



PBS seminar series: 28 October 2020, online

Speaker: Professor Gordon Flett, Department of Psychology, York University Canada

The Perils of Perfectionism in a Perilous Time

Abstract: Many health and mental health problems are rooted in deleterious personality orientations that impact how people respond to stress and life challenges. The current presentation will examine how and why so many people go beyond healthy striving for excellence and instead need to be absolutely perfect.

Perfectionism will be examined as a multidimensional construct with elements that have significant costs and consequences in terms of health and mental well-being. A central theme will be what it means to be highly perfectionistic and driven during this period of great stress and uncertainty around the world. It is argued that the nature and experiences associated with the global health crisis are exacerbating the already high levels of stress and distress and complex psychological problems found among vulnerable perfectionists. The talk will conclude with a series of recommendations for perfectionists to help them cope with problems in living during the pandemic and beyond.