

Perfectionism at a Glance

1. Check the statements that apply to your child.
2. Check those that apply to your partner (spouse or other family adult).
3. Check those that apply to you.

How a Perfectionist Acts

	YOUR CHILD	YOUR PARTNER	YOU
Overcommits himself			
Rarely delegates work to others			
Has a hard time making choices			
Always has to be in control			
Competes fiercely			
Arrives late because one more thing had to be done			
Never arrives late			
Always does last-minute cramming			
Gets carried away with the details			
Never seems satisfied with his work			
Constantly busies himself with something or other			
Frequently criticizes others			
Refuses to hear criticism of himself			
Pays more attention to negative than positive comments			
Checks up on other people's work			
Calls himself "stupid" when he does something imperfectly			
Procrastinates			

What a Perfectionist Thinks

	YOUR CHILD	YOUR PARTNER	YOU
If I can't do it perfectly, what's the point?			
I should excel at everything I do.			
I always have to stay ahead of others.			
I should finish a job before doing anything else.			

continued →

Perfectionism at a Glance continued

	YOUR CHILD	YOUR PARTNER	YOU
Every detail of a job should be perfect.			
Things should be done right the first time.			
There is only one right way to do things.			
I'm a wonderful person if I do well; I'm a lousy person if I do poorly.			
I'm never good enough.			
I'm stupid.			
I can't do anything right.			
I'm unlikable.			
I'd better not make a mistake here or people will think I'm not very . . . [smart, good, capable].			
If I goof up, something's wrong with me.			
People shouldn't criticize me.			
Everything should be clearly black or white. Grays are a sign of confused thinking.			

How a Perfectionist Feels

	YOUR CHILD	YOUR PARTNER	YOU
Deeply embarrassed about mistakes she makes			
Disgusted or angry with herself when she is criticized			
Anxious when stating her opinion to others			
Extremely worried about details			
Angry if her routine is interrupted			
Nervous when things around her are messy			
Fearful or anxious a lot of the time			
Exhausted and unable to relax			
Plagued by self-hatred			
Afraid of appearing stupid			
Afraid of appearing incompetent			
Afraid of being rejected			
Ashamed of having fears			
Discouraged			
Guilty about letting others down			

From *Moving Past Perfect: How Perfectionism May Be Holding Back Your Kids (and You!) and What You Can Do About It* by Thomas S. Greenspon, Ph.D., copyright © 2012, 2002. Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN; 800-735-7323; www.freespirit.com. Used with permission. This page may be reproduced for individual, classroom, or small group work only. For other uses, contact www.freespirit.com/company/permissions.cfm.