

Today's word that we're redefining is one that we all use, and it's a lie every time we use it.

It's the word **perfect**.

The dictionary **defines** perfect as: Having all the desired or required elements, qualities, or characteristics.
Absolute; complete.

And of course, we just have to look at the definition of perfectionism too, if we're going to dive into the dictionary:

The **refusal** to accept any standard short of perfect.

Wow - the **refusal** to accept anything less than perfect.

Perfect - and the accompanying disease of perfectionism then has to be looked at.

But **how** do we define it?

When we choose perfection, very often we are going for an ideal that is beyond what we are humanly able to accomplish. In this lifetime, we will not manage to accomplish "perfect" because perfect doesn't exist this side of Glory - it's a nutty myth perpetuated by marketing experts, overzealous parents, and social media influencers.

It's one thing to say perfect all the time - after all, it “could be” perfect for you if something you're doing, have or desire, has all the desired or required elements, qualities or characteristics - then yes it is, but it truly is the perfectionistic tendencies that we all need to be aware of - perfectionism robs us blind of a vibrant life.

Let's peer at the telltale signs of perfectionism -

1. You expect perfection from everyone.
2. You procrastinate - fear of failure, so why bother?
3. You use your reticular activating system in a distorted way - looking for evidence to support your inadequacies by pointing out your flaws or mistakes.
4. All or nothing thinking - black/white good/bad “she is mean” instead of “sometimes she is mean”.
5. One cookie ruins your Hot Melt Sprint so you eat the whole bag.
6. You do it because INSERT NAME HERE can't do it “right”.
7. You can't meet your own ridiculously high standards - and neither can anyone else.
8. Everything is good, except one little thing - guess what perfectionists focus on?
9. You sacrifice your own self-care to make something perfect.
10. You are highly critical of others, yourself and point out mistakes.

How do we stop this behavior?

1. Acknowledge it. When you're aware, you can shift it.
2. Seek to understand. What's driving this? Need for love, approval, acceptance? Coaching and counseling helped me a lot.
3. Consider the cost - perfectionism messes with you: your psyche, relationships, and productivity. It will cost you your mental health.
4. Enough is enough - and knowing you're enough in all your flawed glory gives an opportunity for **acceptance**. Yes, you can still change, but not if you don't first love and accept yourself.
5. Allow for failure - remember, Michael Jordan famously said, "I've missed 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost 300 games. 26 times, I was trusted to make the game-winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over again in my life, and **that is why I succeed.**"

We are all works in progress, and not a single one of us has been able to skip the step of being a flawed human.

We are blessedly able to evolve - there will always be room for improvement, bettering, and more to learn.

Let's put our eyes on the prize: vibrancy.

And we do this through excellence, not perfectionism.