

# ART THERAPY RESOURCES



## ART THERAPY CASE STUDY BACKGROUND: PERFECTIONISM

Cindy has recently been referred to art therapy to help with his high levels of anxiety. Cindy had done some previous work on regulating his anxious feelings through art therapy. Cindy had expressed that her work environment was a place that regularly created anxious feelings for her. This week Cindy attended her art therapy session highly anxious about a work related situation. Cindy felt her colleagues were not putting enough work into a project she was responsible for. She was feeling very angry at her co-workers about their attitude and started to check on their progressively obsessively. Cindy was starting to send her colleagues constant reminders to do tasks, including contacting them after hours. One of Cindy's co-workers recently complained about Cindy to her boss about the excessive checking to complete tasks.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Discuss with your client the type of art supplies they may like to work with in this session. Your client may wish to use collage techniques and collect images from magazines or free clip art from online sources (eg. <http://www.freepik.com/>). Alternatively your client can use drawing or painting materials.
- Ask your client to reflect on the common perfectionist behaviours and reflect on whether they can identify any of those behaviours in a current situation that is causing them stress.
- Ask your client to create an artwork based on this reflection or their thoughts on perfectionism in general.
- After your client has completed the art therapy exercise, you can discuss their choices of images and words and whether they could identify any specific perfectionist behaviours that they exhibit.

### EXAMPLE EXERCISE:

Cindy reflected on perfectionism and how she can identify traits of perfectionist behaviours through her current work situation.

Cindy noted that while pursuing perfectionism appeared to be based on a desire to be a competent employee, she could also see that perfectionism can be constricting and make you feel confined in a box of expectations. These are the expectations she had been placing on her co-workers.

Cindy enjoyed her job and felt that letting go of control of situations at work might enable her co-workers to thrive and therefore create a more flexible and free work environment.



NOTE: more details can be found at [www.arttherapyresources.com.au/case-study-perfectionism](http://www.arttherapyresources.com.au/case-study-perfectionism)