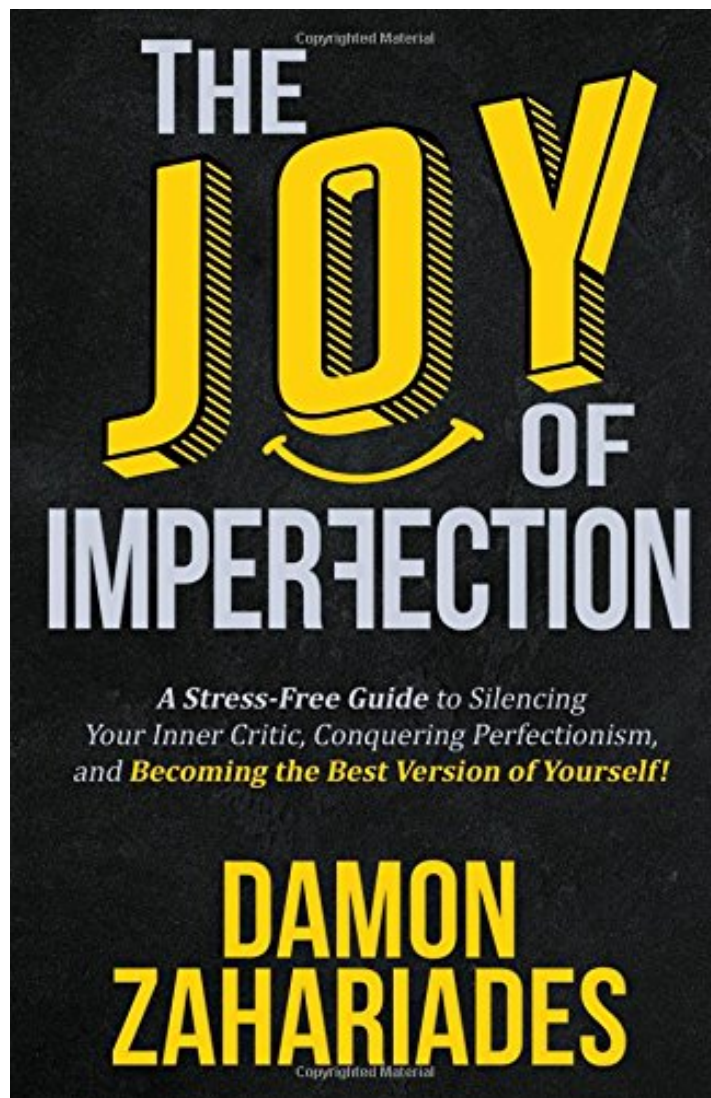


To Be Perfectly Imperfect

Published by Autumn Conner

On April 7th, 2019



"Have no fear of perfection. You will never reach it." Salvador Dali

Today's To-Do List...

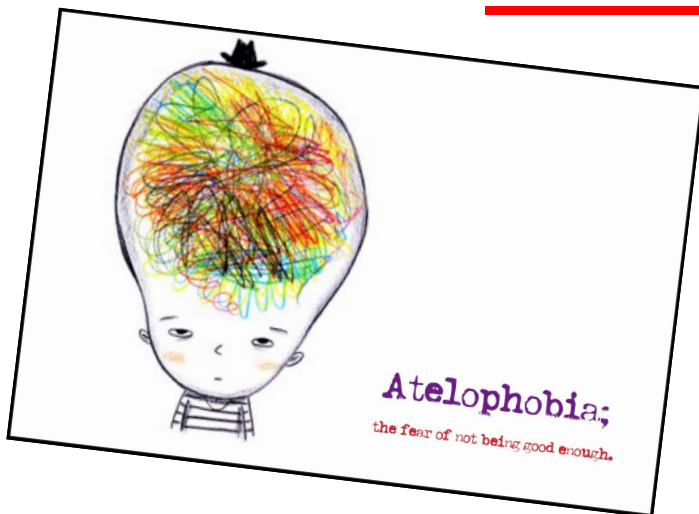
In today's post I would like to talk define the true meaning of perfectionism, my experience in life being a perfectionist and the ways that I used Damon Zahariades's strategies in his guide, Joy of Imperfection, to overcome my perfectionism, and the things I have taken away after reading such a brilliant book.

So, what does it even mean to be a perfectionist? I'll tell you the technical term...

Perfectionism: a disposition to

regard anything short of perfection as unacceptable especially the setting of unrealistically demanding goals accompanied by a disposition to regard failure to achieve them as unacceptable and a sign of personal worthlessness.

(Merriam-Webster)



Why Did I Choose This Book?

I chose the Joy of Imperfection, by Damon Zahariades, because I really wanted to find something to read that would leave a bigger mark on my life and give me lessons and advise I could take with me

forever. Let me tell you, this is that book!!! It's available for sale on Amazon and its available through Kindle Fire. Zahariades' guide to imperfection stood out to me in the list of books to read because I have battled with myself for years on working on my inner critic and perfectionist. Let me start off by saying that as



the oldest child of 4, I have had this pressure put on me for years to be a “perfect example” or “perfect leader” to my siblings and cousins. For so long I have been expected to do everything perfect and pave the way and it has honestly... drained me. It’s like it has been drilled in my mom for everything I do to be perfect because people are watching. So, when I originally saw this guide, I knew it was the one for me, in order to help me overcome wanting to be “Little Miss Perfect” at everything I do. This book stood out to me out of a slew of the other options because I knew it would help me with what I’d been fighting myself for so long about.

The Problems I Faced...

I WANT EVERYTHING TO BE PERFECT! Many times, I will literally go over the same assignment 3+ times just because I overthink the directions or my answers. Or, my body image, where I can sit in the mirror for 1+ hours focusing on the weight I need to lose in which area. After I realized that my obsessions for me to be perfect were getting out of control, I took it upon myself to pay attention to the signs that I was a perfectionist. Have you ever felt like nothing you do is good enough so you keep trying and trying and trying because there’s no room for mistakes? That’s how I felt for years before finding Zahariades’ guide.

11 WAYS TO TELL IF YOU ARE A PERFECTIONIST

1. There is **no room for mistakes in your world**. Whenever you see an error, you'd be the first to jump on it.
2. You have a **very specific manner in which things should be done**. Any other way is not acceptable.
3. You have an **all-or-nothing approach**. It's either you do everything well, or you don't do it at all.
4. It's **all about the end result**. As long as you haven't achieved 100% of your goal, you haven't achieved it yet.
5. You are **extremely hard on yourself**, even for very little things.
6. You **become depressed** when you don't achieve your goals.
7. You have **extremely high standards**. While some of them seem impossible, that doesn't stop you from setting them.
8. **Success is never enough**. No matter what you've achieved, you never seem happy with it.
9. You **procrastinate** just to do things at the 'right' moment.
10. You **constantly spot mistakes** when others don't see any.
11. You often **spend a lot of time just to perfect something**.

© Celestine Chua; Learn to handle your perfectionism:
personalexcellence.co/blog/perfectionism/

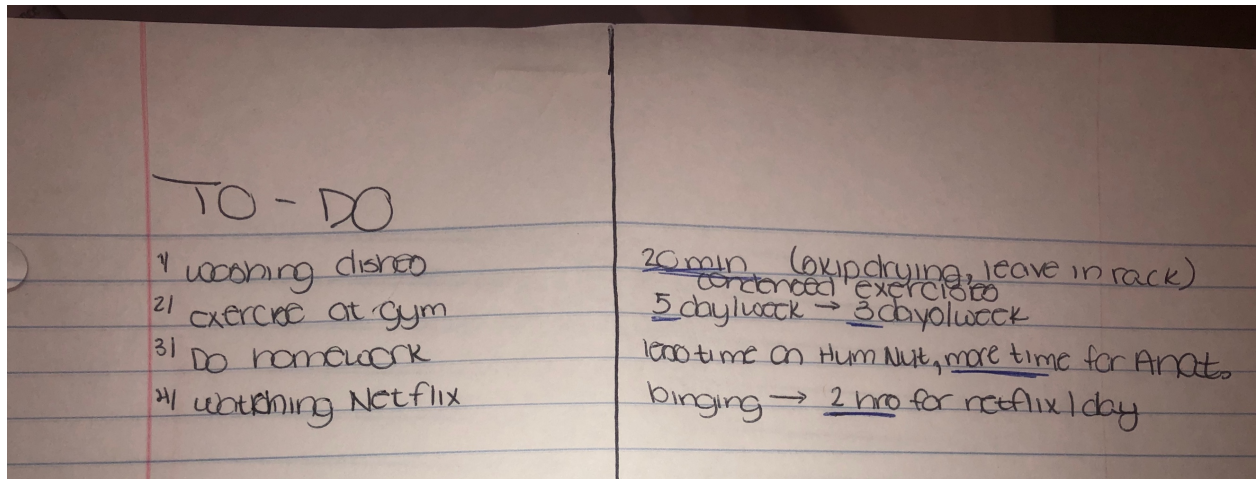
Well, What Have I Been Working On?

There were multiple strategies throughout Zahariades's book to help cope with one's inner perfectionist, the ones that I chose stuck to me the most because I feel like when I used them, they gave me the most ease and comfort with being able to work through my desire to do everything perfect. When I first started college, I noticed that I had more problems trying to do everything in the perfect way whether it was school worth or ethically in general. If things were not 100% then I considered it as a fail and the book's strategies helped me greatly with realizing how to look at things half full instead of half empty.

.....

The 80/20 rule: By following the 80/20 rule you learn to put constraint on time and effort for a task and forces the perfectionist to be practical with "feasible" results. It's when you put 20% of your time towards something and save the other 80% towards different tasks that need to be completed. It was so useful for me to complete this task because I dedicated more time to other things that needed to be done but I was never able to in a timely manner before because of my perfectionism. This strategy was especially useful for my social life activities and my schoolwork. I focused on learning to give 20% of my time to each of my 5 classes in order to efficiently get my work done in a timely manner.

For this strategy, every single week I would divide a sheet of paper into 2 columns; one side with the tasks that I completely flawlessly either on a daily basis or weekly, and the other column I wrote the new ways I minimized the time I would spend on that task by condensing the extra work I do.



The 80/20 rule helped me a lot with learning how to accept things the way I do them the first time instead of over thinking and changing it multiple times because I don't feel as if it is "perfect." While doing this strategy Zahariades helped me understand that this strategy of focusing more on getting more things done thoroughly, I will find that doing everything 100% is unnecessary and a waste of time. It's important to focus on less "perfect" and more "plenty."

.....

The second strategy I tried was trying to do something that I am unskilled in to overcome the fear of failing. It was probably my favorite strategy I learned to use because I challenged myself to so many things I wouldn't typically do. I wrote down everything I've never done before and where I might mess up and the goal was to show my inner perfectionist that lack of proficiency should never stop me from doing things. Many times, I tend to avoid a lot of things that I want or need to do because I fear that I would look silly if I did them wrong.

When I used this strategy I learned to make a chart of everything I've never done before and write down where I may make a mistake doing them, each time I try something new each week I'll cross it off and write

the obstacles I faced and how I overcame them. I made sure to add a lot of tasks that I know I would have to do sooner or later or things I have always wanted to do before. I made a list of things I've been reluctant to do due to inexperience or the fear of failing and promised to accomplish for the week.

- ✔ **Week one: Giving a speech in African American History**
 - Fears: stumbling over my words, talking infant of an audience, speaking on a topic that didn't hold their attention
 - Ways I overcame my fear: practiced my speech over and over till I felt confident enough to say it with no paper, couldn't find a good topic that would be interesting to talk about with alot of facts until I went to office hours

- ✔ **Week two: Go speed dating**
 - Fears: embarrassing myself in front of complete strangers because I don't do well with speaking in front of others
 - Ways I overcame my fear: went speed dating and got the chance to let my guard down|

Doing this strategy helped get me out of my comfort zone, it gave me that sense of uncomfortableness that I needed to feel like my inner critic and perfectionist could be challenged. One question Zahariades taught me to ask myself was, "where can I improve or correct each mistake that I make during this process?" Like when I was required to speak in my History class, I made sure to write down any area I could possibly mess up in and how I could do better, like jumbling over my words I could improve by reciting my speech slower and more thoroughly. I appreciate this strategy so much because as I went through the process, I improved so much along the way of my inner critic. I took action and sought for corrective action in the event that I made mistakes helped me calm down a lot with the way that I critiqued myself.

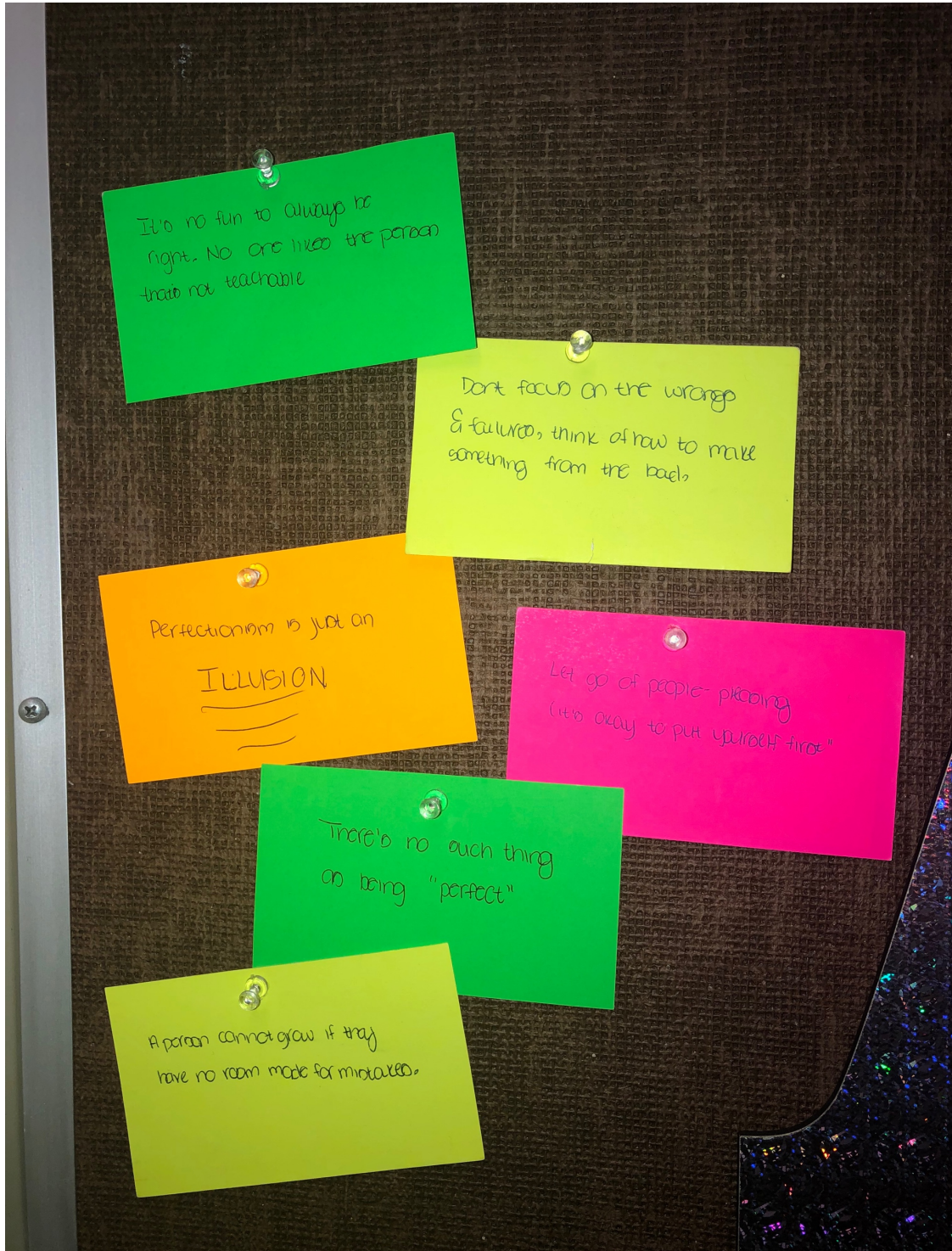
.....

The last strategy I learned to use was writing down sticky notes that would help give me constant reminders that perfectionism is a mental thing that can be defeated. I value the use of this strategy so much

because now I wake up each and every day reading the encouraging notecards that give me a push to work on myself.

In the process of using this strategy I made a few quotes on my calendar and notecards to put on my wall that would catch my eye each morning or every time I would slip into my inner critic and perfectionist ways. Zahariades states in his guide that repeating to yourself over and over that you are WORKING to overcome your perfectionism and it is a journey waiting to be completed.





It's no fun to always be right. No one likes the person that's not teachable

Don't focus on the wrongs & failures, think of how to make something from the back

Perfectionism is just an ILLUSION

Let go of people-pleasing (it's okay to put yourself first)

There's no such thing as being "perfect"

A person cannot grow if they have no room made for mistakes.

Using this strategy helped me remind myself each day of the fact that I am a working progress. Perfectionism is a mindset and I must work each day to fix my mindset by reading the notecards. Zahariades' theory is that if something is reiterated to a person multiple times it becomes a

part of them. I would like more positive thoughts of ways to be less critiquing and more accepting of mistakes.

So, What Are My Final Reviews of This Book?

I recommend this book to any one, younger or older that have been in my shoes. Anyone that has felt like nothing is ever good enough or the feeling that they must work harder no matter what, the person that feels like there are no room for mistakes. I root for the ones that take control of their lives and face their inner perfectionist and critic like Zahariades targets in the guide.

I am able to face my fears and learn that in life, if you do not make room for mistakes then you will never grow. With mistakes comes learning, with learning comes a better person.

Zahariades' guide, broken up into 3 parts of how to accept your perfectionism and overcome it, has helped pave the way for me to reach my goal. Trust me, this book is the real deal!

I've learned so much throughout reading this guide that has helped me figure out who I am and come to terms with accepting that I portray many characteristics of a perfectionist and I am now working on ways to overcome my fear of failure and things not exceeding expectations. The Joy of Imperfection is a well written guide that will help you become a better, more accepting you. I learned a lot about myself and ways that I can strategize how I will plan my days, or ways to help me when I am feeling overwhelmed and many other areas of life. I know that this book has helped me change my outlook on a lot of the things that I do, and I recommend to anyone who is feeling how I felt before I opened this book.