but I don't feel that I have to mourn. Now go

on this okay.

Nicola Currie 9:10

Is there anyone that only feels anxiety when it comes to music performance,

Jane 9:16

right? If a truck was coming

towards me, I might feel

on it? No. Towards me. But no, I think because in, I mean, in most other areas, I would be confident of my performance. I would be if I was giving a speech, I would know my material. I'd be quite confident that I could nail it. I'd know my audience. But I think with your voice, with my voice,

I'm not entirely sure that I've it's Oh, I wasn't entirely sure that it was going to do what I wanted it to do. So I think that's where the anxiety came in, because it's almost like having a car that you aren't entirely sure is going to get you on that journey.

Nicola Currie 9:54

So it's instrument specific.

I think you feel you master that instrument more, yes, than.

Jane 10:00

Would feel more confident, yeah? Or getting ahead of ourselves, or if I was less bothered about it being perfect, yes, I wouldn't be as anxious, which is where I'm hoping this will leave me,

Sally 10:09

Yeah, mine's imposter syndrome. I'm fine in social situations. I'm fine at work when you know I'm doing stuff that I'm an expert in, I'm absolutely fine, but stick me step and I'm in control the information, but in a choir, I'm not. You're in control of it. All people around me, and I'm all right in the group, but if I had to stand up there at the front, that's get imposter syndrome. And I think, Why me? I'm not good enough. I'm not an expert in this.

Nicola Currie 10:35

So for you, being the expert is important. Yes,

Sally 10:39

that's when I don't have the confidence.

Nicola Currie 10:41

Yeah, so just briefly, like the measures that I had to use, I could have used so many different measures, and that, I do have some thoughts about that myself. But did you feel, you know, the questionnaires that were music performance related and perfectionism related? Do you feel that they were

applicable to you? Or do you think that there was a lot of it that just didn't feel quite like it tick the boxes, so to speak?

Jane 11:10

Think because we don't perform frequently enough? Yes, we hadn't. I felt I hadn't tested a lot of those boxes enough, or had enough time to really put that stuff into action. So, yeah, some of it wasn't really answerable yet. And I think I put in my feedback that if you came back in three months time or six months time, it would be interesting to see how the scores have changed.

Nicola Currie 11:32

So like, follow up might be a good idea.

all 11:43

Really good idea working in

Nicola Currie 11:46

l

Speaker 1 11:55

for people who don't get a lot of performance experience, then a follow up might be something that gives you that time to then go and perform and see what happens. That's,

Jess 12:06

I think it's something that you you can use in other parts of like we said, you can use. So although it might not directly relate to performance, it does relate to different things in your life that you can use that. You can use it with you.

Denise 12:19

And if it generally helps in your life, it's going to help the performance anyways. Because if that, if, if it's, if it's powerful enough to change your approach to your own self security and your own self confidence, then that, in turn, will have a knock on effect on performance when it

Sally 12:40

is still some of the noise. And

Jane 12:44

I think also for me, there were two points to this. It wasn't just about the anxiety, it was about the perfectionist. And I wouldn't have called myself a perfectionist before, or not perfectionist. I never really thought of myself in that box at all. But I think one of the things I learned through that was I definitely have those tendencies to apply to myself, and much like Rebecca, if my if my singing isn't perfect, then it's not worth bothering with at all. And so, and I think, having gone through the course, I thought, actually, I can apply that to other areas of my life, and it's not about anxiety. It's about if I've made a cake and it's not absolutely perfect, and it won't be because I've made it, then I wouldn't serve it, you know, if it was important, I would rather bin it and buy another one.

So, so that really opens my eyes to something I was really unaware of. So that was a bonus for me. And I don't know, getting ahead of ourselves here about whether the title of the

was more about the perfectionism than about anxiety. And the anxiety is because of the perfectionism. So, you know, maybe I'm coming at it from a different angle.

Justine 13:47

Mine was anxiety. That's what drew me to it. It wasn't because it was you as well. And in fact, and in fact, I've played it since because I've never, never, ever been able to do mindfulness. I just haven't been able to shut it all off and and yet, I could, this time, the full body scan. I love it's my favorite thing ever.

Nicola Currie 14:16

I love it. She's the only one. I

Justine 14:22

don't know why it works for me, but it proper work. I love it,

but it was the anxiety. Because my anxiety is definitely, I think I recognize it more as I got older, and I feel it more as I got older, yeah, whereas I didn't necessarily, I think it's always been there, but I didn't necessarily know what it was, so it was definitely anxiety. And yeah, as I said, I've used it. I've used it since. I've used it in the past two weeks, and it works for me, which so just that I don't care if I can't sing a karaoke

Nicola Currie 14:52

Well, ultimately, as it were, as humans, that's more important as humans, and singing is isn't it? And I. Is how you feel about yourself. I always say like singing is 20% about your instrument and 80% about being heard, how you feel about being heard. You know, it's a big deal, isn't it, so actually, that's who we are. That's not to do with our instrument. Really about

Jenny 15:18

thinking that you've got something that someone else would want to hear.

Lisa 15:23

Yes, and I think that's where I start, even with getting up in public speaking or speaking up in meetings, is because I always go, no one wants to hear what I've got saying. So I don't that's why I struggle with performance and

everything with that.

Jenny 15:36

I did find it quite interesting, because I think it was like the perfectionism based quiz, where it was asking, obviously asked about kind of relationship with parents and that sort of thing. And it was really interesting doing it, because it made me think about why I have those perfectionist tendencies. And I can say hand on heart, it is nothing to do with my parents. My parents were always immensely supportive of anything I chose to do. They allowed me to be free in how I express myself, what I chose to do with my education and going to university, when I was having a tough time, they were very much. If it's not working for you, come home, we'll support you. So there was never any pressure to say you've got to do this or you're not good enough. I was, I was never told by the people who

more often, yeah,

Nicola Currie 17:14

yeah, yeah, because ultimately,

like, it is possible to change your mind, isn't it? Maybe it's that thing of until you know what's in there, it's hard to know how to change it. So knowing yourself, and even if it's hard to figure out where it came from, and like you say, it's got that self talk going on all the time, might not have come from anywhere, obvious.

So when it comes to

like, the mindfulness practices that you took part in, it's been interesting reading, like the feedback from everybody, and I think this, it's been really lovely and good to read like a broad range of responses to lots of the different exercises do. One thing that's kind of come up is that for some people, mindfulness can like almost trigger irritability or anger, especially the stuff that's effective, so the stuff that's emotional, but even physical, even body scans, can make people and I know it can obviously be careful with trauma tricks and things like that, but just focus on the body can can be very irritating to people, and some people would have expected all of the practices, perhaps to be enjoyable or relaxing, and struggled with the

thought that anything might be difficult. Do you think that coming on to this course? Do you think that almost like purposeful barriers to entry, barriers to participation, like when you get a medication box and it says, Yeah, this is going to help your heart. However, please be warned and cause flatulence may get angry. Do you think that barriers to practice might have helped you with your expectations? Of the course

Rebecca 19:22

you did give some in the sessions.

If This Then don't do this or just pull back slightly. For me, you gave enough that I wouldn't have needed any other cautionary tales or boxes to fill in

Jenny 19:38

. I think for me, having done mindfulness before, the mindfulness I've done previously was very much more leading you to a place of relaxation and peace, whereas I think the focus of this mindfulness was about focus and being a feeling of levelness of being even if.

yeah, understanding the intent of it certainly helped me to figure out I was actually getting where I was meant to aim for.

Rebecca 20:38

There was a degree of challenge around perfectionism, which I've only just realized in terms of the body scan you mentioned, specifically, I struggled sometimes when the timing didn't quite work for me, but Well, I'm doing it wrong

getting it wrong, and therefore I'm not being perfect, and if I'm not getting the benefit. So so there was maybe something around that that could have been helpful. Of you know if the time, if your breathing timing is different to the way this is going to work, and apps,

Speaker 2 21:11

right?

Denise 21:13

I've taken a breath in and I've taken a breath out, and we're not moving

all 21:20

yet, and it

wasn't to breathe again.

Jess 22:03

And the first one, it just was a disaster. But then I did it again. It was better, but I, for me, that wasn't my favorite part of it. It's not something I'd probably choose to do that part again. But the rest of it, I

Justine 22:16

I found I struggled with was the

focus on someone that you love, and he's really I was crying. Oh, and the next time I did that, thought it's going to be best if someone knows coming.

Nicola Currie 22:32

Was that?

Was that kind of cathartic crying? \

Justine 22:37

Or I know it's, yeah, it is cathartic because I don't cry very easily. I try not to cry because there's also people around that I don't want to cry in front of, so I try not to so when, whenever I have a crisis, to

Unknown Speaker 22:50

be honest, yeah,

Lisa 22:50

I would say, as somebody that has a lot of past childhood trauma going into that, I didn't feel like I needed any warnings ahead of it, but I really struggled with the kind of with the loving kindness, not just directed at other people, which I really struggled with because I'm Cancerian and I hold a grudge. Trust me, I'm not giving loving kindness to anyone that's pissed me off in the past. It doesn't

happen. But with there was a part of it where you had to think of a time and a person where you felt completely safe, and I couldn't think of a single one. No, I had to back out of that. I was like, I don't have an experience to relate that to. So that was weird. I'm a bit tragic.

Jenny 23:35

I felt I've tried, I've tried too hard to think of someone, yeah, and I ended up my brain. My brain got so busy I realized I was not in a good space to continue with the rest of it, because I was getting stressed out because I didn't think I was finding the right answer to the situation, which, again,

Jess 24:02

one is that unless, like questioning My choices, should have this person

Speaker 3 24:10

and

June 24:19

really couldn't, situation, and I really couldn't think of a difficult person or a difficult situation, so maybe if we'd had some prior notification

so yeah, maybe trying to think The warning ahead of it. Okay, that's interesting.

Nicola Currie 24:42

I'm not surprised that loving kindness was

hard for anyone with perfectionism. It is a difficult one, and actually the way I did it was to work towards self last

Jane 24:59

Yeah. Because it's videos, they do stuff

Nicola Currie 25:03

first, whereas for perfectionism, it's yourself that's the biggest issue. So you start kind of a different way around. But interestingly, interestingly, I think it's the one that some people found the hardest, but the most rewarding when they finally got somewhere with it, but it took that time and again, maybe that expectation, could it be you're going to need some time with this and some gentleness with this, and this is what you could do. But here's some options. Would that be more of

Speaker 4 25:38

a

Unknown Speaker 25:38

a I

Jane 25:39

think, for me, if I'd had the sort of heads up that you're by the way, before you do this, you're going to need to identify a safe person, someone you hardly know, that you've seen in the grocery store or something, and then someone that you know really can't bear. And you need to sort of identify these three people before you go into this. Because with my perfectionism head on, I was so busy trying to think of someone, then I was thinking, she's moving on. She's like, how moving on. She might haven't got anyone. So then I snatched at someone, and then the whole thing through, I'm thinking, that's the end of wasted that one.

Jenny 26:10

And it was like one, as June said, I find it really hard to think of someone I don't like, because I'm generally a very object. But the one person I could think of was a patient that I've had to look after a couple of times at work, and she is a positivity vampire, and I have to literally give my team an alert. If I'm not out of the room, please come and rescue me, because I'll probably be in the corner rocking.

And I just had this terrible thought, because I felt I was sending her these vibes that she was going to take that as a psychic message to come and talk tomorrow, and she's on my ward. I'm God

people, yeah,

Denise 26:58

see, I was really lucky because as as I've got older, all the people that are really toxic in my life, over many, many years, I've quietly let them move away in their any direction they wanted, for as long as it wasn't me sort of thing, but no big deal. But just let them drift away. And so I luckily, or unluckily, I'd met up with some friends for coffee, and one particular friend had bought another person along, and this person was really difficult, and with no provocation, she just exploded.

And it was really difficult. And so I was it was easy for me. It only happened about three days before. So I just thought, Yes,

Nicola Currie 27:48

I'll move on from that bit for now. Just move us through a bit quicker. And one of the things that have come through in the in the your feedback and generally, is the theme of kind of authenticity, something about authenticity, sticking with some of you, for those that kind of identified that as a kind of helpful thing, what

Speaker 1 28:14

what would have changed, or what meaning would you have found with authenticity through mindfulness, not necessarily through the course, if you know what I mean, but more what? What did mindfulness, why did authenticity come through in that for you, if that was a thing that you found helpful,

Jane 28:33

some of the phrases I've written down, some of the phrases you used, are things that almost like a mantra that I'm now eating to myself. So one of the things, one of the phrases you used was, I think this was in my body as an instrument,

sing with authenticity, with no care for perfection. And that really resonated for me, that the authenticity is way more important than perfection, getting that balance right. So it was. There were other ones I would probably went through, through here, but I've written lots of them down that I thought, really the thing about this is my voice, and my voice is good enough, and those sort of things, I think that that really sort of and doing that as part of a mindfulness course, when there are when your focus is entirely on that message that I think

that just really seeps through. And even after coming sometimes I didn't want to come out of the mindfulness course, I just wanted to lie there and repeat those things to myself. I felt like they were really sinking in, even though I may have listened to 20 minutes of you talking at the end, there were those key messages that stages. So I wrote them down.

That's great.

Rebecca 29:39

So just that my voice is enough, that's the one I struggle with, because i i intellectualized it and went, then why am I learning? Why am I developing? If it's enough, then I should stop, but I can't, don't, can't I don't want to stop, because there's no more I can do. So that was the only one that I actually struggled with. I.

Lisa 29:58

struggled with. I.

Nicola Currie 29:59

What do you think?

Do you think there's a kind of a black or a white in that? Could you is there any way you could

feel like enough today now? Yeah, would that? Would that be kind of a juxtaposition that you can't quite square?

Rebecca 30:18

Yeah, no, because I want to learn, because I want to develop. I don't want my voice to be enough where it is. I want it

to get even better today.

June 30:29

Today. It's good enough today.

Rebecca 30:32

Yeah, I probably just find something else that resonated more rather than saying that ones,

Justine 30:40

sorry. Would that ever stop?

Rebecca 30:41

No, but I'm okay with that. That doesn't that isn't something that stops me feeling it's not feeding the perfectionism, it's feeding the desire to learn.

Nicola Currie 30:51

It's interesting. It's interesting. So if you if, if you had a phrase like, you are enough or you are good enough,

do you think that would be a barrier to growth for you? Do you think that would somehow, maybe, in your mind, as a perfectionist, be like, well, that lets you off the hook from having to try? Would that be or do you

Rebecca 31:14

think I feel it that strongly? It just, it just didn't really sit with where I am. How are you in my journey? Yeah, yeah,

Jane 31:23

but it would still be your voice,

Rebecca 31:26

and that part of it was all good, yeah, this is my voice. I was perfectly happy with.

Nicola Currie 31:30

Yes, yes, yeah. And authenticity. Would that be something that would resonate with you quite happily?

Rebecca 31:37

Or, yeah, it didn't occur to me, particularly while I was following the course, it wasn't when I came to the questionnaire at the end, okay, but it hasn't just

Jenny 31:47

Yeah, yeah. I think the when you talk about authenticity, it's one of those things that I think I've always struggled with. And one of the reasons I want to come and have lessons, I don't know what my voice is. I know I can sing in the style of people who have sun songs, and I think sing them quite well, yeah, but I don't know what my voice is, so I don't think I found my authentic voice to be able to say yes, I'm

happy with it, and I'm all the time I'm if I hear a song, or I come across a song, and I think that's either easy for me, it's a I could have a go at that now, or I'm not ready to even tackle that. So almost like I'm making like a list in my head of the songs I would like to aspire to. But I think I would have to put a lot of work into growing my voice to be able to reach to do my aspiration of where I would like to

Nicola Currie 32:48

be and do I'm going to do this. Sorry, Jen, every time I notice that this keeps stopping every time you and then I get distracted, it's still doing its buzzy thing, but it's not I just want to restart that again. This is recording, but that wasn't so I just want to start that again.

Go to home. I hope this is doing it record.

I'm going to start that again. It may have missed that for you on here, but I'll have it on there. Do you think that knowing your voice is something that's purely voice oriented, or is there a part of you that feels that

that's connected to knowing who you are

Jenny 33:35

massively so that would be linked as and there's one of the things that the Warblers will know I do not know what to do with my body when I'm singing. And it's bizarre when I can lecture for three hours, I can stand up and talk in front of hundreds of people, and I'm animated and I'm moving and I'm dynamic when I'm singing. I'm just kind of like, I don't know what to do with my hands. I don't know should I be moving so I'm not my body doesn't feel comfortable

to express what I'm trying to express. So I think it's, it's, it's the voice is an instrument, but also the body as a means of performance.

Jess 34:19

Yet I'm very similar in that I

definitely knew, no, I don't know my voice. I didn't know my voice when I had my first singing. I didn't know my voice. I didn't and then I sat back with the mindfulness. Course, I did actually sit back and think about, well, why did I join the tenors and why? Well, I joined the tenors because my sister was a tenant. It was ours at the time. I sat next to her. She came. I sat next to her. I stayed there. I made some friends in that and I'm in my comfort zone. And actually, the thing with mindfulness, it's really made me think about my me and my comfort. Zones and where I'm happy and where I'm not happy. And it is that I don't,

not quite yet a bit more, maybe with mindfulness, but I'm not quite yet confident in my self to know that I can sing.

Nicola Currie 35:20

so like, so for some people, it felt like some of the feedback was like, oh, like, I feel like I've moved from A to D, but G, G is performance. G's knowing it that I can do that, whereas it hasn't quite got to there yet. And

do you, do you feel like there's a trajectory, though, that you feel you can see, or do you feel like mindfulness?

Jess 35:47

It's, I think it's a mixture of the,

some of the mindfulness techniques, singing lessons, more confidence in however I choose to do that. But it's, it's it's a mix of everything,

Nicola Currie 36:01

so like skills training and mindfulness in skills training, yeah,

Lisa 36:06

you both saying same sort of thing around knowing your own voice and not that comes from a place of vulnerability, I think, doesn't it being able to stand up, because this is the masking things. I can stand up there. I can be whoever I choose to be that day, but to be me, that's the vulnerability there. That's very you're really opening, yeah, fully open to as I say, as I the criticism is the wrong word, but, but that's how I feel.

Jenny 36:37

Yeah, people because they're seeing me, yes, not seeing

Jess 36:42

and as as a person, as a people pleaser. And I know I'm a people pleaser. If I don't,

if I get up and sing and people don't like it and I've not then pleased them, they're not gonna like me anymore. Not not. It's not even about my singing. It's about me, yes.

Lisa 37:00

So maybe getting through the performance anxiety step one, and then it's Yeah, sing the Yeah. The rest of

Justine 37:06

mine's a little bit like, I don't think I will ever get to a place. There I will go, I did that really well, and walk away and be I smashed it. I don't think I'll ever, ever feel that. And I know that goes That's all through my childhood for certain different reasons. Not everyone didn't love me, but through a number of different reasons, which I can now identify quite well.

it, yeah? And I really admire that. I really admire that, because I don't think, I don't think I will ever be that person.

Nicola Currie 38:13

And is that again? Is that a vulnerability thing?

Justine 38:16

Yeah, and I think,

without going too deep, growing up, I've always taken a little bit of a backseat, you know, that was, that's what I did, you know, and, and I've always been the one to kind of be a people pleaser and not say, No, that's crap. I don't agree with that. I'll go, Yeah, okay, then we'll find a way and do that, and especially with people I care about, and it's just who I've been for a very, very long time through my own children and my own husband, I've, I'm, I've learned to not be that so much, because I know they've got me, but it's taken me that long because they are, they are my core. They are my people. And I know they've got me, but it's a big thing to even amongst people I trust. It's just, it's very vulnerable, isn't it?

Speaker 4 39:08

Yeah,

Jane 39:10

I think with the authenticity thing and perhaps wrapping my head around the fact that

Unknown Speaker 39:16

that my voice is good enough now,

Jane 40:00

I think that's a big thing for me to try and accept. And I think if I couldn't get to the point of accepting that, then that would take away a lot of my nerves.

Rebecca 40:08

Is there also an exposure and opportunity piece for anyone else? Because I know when I look back at Dracula, for instance, and I still don't really remember it, you know, my brain said

no, just not happening. But whereas now that's not the case, I can remember, sometimes that means I can be over critical. Other times I would like to showcase, watching the showcase. Showcase, terrified to watch it, but I've watched it three or four times that I've made myself and each time I've been kinder looked at the overall rather than picking bits.

So

Jenny 40:48

how much I frown. I'm like, Oh my God. Every

time the camera comes, it's

Nicola Currie 41:01

concentration

Sally 41:03

I just watched you all in absolute awe.

Nicola Currie 41:09

That might be the test three months down the line.

Yeah, I'm gonna do the final section of this just because then we can finish. There's some questions that I think, to be honest, I've got most of the answers for those practical things from the questionnaires. So I think we're all right with that. What I would like to do is kind of combine these last questions, and each of you, we've got probably 15 minutes. I'd love to know these are the things that are coming up, so you have a little thing, what would you what was one thing you would have let go of in this course that might be a good thing that you feel you've let go of. What would be one thing that you might have taken on, if there's just one thing that stuck with you, you might have already said it tonight, so that's fine. You can just reiterate that. And if you had to name the course based on purely your experience, you don't have to think of a pithy perfection name, but like, maybe there's, like, a little group of words that you might put to it, because that will help me a lot with what you've got out of this And what mindfulness means to you.

Because obviously the I

so the mechanisms of mindfulness are what are interesting more than the court the course is going to evolve and change as I learn from you, so that will help me just dig a little bit deeper into your personal experience, really. So what would you take hold of? What would you let go of, and what might you

call a course like this.

Lisa 42:45

Does anyone want to go? I'll go, yeah. I'd lose the body scan right, purely because I never got past my right hand. I was asleep, and I kept waking up going. She stopped talking, and then having to restart it. I still never got past the same hand again. So I just had to abandon that one and not do it. But what I did do was go back, when on those occasions, I said to you, this my lesson last week, I went back and did Nadi shidana instead, because I could get through that, and I found it really exactly what I'm really useful, but I couldn't get on with the body scan Nadi shidana, I would absolutely keep for sure, and I think I would, I'd probably call it something like mindfulness and perfectionism, because as I said to you at my lesson, what was really interesting at my warbler session last week is I got up and sang and I wasn't shaking, because I told myself the entire way there, on the journey, it Doesn't matter if I'm perfect, because these girls are going to cut me anyway.

Jane 43:44

I think your phrase was faster up there and farted.

Lisa 43:54

Applaud that you so, yeah, I genuinely came out of that session feeling like I didn't need to be perfect. So I think I gained something from it, and I see how I go in the coming weeks. That's great.

Denise 44:17

I like the name presence over perfection, because for me, that is key. You know, I am a perfectionist. I know that I'm a perfectionist. We're getting ready for a gig at the moment, and poor Phil is having to do things that he knows inside out and back to front over and over and over again, because I insist on it. And it's because i It's because, partly because I'm the one that when I'm anxious, I know that I make silly mistakes, so I need it to come out, literally automatically, like, I'm like, I'm a machine, because the more I think about it, the more it's likely to go wrong. So keep telling myself that it's all about you. Know, the Course says something about, you know, how many people actually have the bravery to get up and perform? And that said a lot, you know? I mean, and I've dealt with people like that, I run folk music sessions where very new people are standing to sing for the first time, and the nerves are incredible. And and I always try and put them on early so they can get it out of the way, and they're so thrilled with themselves. And, you know, performing is difficult, and so it's a hard so to just tell yourself that actually, just turning up and doing this is a really big deal, that you are good enough over the fact that every note's got to be spot on and perfect, is it? To me, it kind of encapsulates what it's about

Sally 45:54

that's good. Thank you. The thing I get rid of is, or let go, is wishing people that have done me harm. Well, I mean, I've retired eight years now, but I had to go right back to when I was working to actually find people that I really, you know, would have killed half the time, you know. And I had to dredge that right back, because there's not people in my life now that particularly have that impact on me is

Justine 46:23

that because you don't allow them to

Sally 46:25

Well, yeah, yeah, they're not in my life. I mean, in work, you don't have a choice, but in my personal life, you do, yeah, I keep the Nadi Shodhana, but a word of warning, I think you should warn people to blow their nose. Yes. I Yeah,

Jenny 46:44

I got, no, I can't breathe out my left nostril

Sally 46:48

almost anytime. You know, if you finally get really annoyed at somebody, you can just sit there

Lisa 46:52

and the sweet progress is great as

Denise 46:54

well. Yeah, I think I would put the body scan a bit later. I really struggled with the body scan, really, really struggled. And it was partly because I could sense, you know, you're starting up here, and you know that at some point you're going to go all the way down the right hand and all the way and it's almost like the anticipation of knowing that you've got to get through all this, and it's, it's just knowing how long that's going to take, and everything, instead of just being in that split second or that moment, I'm thinking, right? So the rest is next, and then we're going to go all the way back up again, and then we're going to go across and all the way down there. And it was always it was

Nicola Currie 47:34

it you weren't in the moment. No,

Denise 47:38

couldn't get in the moment either. And I'm sure if you did it like every day, that would probably be better. But I kept sitting there thinking, oh, right, it's the wrist now and, Oh, have I put the kettle on and did all the potatoes and whatever it was, I mean, the

solar plexus now, yeah,

but the nadi shadharma. Nadi Shodhana, Nadi shodharma. There's something about the counting that just works for my, for my I guess everybody around this table, please everything. But there's something about that counting.

Nicola Currie 48:16

Sorry, I'm just redoing this. Yeah. On a minute.

It's so annoying. I'm recording it here as well.

It's going again. I think,

does anyone else want to like

Jane 48:46

body scans? But not at first. It took me a while, but once I got into them, I'm focusing on being in the moment and keep dragging

myself back. I didn't really

Justine 48:56

want them. I loved it because it was on holiday, right? So there was nothing else for me to do, so it was quite easy to focus. And then, from then, when I got home, I did it before I started

my day, because there still wasn't any distractions, and I was on my own, no one. So yeah, I think that's probably why I got

Unknown Speaker 49:20

into it

Jane 49:21

in terms of things, I was letting go. There was one thing you said that me imperfection with curiosity, not criticism. And I'm going to try to remember that I don't know if I nail it every single time, but when I make mistakes, I'm going to try and think, wonder why that happened instead of so hopeless, I'm useless. I should never sing in public again. So that is a takeaway among all the number of other things that I've said. And if I was renaming it, I would rename it. I would because for me personally, it would be about authenticity, because that's the major takeaway for me. And I think something about the true you is worth more than for. Section. That's how I felt.

Unknown Speaker 50:03

That's good. Yeah, yeah, thank you.

June 50:06

I've actually used the Nadi Shodhana to benefit before. I was leading a walk the other day, and because usually I get in a spin about it. So I sat in the my car park. I don't know what people

would think me a sense of calm but focus as well.

Nicola Currie 50:42

Quite a quick program.

Jane 50:45

The other day, a drama. A woman was on a plane and scared of flying, and she was doing it, yeah, and she wasn't even like part of that, but you could see her doing it in the background.

Rebecca 50:55

So the the body scan I did like, but I have to at my own pace, so I kept doing it. Now you should stand absolutely three part breath, no, for me, it feels really artificial, and it makes me feel claustrophobic. I start to feel like there were a couple of points where I had to remind myself how free

Nicola Currie 51:11

now, yeah, that's not right, holding on to it, yeah,

Unknown Speaker 51:17

yeah. And then in terms of renaming,

Rebecca 51:21

I think just something simple and easy to type in is probably a good way to go, but with the tagline. So I've kind of written down mindful performance, but then addressing anxiety and perfection and perfection and performance, so that you can give a bit more explanation, yes, but without it having to be the title,

Unknown Speaker 51:40

yeah, yeah. That's helpful.

Lisa 51:42

One of the things I would say is I would have liked something I'd like to have seen in the course, is some way of addressing the post performance anxiety. That whole Don't ever do that again. That was horrendous. You look like a fool. You might as well have been stood there naked. Lisa, yeah, that bit, because that's where I beat myself up. A lot, yeah, I

Jane 52:04

think there was something about that. There was a little Yeah,

Unknown Speaker 52:10

I think the thing was interesting, just to kind of like,

Nicola Currie 52:15

maybe give a little bit of more understanding about mindfulness, and what it does is that it's really difficult with mindfulness to take a specific symptom and say, do this and that addresses that symptom. So actually, what mindfulness is doing is pulling you out of one part of the brain where you are mindless, where you've got like, a wandering state of the mind where most people don't realize that they're in a wandering state of mind. Most of the time it's where you realize that you've not been with it for a second, and mindfulness is like the training of coming into the back part of the brain away from that where you're less triggered. So the amygdala is not very likely to get triggered. So, so that is through focus and boredom. So unfortunately, it's the ability to go. I'm wondering, wandering, wandering, come back and wondering, wandering, wandering, come back and wondering that is rewiring the brain, not unfocused. Does that make sense? So for those of you who struggled with wandering, wandering, maybe knowing that actually, I did say it, but it wasn't explicit in my training of you beforehand, that actually that, oh, I'm wandering, that is a win. That's your brain rewiring because you've just got I've wondered, yeah, I've wondered I'm not in my left toe. So some of the so some of the frustration is part of the mindfulness programming, because when you come to perform the self talk, actually doesn't do anything, not very much, until that focus has been established when you're in the right part of the brain. And then you can start to observe as a third person, rather than you are not your thoughts, you're watching them. Then

you can start to address emotional based things, because you are more observant than I am one with my thoughts and feelings. There's that separation, but until you've gone through the mindful refocus, refocus, refocus, that part of the brain can't then fully engage with that separation of you and thought and emotion. So it's a really difficult one, because actually this mindfulness course, I suspect could run for anything

Jess 54:41

I think I was going to say that. I think the title is, like you, I think he's perfect. Because actually, I've been talking to people at work about it and say, and for me, I've been explaining that being present at something is better than just being perfect at something. And so I think those if. You can find a way to get those words in as well as even if it's in an explanation.

Nicola Currie 55:04

I think a lot of courses like Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction courses, they do quite a lot of so it's Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction courses are eight weeks long. You have lectures at the beginning and checking points, and it's 45 minutes a day, daily. Yeah. Huge commitment, and like the research does, is out there to suggest that actually there is a cap on benefit time, that actually dose response isn't necessarily the longer, the more progressive you get in mindfulness, the more long term changes happen in the brain. But like 10 versus 20 minutes of mindfulness doesn't seem to be much between it. But actually, if you knew that actually the refocusing and almost like the ability to recognize the wandering and just bring it back, even if you do that like a goldfish 400 times, you are training your brain and stopping yourself going into fight or flight when you're nervous. So, and there's the body scan is an interesting one, because if you're just, if you just scan through the body, you're left to kind of think, whereas the very specific points, because they're nerve rich, so you're more likely to possibly be able to feel something there, but also it's moving you quickly through your brain so that you're not

Justine 56:24

I used to twitch Right,

Speaker 5 56:26

yeah, wiggle a toe, yeah, and my fingers especially, yeah, yeah. Definitely.

Nicola Currie 56:33

My thinking is because of the way mindfulness does work. You know that that kind of training ground, that first two weeks of training is short, right? And it's, it's 20 minutes a day, but for some of you, that might feel like forever. But then to go on to the effective stuff, although loads of you responded amazingly to that, I wonder whether there's an element that the more that was established, the easier the second part was. And maybe, if that wasn't quite so easy, maybe that second part was a bit harder. Do you think there's anything in that? Do you think

Sally 57:10

first long session felt really, really long, but as I went through the program and it was equally long towards the end, I didn't feel it as long. So that big jump from just doing the nose breathing to doing the body scan was quite or half a body scan. That was quite a leap in time. And it seemed long that first time, till I got really into it. And then it was, and then it was, yeah,

Unknown Speaker 57:33

I found it easier. The

Denise 57:36

longer ones, yeah, it was more. There was more, sort of there was more to grip my interest, and there was more time to actually get into it, right? So the longer ones actually, I found a bit easier.

Rebecca 57:54

There's one other practice that might be valuable, just from what I've done in the past, which is the walking meditation. Yes, because all of these are very sedentary, yes. And when you're preparing for performance, some people pace

Unknown Speaker 58:09

before as well.

Rebecca 58:10

But something more animated, yeah? Something more tied into that in pre performance, emotion and activity.

Nicola Currie 58:17

Yeah, right. That's where my lovely in the future not to do with this, but obviously, I'm a yoga teacher, so like, yoga is meant to be for preparation, for seated mindfulness. So we're missing, really, in the tradition, we're missing a key element in this. And it's not necessarily just yoga, it's, it's energetic movement. So I think that that is key.

Rebecca 58:42

Well, the walking meditation I did wasn't energetic, right? It was active, but it was slow, yeah? And it was mindful, but you're

Nicola Currie 58:48

moving that energy, but you are up.

Speaker 6 58:52

I mean, I couldn't, I doubt, yeah,

Lisa 59:01

but one of the things I said when we were doing the Warblers was actually the research I had read was about when you're feeling that anxiety, you go into flight or fight your immediate your body's telling you to run away, whereas if you walk forwards and step into it using your motion, it can help calm you down.

Justine 59:20

You said you quoted from someone else, and she said she gets in her car and she says, You can ride with me, you can sit in the back, but you're not in control. Yes, I am. And that really, that is that, is it, isn't it like, yeah, you can come, you're always going to be here, actually somewhere, perching on a shoulder, but you're not a boss of me. I am, and I think if, for me personally, if I can channel that, it would

be huge for me. That was really, yeah,

Nicola Currie 59:49

I guess it's that acceptance that sometimes we can have thought with positive thinking, that you replace a bad thing with a good thing. But actually, really, with mindfulness, it's not really. About that. It's more like, look, there's all these things. There isn't just one thing. So, for instance, there isn't just nerves, there's energy, there's anxiety, but there's excitement or there's fear, yes, but there's also, like, balls, you know, there's all of those things, and we're all going to go forward together, like you, saying some of us are approach focused, and some of us are run focused. So depending how you are as a person, some of these things are going to not be helpful, and some of them are going to be really helpful.

Justine 1:00:36

Sorry, just I also think it would be so lovely if younger people had access to this sort of thing, because when I look at my own children, and Andrew and I are different approaches and stuff, but they learn so much from the way we are and what they watch as they grow, and some of those things you can't you can't Take away, and it's not you haven't taught them open, you know, don't want to teach them that, but they they learn it. And I see that coming out, some of my traits coming out in one of my sons, especially. And I just think if I could have given it like, don't be me, do this, take this and be that that's, that's a gift I would give any anyone. So if it's, you know, now, in the world we live in as well, if children, younger people, have more access to this sort of learning, I think it'd be amazing. I really do

Jenny 1:01:36

one last point on the body scans. There was a really interesting point that you put on the prep paper, which was, would we have preferred something more spacious? And I thought spacious was a really good word to use. And when I've done mindfulness before that, I found very effective as I totally get where some people really struggle with lying down for it, yeah, when I've done seated body scans, it's been much more about focusing about what your body feels like in contact with the surfaces that it's in contact with, and I think I find that a lot easier to feel my fingertips where they're resting against my legs, or feel my chest moving against the back of the chair, rather than I'm thinking of my finger if I've got a sensation to

what it's a reference with the floor. So a reference point really helps. But another style that I did as well was where we did a body scan, but it was focused purely on breathing. So it was feeling the air of the nostrils, feeling within the nasal cavity, feeling within the back of the throat, within the trachea, and then feeling the actual movement of the lungs. And actually just having that real direct focus solely on the breathing is very, very focusing as well. And that's what I tend to go back to when I'm in a stress moment, I go straight to that. I'm thinking about the movement of air in and out of my body. And a lot of what you covered was very much a if you get lost, come back to the breath, but sometimes maybe a little bit of focus on the specific feel of the breath as it's coming in and out of the body gives you that really quick focus.

Jane 1:03:23

Yeah, you did mention that about the temperature, yeah,

Jenny 1:03:27

yeah, cool coming in and warm going out, yeah.

Nicola Currie 1:03:30

But we probably moved from just general and then moved, yeah, so and again, on a quick course, maybe that's something that moves. It's very different too quickly. Or maybe if you've done it before, it's okay, you can move from that, but

Jenny 1:03:44

maybe some that will be more time, yeah, because

Nicola Currie 1:03:49

also that's combining the physical sensation and focus with the breath, which is super good, yeah, yeah. But we did move on quite quickly from that,

Jane 1:03:58

and I wonder if that's why we kind of like the things that were introduced early, because we've done them for longer, yes, and maybe another week. My practice might have changed,

Unknown Speaker 1:04:07

but I will revisit. Is

Lisa 1:04:09

this, does it stay available? Yes. Will it stay a bit? Because I would like,

Denise 1:04:14

especially the second half the last 15 days, I would quite happily go through those, perhaps not every single day, but I would, you know, start at the beginning and work my way through them again. Yeah? And because I found a lot and a lot of what, a lot of the content was really helpful,

Nicola Currie 1:04:33

they're quite dense as well. Yeah. So that's a trick within Of course, it's that short is, you know, some people put could we not do that? Could we do it like four, four days of that session? And some people would be like, Dear God, no. Other people really wanted to spend four days on one thing.

Sally 1:04:50

Yes, like, you mastered it, yes, practicing it like once or twice. You don't know you

Denise 1:04:55

really, but also, it's all new the first time you. Hear it, and the second time you hear it, it's beginning. You're beginning to relax and let that go actually into your consciousness a bit better.

Jane 1:05:13

You did lower my blood Yes. Can you say that?

I'm just saying that right now.

So I'm having to measure my blood pressure at the moment GPS ask me, it's just one of those things you do once a year, isn't it? And so I've been writing it down, and I've been writing it down before I did nicolala And afterwards, just out of curiosity. And it definitely lowers

Unknown Speaker 1:05:37

my blood pressure, really. And

Jane 1:05:39

it's, it's quite and that is a black and white tangible. And you think, yeah,

Jenny 1:05:44

and it's just, like, after having done it for the New Zealand, it's about like, six minutes. It's just kind of equilibrium, and you feel mind

Lisa 1:05:55

has a physical impact,

Jenny 1:05:57

yeah, yeah, yeah. I wasn't expecting it to be that noticeable, but it's something

to then tackle. Yeah. What was coming?

Speaker 2 1:06:07

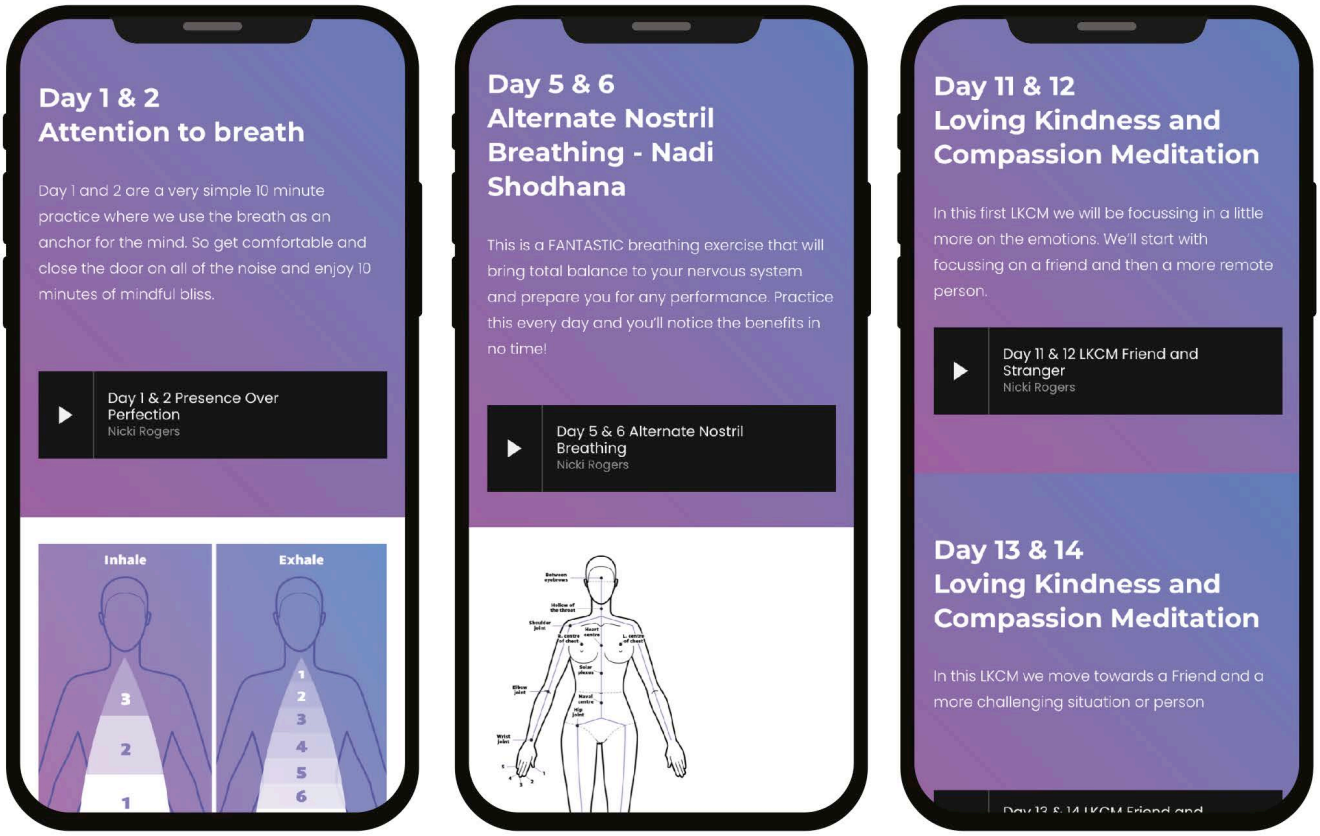
Yeah. I've used it when I couldn't sleep, you know, when you have yes buzzing, and it's made a huge

Justine 1:06:13

Yeah, overthinking my mind. It was just a bad week, and it was going, Oh, and in desperation, me and I thought, I'm just gonna do it. And it worked. Yeah, it was amazing. I love it. Thank you. Oh.

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Appendix H - Links to Presence over Perfection course access



Presence over Perfection course access: https://www.nickirogers.com/mindful

Science Page: https://www.nickirogers.com/science