

# PERFECTLY PERFECT – WHAT ARE WE DOING HERE?

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07/02/2017

Not in time. Boring. Always the same. Stupid. Not enough sounds. Too many sounds. Not confident enough. Too perky. Not kind enough. Too nice. Not expressive enough. Too vulnerable.

Perfectionism has many voices, but none of them are very pleasant to be around.

We probably all have to deal with perfectionism, some more regularly than others. If it's creating a new work, improvising, or even dealing with the tasks of entrepreneurship. We can always find something. Perfectionism can come in various shapes, some are more obvious and some are more sneaky. It can be that we are afraid of improvising because the voice in our head tells us we are not good at it. Or we procrastinate finishing a piece because we feel that it's "not there yet". Or we are scared of succeeding because we think that we are not good enough, or we don't deserve it, and therefore holding opportunities away from ourselves.

But what is perfect supposed to mean? Who tells us when something is perfect? Who even has the right to judge it? How do we know when we've reached maximum perfection? And how can we know that the thing that seems perfect now will still be perfect ten years from now?

We should all take a deep breath here.

Perfection seems like a very intangible, fuzzy, abstract construct that is dwelling in our minds. No matter how it found its way there – childhood experiences, society, past situations, it is not very helpful in reaching our full potential, and I suppose that many of us know the numbing feeling of the perfectionism that is creeping into a new creative project that initially seemed so exciting and intriguing.

Perfectionism is like going into a tap class with the expectation of nailing and understanding everything right away. If we knew everything already, why would we go in the first place? If we ever get to a point where we feel there is no more to learn for us, then we are in huge trouble. Because if we know everything already, what's the point of being here then? We might as well be dead, floating around as energies of pure love and universal knowledge. But we came into this human existence for a reason. I believe that our higher self is supposed to learn things while it's present in this human body. Our body is a vessel for our higher self to explore the things it could not explore on its own.

We are not made to be perfect. We are made to learn and grow. To fully embrace this human experience with all its ups and downs.

I find that being perfect and being our best are two very different things. Being our best means that we strive to be in tune with ourselves as much as possible so that our human form can serve as the vessel our higher self needs to express itself in this current realm. Being perfect on the other side is a condition of the ego that wants to control everything. But let's face it, our human brain has a very limited capacity, and it often does not understand the greater whole. Our higher self though does. For the best, we should strive to remove our ego from the playground and make way for our higher self to

lead us to where we need to go.

Our ego rarely knows what's up. It tries to make believe that we have to do something in a certain way because that's how somebody else has done it, or because it seems like the greatest crowd-pleaser, or because it is technically complicated.

Don't listen to it my friends! Our higher self knows better. If we stop and listen and manage to stand the stillness, our higher self will make itself heard and show us the way. We all have something completely unique to say, and if we are courageous enough to listen to it and accept ourselves in every part, that's when the magic happens. And, referring to my previous article [\*Thoughts On Trick Steps\*](#), it makes the tools secondary – we can express our truth both through shuffles and through over-the-tops, as long as it serves us and our message.

On that note, I find that it is highly beneficial to indulge in practices like meditation or other mindfulness activities. Coming back to our center as often as possible helps us connect to this inner wisdom that each and everyone of us is carrying inside.

All that we need is already within us. We are already complete. Things that are outside of us may enrich and inform us, but everything we find over the course of our lives has been there from the start. It's just that we need to tune in to that frequency that allows us to feel and see it.

That's why I avoid the use of the word “mistake” when I teach or create. It has such a negative connotation in our society, and often we are being told by others or ourselves that we must not make mistakes, and if we do, there is something wrong with us. What is a mistake supposed to be? Usually, it's an experience that did not happen the way we planned or expected or wanted, or something that made us or others feel a negative feeling, or caused pain in our own and other peoples' lives.

Are we a bad person because of that?

What we perceive as a mistake often does not happen on purpose (and if it does, it is probably rooted in an underlying issue with ourselves, but that's another story). We don't want to be off time. We don't want to forget part of the choreography at the performance. We don't want to be angry at the people we love. But still, we do these things. And that's okay.

I think that the key here is to reflect on how we deal with issues like these. If we tend to be very perfectionistic, we often beat ourselves up for what we have done or not done, said or not said, thought or not thought. Does putting ourselves down result in less pain? I hardly think so. The more pain we cause in ourselves, the more pain we cause in others, because they have to deal with a version of us that does not love ourself. And that results in more ego-driven, unwanted actions.

Loving ourselves does not only imply the bright things, it also implies the painful, frustrating, sad, and angry parts.

So what if instead of attacking ourselves for our “mistakes”, we would encounter ourselves with acceptance, compassion, and forgiveness? Whatever it is that has happened, we cannot change it anymore. What we can change is our attitude towards it. Yes, we completely screwed up this performance. Does that make us less valuable? Does that mean we are going to be expelled from tap dancing? Does that mean we are not good at what we are doing?

I doubt it.

Is it an experience that needed to happen because it was something we needed to learn? Does it teach us that life goes on, even if a life situation might not have been very pleasant? Does it show us that the contrast of things that don't feel good and things that feel good make us feel alive? Does it show us the way to more self love? I believe that more.

Accepting our “mistakes” does not mean that we like them. We simply give up resistance. They say

what we resist, persists, and it makes sense, because the more we focus on something, the more present it becomes in our life.

So whatever we do, from my stance it is the healthiest to strive for integrity instead of perfection. Even if that means moving slower. Again, everybody is meandering down their own life path. What we do on that path is way less important than how we do it.

Let's put it this way: what would you prefer – ten 5-count wings with landing on the toe in 300bpm double time feel, executed with rush and tension and desperately reaching for perfection? Or a bunch of buttery-smooth shuffles executed with intention, ease, invigorating attention to all the sound nuances and radiating the love for yourself, and the world around you? Your choice.