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DIVE INTO SELF-DISCOVERY

The Hidden Gift in Perfectionism

By *Creative Katrina*

Perfectionism often gets a bad rap, but it can be a great tool when we use it in positive ways.

By definition, a perfectionist is “a person who refuses to accept any standard short of perfection.” When we distill this idea down, what it really means is that being perfect is all tied up in our perspective, something we have the power to define for ourselves, and change. The challenge is in managing the emotions that spark up when things don’t appear “perfect”, tricking us into thinking we’ve fallen short or missed the mark.

Perfectionists always question themselves first, trying to find a way to do it “right”, and taking all the blame when expectations aren’t met. And no matter how talented and capable we are, we take on the blame anyway.

One of my creativity coaching clients is a multi-talented creative. She writes musicals, stories, and songs, plays the piano and guitar, sings, and loves to perform, all while taking classes to improve her various aptitudes. Despite all of these natural and practiced gifts, her perfectionist voice pops in a lot. It’s why she reached out to me. The voice gets twice as loud when she’s getting ready to start something big, or when things are not flowing according to how she envisions it in her mind. This is a reaction I know all too well as a perfectionist myself; well, a recovering one, anyway.

The understanding that you are a perfectionist offers an invitation to dig deeper and get really honest about what you need, and what throws you off balance. Being OK with the fact there’ll always be things to nitpick, no matter how much work we’ve put into something is good to know. It helps us catch ourselves in the act, so to speak. When we also acknowledge all the little things that may send us into picking to get to “perfect”, we can slowly shift out of reaction mode and into a self-compassionate place of non-judgement.

If you have perfectionist tendencies in your career or personal life, instead of judging yourself, rethink “perfect” to fit what you want, and need, moment to moment. Open up to seeing expectations for what they are, a personal version of the “ideal”. This helps remove the pressure to be perfect because we understand it’s self-defined. We don’t have to push to live up to another’s unreasonable standards because each and every person has a different idea of what perfect is, too. Once we truly understand this in our heart, we don’t have to beat ourselves up about every little detail and what other’s may think.

When we can see the gifts in our weaknesses, they turn into strengths we use to our advantage. The hidden gift in perfectionism is that we can set the bar high and really excel to meet it, while we practice being present, knowing we aren’t less than when we don’t hit it every single time.

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My unique support services help clients heal creative blocks, create deep personal clarity, and build confidence in self-expression. I offer creativity and writing coaching, content consulting, intuitive guidance sessions and classes.

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