

WORKSHEET 5.1: QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU DRAW YOUR DIAGRAM OF WHAT IS KEEPING YOUR PERFECTIONISM GOING

Q1. Is how you think about yourself, feel about yourself or judge yourself dependent on achievement or striving? Is it too dependent? Would you feel bad about yourself *as a person* if you did not achieve or strive to achieve high standards? If so, this is likely to be a factor in keeping your perfectionism going, and it can be put at the top of the diagram.

Q2. Do you have excessively high standards? If so, this needs to be in the diagram, and as these demanding standards are likely to stem from how you judge yourself on the basis of striving and achievement, it might go underneath the first point above, connected by a downward arrow.

Q3. Do you have rules to help you achieve your high standards? If so, list some of the most obvious ones and put those into the diagram below 'high standards'.

Q4. Does 'all or nothing thinking' mean that you feel you often don't meet your standards and that you perceive yourself as a failure as a result? If so, put this into the diagram with a recent example.

Q5. Do you react to the perceived failure with self-criticism? If so, this should be in the diagram too, again with examples.

Q6. Put examples of 'counterproductive' behaviour such as avoidance, procrastination, repeated checking, being overly detailed or overly thorough, and multi-tasking into your diagram and think about what leads to these. Is it failure to meet your standards? Is it self-criticism? Is it anxiety, low mood or stress? Put in the answers you come up with.

Q7. Think about how anxiety, low mood and stress contribute to the cycle of perfectionism. Add these to the diagram.

Q8. If you do perceive that you sometimes meet your standards, put this in the diagram (as in Figure 3.1), with a recent example. Think about how you react to such success, how long those feelings last and whether you discount your successes. All these features should be in your diagram.