

A Practical Guide to Managing
« NEVER GOOD ENOUGH »

2018
LEGACY
BOOK AWARD
WINNER

PERFECTIONISM

LISA VAN GEMERT
M.Ed.T.

**Perfectionism:
A Practical Guide to Managing “Never Good Enough”**

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Praise for

**Perfectionism: A Practical Guide to
Managing
“Never Good Enough”**

Finally, a book on perfectionism that delivers on its promise of managing the "never good enough" lives of those perfectionists we love, live with and teach. Lisa Van Gemert's highly-readable and engaging book marries theory and practice with exquisite clarity, providing sound advice to educators and parents who are dealing with perfectionism in themselves or others. Her writing style is so comfortable that, as you read her book, you will feel that you are sitting across from Lisa having an important and enjoyable conversation. Filled with allusions to Greek myths, Winnie the Pooh, psychological research and Leonard Cohen song lyrics, Perfectionism: A practical guide to managing 'never good enough, does what it set out to do: engages readers in a thoughtful, fun and important discussion of a topic that impacts the lives of many children and adults.

~ James R. Delisle, Ph.D., Distinguished Professor of Education (Retired), Kent State University. Co-author of *When Gifted Kids Don't Have All the Answers* and 19 other books.

Packed with practical ideas parents and teachers can readily implement to help those struggling with perfectionism, this book is the PERFECT resource to help adults teach and model happy imperfection.

~ Ed Amend, Psy.D., Clinical psychologist and former Board member, Supporting Emotional Needs of Gifted

Who better to write a book about perfectionism than a recovering perfectionist? Lisa Van Gemert is just that person. She offers invaluable new insights on perfectionism as a tendency and not a label which enables smart strategies for those debilitated by its multi-faceted nature and real-life consequences. It is a must-read for parents and teachers struggling to understand the young perfectionists in their lives.

~ Lisa Conrad, Owner, Gifted Parenting Support, and Moderator of Global #gtchat Powered by TAGT on Twitter.

Lisa Van Gemert is your guide out of Perfectionland! She intimately knows the challenges of perfectionism and gives inspiration and a roadmap for a life filled with joy, while still pursuing your personal best. The stories and strategies in these pages can literally transform lives and allow those you care about to accept who they are and live fully while embracing life's journey.

~ Dan Peters, Ph.D.

Clinical Psychologist and co-founder of Summit Center, and author of *Make Your Worrier a Warrior: A Guide to Conquering Your Child's Fears* and related books.

Van Gemert draws on diverse theories and narratives and offers refreshing insight to our understanding perfectionism. The strategies and models for managing perfectionism in this book could be life-changing.

~ Todd Kettler, Ph.D., College of Education. University of North Texas

This book was a pleasure to read. The examples Lisa used all felt like people I know. Lisa Van Gemert's examples felt very familiar, which was a tremendous comfort. I wish I had known these strategies in raising my own highly capable children. Her suggestions make good sense for busy parents and teachers who might find that some of the ideas would be useful for themselves.

I have already begun using ideas from this book and have recommended it to others. This will be a truly useful addition to my classroom library. Full of commonsense advice for parents and teachers, and a good helping of humor, the logical strategies will be easy to try at home and at school. It reads like a conversation with a wise friend who understands how perfectionists struggle and knows how to translate ideas into action.

~ Jane Hesslein, M.A., Humanities teacher, Seattle Country Day School and former Board member,
Supporting Emotional Needs of Gifted

Table of Contents

Introduction. A Native of Perfectionland	13
Deciding to Write this Book	
About This Book	
Chapter 1. A New Paradigm for Perfectionism	21
A Changing Paradigm of Perfectionism	
Connection to Underachievement	
Types of Perfectionism	
<i>Academic Overachiever</i>	
<i>Aggravated Accuracy Assessor</i>	
<i>Risk Evaders</i>	
<i>Controlling Image Manager</i>	
<i>Procrastinating Perfectionists</i>	
Perfectionism Isn't Always What It Seems	
Perfectionism as an Aspect of Personality	
Key Ideas	
Action Steps	
Chapter 2. The Dramatic Downside of Perfectionism	37
Negative Thinking	
Stress	
Workaholism	
Decreased Social Acceptance	
Risk Avoidance	
Lack of Motivation	
Anxiety	
The Silver Lining	
Is the Child in Flow?	
Where Are the Standards Coming From?	
Can the Child Relax?	
Mastery Orientation	
The Desired Answer	
Can You Measure Perfectionism?	
The Procrastination Habit	
Key Ideas	
Action Steps	
Chapter 3. Excellent Is Good Enough	59
The Pursuit of Excellence	
Parent Reactions and Setting Goals	
Creating Climates of Perfectionism	
The Level Strategy	
The Timing Strategy	
The Importance of Reflection	
Key Ideas	
Action Steps	

Chapter 4. Goals, the Journey, and Everything In Between	75
Goal Setting	
The Importance of a Cost-Benefit Analysis	
Tiny Habits	
The Role of Mental Framework	
The Role of Mindset	
The Role of Grit	
Goal Disengagement	
Key Ideas	
Action Steps	
Chapter 5. Importance of Developing Effective Self-Concept	97
The Poker Chip Metaphor	
Measuring Self-Esteem	
Societal Pressure	
Five Keys to Building Self-Concept	
A Sense of Inherent Self-Worth	
Self-Awareness	
Connection	
Understanding Practice and Effort	
Valuing Intuition	
Adding It All Up	
Key Ideas	
Action Steps	
Chapter 6. Living in the Moment Imperfectly	119
Don't Postpone Joy	
Shifting Our Motivation Strategy	
Waking Up from the Homework Nightmare	
The Importance of Rationale	
The Power of Other	
Mind in Boat	
Mindfulness Exercises	
Belly breathing	
Counting the breaths	
Stimulating breath	
Expansive breath	
Power breathing	
Countdown in the sand	
Under the waves	
Muscle tension release	
Alice in Repeatland	
Avoid Eeyore Thinking	
Just Do It	
Key Ideas	
Action Steps	

Chapter 7. When Failure Is an Acceptable Option	141
Why Failure is Valuable	
The Power of a Ninety-Nine	
The Amish Mistake	
Providing Support in Dealing with Failure	
Practicing the Possibilities	
Barbara Clark’s Model	
The Fitts and Posner Model	
Key ideas	
Action Steps	
Chapter 8. Building Resilience	161
Begin with the Brain	
The Importance of Family Mealtimes	
Family Storytelling	
Lickerman’s Model	
Using Sternberg’s Model	
The Right Kind of Optimism	
The Skill Acquisition Timeline	
Getting Back Up	
Key ideas	
Action Steps	
Chapter 9. Parenting and Teaching the Perfectionist	181
Positive Priming	
Maintain Reasonable Schedules	
Accept that Gifted Children Might Not Like School	
Facilitate Group Work Effectively	
Implement Appreciative Inquiry	
Support Executive Functioning Skills	
Avoid Over-Advocacy	
Avoid Unhealthy Comparisons	
Key Ideas	
Action Steps	
Chapter 10. Coping Strategies	205
Maladaptive Strategies	
Model Dealing with Stress	
Encourage Social Support	
Cultivate and Value Work	
Mental Contrasting	
Positive Reinterpretation and Reassurance of Worth	
Making Sure We Are Choosing It	
What We Can Learn from Economists	
The Ultimate Goal	
Key Ideas	
Action Steps	

Chapter 1

A New Paradigm for Perfectionism

Perfectionism is not a quest for the best. It is a pursuit of the worst in ourselves, the part that tells us that nothing we do will ever be good enough—that we should try again. - Julia Cameron

What is the worst punishment you can imagine? In Greek mythology, the story of Sisyphus illustrates what the gods thought was ultimate torment. Sisyphus was the king of Corinth, and by all accounts, he was not a great guy. His list of sins and misdeeds could fill its own book, and when he offended both Zeus and Hades, he was condemned to an eternal punishment. Sent to Tartarus, the lowest region of the Underworld, Sisyphus was required to roll a massive boulder to the top of a steep hill. The problem was that as Sisyphus neared the top of the mountain, the rock would roll back down again. Sisyphus would then have to begin to push it to the top once more, only to see it roll back down yet one more time. To the Greeks, doing the same fruitless labor over and over was torment.

While very few people spend their days literally rolling boulders to the tops of mountains only to watch them roll back down, many people do this figuratively. We call that fruitless effort *perfectionism*. The truth is that even if you want to be perfect, you can't be. It's a cliché to say that nobody is perfect, and one of the things that makes perfectionism so damaging is that we like to tell our children "you can be anything you want to be," but we forget to mention that "perfect isn't one of the choices." You simply cannot be perfect, no matter how hard you try. And so kids or adults who are focused on trying to be perfect will almost always feel dissatisfaction, depression, and anxiety as they constantly seek something that's unattainable. They become the emotional equivalent of Sisyphus, always struggling, yet never satisfied.

Perfectionism is characterized as setting impossibly high standards and striving for flawlessness, combined with excessive self-criticism, an unhealthy concern for others' opinions of one's work, and overgeneralization of failure despite adverse consequences. Let's separate these parts out: setting impossibly high standards, *and* trying to be flawless, *and* being too hard on oneself, *and* being very concerned about what other people think, *and* typically thinking that failing at something is indicative of pervasive worthlessness, *and* it's hurting you.

When you break it apart like this, you can see that it takes several factors in order for perfectionism to be problematic. If you have high standards, but you don't care what other

people think and you're not too hard on yourself when you don't attain those standards, it's unlikely that perfectionism is causing real difficulty for you. Essentially, perfectionism boils down to unreasonable expectations of oneself combined with a lack of self-love. As one colleague said, "Perfectionism is like cholesterol; there's good cholesterol and bad cholesterol." There is nothing wrong with setting high standards; the problems arise when it causes you misery and interferes with your life.

A Changing Paradigm of Perfectionism

A common view of perfectionism is thinking of it as a dichotomy: you're either a perfectionist or you're not. This all-or-nothing view adds to the defeatism that often follows perfectionists around like a little grey cloud over their heads. In his book on perfectionism written especially for kids, psychologist Thomas Greenspon, explained:

Perfectionism might feel like something that is 'wrong with you' – like a disease you should get rid of, and once you do you'll be perfect. But easing the burden of perfectionism is not about getting rid of something bad. It's about learning to judge yourself less harshly and learning to find ways to feel acceptable.¹

It also lends itself to the idea that in order to avoid the negative consequences of perfectionism, you have to rid yourself of it completely. When you are unsuccessful in this, you get discouraged, throw up your hands, and say, "I can't help it! I'm just a perfectionist!"

I'd like to suggest a new way of thinking about perfectionism. I believe that perfectionism, like most things, is a continuum. Imagine in your mind the standard bell curve. In some areas of our lives, we will be to the left of the curve in our perfectionistic tendencies, sloppy or haphazard. In other areas, we may be much more meticulous, perhaps to the point that it's causing us problems. Very few people are all the way to the right of the perfectionism bell curve in every aspect of their lives. Rather, they move back and forth along the continuum, sometimes even changing the things about which they are perfectionistic.

Here's an example. Nine-year-old LeDarion, is remarkably perfectionistic in most areas of his life. At school, his pencils are all sharpened to within an inch of their lives; he won't turn in work until he believes it could be used as an example for years to come; and he struggles not to have a tantrum when he receives a grade less than 100%. His teacher has asked the counselor

to evaluate LeDarion's perfectionism because he feels like it's causing LeDarion to be anxious at school. Yet anyone seeing LeDarion's room at home would find it difficult to believe that his teacher's greatest worry about him is his paralyzing perfectionism. To call his bedroom a mess would be an understatement; he has no real standard or concern for it in the same way he cares about his assignments being perfect, or the need to maintain structure at school.

For kids like LeDarion, the unevenness of the perfectionism often confuses adults around them. If perfectionism is situational, then people not associated with that situation may not realize the extent of the problem. I see this often with homework when a child will try and try to get it perfect, working for hours at the kitchen table, frustration growing on the part of everyone in the household. The teacher, however, is unaware because the teacher never sees the child struggling in that situation.

For most things in life, the majority of us are in the middle of the bell curve, though we vary depending on the situation. We set a standard for ourselves in hygiene (our clothes are clean, we shower regularly), cleanliness (we take out trash, we vacuum), or professionalism (we show up to work or school on time, we meet deadlines). Very few people are equal opportunity perfectionists or perfectionistic in every single area of their life. This can make it hard to understand because the same kid who is neurotically perfectionistic about schoolwork may be, like LeDarion, the complete opposite in taking care of his bedroom or personal things at home.

This confusion can be even more striking in kids who have executive functioning issues. The same child who struggled for hours at the kitchen table may not turn the work in, finding the path from the backpack to the teacher's inbox an impossible abyss. Children who suffer from ADHD or other disorders are likely to show inconsistent standards and follow through in their behaviors, and often are perplexed and distraught as to why they can't be organized like others.

So the first of the two truths we're going to start with, as we embark on an exploration of perfectionism and how to manage it, is that you're never going to be perfect. This realization can create its own difficulties as we come to understand and accept that. Those of us who were expecting to find a cure have to accept that it may be a chronic condition for us—treatable, but not curable. Secondly, you're not necessarily going to possess the same level of perfectionism in all areas of your life. Just because your backpack looks like the bomb squad did a test explosion in it doesn't mean you aren't struggling with perfectionism. Because of this, I prefer not to label

people perfectionists, but rather to say that they have perfectionistic tendencies or that they strive for perfection.

Connection to Underachievement

Sometimes people who demonstrate perfectionism get so frustrated by their inability to be perfect that they go the complete opposite direction. I live in Texas, and it gets very hot in Texas in the summer. Trust me, the last place you want to be during the summer in Texas is in an attic. Unfortunately, one year we had to clean our attic during the summer in preparation for a new roof, and to psych ourselves up for the task, my husband and I watched an episode of the television show *Hoarders*. It was perfect motivational therapy for cleaning the attic or the garage, even in the middle of the summer. It made us want to throw away everything we own.

In the show, the characters discussed the origins of the person's perfectionism. They asked the woman, who was the hoarder, what she thought put her on the road that led toward hoarding. She replied, "Well, I was a perfectionist." My husband snorted in disbelief. How could someone whose house looked like that be a perfectionist? How could you go from being a perfectionist to being unable to walk across a room in your house? That's hard for most people to understand, yet I totally understood it.

Often if you're seeking perfectionism and you realize you can't get there (remember Sisyphus?), your frustration leads you toward the complete opposite side of the spectrum. Sometimes, kids struggling with perfectionism who find they cannot be perfect in school don't slide into the A minus or B range, but instead go into F mode, which can be particularly damaging. But it's important to understand that perfectionism can often be the root of some people's failures or look like they lack concern for their success. If we interpret this failure as laziness or rebellion, we may approach the student's underachievement in the entirely wrong way.

I'll be describing strategies for managing perfectionism later in the book, but it's important to understand the working theory behind them. My best friend is a counselor in private practice who specializes in counseling the gifted, and she said to me one time, "Your theory guides your intervention." When I asked her to elaborate, she said, "If you're a teacher and a student isn't doing her homework, and your theory is that she doesn't understand how to do it, your intervention and how you deal with that will be different from your intervention if your

theory is that she is lazy.” My theory is that people who lean toward perfectionism can grow to have a healthier relationship with it if they are encouraged to nudge themselves back towards the middle of the bell curve, rather than thinking in black and white terms of “I’m either a perfectionist or I’m not.” That theory will guide my suggested interventions.

Types of Perfectionism

Perfectionism comes in a few fabulous flavors, some more common than others. One discussion of different types of perfectionism is described in *Letting Go of Perfect* (Adelson & Wilson, 2009).ⁱⁱ The first face of perfectionism is the *Academic Overachiever*. These kids *have* to get 100% on every assignment, or the world is going to come to a grinding halt. If they earn a score of ninety-eight, they go into the teacher's room after school, walk up to the desk and demand, "Why did I get a ninety-eight?" This question is quickly followed by, "Do you give extra credit?" This is the most common kind of perfectionism that we see in the classroom. This kind of perfectionism can look like arrogance or over-developed competitiveness, making the child seem less likeable, rather than suffering.

A second type of perfectionist is the *Aggravated Accuracy Assessor*. These are the people who have in their minds the way the task should look in the ideal world, and they get frustrated when they can't drag and drop it from their minds to the paper in the way they imagined it. When I taught third grade, I would see these kids sometimes erase and erase and erase until they literally wore a hole in the paper. My eleventh-grade student, David, was so debilitated by this type of perfectionism that he was unable to pass the state-mandated English test. He had gone so far in this type of perfectionism that he couldn't write an essay without using Wite-Out[®] tape to cover up words and phrases he felt were unworthy. Because Wite-Out wasn't allowed during the test, he felt paralyzed, unable to move forward. Eventually, we had to get him an accommodation to use Wite-Out.

This type of perfectionism is not limited to children. Adults sometimes repeat tasks over and over and over again to the point where the tasks don't get done at all. I call it *Pinterest Perfectionism*, named for the social media channel that can create unreasonable expectations if we set it as a standard. Pinterest shows us a finished product resulting from hours (even days or weeks) spent on a single task, and then perfectly photographed. An individual struggling with Pinterest Perfectionism thinks he or she should do *everything* to the level that the Pinterest

person did this *one thing*, and should be able to do it on the first try. Social media isn't the only problem, though. We go to parties or school events and see everyone else with clean, compliant children, thinking of the struggle we had just to get out the door, our own children wolfing down peanut butter and jelly sandwiches in the car on the way. Those with Pinterest Perfectionism compare their everyday normal to others' perceived perfection without considering the work or struggle they endured. If our efforts aren't as perfect, we feel we have failed.

This can be problematic in the workplace and even lead to job loss. It can create unhealthy levels of competition, as we believe we must consistently do better than what has been done by others. We feel threatened by others' success, which makes us less of a team player.

Risk Evaders, as described by Adelson and Wilson, are afraid to take a risk and give up if they don't get it right the first time. This is particularly damaging because risk taking is necessary for growth. If they don't take risks, by trying things that don't come easily to them, they will never grow. For gifted kids this often is a problem because so many things do come easily to them. At school, these kids stick to tasks they know they can do well, but do not expand their skill set because virtually every assignment offers an option that doesn't require extension beyond their current level of mastery. To grow, there must be risk to try new things and experience challenges.

Risk evasion extends beyond the walls of the school. It can happen in sports, in fine arts, and can creep into areas that don't seem like achievement domains, such trying a new book author or genre of books. Ten-year-old Emily was devoted to the *Redwall* series and refused to explore another series, preferring to read books she knew rather than embark on the unknown. "Emily," I suggested, "if you like *Redwall*, I think you may like the *Chronicles of Prydain* series as well. Have you tried those?"

"No, but I'll go read about them and decide," she answered. Her elaborate ritual for deciding to read a new book included reading every review on Amazon and Goodreads, even if there were hundreds of them, and then mastering the names and relationships among the characters. Then, and only then, would she read the book. "I want to be able to answer questions if someone sees me with the book," she explained. Her parents saw her as a budding literary critic, but I saw her as a risk evader, determined to be a master, never an apprentice.

Another kind of perfectionist, the *Controlling Image Manager*, is particularly concerned with the persona that they've created for themselves. They think, "This is who I want people to

believe that I am,” and often at the core of that self-image is the idea of being a bright, talented, gifted individual. This type is intricately interwoven with Impostor Syndrome, the fear or feeling that if you cannot do everything perfectly, then you’re not really gifted and someone eventually will find you out. You will be revealed as powerless and fraudulent like the Wizard of Oz or the Emperor with no clothes.

Controlling Image Managers often worry others will perceive them as less than smart academically, but it can be a problem in other domains as well. Those who are in fine arts may have an internal dialogue that says, “It is crucial that people see me as a talented actor (or musician or painter).” The drive to maintain their image is so important that some Controlling Image Managers pretend they don't want something, even if they do, in order to preserve the persona. They'll say, "Well, I don't even want to try out for the school play. I could be the lead if I tried out, but I don't even want to try out." In actuality, they deeply would like to be in the play, but they're worried that they're not going to get the lead. If they don't get the lead, but rather some supporting role, people's view of them might change. They worry that *everybody* will be sitting in the audience saying, "How come he's not the lead this time? I think he was the lead last time. I guess he's not as good as he thought. I guess he's not good at all." In that way, the self-talk of the Controlling Image Manager goes down a rabbit hole of persona implosion that has the same effect as risk evasion—the loss of opportunity. The difference between the two types is the audience. Risk Evaders suffer from a fear-based concern for their view of themselves, while Controlling Image Managers struggle with a more existential worry about others' view of them and their own innate worthiness.

Next are the *Procrastinating Perfectionists* who have a complicated relationship with some fairly simple math. They think that a zero you earned when you didn't turn in the work is better than an eighty you earned when you did turn in the work. Why? Because with the zero there's always a possibility that *if* they had turned it in, they would have gotten a one hundred, whereas with the eighty that possibility is gone forever. An eighty is a B, in fact it's almost a C, and so that's *horrible*. The Procrastinating Perfectionist thinks, not necessarily at the top of consciousness, “It's better to get the zero and keep in my mind the idea that I maybe could have had a high grade; I would have gotten a hundred if I had turned it in. I could have had it if I had tried.”

Procrastinating perfectionism is a common reason that gifted kids' performance in school often doesn't match their ability. Teachers end up with a grade book that looks like Swiss cheese. The row of grades will be: one hundred, one hundred, one hundred, zero, zero, zero, one hundred, one hundred, zero, zero, zero, zero. It is difficult for the adults around the student to understand what is going on. It boils down to an inability to complete the task in the way that you feel like you could or should, and this gets compounded with habits of procrastination.

In classrooms, this type of perfectionism is the kind that often most confuses us. We see kids with tremendous ability, yet their grades do not accurately represent that ability. One student, Rochelle, completely confused her teacher, Mr. Waterston, when she didn't turn in a big project on an Asian country. What confused him was that Rochelle had been so passionate about the project. She had selected her country, South Korea, and had talked with him several times over the course of the project about her plans. Her excitement seemed genuine, so he was completely surprised when she turned nothing in the day the projects were due.

He asked to speak with her after class, and she just shrugged in response to his question about why she hadn't turned in the work.

Mr. Waterston called Rochelle's parents, who expressed equal confusion. They had taken her to buy supplies for the project, and were shocked she didn't turn it in. Her father's finding her shredded poster board in the recycling bin finally led to a tearful explanation; she was so frustrated with her inability to make a project that matched in execution her passion for the topic that she felt unworthy of creating anything. She felt she would be letting down the entire nation of South Korea if she turned in a second-rate project. Mr. Waterston's assurances meant nothing to her, and Rochelle could not be persuaded to turn the project in late, even for full credit. The situation sparked a tumbling cascade of negative effects on her performance in class, as the impact of a zero for a test grade led to discouragement and a lack of incentive to try in other, smaller assignments. One of the brightest students in the class, Rochelle barely passed the class that grading period.

Do any of these types of perfectionism resonate with you? Are you realizing that a child you didn't think was perfectionistic actually is? Perfectionism is a chameleon whose changing colors and types often camouflage its presence. These types of perfectionism are not exhaustive, and you may have witnessed or even struggled with other manifestations of perfectionism.

Perfectionism Isn't Always What It Seems

When Ethan started school, everything was fine for a while. One day during third grade, he brought home directions for an assigned science project. When his parents looked at the instructions, his dad, an astrophysicist, got a brilliant idea for the project Ethan might do. He tried to describe it to Ethan, but it was a little above Ethan's ability. Eventually, dad ended up doing quite a bit more of the project than was appropriate. The completed project looked terrific, in no small part because of the over-involvement of Ethan's dad.

The next time Ethan's teacher gave him a project to do, this time in Language Arts, he barely gave the instructions a glance. Ethan brought it home and handed it to his dad. This time, his dad told Ethan he needed to do the project himself. Because the last project, done in large part by his dad, looked terrific, Ethan became extremely frustrated with and frightened by what he would need to do by himself. He knew what he would turn in for this assignment looked very different from his last project, and he was embarrassed. His parents, noticing his frustration and knowing how common perfectionism is among the gifted, assumed that Ethan was struggling with perfectionism, rather than struggling with living up to an impossibly high standard set by an over-involved parent.

As time went on, Ethan learned that he could get extra help from his parents by showing frustration with assignments. His parents, blaming his perfectionism and trying to reduce what they perceived as anxiety arising from it, stepped in over and over. Inadvertently, they created a situation where a child appeared to be a perfectionist, when in actuality he was a fearful procrastinator. By the time Ethan was in high school, he was completely habituated to procrastinating assignments, his parents were habituated to making excuses and over-involving themselves, and Ethan had learned that the word "perfectionism" was a get-out-of-schoolwork-free card.

Because perfectionism is so common among bright children, sometimes we stop there when trying to determine what is causing a child to have issues with schoolwork. While Ethan's parents meant well and couldn't see where the road they embarked on with that science project would lead, they inadvertently ended up with their child's being labeled a perfectionist, when in actuality he may not have been. We should be careful in labeling a child a perfectionist, as the child can adopt that as part of his or her identity when it otherwise would not be.

Perfectionism as an Aspect of Personality

One reason I resist labeling people perfectionists, preferring to say they have perfectionistic tendencies or struggle with perfectionism, is because calling someone a perfectionist creates a very narrow concept of their personality. Perfectionism is just one of many aspects of personality found on personality model inventories. The Big Five personality traits model,ⁱⁱⁱ for example, identifies perfectionism as an extreme form of the factor *conscientiousness*. In this model, conscientiousness is described as a tendency toward organization and dependability. People with low conscientiousness can look lazy, disorganized, unreliable, or sloppy, while people with high conscientiousness look super organized and reliable. Viewed in a slightly different way, this highlights the connection between perfectionism and what we would call executive functioning skills—the ability to manage one’s life.

People with strong executive functioning skills not only plan and do their work before it is due, they also turn it in on time. They meet deadlines, have necessary supplies, and manage time effectively. You can see how, taken to the extreme, this could land you in a somewhat obsessive place, desperately concerned about not being able to do these things. With or without the Big Five model, it can be helpful to see perfectionism as an extreme manifestation of otherwise normal behavior.

Key Ideas

- Perfectionism is not an either/or situation, and people can be perfectionistic in some areas of their life but not others.
- Perfectionism comes in different types, and individuals may manifest perfectionism in many ways.
- Perfectionism can actually be a factor in underachievement.
- Procrastination and perfectionism can co-exist.
- Perfectionism can be managed, not necessarily cured.
- Perfectionism often is a normal aspect of personality gone awry.

Action Steps

- List some areas of your life and your child's life such as school/work, chores, personal appearance/hygiene, etc. Using a bell curve drawing, mark where you each feel you are in different areas of your life with regard to perfectionism.
- Discuss Adelson and Wilson's types of perfectionism with the child. Explore the types of perfectionism that resonate with the child, and share what types of perfectionism resonate with you about yourself.
- Discuss characters from films, books, and social media who demonstrate perfectionistic tendencies. Include in the discussion whether the perfectionism is helping the person or not.^{iv}
- Break large projects for school or home into smaller, manageable steps, and mark the progress towards the completion of the project.

Thank You

Thank you so much for reading this sample chapter.

I hope that it has created a desire to read the entire book! If so, you can get it at <http://bit.ly/book-perfect>. It is available in both print and digital formats.

If you'd like to know more about giftedness, please join me at giftedguru.com. There you will find ideas and resources for parenting and teaching and advocating for the gifted.

You can sign up to receive my monthly newsletter o' goodness at <http://bit.ly/giftedhelp> and receive a free copy of my guide, *How to Help Gifted Kids Thrive in School*.

Best wishes to you on your journey!

Lisa

About the Author

Using a combination of neuropsychology, pedagogy, experience, humor, technology and sheer fun, Lisa Van Gemert shares best practices in gifted education with audiences around the world.

She is an expert consult to television shows including Lifetime's "Child Genius," and a writer of award-winning lesson plans, as well as numerous published articles on social psychology and pedagogy and the Legacy Award winning book, *Perfectionism: A Practical Guide to Managing Never Good Enough* and *Living Gifted: 52 Tips to Survive and Thrive in Giftedland*.

A former teacher, school administrator, and Youth & Education Ambassador for Mensa, she shares resources for educators and parents on her website GiftedGuru.com. Lisa and her Aussie husband Steve are the parents of a lot of sons and live in Arlington, Texas.



ⁱ Greenspon, T. (2007), p. 92.

ⁱⁱ These different types of perfectionism are described more fully in the book *Letting Go of Perfect*, by Jill Adelson and Hope Wilson. Both authors are educators, and their views of the types of perfectionism reflect the ways perfectionism manifests itself in school settings.

ⁱⁱⁱ The Big Five model is a personality trait model that has grown in popularity over the past fifty years or so. It narrows personality traits from the thousands that exist in other models to only five broad categories: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Openness.

^{iv} An excellent resource to find books with characters showing perfectionism is *Some of My Best Friends Are Books: Guiding Gifted Readers from Preschool to High School*, by Judith Wynn Halsted. She provides a brief description of several hundred books, the issues that they deal with, and gives questions you can use to help promote insight and identification with the characters in the books. Similarly, several movies feature perfectionistic characters.