

PERFECTIONISM

Perfectionism Facts

- 1 Perfectionists rarely feel satisfied with their accomplishments. Their self-worth often depends on the latest accomplishment.
- 2 Perfectionists believe they either succeed or fail.
- 3 Perfectionists live with the fear of not being good enough, therefore they may have difficulties relaxing and taking risks.
- 4 Perfectionism is associated with depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive problems, anger problems and body image and eating issues.



**FOCUS ON
REALISTIC
EXPECTATIONS
& SELF
COMPASSION**

**YOU ARE
ENOUGH**

Strategies for Overcoming Perfectionism

- Be aware of your own motivations for perfectionism.
- Identify automatic perfectionistic thoughts and feelings and see if you can identify more balanced ways of thinking as an alternative.
- Reframe perfectionism to the healthy pursuit of excellence.
- Identify instances of excessive checking, correcting, and organizing; difficulty following through; procrastination, or avoidance.
- Consider positive as well as negative outcomes
- Set realistic goals and prioritize.
- Delegate responsibility.
- Look at the big picture. Enjoy the entire process and celebrate your progress.
- Focus on what can be done.
- Alter your attitude about failure. Rather than focus on what didn't work, identify what you learned through the process. The world doesn't end because you aren't perfect (and no one is!).
- Use feelings of anxiety or depression to ask yourself "Have I set impossible expectations for myself in this situation?"
- Respect and love yourself.

PERFECTIONISM

Diving Deeper: Causes of Perfectionism

Earlier in life, you may have equated your accomplishments and achievements with your value as a person. Your perfectionism might be rooted in one or more of these:

Fear of failure: You equate failure with a lack of personal worth.

Fear of making mistakes: By avoiding mistakes, you miss the chance to learn and grow.

Fear of disapproval: You might fear that others will reject you if they see your flaws. Perfectionism may be a way to avoid criticism, rejection, and disapproval.

All-or-nothing thinking: You might feel that if your work isn't perfect, it's worthless.

Overemphasis on "shoulds": These "shoulds" often direct our lives, leaving us unaware of our own wants and desires.

Believing that success comes easily to others: To you, it might look like others achieve success with little effort, few errors, minimal stress, and maximum self-confidence, and it's easy to confuse beliefs with facts. You might see your own efforts as unending and constantly inadequate, leading to constant frustration.

Campus Resources

Habif Health and Wellness Center

Medical Services: 314-935-6666

Mental Health Services: 314-935-6695

Health Promotion Services: 314-935-7139

Visiting Us

Habif is on the lower level of Dardick House on the South 40 on Shepley Drive.

The Zenker Wellness Suite is in the Summers Recreation Center (room 303).

habif.wustl.edu



Habif Health and
Wellness Center

STUDENT AFFAIRS AT WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY