

## **The Perfectionistic Overcompensator Mode**

When the Perfectionistic Over-Compensator mode is activated within our personality system, our focus turns to protecting our Vulnerable Child from a perceived or real threat by attempting to exercise extreme control over our own actions and possibly the actions of other people too. Sometimes, there can be a part that falls into a suspicious version of this mode, which causes our system to experience a sense of hypervigilance, a certain degree of paranoia, and behaviours that are purely and simply designed to control what other people do. When blended with a part that's using this mode to cope, we make sure that everything in the area of life we're concerned with is "perfect." This way, we can avoid any form of judgement or criticism that might activate shame. Whether this judgement comes from the external world, or our own Internal Critics is completely irrelevant, the impact is the same.

When in a Perfectionistic Overcompensating mode, we can sometimes be seen by others as an overachiever in many areas of life. However, this is often to our emotional and physical detriment in one way or another as the constant drive to do things perfectly, sooner or later, leads to burnout of some kind. When blended with a part that's in a Perfectionistic Over-compensator Mode, it can also be true that we expect other people to be perfect too. This mode causes parts to see things in black and white terms, from one extreme to the other, without room for a middle ground. For example, when coupled with a compliant-surrender mode, and a Schema of Self Sacrifice, this behaviour can often lead to making sure that other people's needs are met perfectly, without compromise, no matter what. Failure to do so is a damning indictment of who we are, and its this overwhelming fear of shame that drives the behavioural response.

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**“I held myself to a higher level of expectation than other people did. In order to achieve this Unrelenting Standard, I had to be perfect in everything I did, otherwise my internal critic would judge me as a total failure.”**

~Steven Morris RP

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As I have previously discussed, my own personal vulnerabilities revolved around Defectiveness and Failure, so avoiding the shame that came with these particular schemas was a must in my own behaviours. My personality, driven by fear, was set up to keep as far away from these feelings as I possibly could, at all costs. Sometimes this meant an additional schema of Unrelenting Standards was activated in my system as a way to cope with this devastating fear of shame, and it was regularly matched with my Perfectionistic Over compensator. As the name suggests, this part of my personality was driven to be perfect, in everything I did. Failure to reach this level of expectation led to a judgmental Internal Critic that would reprimand me in a many different ways.

When the Perfectionistic Over compensator Mode is a dominant part of our personality, we blend with the thoughts and feelings that focus on controlling everything around us. This mode of behaviour is designed to protect our Vulnerable Child from the threat of judgement, whether this is an internal threat or an external threat, the coping mechanism, and its behavioural responses are the same. We will push ourselves to our physical, emotional, and psychological limits, never slowing down to take a breath or appreciate what we've accomplished, constantly striving for more without acknowledging or validating our accomplishments.

People who struggle with this behaviour mode will often justify its existence with statements like, "what's wrong with pushing myself?" or, "how else am I supposed to accomplish things?" While these are completely valid points of view, at the same time, the problem with the Perfectionistic Over-compensator is that it never allows us to stop and take a break from the expectation of perfection. Working with the Perfectionistic Over-compensator begins with mindful awareness. Understanding the language of the part, the feelings that come with it, and the schema that's connected to its initial activation. Planning Ahead to Build Mastery, Paying Attention to Positive Events, and the RAAVEN exercise are all key to removing the rigidity this part has for the perfection it is seeking. The Perfectionistic Over-compensator hinders our ability to live according to our values and beliefs, so learning to spot this part when it blends with our system is key to building the Life you Want to Live.

Next, let's check in to see how you relate to this Mode in your own behaviours. Answer the questions below based on your personal experiences and the rating scale provided.

Never 0	Sometimes 1	50/50 2	Often 3	Always 4
Description				Score
I often find myself needing to make sure I'm on top of everything in life, things have to be a certain way in order for me to feel at ease, if not I am anxious.				
People have referred to me as an "over achiever" in many areas of my life, it upsets me if expectations are not met by me or other people.				

Based on the scores you gave for the questions above, and the way you relate to the description provided on the previous pages, how Relevant is the Perfectionistic Overcompensator Mode to you in your life? Add the two scores together to calculate your prevalence score. On a scale of 0 – 8, 0 being not present at all, and 8 being present in my life every day, rate your experience of the Perfectionistic Overcompensator Mode.

My Perfectionistic Overcompensator Mode has a prevalence score of \_\_\_/8.

On the next page, take the time to explore your experience of the Perfectionistic Overcompensator Mode, see if you can identify how you feel when this Mode is active, how you are thinking when this Mode is active, what you do when this Mode is active, and what situations you might need to be aware of that can activate this way of thinking in your personality system.

- a. When I am in the Perfectionistic Overcompensator Mode, I experience the following feelings (List the emotions you experience in the Perfectionistic Overcompensator Mode, focus on the feelings in your system when you are constantly on the go, holding judgements for yourself and others about achievement related things).

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- b. When I am in the Perfectionistic Overcompensator Mode, I am having the following thoughts (List the thoughts you are having when you're in the Perfectionistic Over-compensator Mode, be specific, focus on thoughts that point out how the story in your system is an accurate one, how the narrative has to be true, and how there is no alternative to what you are hearing).

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- c. When I am in the Perfectionistic Overcompensator Mode, I behave in the following ways (List the things you do, the way you act, and how you react when you're in the Perfectionistic Over-compensator Mode).

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- d. The following situations are likely to be involved in triggering my Perfectionistic Overcompensator Mode (List the situations you are aware of that have activated this mode of behaviour in the past).

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