

Perfectionism: what is it, how to reduce?

Perfectionism has nothing to do with chasing perfection. After all, you know that it is impossible. The real reason lies much deeper: perfectionism was the **ultimate solution to deal with bad emotions** in your youth. Not only that you feel bad because of your perfectionism, it also has a real impact on your daily life, work performance, your relationships and even your health can suffer from your drive for perfection!

Possible consequences of perfectionism

- **Procrastination**: afraid to start, you eventually finish your projects ... but perhaps inefficiently
- **Missed opportunities**: all the effort you put into perfecting implies that you have less time for other (*more exciting*) things
- **Stress**: forces you to try even harder
- **Happiness**: a little voice in your head constantly tells you 'good is not good enough', which makes you want to be 'in control', you don't feel satisfied, worry about what could be better, you get into stress mode, which fuels your fear again!



The '**Perfectionism Paradox**': you know that you will never achieve perfection ... yet you want to try, out of fear of ... (*please complete*). Perfectionistic behavior often has its origins in your childhood, and how you reacted to it. A bad situation triggered a need for perfection in you, in order to soothe a painful emotion. And it worked!

Practical tips to reduce your drive for Perfectionism

1. Set **achievable, positive goals**: despite putting a lot of time and energy into it, you always end up dissatisfied. Adjust your expectations to a '*reasonable*' level
2. Divide your end **goal into smaller steps**: by focusing more on the process and achievable intermediate steps, you will experience more ease and pleasure. Be grateful and happy for the progress, so that your self-confidence and self-esteem increase step by step
3. **Dare to fail**: by keeping everything under control you try to prevent '**mistakes**'. Know that failures ultimately make you stronger and keep faith in the end result
4. Be **less critical** for yourself: go for '*good is good enough*'. Perfection is an illusion!

Reduce your Fears with Fear-Setting

This method will help you gain insight into your greatest fears and come up with solutions:

- Ask yourself: - "*What is the worst that can happen if I don't do what this 'perfectly'?*"
- Ask yourself: *what exactly am I afraid of?*
- You will soon notice that those doomsday scenarios and your fears were unfounded. Those situations don't happen at all.

The deeper you delve into the fears behind your perfectionism, the less they become for you. This way you can let go your fears more easily and that reduces your urge for perfection.

As a **Leader**, you know very well: perfection is super boring!