Perfectionism Cards:
24 Prompts for Conversation

Perfectionism has many faces. Sometimes it's high standards we set for ourselves, sometimes the way we look at others, and sometimes the others expect perfection from us. This 24 cards make the reasons behind it visible, so you can talk about them.

How to use the Cards: The cards can be used for individual reflection or on Teams to talk about perfectionism at work.

Note: These cards are a conversation starter, Not a diagnosis. The reasons on the Cards are Observations from practice, meant to spark reflection rather than to provide answers.

The cards fall in these three groups, based on the model by Hewitt and Fleet (1991):



Self-Oriented Perfectionism: I demand perfection from myself.

Socially-Prescribed Perfectionism: I feel others demand perfection from me.

Other-Oriented Perfectionism: I demand perfection from others.

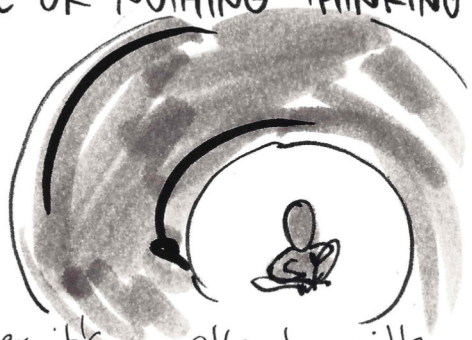
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FULL RESPONSIBILITY



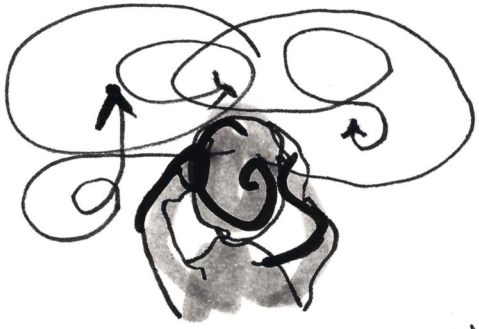
When everything rests on you alone, even the smallest gap feels like it becomes your fault.

ALL-OR-NOTHING THINKING



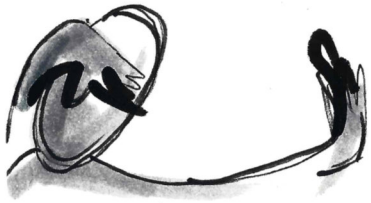
Either it's excellent, or it's worthless - there's no "good enough" in between.

SELF-DOUBT



Perfection becomes a shield against the fear of not being good enough.

NO CLEAR VISION



you hold yourself to a perfect picture you can't quite see, so nothing you make feels right.

IDENTITY TIED TO THE WORK



Bad work feels like it says something about who you are, not just what you made.

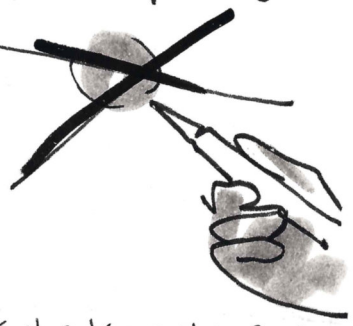
PERCEIVED EXPERTISE GAP



Not knowing "enough" holds you back, even when you already have something worth sharing.

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FEAR OF ONE WRONG MARK



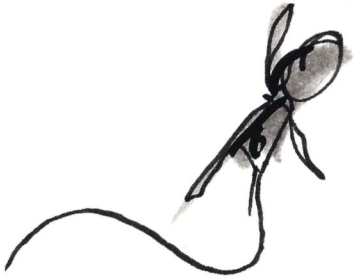
One wrong checkmark feels like it could undo everything, so every small decision gets overthought.

CONDITIONAL APPROVAL



Growing up, recognition came only with a good result so "enough" never quite feels safe.

MISTAKES AREN'T ALLOWED



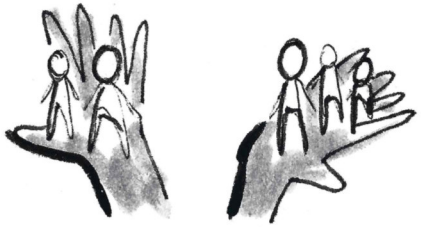
It feels as if the people around you won't accept that you can make mistakes too

NOTHING MAY BE MISSING



Everything has to be complete before starting - even one missing piece feels like reason enough to wait.

COMPARING TO EVERYONE ELSE



Everyone else seems to get it right without trying, so your own effort never feels like enough.

PRESSURE FROM PAST SUCCESS



Every success raises what others expect from you next time.

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FEAR OF TAKING UP SPACE



Sharing your views feels like asking for attention others haven't granted you.

NOT INTERESTING ENOUGH



Comparing yourself to others make you doubt whether what you have to say is interesting enough next to theirs.

MY NAME IS ON IT TOO



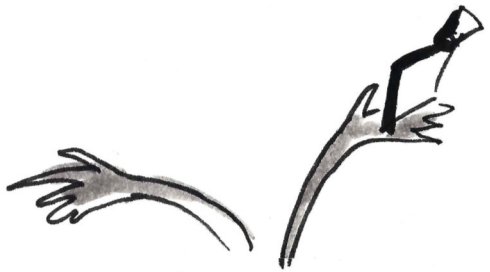
When other's work carries your name, you demand flawless results from them.

FEAR OF CRITICISM



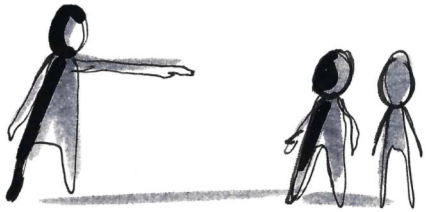
Worrying about others' opinions makes every flaw feel like it will be noticed and judged.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS



Doing something professionally means others expect more of you than you'd expect of yourself.

HARD ON MYSELF, HARD ON YOU



If you are hard on yourself, you are rarely gentle with others.

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CARING MEANS EFFORT



When effort shows care, less effort from others reads as less commitment.

UNSPOKEN STANDARD



When your standards live only in your head, others can't meet them and you end up quitly disappointed.

FEAR OF BEING LET DOWN



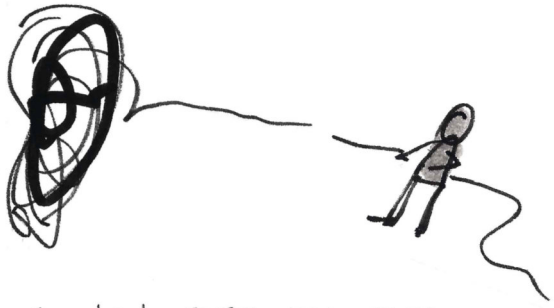
Relying on others feels risky when you can't accept that they might fall short.

SAFER IN MY OWN HANDS



Doing it yourself feels safer because others might not reach your bar.

NEED FOR CONTROL



Control over your own work grows into control over everyone else's.

DISAPPOINTED BY "GOOD ENOUGH"



When your own finish line is perfect, others' "done" feels like giving up.

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