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WHY ARE WE AFRAID OF PERFECTION

By Arleen M. Kaptur

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Many potentially great writers have enough enthusiasm and energy to keep the Olympic torch going for the next thousand years. They are "writing" in their minds 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Months on end, their mind is fast at work with fantastic ideas, characters, and then – the bottom falls out.

They sent in that manuscript, or submitted that query and it came back "Sorry, it doesn't fit our current publication needs." Yes, a rejection is a turn-down whether the publisher uses kind words or just a form letter. In other words, our perfect attempt at literature was not perfect. It didn't hit that "publish me" target with these publications or editors.

Then these souls that have labored untold hours and typed, retyped, and typed again are devastated. They cannot, will not, and "you can't convince me for all the money at Fort Knox" to continue writing.

Why do we base perfection on one, two, or even three opinions? What you wrote, thinking it was your "best to date" is exactly that! It is YOUR best to date, and you are pleased with it as you should be. It is where you were at that particular moment of your writing life. It was perfection at 9:23 a.m. on Monday, the fourth of November. Leave it at that and start on your next piece of perfection.

Should you attempt to change or modify what you wrote and that was rejected? Of course, because it still has the opportunity to be perfection on whatever day in time you finish it for the second, third, or how many other times. The most important step here is that you went ahead, didn't sell all your pencils and paper, and moved forward, not backward, and not stood still.

When a child is born that is far less than perfect, the parents and all those involved in this mystery of life, must find a way to bolster their attempt at making the best of a "less than perfect" situation. This, of course, is a far more tragic undertaking than what a writer faces with a rejection. But we can learn so much from those that face walls that are made of concrete, while ours are simply plaster. The families

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of these children that the world has labeled "less than perfect" are still proud of their perfect little boy or girl. To them, at the moment they are holding him/her in their arms, they are totally perfect. They are the most precious, wonderful miracle that two people can create. They will love and be proud of this example of their love each subsequent moment, at that particular moment, even when the hurdles come along. When the child attempts something and cannot do it, they will be proud of their attempt. When they take a "baby" step in the right direction, they will applaud their efforts. When they fail completely, they will hold them tight and love the perfect way they tried at that moment.

You see, only you can equate perfection in your writing. If you are pleased, then the writing is pleasing. If you gave it all you had, everything you could muster, then it is perfection. It will never be "perfect" to everyone, every single time, and every single moment in time.

Your work that you considered perfect was and still is perfect for its space in time. Look with inspiration at people who face graver challenges and you will find that their very example motivates you to cherish your perfect article or book and be proud of it. Today is a new day, and yesterday's perfect book may need a little dusting, or polishing to meet your perfect stamp of approval for today.

Perfection is what you perceive it as, and this holds true for every other person in the world. It may not be one person's idea of perfection, so the job at hand is to match your perfection with the publisher or editor who will consider it "perfection" when the right moment in time comes along.

The only mistake you can make will be to give up and quit. Quitting is nobody's idea of perfection and it will never be. If you quit, it is failure – right down to that last sentence, that last period. The ONLY time you fail is when you quit. Your article or book can never be given the chance to be perfect to anyone at anytime. You wrote "The End" and closed the cover.

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Is it right to long for perfection?

By ajaypats

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Perfection is achieved, not when there is nothing more to add, but when there is nothing left to take away. Aim for success, not perfection. Never give up your right to be wrong, because then you will lose the ability to learn new things and move forward with your life. Assert your right to make a few mistakes. If people can't accept your imperfections, that's their fault. Remember that fear always lurks behind perfectionism. Confronting your fears and allowing yourself the right to be human can, paradoxically, make you a far happier and more productive person. Have patience with all things, but chiefly have patience with yourself. Do not lose courage in considering your own imperfections but instantly set about remedying them – every day begin the task anew.

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Things will never be perfect. Sometimes they will never even be close. Yet that is no reason to hide away from life, no reason to curse your predicament. On the contrary, it is every reason to rise up and go forth with renewed determination.

If you wait for conditions to be perfect, you won't ever get much done. If you refuse to go ahead unless you can be guaranteed of a sure thing, you'll never get very far.

It's great to aim toward perfection, yet to arrive at perfection you must cross through a lot of imperfection. To get everything just right, you must be willing to deal with things going wrong. Take this day, this moment, with all its flaws, and make the very most of it. Rather than complaining about what you don't have or where you'd rather be, make full use of where you are, of what you do have.

Aim toward perfection while also accepting the reality of what is. And excellence will surely result

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