

OVERCOMING PERFECTIONISM

QUIZ

You might want to complete the following quiz to help find out the areas in which behaviours associated with perfectionism are a problem for you. You can also use some of these questions as the basis for your survey (see Section 7.3) if they are relevant.

Answer the following questions using this scale:

1=never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4=very often, 5=always

Home

1. How often do you spend more than five minutes making the bed?
2. How often do you spend more than twenty minutes cleaning the kitchen?
3. How often do you clean behind the fridge?
4. How often do you vacuum the bedrooms?
5. How often do you clean the windows upstairs?
6. How often do you iron underwear?
7. How often do your standards interfere with the completion of household chores?
8. How often do you thoroughly clean the oven, including the racks?
9. How often do you check the cleanliness of your house over and over again?

GETTING STARTED: IDENTIFYING PROBLEM AREAS

Work

10. How often do you put off doing work because you're afraid of failing/not doing it right?
11. How often do you find it difficult to start a task because you're afraid of failing or not doing it right?
12. How often do you check your work for mistakes?
13. How often do you procrastinate because you know that you're overly thorough and the task will take a long time?
14. How often do you find it difficult to complete tasks because of your standards?
15. How often do you work overtime to complete a task to make sure it is right?
16. How often do your standards interfere with the completion of a task?

Social

17. How often do you ruminate about past social interactions?
18. How often do you arrange social meetings?
19. How often do you avoid social interactions?
20. How often do you check for reassurance from your friends?
21. How often do you put off social interactions by doing other tasks?
22. How often do you socialise with groups larger than two people?

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Hobbies

23. How often do you participate in your hobbies?
24. How often do you participate in group activities?
25. How often do you participate in individual hobbies?
26. How often do you check your achievement in a hobby?
27. How often do you avoid participating in a hobby?
28. How often do you ruminate about your performance in a hobby?
29. How often do your standards interfere with your achievement in a hobby?

Appearance

30. How often do you wash?
31. How often do you wash your hair?
32. How often do you brush your teeth?
33. How often do you go out without your make-up or hair done?
34. How often do you clean your ears?
35. How often do you cut/file your nails?
36. How often do you look in a mirror?
37. How often do you check your appearance?

Other questions

38. How important is the completion of a task to you?
39. What sort of checks do you make on a day-to-day basis?

GETTING STARTED: IDENTIFYING PROBLEM AREAS

40. What influence do the standards you set yourself have on the tasks that you undertake?
41. Are there any other specific perfectionist behaviours that you carry out?

Now you have completed the monitoring suggested in this section, you are likely to have a much better understanding of how your perfectionism works. This includes the areas of your life affected by perfectionism and the particular behaviours and negative feelings that your perfectionism causes. This understanding will help you to use the techniques outlined in the following sections – the compartments of your toolkit – including testing out your perfectionist predictions and changing your unhelpful thinking.

TAKE-HOME MESSAGE

- Self-monitoring is important as it helps you to understand your perfectionism and become more objective about it.
- Self-monitoring can include identifying areas of perfectionism and monitoring perfectionism thoughts, emotions and behaviour (avoidance, procrastination, performance checking, counter-productive behaviour).