

## Safety Strategies vs. Expansive Strategies for the Perfectionist

Here are some examples of perfectionist safety strategies we use in common situations, as well as alternative expansive strategies you can practice using instead.

<b>Safety Strategy</b>	<b>Expansive Strategy</b>
Finish up task so you can relax	Take a break, regardless of whether the task is completed.
Repeatedly check e-mail for errors.	Write and send.
Clean house to prepare for guests.	Leave some dirt and disarray.
Do hair and makeup perfectly.	Spend less time on hair or makeup.
Organize workspace so it is neat.	Leave some clutter.
Be careful in conversation not to offend.	Be spontaneous in conversations.
Don't waste time on things you're bad at.	Pick something hard and practice imperfectly.
Always be on time.	Arrive five minutes late to something.
Order carefully—don't look stupid to the waiter.	Intentionally mispronounce words when ordering.
Take pride in remembering people.	Intentionally call someone by the wrong name.
Express yourself correctly.	Allow for others to misunderstand you.
Plan everything well.	Stop making to-do lists for your weekends.
Appear competent at the cash register.	Pay for a purchase with change or small bills.
Appear competent at the coffee shop.	Ask barista where the half-and-half is.
Put off doing taxes, or anything you hate.	Set a time and spend five minutes on it.
Do things perfectly.	Allow for mistakes.
Hide signs of anxiety, like sweating and blushing.	Don't cover them up, and even point them out.
Fill conversation gaps with jokes and comments.	Stay quiet, no matter how awkward the silence.
Sit in the back at classes and meetings.	Sit up front.
Avoid embarrassment in meetings and/or classes.	Raise your hand and contribute at least once.

<b>Safety Strategy</b>	<b>Expansive Strategy</b>
Delay deciding things until you're sure.	Set a time to decide and stick to it.
Ask everyone for advice.	Make a decision independently of others.
Only do things you have an aptitude for.	Take up a hobby you know you won't be good at.
Attempt to cook the perfect meal.	When cooking for others, allow for mistakes.
Spend your free time doing practical pursuits.	Take a class on something random.
Carefully plan days off, weekends, and vacations.	Let your partner plan without consulting you.
Choose outfits carefully, matching style and color.	Wear the first things you try on.
Dress correctly for the situation.	Go to the mall while dressed for the gym, or vice versa.

The preceding strategies were behavioral. Here is a short list of opportunities to practice mental expansion strategies.

<b>Safety Strategy</b>	<b>Expansive Strategy</b>
Review the past, looking for mistakes.	Allow yourself to be uncertain about whether you made mistakes in the past.
Make a mental list so you won't forget anything.	Refrain from making a mental list, and allow for the possibility of forgetting something.
Worry when reminded of a problem.	Use the five-step problem-solving process.
Worry over a problem or past mistake repeatedly.	Thank your monkey, and ask for more or schedule yourself a Worry Time.