

How To Be Perfect If You Feel Ashamed of Your Flaws

There is no guide that will reliably tell you how to be perfect because perfection doesn't exist. It's time to embrace your flaws, and here's how.

One of the biggest traps that us self-improving humans fall into again and again is the pursuit of perfection. This includes getting bigger muscles in the gym, trying to cultivate a mind that is free of negative thoughts, or starting a new endeavour in our lives. Sometimes if it isn't perfect, we feel like it isn't worth doing.

Because perfection is the goal for many people, that means that whatever stands in the way of perfection is an enemy to be eliminated. That might be other people, other obstacles that you encounter, or perhaps most tragically, yourself and your own flaws. Not only this, but being a perfectionist has been shown to be terrible for your health.^[1]

There are two facts that you must know that, although they may seem obvious, are actually incredibly slimy and make you believe they aren't actually true. The first is that everyone has flaws. The second: perfection doesn't exist.

Therefore, if you plan on functioning as a relatively healthy human being for the rest of your life, it is probably time to come to terms with these facts. Unfortunately, a guide on how to be perfect full-stop doesn't exist because perfection itself doesn't exist. Instead, here is a guide on how to be perfectly imperfect, especially if you feel ashamed of your flaws.

Why Perfection Is an Illusion

It can be a surprisingly difficult thing to accept. Hopefully, you had a decent childhood where you would watch Disney movies, cartoons, and play with your favourite heroes and heroines.

Humans tend to find these sorts of things entertaining because they are easy to follow and give us some sense of purpose and direction. You rarely find a conflicted character in a Disney film: there is the clear good, and the clear bad. There is the extremely perfect hero and the extremely imperfect villain.

This idea of perfection is something that you subconsciously cling to as you enter adulthood. The world is immensely strange, complicated, and downright impossible to understand. Things are a lot easier to deal with when you make things black and white. Good and bad. Perfect and not perfect.

This is a common mistake and one that holds many people back. There is no one perfect policy, political party, action to take, or partner to be with. Every action ultimately involves a trade-off with another action^[2]. Even inaction comes with its own set of costs.

Even if you believe yourself to be taking the perfect action in a certain situation, you don't know how that action will affect someone else, the world, or even yourself down the line.

Waiting for the perfect partner might lead to a life of loneliness and an existence far from the happiness that you set out to achieve. Accepting the imperfections of a partner might lead to a life of happiness and, ironically, a life closer to 'perfection.'

There is no perfection in this life, only trade-offs that you have to make. The simple act of recognizing this can take you extremely far.

The Consequence of Pursuing Perfection

In one word: unhappiness.

As we have already established, perfection is an illusion, and therefore trying to chase it is a mistake that will only lead to misery, restlessness, and discontentment in your life.

Pursuing perfection is the same as kidding yourself that you will be happy when you find the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. It's a moving target that doesn't really exist but is quite often nice to think about.

As famous, modern-day thinker Naval Ravikant said:

'Desire is a contract that you make with yourself to be unhappy until you get what you want.'

The same can be said for happiness and the pursuit of perfection. Too many people force themselves to be unhappy until they reach a vain metric — sometimes perfection — before they will allow themselves to be happy.

You have a natural desire for more. You have a natural desire for improvement. You have a natural desire to be a better person. Everybody does. But improvement and the journey itself is the whole thing. There is no magical destination that will solve all of your problems.

Perfection doesn't exist. Don't ever fool yourself and trade in your happiness thinking that it does. It's a lousy, foolish pursuit.

Embracing Flaws Is the New 'Perfection'

You've probably tried hiding your flaws from other people or maybe even from yourself. Everybody has at some point. Maybe you feared being judged or rejected, or were worried about the opinions of other people, or were too afraid of what *you* might think of yourself if you dug too deep.

You've also probably revealed some of your flaws to close friends and family. This is part of life and where vulnerability is healthy. As you get to know people better, you start to open up, get comfortable, and effortlessly allow your true self to shine forth.

Think back to that awkward time you met your best friend and how silly you are together now. Think back to the awkward first date with your partner that is now a key part of your life. Think back to a time when you were

extremely embarrassed about something and your family brushed it off like it was nothing. Because after all, it was nothing, really.

During all of these instances and many others in your life, you have had flaws that you were self-conscious of, parts of you that you weren't particularly proud of, or hang-ups that you could never seem to completely shake off.

But look at where you are now. Look at how many of these things haven't even mattered in the end. Most likely, you were pulled even closer to those that you love in your life after you revealed your flaws to them, rather than feigning some sense of perfection that was never really there.

The same is true in reverse, too. You are touched when a friend opens up to you and asks for life advice. You feel great when you can help out a family member who has asked for your help with one of their flaws.

Despite what you make of them in your own head, flaws and openness and acceptance are all key parts of life and bring people together like no form of perfection ever could. You are perfectly *you*. Nobody has the complete 'you' package like you do — strengths, weaknesses, and all.^[3]

When you become who you are and not who you think you should be (or who someone else thinks that you should be), life gets much better. Your relationships deepen, people like you (or don't) for who you are, and you know that the ones that are sticking around are there for *you*, not a facade that you sometimes call 'you.'

Embracing flaws is the new perfection. They bring people together like no perfection ever could.

What to Do With Your Flaws

Now that you are starting to understand that maybe perfection isn't so great and that maybe your flaws aren't so bad, it can still be difficult to know what to do with them. After all, flaws don't just magically disappear overnight. Here are some of the steps that you can take to reset your relationship with your flaws and say goodbye to the myth of perfection forever.

1. Accept Them

Perhaps the most straightforward and most effective path that you can take is to start accepting your flaws. This is the ideal route to take, especially if everyone else is pretty chilled out about them apart from you.

Most likely, your flaws will only be minor things like how your tooth is a bit wonky or how your walk is slightly strange. Most people's flaws are things that only they see and that no-one else really pays attention to. Therefore, for your own peace of mind, it's usually best to just accept them for what they are.

If you are surrounded by good people, they tend to love you *because* of your flaws, not *despite* your flaws, so why worry?

2. Change Them

You never need to seek perfection, but if your flaws are standing in the way of your mental health, physical health, or relationships and accepting them isn't doing anyone much good, then the next step is to try and change

them.

Like with any change, though, it is important to not expect too much too soon, and to continue working towards the change in small steps, day by day. You wouldn't expect to become a pro-golfer in a matter of weeks or even months, and this skill is no different. It is perhaps even more difficult.

3. Forget Them

If you can't accept your flaws for whatever reason and are unable to change them, then a viable last resort is to simply do your best to forget about them. You will have had plenty of moments in your life where you weren't thinking about them and felt completely happy. Maybe somebody told you a funny joke. Maybe you were in awe of a shooting star. Maybe you had an essay that had a creeping deadline.

These moments of not dwelling on your flaws, not being worried about perfection, and living in the moment *have happened to you*. They're real. If you can't stop your mind from focusing on your flaws when you are at rest, then take your mind off them by doing something else.

Build up enough of these 'tactical distractions' and you might begin to realize that you can actually live your life despite these flaws, and then, paradoxically, they start to either become accepted or fade away altogether.

Final Thoughts

Hopefully, throughout this article, you have come to realize that perfection isn't a real thing and that the pursuit of perfection is a sure-fire way to live a life of misery and never feeling good enough. Perfection is shiny but made of nothing substantial.

On the other hand, flaws are something that you have, just like everyone else. If you don't think that somebody has flaws, you obviously don't know them well enough. However, flaws are nothing to be ashamed of. In fact, they are something to be celebrated. They bring you closer to the people that you care most about and are a part of your whole essence. Flaws aren't shiny but are made of something whole and pure.

Perfection should be shunned. Flaws should be celebrated.

More Tips on Accepting Your Flaws

1. Accept Yourself (Flaws and All): 7 Benefits of Being Vulnerable
2. Why Being A Perfectionist May Not Be So Perfect
3. How Not to Let Perfectionism Secretly Screw You Up

Reference

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