



Too Perfect: When Being in Control Gets Out of Control

Jeannette De Wyze , Allan E. Mallinger , Jeannette Dewyze

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For many of us, perfectionism can bring life's most desired rewards. But when the obsessive need for perfection and control gets in the way of our professional and emotional lives, the cost becomes too high. Although many of us appear cool and confident on the outside, inside we are in emotional turmoil, trying to satisfy everyone, attempting to direct the future, and feeling that we are failing.

In TOO PERFECT, Dr. Allan Mallinger draws on twenty years of research and observations from his private practice to show how perfectionism can sap energy, complicate even the simplest decisions, and take the enjoyment out of life. For workaholics or neat freaks, for anyone who fears change or making mistakes, needs rigid rules, is excessively frugal or obstinate, TOO PERFECT offers revealing self-tests, fascinating case histories, and practical strategies to help us overcome obsessiveness and reclaim our right to happiness.

Too Perfect: When Being in Control Gets Out of Control Details

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Lauren Little says

A really good book that was recommended to me by a psychologist. This book is helpful you struggle with perfectionism or know people who do.

Mandy says

Ok, so this is a GREAT book if you think your a little obsessive (in the clinical sense). I was amazed at how much insight was in it. It really helped me understand some things that I've been struggling with this past year or so. I would highly recommend it for anyone-whether or not it pertains to you directly, you probably know someone that it would.

Emily Davenport says

Very insightful and enlightening for someone like me who certainly has obsessive and perfectionistic tendencies. The most useful insights were about the hidden workaholic, demand-sensitivity, being a thinkoholic, and many others. Some of the suggested CBT activities were a little contrived but all in all, a very helpful book.

Isabella says

Actual rating: **2.3 stars**

Claire E Jones says

An absolutely great book for anyone who has obsessive tendencies or anyone who is familiar with someone who has obsessive tendencies. I read it at the request of my boyfriend who was recently diagnosed with Obsessive Compulsive Personality Disorder and his therapist had given him this book to read. My boyfriend claims the book changed his life and so I read it too. Not only did it give me a really comprehensive perspective on what goes on inside an obsessive's brain, but it also gave me tips on how best to deal with my boyfriend's obsessiveness. All in all, an excellent resource.

Jane says

Unfortunately, a lot of this book was cringingly familiar. It was heavy on insights and light on good advice

but a lot of it is just being aware that this is something you're doing so you can try to not instead.

Chris says

Perfectly on point.

Alexan Martin-Eichner says

Pretty mediocre, not great for any one purpose but just barely adequate for most--whether for self-help, amateur education, professional education, or reference

Ultimately I'll probably keep it around just for the few thankfully concise bits of general reference to the phenomenon of American obsessiveness without getting bogged down in diagnostic debates

The general structure of the book and organization of the TOC is excellent for this topic however--another one of the main reasons I'll prolly try to keep this on my shelf for a bit

In the end--too many examples (repetitive, most obvious/boring, little added insight), confused and unfocused tone/direction in elaborating on examples, and waaaaay too little theory, hardly any theory at all; abstaining from ANY discussion of theory does not make a book more accessible, it merely obscures the authors underlying thought process and justificatory Logic, while restraining the potential reach of what insight ur offering to readers

And ofc, as always w the american mental health industry, much of the book is an apology for the american capitalist mode of work; this is smthg some theory might have pushed the authors towards discussing--the cultural background of more or less objective psychological phenomena; but alas the authors go so far as to assert that the problem underlying workaholism is not our model of work itself

In fact I can't imagine any obsessive person reading this book and then feeling a sense of hope and direction afterwards, as the authors seem to suggest all obsessive problems stem merely from some ineffable notion of obsession that permeates modern America in an unplaceable way, more or less shifting the fault of the matter onto a person's self-awareness and childhood situation, and as remedy the authors can only offer that potential patients better conform themselves to the cisheteronormative conventions of sex and romance, and the rote daily structures of work-leisure under capitalism

Kim says

I have never felt more understood by a book.

Joe Devon says

This is an important book. If you or anyone around you is too much of a perfectionist, I mean to a degree that

happiness is affected, read this. There's something called OCPD, it's like being OCD but more severe. It's part of the DSM IV.

OCPD is difficult because the sufferer thinks they are perfect, so they have no desire to change. They are challenging people to be around. This book doesn't go into too much clinical detail, it just helps people with this disorder. Jeannette picks the "perfect" tone in addressing the issue.

Courtney Devine says

If you need to focus on understanding the obsessive in your life, or yourself, this book is for you. I find it to be better if you are trying to better understand why an obsessive in your life acts the way they do, this have each explanation. However, if you are the one searching to understand your own obsession with perfectionism the author does forewarn you that the only way you can work to change your ways is to begin changing them; thus, you will spend most of your book identifying why you might be an obsessive. Definitely worth the read, but at time can be repetitive in certain sections.

David McMenomy says

Certain chapters of this book didn't speak to me much at all; other resonated so clearly that I was a little uncomfortable reading them. In addition to outlining various forms of perfectionism (and the self-sabotage that often accompanies it) De Wyze also provides a few simple suggestions on increasing awareness of these tendencies, and overcoming them.

Amira says

This book has provided me with a lot of answers for many questions I couldn't answer about myself, "Why am I taking work projects too seriously?" , "Why am I taking everything on my nerves?" ..

It also helped me see the real reasons behind different situations I did or happened to me in my life.

This book is very useful to let you know about OCPD or perfectionism. It can help you spot if you have it or not through answering some questions or measuring situations to the stories mentioned in the book. It also covered many aspects about obsessives in general which didn't always relate to perfectionists directly as I see, but were useful to learn about.

The worst thing I found is that in spite of its positive start about bright sides of being perfectionist, the rest of the book was overdose of mentioning the dark side of being a perfectionist. It could be kinda depressing to a perfectionist, it's important but it's not balanced with effective advice about what to do with it.

In short, this book can help you understand more about yourself, but the next step is to search for a guide to help you get the best of being a perfectionist and handling the dark sides.

Cathryn Conroy says

The good news is that I am not perfect at being a perfectionist. Being a perfectionist means you have a difficult life, and that is fully apparent in this book. On the perfectionist scale of 1 to 10, I give myself about a 2. Maybe a 3. This book was fascinating, though, and I saw in my husband, children and siblings just a few of the numerous "perfectionist" characteristics presented in the book--but enough to explain parts of their personality. It's written by a psychiatrist for laypeople. Very readable. Highly recommend if you think of yourself as a perfectionist and even more highly recommend if you're not a perfectionist but married to one, parent one or work for one.

Maria Paiz says

This book was recommended to me by a psychologist friend and, to my astonishment and dismay, I found myself reflected on nearly every page. I highlighted so many paragraphs, I'm sure if it were a physical book instead of a digital version, it would drip yellow ink. The book talks about obsessiveness: the need to feel in control. There is a self-test of 25 questions at the beginning of the book, and again I was appalled to find that I answered YES to all except four.

This book was an eye-opener for me, and helped me understand many aspects of my personality and the types of fears behind them, which move me to act or react in specific ways. It gave me many insights, which is a good first step towards being able to work to fix (or relax) them. What was missing from this book, however, were solutions... though I now understand that my need to have and understand all the answers, is a form of control as well. Also, most of this work must be done with the help of a therapist.

Enlightening and well documented from the co-authors' case studies. I highly recommend it.
