



“Perfectionism”

When introduced to the possibility that a client may have perfectionistic tendencies the first response is often “Not me! You should see my car!” Having traits of a perfectionist does not mean that all aspects of your life are in perfect order. Rather, it is a set of self-defeating thoughts and patterns that push you to try and reach unrealistic goals. This is quite contrary to being a high achiever or goal oriented. The perfectionist may suffer from general health issues, procrastination and lack of creativity, not to mention a lack of joy or peace.

Perfectionists have a critical eye, usually focused more on themselves than others. Spotting mistakes, homing in on them exclusively and a judgmental approach are all character traits that battle within. High achievers are often drawn to or pulled towards their goal, where the perfectionist is pushed by the fear of not reaching the goal. This creates a lot of stress as well as feelings of being out of control or a victim of deadlines. The unrealistic expectations can contribute to depression, chronic dissatisfaction, defensiveness and low self-esteem. Often defensive when confronted, perfectionistic people feel the need to hide, protect and defend their imperfections.

What drives this behavior? The root of this unbalanced perspective is an attempt to avoid rejection, criticism and failure. Until an understanding of one's true sense of worth and value is discovered, this trap is perpetuated. Typically, we don't want to give up a familiar pattern without first envisioning a better option. Wisdom and truth tells us that our worth lies in our very essence; that we were created in the image of God, and that this is regardless of our productivity and performance. It is the Ego (Edging God Out) that is never content, screaming that our value is based on performance and others opinions.

The greatest gift you can give yourself is the gift of acceptance of your imperfections, embracing them as the unique essence of who you are. Shifting away from these rigid patterns involves an awareness of your emotional state, even if it is unpleasant. By relaxing into the present moment, you will be able to make a choice rather than continue with the same familiar pattern. Once surrendered to this truth you will become empowered to be whole and at peace-paradoxically creating more effectiveness. Being able to laugh at yourself and reach this state of inner peace is a true blessing-after all, you are the only person you are with 100% of the time!

“Perfectionism becomes a badge of honor with you playing the art of the suffering hero” David Burns



Do you have these thoughts?

“This meeting will either be great or a disaster”

“If they knew my flaws, they wouldn't care for me”

“I know he is staring right at my crooked nose!”

“If I don't do it, it won't get done”

“I am going to explode from so much pressure and stress”

“I am going to fail that test since I didn't stay up all night”

“I should have done better”

“All that hard work and I feel no satisfaction”

“I don't deserve that criticism from my boss-he has no idea the sacrifices I make”