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EAP HELPLINE



E-MAIL EAP

PERFECTIONISM

Today's world imposes standards that we want to live up to. Even at Christmas we want everything to be perfect: sophisticated dishes, the most beautiful Christmas tree, trying to please the entire family... However, excessive ambition can easily turn into perfectionism.

What is perfectionism?

Perfectionism is an attitude characterised by striving for perfection, flawlessness, being too demanding and overly critical of oneself.

A person who is a perfectionist always strives to be the best at what they do. By being too demanding of themselves, they often cannot meet those expectations. Moreover, they have inadequate self-esteem and criticise themselves excessively, thus fuelling their desire to be perfect. Perfectionists are never satisfied with themselves because they could always do something better. Flawless performance is a determinant of self-esteem for them.

Symptoms of perfectionism

- Very detailed checklists
- Punctuality/ excessive meticulousness
- Workaholism or avoidance of tasks (better not to do something than to do it badly)
- Difficulty in making decisions
- Correcting others, getting angry when they do things their way
- Sticking to rigid rules
- Emotional reactions to criticism
- Lack of ability to delegate tasks
- Fear of failure, of making a mistake
- Overestimating one's own abilities (ignoring fatigue, mental tension)
- Basing one's self-esteem on the way they are perceived by others
- Putting on the mask of a 'perfect person'
- Unrealistic perception of one's own impact (a task when not performed perfectly generates losses).

Types of perfectionism

1. Self-centredness - demanding perfect completion of tasks from oneself. In the case of failure - experiencing the mistakes made in a more intensive way. Huge dose of self-criticism.
2. Other-orientation - making unrealistic demands on others, rewarding them only when the expectations are met. Frequently being critical and overbearing.
3. Social conditioning - the belief that others demand perfection from us. The belief that it is the only way to gain acceptance from the environment. Frequent avoidance of establishing new relationships.

EAP WEBINARS

1. Log on to our portal: www.myeap24.pl
2. Browse through our upcoming webinars and sign up
Inspire yourself to change for good



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We recommend a great lecture on perfectionism from the SWPS University – it is available here [link](#).

Is it possible to be a healthy perfectionist?

The difference between a 'healthy' and an 'unhealthy' perfectionist is quite significant. The most important of their features are:

Healthy perfectionist	Unhealthy perfectionist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has realistic approach • Pursues a feasible goal • Believes in his/her own success • Focuses on the process • Wants to do the best they can • Life is a challenge for them • Can accept criticism • Learns from mistakes • Values him-/herself for who they are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He/she is an idealist • Wants to achieve the impossible • Fears failure • Focuses on the subject matter/objective • Must be the best • Life is a threat for them • Cannot accept criticism • Strongly relives his/her own mistakes • Their self-esteem is based on achievements

The effects of negative perfectionism

Perfectionism may initially have the intended effect, but over time the consequences will become negative. Some of them include:

- Reduced productivity,
- Procrastination, or putting off tasks for later,
- Short-sightedness – lack of ability to see a project as a bigger whole,
- Stagnation – not taking action for fear of failure,
- Worse health and mood – a constant lack of contentment can lead to serious consequences,
- Problems with social relations.

How to deal with perfectionism?

- Set priorities and define areas where you can lower your expectations,
- Pay attention to the costs/consequences of perfectionism,
- Try to ditch the "100% or nothing" attitude,
- Gradually learn to respect and love yourself,
- Celebrate every progress, success and failure – try to feel gratitude in every moment,
- Learn to delegate tasks to others,
- Treat your ideals as guidelines and not necessities,
- Try to move towards a healthy perfectionism,
- Value your relationships with others!

Perfectionism can effectively make life difficult and lead to problems such as anxiety disorders, depression, social phobia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, sleep and eating disorders. This is why it is so important to deal effectively with the compulsion to be perfect. Imperfection is much healthier for your body and mind!

Don't wait, call now! If you observe anxiety in yourself, talk to a specialist. Your loved ones can also benefit from advice from our specialists. We are here to support you!