

## *Kick Butt Therapy*

### **PERFECTIONISM:**



### **THE DEAD END STREET**

#### **Things to Know....**

- ≡ Perfectionism is based upon the thought that “perfection is obtainable.”
- ≡ Perfectionists believe that without aiming for perfection, you cannot find happiness or enjoy life.
- ≡ Perfectionism typically results in frustration and anger.
- ≡ Fear lurks behind perfectionism. Fear fires up your intense desire to make things perfect. Perfectionism protects you from having to face this fear.
- ≡ Perfectionism is a way of thinking. You have adopted it as part of your life.

#### **Things to do....**

- α Recognize that perfection is an illusion; it doesn't actually exist anywhere.
- α Adopt the belief that there is little correlation between aiming for perfection and happiness; learn to accept less; observe that it is possible to do something very well (though not perfect) and still derive satisfaction.
- α Recognize that perfection is an unrealistic expectation and, like all unrealistic expectations, will ultimately produce frustration. Modify your thoughts concerning this expectation.
- α Confront and recognize the fear and anxiety which exist once you unmask your perfectionism. Prepare yourself to ride out the anxiety once you decide to accept a more reasonable you. Refuse to yield to the perfectionist behavior.
- α Choose not to think perfectionism. Recognize that there are no negative consequences to doing something less than perfect.

Adapted from James Peterson, PhD.