

Perfection: an ideal to aspire to?

Do you often set high or even unattainable goals for yourself? Do you have trouble delegating? Are you constantly stressed? These attitudes reflect a propensity for perfectionism, a personality trait of little concern at first glance because it enables some people to excel. However, when the need for perfection becomes too invasive, it can become unhealthy and be very detrimental to your health and the people around you. If this describes you, do not delay! Questioning yourself is not a shortcoming, but a strength.

What is perfectionism?

Perfectionism is not a quest for excellence, but rather a quest for the unattainable. It manifests itself differently from one person to another and can affect things like work, relationships with others and even simple daily tasks. It involves the need to:

- Be or seem perfect;
- Be persistent, thorough and organized;
- Maintain unrealistic standards;
- Be under constant stress to achieve perfection.

The flip side of the coin

Perfectionism is not a disorder in and of itself; it is a vulnerability factor that can result in various problems when it becomes "unhealthy", meaning that a person is unable to adjust the performance criteria he imposes on himself based on the time allotted to him or on what is going on in his life. He will usually have trouble dealing with his stress, which makes him vulnerable to various emotional, physical and relationship problems including depression, eating disorders, chronic pain syndrome, marital conflict and even suicide.

Are you a perfectionist?

Some signs you should look out for:

- You cannot stop thinking about a mistake you made;
- You are very competitive and cannot tolerate doing less well than others;
- You require perfection from those around you;
- You do not ask for help if you think the request might be perceived as a shortcoming or weakness;
- You fall behind from trying to do things too well;
- You always have doubts about your performance;

- You make it a point to correct people when they are wrong;
- You avoid doing things or postpone them for fear of failing;
- You notice mistakes everywhere;
- You elicit reactions from others because of this characteristic.

Do these statements describe you? If the answer is yes, try not to be too hard on yourself! You should only want to find out more if all or most of these personality traits define you and are becoming invasive.

Conclusion

If you notice any similarity with your current situation and what is listed above, do not hesitate to call us. The Health *InSight* support services offer you additional support and active listening. Our professionals can help you relax your own rules in order to make them more realistic, set achievable goals and strike a balance between your desire to succeed and the notion of pleasure on a daily basis.

Remember that asking for help is not a weakness, but a form of courage.

Note: To make the text easier to read, the masculine form is also used to designate the feminine.