

Perfectionism is an unhealthy belief!

Seeing some of these personality traits in yourself could be a sign that you are a perfectionist! But don't panic! Being more aware of these traits and the harm they bring gives you a chance to recreate a more easygoing nature!

**Do not forget: "Almost Perfect" is still a job very well done!**

If you wish further information or advice, please call or drop in to see us at:

**Eastern Mediterranean University  
Psychological Counseling Guidance and Research Centre  
(EMU-PDRAM)**



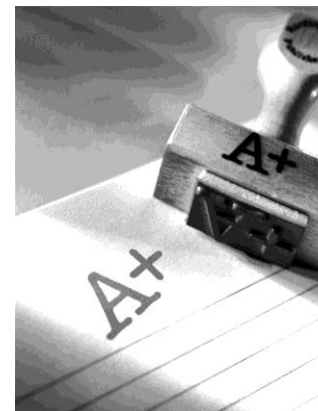
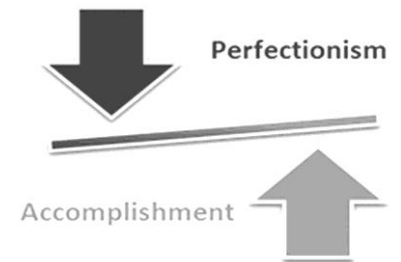
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# PERFECTIONISM



You are worth more than your accomplishments!

Perfectionism is not a healthy pursuit of excellence!



"Perfectionism is a double-edged sword -- it cuts both ways!"

There is no such thing as a "perfect human being"!

Mistakes are acceptable!

No one wants to be around a 'fault-finder'!

## What is Perfectionism?

Perfectionism is an absolutely "no-win" situation. Perfectionists often don't realize that they are harming themselves by their own actions. Perfectionists believe that their resolution to be perfect will give them success, love, approval and satisfaction. However generally the opposite occurs.

**There are big differences between perfectionists and healthy achievers.**

### Perfectionist vs. Healthy Achievers

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|---|-----|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Sets standards beyond reach.</li><li>➤ Is never satisfied by anything less than perfect.</li><li>➤ Gets really depressed when experiences failure, disapproval or disappointment.</li><li>➤ Is absorbed with fear of failure and disapproval which can reduce energy levels.</li><li>➤ Sees mistakes as justification of unworthiness.</li><li>➤ Gets very defensive when criticized.</li></ul> | vs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Sets high standards, which are obtainable.</li><li>➤ Appreciates the good work and enjoys the process.</li><li>➤ Moves back from a failure quickly and with motivation.</li><li>➤ Keeps normal levels of anxiety and fear and uses them to create energy.</li><li>➤ Sees mistakes as opportunities for progress and learning.</li><li>➤ Reacts positively to constructive criticism.</li></ul> |
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### Traits Of Perfectionists

**All-Or-Nothing Thinking:** High achievers can be satisfied and happy with doing a job even if their goals are not fully met. Perfectionists on the other hand, will never accept anything less than perfection. For them, 'almost perfect' is the same as 'failure'.

**Critical Eye:** While high achievers appreciate their performance and are willing to support others, perfectionists tend to pinpoint even the smallest mistakes they make and those of others.

**Defensiveness:** Since a 'less-than-perfect' achievement is too difficult to accept for perfectionists, they tend to take criticism defensively, even the positive ones which are made with good intentions.

**Low Self Esteem:** Because of their judgemental nature and rigidity, perfectionists can push others away and be isolated in return. This can cause a lower self-esteem.

### Costs of Perfectionism

Perfectionists are likely to experience decreased productivity and motivation, impaired physical and psychological health, problematic interpersonal relationships, and low self-confidence. Perfectionists are vulnerable to:

- Depression
- Performance anxiety
- Exam anxiety
- Social anxiety
- Writer's block
- Obsessiveness
- Compulsiveness
- Suicidal thoughts
- Loneliness
- Impatience
- Frustration
- Anger

### Perfectionism: Myths and Realities

**MYTH:** "I wouldn't be as successful as I am today if I weren't such a perfectionist".

**REALITY:** Perfectionism does not bring success and fulfillment. Some perfectionists are remarkably successful, but this is not 'because of' their unremitting struggling, it is in fact 'in spite of' it.

**MYTH:** "Perfectionists get things done on time and they do things best".

**REALITY:** Perfectionists often delay their responsibilities needlessly, they usually miss deadlines because of losing a lot of time and energy on small irrelevant details, and are not really that productive.