

Perfectionism and Estrangement

In general, perfectionism is a recipe for depression. This is because perfectionism tells you to constantly raise the bar on yourself and say you not only could've done it better--you *should've* done it better.

Perfectionism is a difficult style for even non-estranged parents because it causes people to chronically feel like they should be doing more for their children, and to blame themselves if their children aren't doing well. For estranged parents, perfectionism can be agonizing because part of what is required to heal from an estrangement is the ability to:

Look at our mistakes

Take responsibility for those mistakes both to ourselves and our children

Be able to distinguish between what we might be responsible for, what we're not, and that very large area in between

Forgive yourself and move to a position of self-love and self-compassion

This may be difficult for the perfectionist, because their inner voice says:

- You should've done better
- You should've tried harder
- You're not doing enough now
- You don't deserve to feel good about yourself or forgive yourself because you're only as good as your achievements