

PERFECTIONISM is a personality trait which occurs when someone places themselves under high levels of pressure to meet high expectations

SIGNS YOU ARE A PERFECTIONIST

If you're wondering whether you are a perfectionist, there's a good chance you are—at least to a degree. There's also a good chance you have some investment in being a perfectionist because of the positive connotations of the word "perfect."

Below are some tell-tale signs of a perfectionist — signs that you may be able to spot in yourself or people you know.

ALL OR NOTHING THINKING - accepting nothing less than perfection. 'Almost perfect' is seen as failure

BEING HIGHLY CRITICAL – a perfectionist is more critical of themselves and others, spotting mistakes and imperfections. This is different to a high achiever who tend to be more supportive.

FEELING PUSHED BY FEAR – perfectionists tend to be pushed by fear of anything less than a perfectly met goal.

HAVING UNREALISTIC STANDARDS – another sign of being a perfectionist is setting goals that may not be reasonable, setting goals that are initially out of reach.

FOCUSING ONLY ON RESULTS – perfectionists see the goal and nothing else. They are so concerned with hitting the goal and avoiding failure they can't enjoy the process of growing and striving.

FEELING DEPRESSED BY UNMET GOALS – perfectionists are often less happy than high achievers. While high achievers are able to bounce back fairly easily from disappointment, perfectionists tend to beat themselves up and wallow in negative feelings when their high expectations go unmet. They struggle to move on when things don't work out the way they had hoped.

FEAR OF FAILURE – because perfectionists place so much stock in results and become disappointed by anything less than perfection, failure becomes a scary prospect. Since anything less than perfection is seen as failure, that makes starting anything new very difficult.

DEFENSIVENESS - Because a less-than-perfect performance is so painful and scary to perfectionists, they will often respond defensively to constructive criticism.

LOW SELF-ESTEEM - Although striving for perfectionism is associated with higher self-esteem, when someone with a perfectionist personality evaluates themselves critically, this contributes to [low self-esteem](#) instead.

HIGH ACHIEVER

Strives to be the best at all times

Enjoys the journey

Very resilient

Comfortable and enjoys constructive criticism

VS

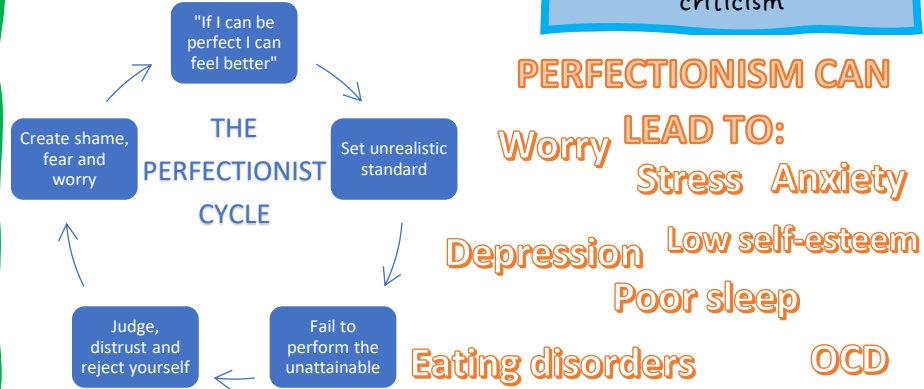
PERFECTIONIST

Fears failure or rejection
Usually has a lower self-esteem

Doesn't always enjoy the journey

Rigid

Doesn't respond well to criticism



WAYS TO COMBAT NEGATIVE PERFECTIONISM

- ✓ Being kind to yourself
- ✓ Not comparing yourself with others
- ✓ Set realistic goals
- ✓ Beware of social media (showing you filtered 'perfect' lives)
- ✓ Practicing mindfulness to help you learn how to focus on the present without worrying too much about the past or future
- ✓ Using techniques from cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) such as challenging negative thoughts

Remember, above all your value doesn't depend on external achievements. You're fine as you are. You don't need to be perfect; you just need to be perfectly you.