

Are You a Perfectionist or Someone Who Values Doing Things Well?

Written by admin

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by Karla Downing

Are you wondering if you are a perfectionist or just someone who values doing things well? Answer the following seven questions:

When you fail or fall short of your expectations, do you:

Beat yourself up in your mind with negative self-talk? People who value doing the best they can understand that they will make mistakes no matter how hard they try. Perfectionists don't allow themselves to make mistakes and are extremely hard on themselves when they do.

Obsess on the mistake and have trouble letting it go? People who value doing the best they can let go of their mistakes after learning from them. Perfectionists obsess on the mistake and have a great deal of difficulty letting it go because it shouldn't have happened.

Punish yourself in other ways? People who value doing the best they can do not punish themselves for making mistakes, because they expect to. Perfectionists punish themselves in some way, even if it is only a mental berating. They may also make themselves work harder, study harder, and avoid fun to compensate for the mistake.

Vow to try harder next time and never let this happen again? People who value doing the best they can are already focused on doing a good job and do not have to vow to do better. Perfectionists are harsh with themselves and vow to not let it happen again, because it is unacceptable to make mistakes in the first place.

Feel embarrassed, guilty, or ashamed? People who do the best they can don't feel that mistakes are a reflection of their inadequacy; hence they are not embarrassed, ashamed, or guilty. Perfectionists feel that mistakes are a direct reflection of who they are and that a mistake is a reflection of their inadequacy. They do struggle with guilt, shame, and embarrassment.

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Replay the mistake to figure out how it happened? People who value a good job replay the mistake once to learn from it, but perfectionists replay it over and over to figure out what went wrong to insure it will never happen again.

Fear the response of other people when they find out? People who do a good job don't care if anyone finds out that they made a mistake. They don't have to be perfect. Perfectionists are invested in maintaining a perfect image out of fear and do care what people think.

Jesus was perfect, yet there was no more grace-filled person than him. God wants us to do the best we can in everything as unto the Lord (Colossians 3:17), but we are not expected to never make a mistake. 1 John 1:9 tells us that we will make mistakes and there is continual grace and forgiveness for them. In fact, it tells us that if we think we aren't going to make mistakes, we don't walk in truth. Let go of perfectionism and strive instead for doing your best and letting that be good enough. That is offering yourself the same grace God gives you.

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