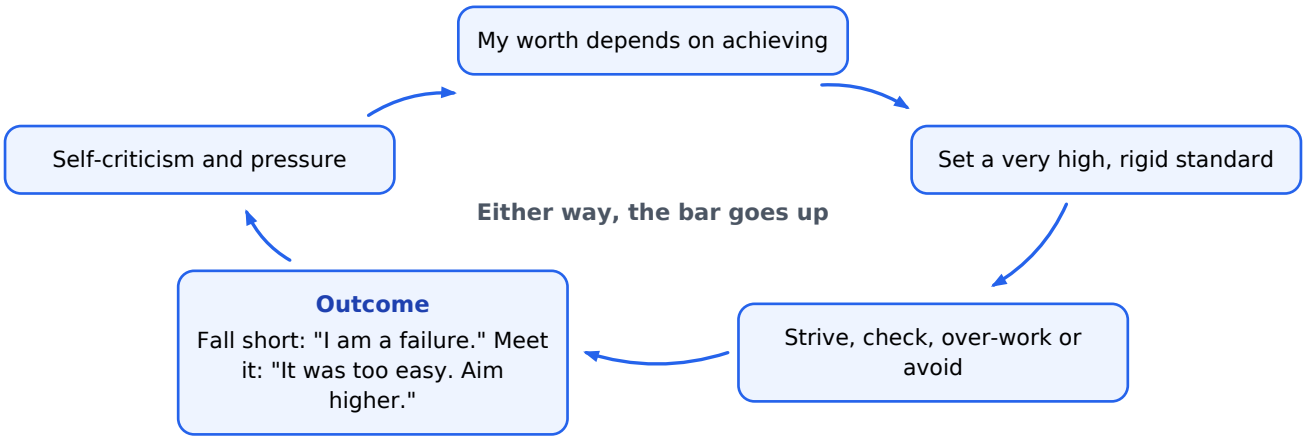
Understanding perfectionism

When high standards start to do more harm than good.

Wanting to do things well is healthy. Perfectionism is different. It means setting standards that are relentlessly high, judging your worth by whether you meet them, and carrying on even when it is doing you harm.



How it shows up

- [ ] All-or-nothing thinking: perfect or worthless
- [ ] Spending far too long on tasks
- [ ] Checking, redoing, tweaking
- [ ] Putting things off for fear of not doing them well enough
- [ ] Finding it hard to delegate
- [ ] Rarely feeling satisfied, even with success
- [ ] Harsh self-criticism over small errors
- [ ] Avoiding things I might not excel at
- [ ] Difficulty resting without guilt

What it costs

Exhaustion, anxiety, low mood, strained relationships, missed deadlines, and a life with very little room for enjoyment. Often, in the end, worse work too.

What change looks like

You do not have to stop caring about quality. The aim is:

1. **Flexible standards.** Different tasks deserve different levels of effort.
2. **Worth that does not depend on results.** You are more than what you produce.
3. **Experiments.** Trying "good enough" and finding out what really happens.
4. **A kinder response to mistakes.** A mistake shows you what to change. It is not a verdict on you.

> **A useful question**
> "What would good enough look like here, and what would I do with the time I saved?"

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The costs and benefits of my high standards

What perfectionism gives you, and what it takes.

Name _____ Date _____

Perfectionism has benefits, which is why it is hard to give up. An honest look at both sides helps you decide what is worth changing. Tick what fits and add anything else.

What my high standards give me

- ☐ Good results
- ☐ A sense of control
- ☐ Pride in my work
- ☐ Praise or respect
- ☐ Safe from criticism
- ☐ Being relied on

What they cost me

- ☐ Time
- ☐ Sleep
- ☐ Enjoyment
- ☐ Peace of mind
- ☐ Energy
- ☐ Health
- ☐ Time with people

Area of life	Effect of my perfectionism
Work or study	
Relationships and family	
Health and rest	
Hobbies and enjoyment	
How I feel about myself	

What am I afraid would happen if I eased off?

Is that definitely true? How could I find out?

What I would like to be different

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