

Understanding perfectionism LESSON ONE

LO:

To be able to understand the advantages and disadvantages caused by perfectionistic characteristics.

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Are you or is someone you know a 'perfectionist'?

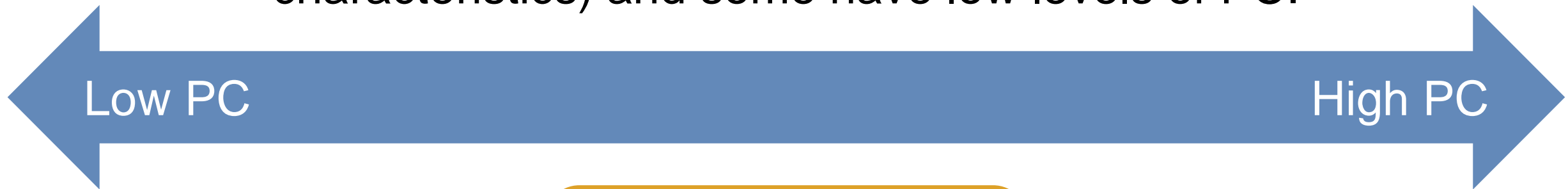
Write a list of the characteristics they show that you think are 'perfectionistic characteristics'.

Is having these characteristics a good or a bad thing? Why?

We all have perfectionist traits somewhere!

We all fit somewhere on the spectrum for perfectionistic characteristics.

Some of you will have high levels of PC (perfectionistic characteristics) and some have low levels of PC.



Where do you fit?
Let's find out!

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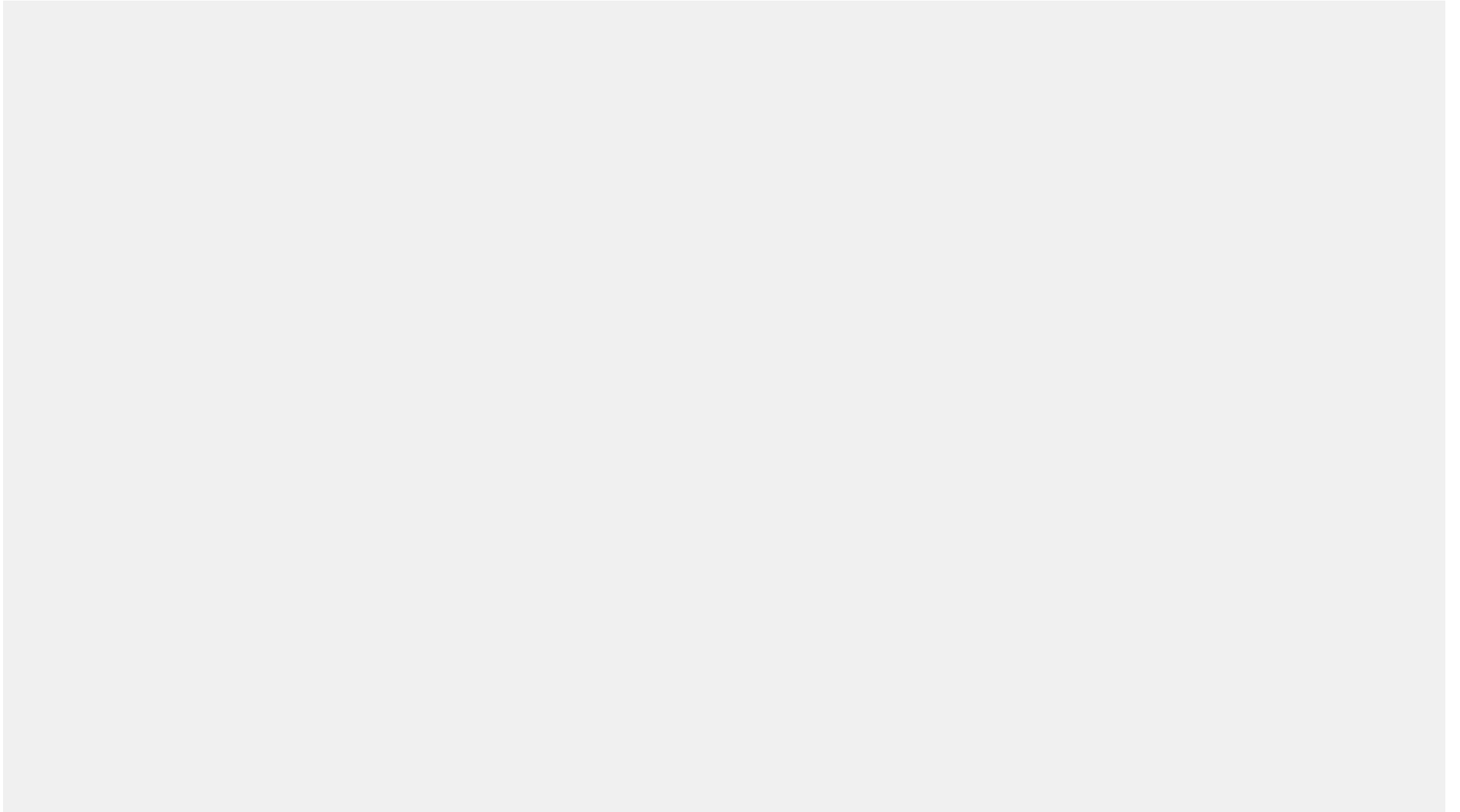
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York St John University is currently researching PC and they have put this video together to explain PC in more detail:
(Videos on next pages)

<https://www.nace.co.uk/perfectionism>

Perfectionism animation



Main learning activity 1: Perfectionism vs Doing Things Well

Place the following statements into two groups:

Group 1: statements referring to Perfectionism

Group 2: statements referring to Doing Things Well

“CHOOSING TO WORK IN A GROUP BECAUSE YOU ENJOY LEARNING THINGS FROM DIFFERENT PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCES AND WAYS OF DOING THINGS”.

“JOINING A SPORT TEAM (OR OTHER ACTIVITY) AND PRACTISING/ PLAYING FOR TWO OR THREE TIMES A WEEK FOR FUN AND FRIENDLY COMPETITION”.



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“AVOIDING TRYING NEW THINGS AND HAVING NEW EXPERIENCES BECAUSE YOU ARE AFRAID OF MAKING A MISTAKE AND EMBARRASSING YOURSELF PUBLICALLY”.

“TAKING LESSONS AND PRACTISING EVERYDAY TO ENSURE YOU ARE PERFECT”.

“HANGING OUT WITH PEOPLE BECAUSE YOU THINK THEY ARE INTERESTING, LIKEABLE, AND FUN TO BE WITH”.

“NOT BEING ABLE TO LEAVE YOUR BEDROOM UNTIL EVERYTHING IN THE ROOM IS JUST SO”.

“WANTING TO BE THE BEST YOU CAN BE AT A GIVEN ACTIVITY”.

“SEEING MISTAKES IN MY PERFORMANCE THAT OTHERS DON'T SEE”.

Main learning activity 1: Perfectionism vs Doing Things Well

Main learning activity 1:

Perfectionism vs Doing Things Well

What do you think is the difference in the characteristics in each pile?
Which is more helpful?

Class discussion:

Why do we think that research suggests there are increasing levels of PC in adolescents?

Perfectionism vs Doing Things Well

Class discussion:

What do you think are the negative impacts of having a perfectionist mindset across all areas of a person's life?

Low self esteem

Impacted mental health

Finding it difficult to feel proud of one's achievements if not 'perfect'

Failing to understand that learning is a process and that you will get better over a long period of time - ironically this can lead to doing LESS well in exams and assessments

Negative feelings including frustration

Less likely to try new things and therefore rob yourself of new experiences

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Perfectionism vs Doing Things Well

"I worked on my history homework last night but when I finished it had lots of crossing out, so I tore out the page and wrote it up again more neatly."

"I don't want to take part in house karaoke because last year we didn't win which was so embarrassing."

DISCUSSION:
What would you say to a friend who said these things to you?

"I have been studying *GCSE* Latin for eight weeks now and I am devastated that I didn't get full marks in our last test."

"My parents were upset that I didn't get all grade 9s for TA1."

Ahead of our next lesson...

In our next lesson we will follow up with more discussion about how perfectionism can impact life at CCHS.

Over the next week think about...

- if you feel you have any perfectionistic traits
- have you had any recent experiences which make you feel this way
- how you might be able to think about them differently

Understanding perfectionism LESSON TWO

LO:

To identify the three 'flavours of perfectionism'

To understand why these traits can be negative
and consider what we can do about them

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Main learning activity 2:

Three flavours of perfectionism

There are three flavours or categories that people can fall into:

- 1: Expect yourself to be perfect
- 2: Expect others to be perfect
- 3: Others expect you to be perfect

Place the following statements into three groups representing each flavour of PC.

"I GET
IRRITATED IF A
TEAMMATE
MAKES A
MISTAKE".

"I WANT TO
ACHIEVE THE
VERY BEST
GRADES I
CAN".



"I WANT TO BE
PERFECT IN
EVERYTHING I
DO".

"I EXPECT A
LOT FROM MY
FRIENDS".

"MANY
PEOPLE IN MY
LIFE EXPECT
ME TO BE
PERFECT".

"I FEEL THAT
PEOPLE ASK
A LOT OF
ME".

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"THE PEOPLE
AROUND ME
SHOULD
NEVER LET ME
DOWN".

"OTHER
PEOPLE THINK
I HAVE FAILED
IF I AM NOT
THE BEST".

Main learning activity 2: Three flavours of perfectionism

Can you see yourself in
any of the three
flavours?

Main learning activity 2: Three flavours of perfectionism

https://www.ted.com/talks/thomas_curran_our_dangerous_obsession_with_perfectionism_is_getting_worse?language=en

Main learning activity 2:

Three flavours of perfectionism

Class discussion:

What are the positives and negatives of each of the three flavours?

Application of learning: Your story of perfectionism



1. Draw the PC spectrum (low to high PC).

Plot yourself on it.

Reflect:

2. Explain why you feel you are there on the spectrum. Give specific examples from the card sorts. Maybe you display more “getting it done” than “getting it done perfectly” behaviours? Or vice versa?

3. Which of the three flavours can you most identify with?

Or what do you notice in your friends? (Without naming anyone)

Have you found
this lesson on PC
interesting?
Why/why not?

Plenary

What have you learnt from today's lesson?

Is it good or bad to have **low** levels of perfectionistic characteristics? Why?

Is it good or bad to have **high** levels of perfectionistic characteristics? Why?



PERFECTIONISM AND MENTAL HEALTH

Instructions:

Being less perfectionistic (and harsh on yourself and others) takes time and practice.

Here are three handy tips.

- 1** **Remind yourself** why you want to be less perfectionistic and the benefits of changing the negative ways you think about yourself or other people.
- 2** **Re-examine** the activities and resources again. If they helped you better understand perfectionism the first time, they might be even better a second time.
- 3** **Reach** out and ask for help. If you feel like you need some support, find someone you trust and speak with them about the issues you are having.



For additional
information and
resources:
[www.nace.co.uk
/perfectionism](http://www.nace.co.uk/perfectionism)