

**THE DRIVE TO**  
**PER**

The Perfectionist's Roadmap to

**FECT**

Becoming Less Anxious, More Productive,

**ION**

and Generally Happier in Your Life

**NAJA N.**  
**HAYWARD**



# THE DRIVE TO PERFECTION

BY NAJA N. HAYWARD



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# DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to all of my fellow perfectionists in recovery who have experienced the overwhelming pressure and self-doubt that often accompanies the pursuit of perfection. This book is for those who have felt the weight of impossible standards and the fear of failure, yet continue to persevere in their journey towards self-acceptance and growth.

May the insights and tools in these pages offer you comfort and guidance as you navigate the challenges of letting go of perfectionism. May you find the courage to embrace your imperfections and celebrate your progress, one step at a time. And may you never forget that your worth is not determined by your achievements or your mistakes, but by the inherent value of your being.

Thank you for sharing this journey with me, and for reminding me that I am not alone in my struggles. Together, may we create a world that honors authenticity, vulnerability, and compassion, and that celebrates the beauty of imperfection.

And mostly I dedicate this book to you, Micah Man, for those moments when my perfectionism impeded what you may have needed from me as your mom. I'm so very proud of the man you've become.



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# INTRODUCTION

*“At its root, perfectionism isn’t really about a deep love of being meticulous. It’s about fear. Fear of making a mistake. Fear of disappointing others. Fear of failure. Fear of success.”*

*- By Michael Law*

I couldn’t sleep last night. After years of working through a drive to be perfect in just about everything I did, I thought I’d recovered from the debilitating trait. I tossed and turned in my bed, wondering if I had done a good enough job as a mother—the most important job of my life. A nagging feeling that I should have done more kept me wide awake.

And yet, my twenty-three-year-old son was a college athlete with lots of friends, a kind heart, and an excellent character. He was visiting me during summer break and displayed a genuine happiness and natural confidence that I truly admired. So why was I feeling so inadequate and insecure?

I could sense an anxiety attack coming on. And, at that moment, I realized I hadn’t arrived. That perfectionism still had a hold on me in certain areas of my life. Important areas at that. The only difference between this moment and similar moments in the past was that this time I was conscious of

what was emerging. I knew as I processed what unfolded that I was captured in the Perfectionism Trap.

Epiphany! My cognition of the indirect symptoms of perfectionism, even in this mental review of a past experience, was—in itself—an achievement. Indirect, because the results of my child-raising skills were a happy, perfectly imperfect, well-balanced young man.

For some, perfectionism is a habit response from the hurt of childhood criticism. For others, the disappointment of feeling inadequate, the fear of failure, and the unsatisfied need for praise or appreciation or over praise and over appreciation brings it on. And still for others, it is ingrained, as though it is part of our very DNA—fashioned by nature rather than by nurture. But the pain of it remains the same for all who become obsessed with doing and being perfect in everything.

The wisdom to distinguish between my reality and the challenges of imperfection came to light as I dug up the roots of my own painful perfectionist memories, starting at the ripe age of fifteen. A vulnerable time in my life that saw a turning point into the perfectionistic woman I would become.

To strive to do something perfectly is a worthy goal, but failing to achieve that perfection in every act is human. Consider the person who packs a parachute. They must prepare it meticulously and perfectly or risk causing the death of the parachutist. The surgeon that operates on a patient has little to no room for error because one minor mistake can cause great harm or even death if the job is not done perfectly. But to apply these same standards to everything we do is unrealistic, a waste of time, and oh-so exhausting.

We rarely recognize our own mentally and physically exhausting self-criticism, angst, reluctance to attempt something new or how often we procrastinate as symptoms of

a constant draining quest for perfectionism. The key is to achieve balance between expectations and reality.

I can now look back and see how I worried about being criticized of failings some of which never even happened because I was too afraid to try. I allowed myself to concentrate on not doing or not being perfect even in my own eyes. Thus, I was critical, even of others, when perfection was not achieved. Inevitably, this behavior, whether directed at myself or at others, pushed people away. I can now see that my constant craving for perfectionism made others feel uncomfortable at best, at worst inadequate and insecure.

I blamed my insecurities on a lack in those that were supposed to guide me to discover my own strengths and possibilities; encourage me, and teach me to live a meaningful, joyful life. They were supposed to be my safety net while I spread my fledgling wings.

Although this is partly true for many of us, the influence of what we interpret as reality in our heroes, role models, and celebrities must be considered.

The baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) grew up in an era of extremely rigid work and life ethics. Their parents learned from the Great Depression and World War II that the way forward was discipline, hard work, a good education, and a bit of Victorian prudence in public. So, the boomers worked hard and played hard, mostly when their strict parents' backs were turned.

Once they had children, they set the rules to the values learned from their parents because they saw how easily those who could not keep up dropped by the wayside in a changing era of great corporate growth and competition. They raised their children, Generation X (1965–1985), my generation, with more freedom, but still measured life with

the ingrained values and discipline of the previous generations.

Worst of all was that in their craving for respect and a better life for their children, many induced a measure of perfectionism. Each in their own ignorant way, but often with the best of intentions.

And so that cycle continues until we realize it for ourselves and break free for our future.

I did not see that the most successful people had many failures no matter how much failing forward is a trend in many of today's entrepreneurial circles. And that they learned from each failure and moved forward until they found their niche, their calling, and their purpose.

I did not realize the truths of Nelson Mandela:

*“Do not judge me by my successes, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again.”*

– **Nelson Mandela**

*“I never lose. I either win or learn.”*

– **Nelson Mandela**

I strive in this book to give you the tools to recognize the many and often palpable mental and physical symptoms that originate from the pain of being a perfectionist. To cure this officially unrecognized disease, we will break it down like a physicist does—first its principles, exploring and understanding its root cause. The next step is to get to know and appreciate ourselves as we were meant to.

There is a life that can be lived to the fullest extent without the scourge of perfectionism. A life where we can embrace

and enjoy our imperfections. Life is ultimately a celebration and there is no rule book to follow. Simply learn to embrace life's imperfections. Yes, a weed may be growing on your freshly mowed lawn, but look at the beautiful yellow flower it makes. Within perfection lies tiny imperfections. Look forward to each day when the sun rises on the horizon and the rays gently kiss away what you previously might have considered an imperfection.

Unafraid and free from the exhaustion of the scourge of perfectionism, we will celebrate that things do not have to be perfect! You can look forward to a joyful and fulfilled life ahead.

*“Once a person is determined to help themselves,  
there is nothing that can stop them.”*

– **Nelson Mandela**



# CHAPTER

# 1

## THE ROOT CAUSE OF PERFECTIONISM

*“I’m a bit of a perfectionist.”- said no true perfectionist ever.*

I used to think that being a perfectionist was my superpower. It meant that I had uniquely high standards, was a hard worker and put an inordinate amount of effort and energy into whatever I set out to do. I wore the label of ‘Perfectionist’ like some women wear Gucci or Prada; across my entire body in great big metaphorical letters like a badge of honor.

But as the effects of that label wore on me in the same way a worn piece of clothing breaks down over time, I realized that Perfectionism had taken its toll. It was no longer haute couture.

Perfectionism affects millions of people to varying degrees, with A-List celebrities topping the list and often vying

for the coveted position of “*the hardest working person in Hollywood.*”

Perfectionism in many ways is a societal norm. We give ourselves permission to exhaust ourselves to the point of sickness, rarely challenging the health concerns that accompany such an ambitious way of being.

A healthy dose of perfectionism can be a positive spur to drive self-motivation and perseverance over obstacles, to set a standard of quality for one’s self, and to achieve our best. However, at its core, perfectionism instills a list of tendencies that often negatively affects how we live our lives.

Like any fanatical pursuit, it crosses over into dangerous territory when you find yourself unable to complete tasks, procrastinating, making excuses and criticizing yourself and/or others because something wasn’t done to your ‘perfectly’ executed standards.

Perfectionism at its worst is debilitating for you, frustrating and spirit crushing for others.

As we delve into the root cause of what some deem simply as a trait while others see it as a true disorder associated closely with OCD or obsessive-compulsive personality disorder, we begin to understand our own impetus for perfectionism using the 3W’s: ‘what, where, and why’.

Perfection is a multidimensional challenge that forms one of many parts of our complex personality traits. If your goal in reading this book is to take on the work of reconditioning your mind, it will be necessary to investigate perfectionism from all angles, including how perfectionism affects our daily lives.

Merriam-Webster defines perfectionism as “*a disposition to regard anything short of perfection as unacceptable.*” It defines perfection as “*the ‘quality or state of being perfect:*



*such as freedom from fault or defect, flawlessness, an exemplification of supreme excellence, an unsurpassable degree of accuracy or excellence.'*

A mere glance at the definition would bring most people to the realization that attempting to attain perfection in this complex, imperfect world is impossible—beyond achievement. Yet, there are those that find these words resonating within as something to strive for. I was such a person at one point in my life. A time not so long ago.

The problem occurs when we shift from working with a healthy dose of perfection— setting high standards for ourselves—into an unhealthy or dysfunctional perfectionism when those goals are so high as to be impossible to attain.

If the definition resonates with you, you are not alone. 30% of the American population strives endlessly to attain perfection at any cost. The question we have to ask ourselves is whether this exhaustive ambition will, at the end of the day, bring us peace and happiness. We must weigh the cost of our quest against the fulfillment of achieving it.

Often, in retrospect, we realize that the cost did not justify the pursuit. It may even be so high that, while we were relentlessly pursuing perfection as the ultimate goal, we lost a great deal more in the process than what we achieved in the end.

### **What Does Perfectionism Mean to You?**

We have to take into account that different concepts and words have different meanings for different people. We ascribe meanings to words based on our experiences in life and what we were taught by our caregivers and the people who influenced us most in our early years. This essentially means that the concept of perfectionism might mean one thing to you, yet to a colleague at work, or next-door neighbor, it could mean something entirely different.

Perfectionism, as with all things that form our cognitive thoughts and behaviors, may differ in degree and scope from person to person. That you are investigating perfectionism shows that you realize that your life (or that of someone close to you) could be more fulfilling. Maybe you wonder if your quest to do everything perfectly might be the culprit that is keeping you from living your best life. Is that why you do not enjoy carefree moments, try new things, or even, at times, do not complete something that you started? Do you perhaps set unrealistically high standards for yourself—and even for others? Do you worry about a million insignificant things that may or may not happen if you just go with the flow for once?

The multidimensional framework that makes up the character traits of an unhealthy perfectionist personality varies and may or may not include OCD. You may display one or more of these personality traits. The key to understanding how perfection presents itself is an important starting point when you begin to investigate where it all began for you.

It's important to point out that perfectionism in itself is not a negative personality trait as long as it is not overwhelming, exhaustive, or having a detrimental effect on the rest of your life. As in all things, balance is the determining factor that will bring you to the realization of whether perfection is detrimental or whether it creates a state of balance in your well-being.

Though indications of unhealthy perfectionism in life, emotions, goals, and behavior differ from person to person, there are a number of consistencies that are prevalent in this personality trait. Recognizing the type of perfectionism and the degree to which it affects your life is the key to overcoming this obstacle that is preventing you from attaining your goals. Defining the level to which you associate with perfectionism is the most effective way to make a positive and long-lasting change.

When you review the following characteristics, one or all may be identified in an unhealthy perfectionist personality. What matters is to identify how it affects the balance in your life.

Begin your journey by looking at the following ten core elements of perfectionism:

- **Expecting everyone to be perfect**

Evaluating others according to your impeccable standards, knowledge, and behavior is daunting, not only to yourself but to all around you as well. People in your life—be it work, home, or leisure—are categorized according to your frame of reference. The consequences of this type of judgment of others inevitably may be detrimental and your personal relationships may suffer.

- **Completing tasks according to a deadline**

Perfectionists are deadline driven. This is a good quality if you keep it in check and realistic. There is, of course, a catch-22 situation here that a perfectionist must note. A perfectionist might take hours to email a colleague, breaking down simple instructions for a project. They write, rewrite and reread the email over and over to ensure it is perfect before sending it. This might cause a delay in sending the email and result in missing the very deadline they were so intent to make.

- **Making mistakes means you are incompetent**

Let's look at the same example used above. In order to get the wording of the email perfect and ensure the clarity of instructions, the colleague receives the email after the deadline and it is now impossible to complete the task at hand. Here, rewriting and rereading the email has caused a deadline to be missed. Missing this deadline is proof by a perfectionist that their work is inadequate or

that they are incompetent. This leads to a feeling of not being good enough.

- **Your energy is spent on appearing perfect**

Keeping up appearances is exhausting for all of us. It is actually worse than the proverbial “Keeping up with the Joneses.” Keeping up with the Joneses is about superficial elements, such as a beautiful house or the car you drive. This does cause a fair amount of stress, but worse than that is keeping up the appearance of having a perfect life. Perfectionists fear judgment from their peers and thus need everything to look flawless—their jobs, their marriages, their children, and their social status. This is exhausting. Imagine keeping up the appearance of a flawless, perfect life 24/7, when the reality is everything in your life feels like it is falling apart.

- **Tasks that might not be successful**

The easiest way to always be successful in what you do is to take on assignments that you know you will succeed at. Living like this is monotonous, to say the least. It means that you never take on new challenges for fear of failure. You are on a family vacation, everyone is trying to windsurf, and they are having an amazing time, yet you are sitting on the beach missing all the fun. You are watching and not willing to try it out because you fear you may not balance on the board and hold the sail. As a perfectionist, not being able to windsurf while others can makes a perfectionist feel like a failure.

- **You avoid celebrations of success**

Perfectionists usually put so much effort into ensuring they deliver the perfect assignment or task that they don’t even take time to celebrate their success. Instead of taking the successful sales pitch as a win, a perfectionist might reason that if they had added another element

to the sales pitch, it would have been even better and had a greater impact on the audience.

- **Your self-worth is determined by achieving your goals**

As a perfectionist, you measure your success by achieving success in all areas of your life. This is a virtually impossible task, as you have to constantly achieve more, bigger, and better. Insignificant mistakes to others seem like major failures to a perfectionist. Don't let this become a major factor in your life because as a perfectionist who is determined to change, you will inevitably succeed once you have identified and analyzed the three "Ws".

- **Mental health issues are becoming noticeable**

The song, "[F\\$%^ Perfect](#)" by Pink is a true ode to perfectionists who are always striving for the highest level of success. Continuously trying to reach an unattainable or unrealistic goal has an effect on your mental health and can lead to eating disorders, depression, and anxiety and, at its most dire, may even result in suicide. Perfectionists can stop this cycle if they realize that setting goals too high can lead to mental health conditions, and if they ask themselves in the end, once they have reached their "star" will they finally be happy? Or will they find a star that is further away, try to reach that star, and put their sanity at risk?

- **Physical health issues are ignored**

Achieving perfection takes a lot of time and effort, especially if you are not leading a balanced life. If you are aiming to be the youngest CEO in the company's history and you are burning the midnight oil every night, your physical health is going to be affected. You will try to survive on a couple of hours of sleep instead of getting a good 7 to 8 hours of sleep a night. You might not be eat-

ing a healthy, well-balanced diet which could lead to high blood pressure or diabetes.

It is important to remember that real perfection means living in a state of balance. When your physical health is in jeopardy, it will make achieving any success more difficult.

- **You are dissatisfied with your life**

We face many stressors in every aspect of our daily lives. Life is full of challenges to overcome and living in a state of constant fear of failure is stressful for any person. Can you imagine how a perfectionist feels when confronted with a myriad of stress factors every day? Perfectionists are never totally satisfied with their lives because the moment one challenge is over, life throws a curveball and there is another challenge to deal with. Perfection is not overcoming everyday challenges, but it is how you navigate your way around or through the challenges that bring satisfaction to life.

## **What Kind Of Perfectionist Are You?**

In the process of investigating why you are a perfectionist, you will discover the reasons compelling you to be perfect at everything you do. Now, this may sound complicated, but it really is not. Once you know why you act or react in a certain way, you become empowered to change your reactions or beliefs.

Studies have found that there are 3 types of perfectionism that are the most prevalent in society today. Perfectionists fall into one of these primary categories:

1. **The self-oriented perfectionist**

This type of perfectionism results in an obsessive attention to detail in every aspect of life. Setting a high stan-

standard for what you want from life is one thing, but being obsessive to the extent that you are critical of everything you do is extremely stressful and can cause feelings of anxiety. When you are so critical of everything you do, you leave yourself little chance to enjoy the moment.

It's your 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday and you are having some friends over as a celebration of being alive for half a century. Everything is organized, people are arriving, the music is playing and the snacks are being served, but you cannot relax and enjoy yourself. All the guests, however, are having a perfect evening, so what could be wrong? You are anxious and walking from table to table clearing away glasses and plates, not allowing yourself a moment's enjoyment with your friends and family. There is one minor detail of the arrangements that you missed - the clean-up service. How can you forget something like this? It is, in your view, totally unacceptable. The reality is that it's not a big issue. Once the guests leave, you can simply get a cleaning service the next day and no one will be any wiser - no one except you, that is.

## **2. The other-oriented perfectionist**

If you expect perfectionism in others or set high standards for people to meet, you are going to deal with constant disappointments. People are different and have had unique life experiences, so what is perfect in your opinion might not be perfect in the opinion of another person. These high standards that you expect from people in your life are often unrealistic in your personal or work life. Most people will find it difficult to live up to your expectations and might simply give up on having a relationship with you. This could have unfortunate consequences; you might lose the person you love or might not find that outstanding team member at work because everyone is aware of your expectations.

### 3. **The socially prescribed perfectionist**

The way in which our friends and peers see us set standards and expectations that we feel we have to live up to. Not meeting the criteria of how you are viewed by society can lead to immense stress.

Let's look at 'The Ladies who Lunch'-the proverbial wives of wealthy businessmen who lunch at the country club on Wednesdays. Socially prescribed perfectionism dictates that you wear the right brand of shoes, the diamond in your ring must be at least 5 carats, and many other minimum materialistic values, although you are there to enjoy lunch. You order a beautiful plate of chicken salad, but you don't eat it; after all, you must maintain a certain weight and have a certain physique in this social circle. These are the expectations of 'The Ladies who Lunch' and if you believe you have to fit into these superficial criteria, you are going to feel pressured to be perfect. Social media and socially prescribed perfectionism are closely linked to a person's self-esteem, and it can be extremely difficult to be perceived as perfect by other people's standards. In fact, it can be exhausting and depressing.

#### **Where Does Perfection Come From?**

This sounds like a cliché, but our thoughts, behavior, and emotions formed in our early formative years. We learn the meaning of words and the results associated with those words from our parents, caregivers, teachers, peers, and others whom we look to for guidance on how to navigate life.

The pressure to be perfect might have started at school, where you were evaluated and given a score on your tests. This is where so many of us learn about the pass or fail mentality. We began to make subconscious connotations. A pass is good, a fail is bad. This way of thinking became ingrained



into our thought processes and affects our entire life today. Schooling doesn't favor the spirited entrepreneurs of the future but associates achieving top grades with being successful when all it really means is that you can memorize information and recall it when you are questioned about the specific information.

Besides the pass and fail or bad and good analysis by teachers, parents, and fellow students, you may have received high praise or achievement awards at school. The question becomes, how will this be interpreted when you are an adult? Will you stop yourself from trying new activities or taking on challenging tasks because you fear failure? This might lead to you never experiencing wonderful things or never trying something because you are afraid you might fail.

For us to grow and progress as adults and as human beings, we have to encounter failure; it is through failure that we learn. If you look back at difficult times in your life that you have been faced with and have overcome, you find that those are the times when you learned the greatest and most valuable lessons. Lessons that you might even pass on to your children, making their lives a little easier than your life was.

### **Where Did The Root Cause Of Perfectionism Begin?**

Going back to where your perfectionism began will provide supporting facts about the root cause of how this came to be for you and help you understand how the negative aspects of the perfectionist label were placed on you.

Let's play for a moment.

As we dig into this work, let's have some fun and embrace the role of a skilled detective, taking on the persona of the fictional agent of the late 19th century, Sherlock Holmes and his devoted friend and associate, Doctor Watson. Put on

your favorite deerstalker hat and become an amateur sleuth as we discover the root cause of your perfectionism.

The detective's eager student, Dr. Watson, is going to condense his findings in his ever-present leather bound notepad before he presents them to Sherlock. Which of these resonate with you?

- Many people have a degree of perfectionism within their personalities.
- Early childhood experiences, such as having parents with unrealistically high expectations, may play a role in a person becoming a perfectionist.
- Children may develop perfectionism as a coping mechanism with the belief that they must work hard by 'proving themselves' or their self-worth to gain love and approval.
- Perfectionism can be a trauma response, particularly from the psychological wounds arising from childhood trauma, such as a parent or caregiver withholding love or affection.
- Living in an environment where a person's actions are constantly monitored, scrutinized, and observed produces a deep - seated desire to take control of at least one element of their lives.
- People with perfectionism believe that they're valuable only because of what they achieve or what they do for other people.
- Academic settings can bring out perfectionism in young people.
- Perfectionists often have a fear of judgment or disapproval from others.
- Socially prescribed perfectionists believe others expect perfection from them.

- Perfectionists can feel inferior to others and to appear perfect, they go to extreme lengths to cover these minute flaws.

Doctor Watson, a medical doctor by trade, examines the harm that can be caused to an individual who sets high, unattainable goals. When one's life experiences instill in them traits of perfection and their goals are not attained, their self-confidence and self-esteem can be affected and a snowball effect begins. Guilt complex for letting their loved ones or colleagues down, feelings of inferiority, shame and humiliation seep in and, often, stop them from even attempting to reach other goals. The very laudable characteristic of being a perfectionist leads to becoming a procrastinator, as they would rather not attempt anything new than fail.

Doctor Watson notes an important differentiator between excellence and perfectionism, and he quickly jots this in his book, lest he forget to tell Sherlock of this finding.

1. How does striving for excellence impact perfectionism and vice versa?

Unlike the perfectionist, people that set high standards for themselves, their loved ones, peers, and colleagues don't self-blame so much that it breaks down their self-confidence. As they strive for excellence, they face many challenges and see these challenges in a more realistic manner. The challenge is there as your teacher, providing a lesson on how to overcome and to move on to the next and possibly bigger challenges in life. People who continually strive for excellence in a way to improve their knowledge or self-worth know that mistakes are inevitable along the path of life. They know these challenges are there to build your self-confidence, as each time you successfully navigate the challenge, you learn. These key lessons prepare you for what you may face in the future and you will be ready to accept the chal-

lenge and pass with flying colors. People who strive for excellence over perfection realize that it is okay to make mistakes and there is always room for improvement. So, their self-esteem isn't affected, but rather they focus on using their key lessons to improve.

## **The Cost of Perfectionism**

The cost of perfectionism is not only counted in financial terms, though a financial impact in your life can most certainly be a result. The cost of perfectionism can also affect many other aspects of your life. In black and white terms, perfectionism results in these psychological symptoms:

### **1. It causes damage to your mental health**

Your physical and mental well-being are important as a part of a balanced, holistic life. Perfectionists often focus on one area of life to the detriment of others, especially their mental well-being. This can present as depression, anxiety, and feelings of constant and inescapable stress.

### **2. People who are perfectionists at their core are often lonely**

Perfectionists can feel lonely and alienated in social circles. This is not because there is something wrong with them, but rather because they either feel such a heavy burden to fit in or their peers feel they cannot live up to the high social standards expected from them. It is thus easier and less stressful for others to exclude them from social or work gatherings.

### **3. Perfectionism stunts creativity**

Following the rules and not diverging from expected protocols is the way a perfectionist ensures their tasks are completed perfectly and no mistakes are made. After all, that is why many companies have strict protocols, isn't it?

This type of mindset does not allow the perfectionist to ‘color out of the box’ and could be detrimental to future planning, higher productivity and promotions or their own creative endeavors.

If Elon Musk had never pushed the boundaries on creating rockets that could return to earth without blowing up on reentering the earth’s atmosphere, nothing would have changed, and the Russian Space Program would still charge \$ 400 billion to take an astronaut to the International Space Station. However, the entrepreneur was not afraid to fail, and in fact, failed 4 times before perfecting a rocket that could return to earth intact after a mission. Musk has saved the world billions because of his ‘out of the box’ approach’. SpaceX, a company owned by Elon Musk, can now transport astronauts for a fraction of the cost because Musk was not afraid of failure. It should be noted that Elon Musk is a self-proclaimed perfectionist who believes in maximizing his “God-given talents and making the most of his time.” Studies have found self-efficacy mediates between adaptive perfectionism and procrastination and leads to more productive outcomes; however, Musk’s level of work ethic can be harmful to your average person’s health and well-being.

#### **4. Perfectionism affects productivity**

Perfectionists are often driven by striving for excellence. But when all of our time is spent on seeing what’s missing or broken, we can’t make real progress. Take me, for example. As a Perfectionist in recovery, I can recall many times when I would obsess over getting even the most minute detail just right in my business. It once took me over 5 hours to shoot a video that should have taken 30 minutes because I required not only that the video was perfect, but the entire organizational process in shooting that video needed to be as well. This led to a spiral of time spent prioritizing unimportant tasks.

## 5. **Perfectionism fosters a lack of compassion**

If a perfectionist judges others according to their strict codes of conduct in work, friendships, parenting or partnerships, they might find themselves being judge, juror, and executioner. This can lend itself to a lack of compassion towards others.

Understanding the root cause of perfectionism is the starting point for analyzing your own perfectionistic behavior.

Now, let's look at how our emotions are affected by this trait and what needs to be done to accept our emotions and gain more control over them.