

SOLUTIONS TO PERFECTIONISM*



<p>Write Down the Pros & Cons of Living & Thinking Like a Perfectionist.</p>	<p>Using Appendices F – F3, & the list you have created, which side of the spectrum of perfectionism are you in & which side is more beneficial to your personal health & better relationships?</p>
<p>Keep A Journal</p>	<p>Write down your common thoughts and feelings, and ask yourself, “Are these thoughts and feelings real or imagined?” This will help identify self-defeating thoughts & feelings. We don’t have to be victims of our thoughts & feelings, but we do have to work hard to resist them and make changes in thought patterns (see Proverbs 23:7; Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 10:5-6).</p>
<p>Recognize All or Nothing Thinking (a.k.a. Black & White Thinking)</p>	<p><u>Examples of all or nothing thinking:</u> “I am a straight A student, and I received a B on the exam; therefore, I am a failure.” “If I don’t achieve my goals perfectly, others will reject me and I am unworthy to be loved.” “If I don’t win this game, others will think I am a loser.” Absolutes do not exist this side of eternity, and those who live and think like this will always be depressed.</p>
<p>Change Your Thought Patterns</p>	<p><u>Negative Thought Pattern:</u> “Why can’t he put the dishes in the dishwasher the way it should be done?”</p> <p><u>Positive Thought Pattern:</u> “While I believe my way is better, there are many different ways the dishwasher can be loaded. I can overlook this and it’s not worth damaging the relationship.” (see Romans 12:1-2)</p>
<p>Change Your Behavior</p>	<p>Usually, when people read (Romans 12:1-2), they believe they must change their behavior, but this is not true. Scripture tells us that we must first change our mind by practice of the spiritual disciplines, and then our behavior will change, and it is God who changes us, we are not capable of changing ourselves (Philippians 1:6).</p>
<p>Strive for Excellence, Not Perfection</p>	<p><u>Excellence:</u> We do the best we can. We have heard the term, “Failure is not an option.” This is not true. Failure is an option, because we learn from our mistakes and improve.</p> <p><u>Perfection:</u> This will not be achieved this side of eternity. There is only One who is perfect: Jesus Christ. We will only be perfect when we come face to face with Him in eternity, but in the meantime, we are a work in progress in that we are gradually transitioning from imperfect to perfect. (see Philippians 1:6).</p>

*Richard Winter. *Perfecting Ourselves to Death: The Pursuit of Excellence & The Perils of Perfectionism*. IVP Press. Downers Grove, IL. 2005. (Pgs. 130-147). Martin M. Antony & Richard P. Swinson. *When Perfect Isn't Good Enough: Strategies for Coping with Perfectionism*. New Harbinger Publications. Oakland, CA. 2009. (Pgs.81-172). David D. Burns M.D. *Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy*. HarperCollins. New York, N.Y. 1980. (Pgs. 32-33, 42).