

Embracing our own Imperfections
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By: Steven Campbell, Intelligence Heart

Do you have impossibly high standards for yourself—and maybe for others?

Do you beat yourself up when you make even a small mistake?

Do you believe your worth is based on how much you accomplish and what others think of you?

My dear reader...your desire to be perfect may be hurting you far more than you think.

Everyone has flaws and makes mistakes.

In childhood, many of us learn that we need to be perfect—that we have to look a particular way, act a particular way, and meet other people's expectations even at the expense of our own wellbeing.

Of course, these impossibly high standards are unrealistic.

No one can actually be perfect:

We irritate our spouses. We overdraw our bank accounts. We disappoint our parents and our bosses. We yell at our kids. We don't have time to shop and cook, so we order pizza for a second time this week. We drink too much. We numb out in front of our televisions, video games, and phones. We don't get enough sleep. We forget things. We're late to meetings. We make bad decisions.

And while these mistakes and imperfections are all completely normal. We judge ourselves, **often very harshly**, for being imperfect—for being human.

The problem isn't that we're imperfect.

The problem is we think that other people aren't!

We think they're living perfect (or nearly perfect) lives. It's no surprise that when we compare ourselves to others, we feel inadequate. We think: What's wrong with me? Everyone else seems to have it all together. I seem to be the only one who's struggling.

When we scroll through social media, other people's lives look perfect.

They've got cute kids, expensive vacations, lots of friends, a successful career, a kind/funny/ambitious spouse, designer clothes, and a perfect body.

It certainly looks good—on the outside!

But even if all these outward signs of a perfect life are true, **they don't tell the whole story.**

They don't tell you that behind that seemingly happy marriage is a controlling spouse. Behind that bikini body is an eating disorder. Those adorable kids still don't sleep through the night. The in-laws are critical and demanding. Behind that big house is a woman who's embarrassed to have people over because her house is such a mess.

Logically, we all know that no one's perfect, but just knowing that isn't enough to make us let go of our desire to be perfect. We either don't see that others struggle, or we don't hold them to the same impossibly high standards.

You might think it's fine for other people to make mistakes—but it's definitely not OK for you.

YOU...have to be perfect.

Through repetition, you've trained your brain to see what everyone else is doing right—their accomplishments and strengths and how perfect they seem. But you only see your own failures and weaknesses. Your thinking is skewed due to years of self-scrutiny and comparing yourself to other people's highlight reel.

Movies, magazines, and social media give us unrealistic ideas about what we should look like and be able to do. And our childhood experiences often plant the seeds of perfectionism, giving us the message that we're not good enough as we are. We come to believe that we need to prove our worth.

We need to work harder, accomplish more, be smarter, funnier, thinner, more interesting...especially now when we're stuck together during the Pandemic, more accommodating, and we should be able to do it all with ease!

In other words, we need to be something other than ourselves.

It isn't fair to hold ourselves to these ridiculously high standards—standards we can never meet. It's no wonder we feel terrible about ourselves. **It was a no-win proposition from the beginning.** We can never be perfect – and when we expect ourselves to be, we will always fall short. We will always feel inadequate.

But dear reader, here is some wonderful news.

Since your brain is believing EVERYTHING you are telling it, you can *replace...right now...what you are telling it!*

Rather, *choose* to embrace your own imperfections and accept yourself just as you are.

Perfectionism makes it hard for us to show up authentically because we're so focused on pleasing, perfecting, and proving ourselves.

Ironically, **it's being imperfect that makes us real and relatable.**

Now THAT...excites me!!

We often connect with others over our insecurities, quirks, and struggles. People who are truly interested in you and care about you do not expect you to be perfect; they want you to be authentic. Embracing your imperfections and letting others see the less than perfect parts of you, allows you to connect more deeply—to love others and be loved fully.

Choose connection over perfection. And start with those close to you, and then work outwards! It will make our being isolated with others a LOT easier.

You don't have to prove your worth. You don't have to please everyone all the time. You don't have to compare yourself to others. You don't have to measure up to anyone else's idea of beauty, success, or worthiness. Some people will like you—and some won't.

And that's...well...OK!

Nobody's perfect, but we all have value—and we don't have to keep trying to prove it.

Wow!