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## It's Okay Not To Be Perfect!

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Perfectionism might sound like a great thing to have; however for perfectionists, life can be an endless struggle to 'always do better' and 'always be better', for yourself and potentially for those around you. This can mean that life has a general sense of unhappiness, and in some cases, it can even lead to anxiety and/or depression. Why? Because although you might be striving for success, you're often focused on not failing – your energy is focused on the negative.

So, what actually defines 'perfection'? Well, perfection is an impossible reality, it is impossible to define, and it is impossible to achieve, because even if whatever we are focusing on is great ... it will never be enough, it will never be **perfect**. Just ask an artist, a sports player, or even a parent who has perfectionism.

And for those who have perfectionism, but you're reading this and you don't think it's you ... maybe your perfectionism is sneakily hiding as procrastination. Perfectionists often procrastinate, because if you fear not doing something perfectly, then your mind might tell you that it is best not to start something and fail, so don't start at all.

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And like with anything, there are scales of perfectionism. For some people, it might show up every now and then and not cause too much distress (for themselves or others around them). For others, it might infiltrate their everyday life and make studies, work, and/or socialising extremely stressful, and in some cases, it might make the life of those around them very stressful too.

If you think you have some perfectionistic behaviours, or those close to you believe you're a perfectionist, don't despair, you can take action to make your life less stressful (and maybe those around you will be happier too).

1. **Strive for excellence** : now knowing that perfection is unattainable, keep reminding yourself that you're striving for 'excellence'. When you want to procrastinate, or when you're spending too much time on something to make it perfect, think about what 'excellence' would look like, and focus on this.
2. **Focus on the part of you that is 'good enough'** : make a list of the things that you like about yourself (i.e., personal qualities, relationships with others, meaningful experiences that you've had, etc). If you can't find anything to add to your list, ask someone else that you trust to help you start your list.

3. **Pay attention when your mind starts telling you that it's 'all or nothing'** : remind yourself that you don't need to be the best in everything in order for others to love and/or respect you.
4. **Watch your criticism of others** : treat others with patience and compassion, and maybe this will help you to be less critical of yourself, and reduce your fear of being criticised by others.
5. **Treat yourself with compassion** : stop being so hard on yourself, and give yourself a break now and again. No-one is perfect ... being imperfect is part of the human experience.
6. **Spend time with others that value friendship, family and community** : try to avoid those who are caught up in the pursuit of status, money and everything material.

If you think you might need some help with perfectionism, then please feel free to contact us on 0488 954 195, [amanda@awakenpsychology.com.au](mailto:amanda@awakenpsychology.com.au) or [click here](#)

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