



BONUS: Perfect Doesn't Exist

Transcript

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Since I can remember, I've been a perfectionist. I talk about it a lot, so much so that I actually did an episode all about perfectionism. It's something a lot of us in the dietetics perfection struggle with, and it's definitely been a struggle for me, too.

I honestly don't remember when perfectionism became so huge in my life, because as far back as I can remember, I've been a perfectionist. Or maybe it's better to say I've struggled with perfectionism. I remember when I was a little girl, I'd worry all the time about everything. If the picture I colored wasn't perfect, I'd throw it out and beat myself up for coloring out of the lines. As I got older, I kept reinforcing the perfectionism part of me, and I was often rewarded and recognized for a job well done. When I was in grade 2, my teacher would hand out these "get out of homework free" cards. We got them for all sorts of things. Like if we helped clean up the classroom or we helped a friend with something, we'd get one of the "get out of homework free" passes. They kind of looked like Monopoly money. And they were laminated. And I had a little stash in my desk. I mean, we really didn't have a lot of homework. We were in grade 2, but the incentive sure worked, especially for type A personality Jana. Oh, yeah. And collecting the cards felt so good. A little token to remind me I did something great and wonderful to earn such a special card.

Nighttime has always been my big worry time. I'd be lying if I said I still don't worry at nighttime, because I do. Sometimes I'm so exhausted I fall asleep immediately. But if there's something bothering me, I'll wake up around 01:00 in the morning and that's it, I'm up. I'll be exhausted but can't sleep because my mind will be racing a million miles a minute. If you're listening to this and thinking, oh, my goodness, that's so me, I get you. You're not alone. This one night in grade 2, I was laying in my bed, my tummy hurting so bad with what we call in our house, the "uh-oh feeling". But I couldn't figure out why I was feeling like that. And then it hit me. I forgot my homework at school.

I laid in bed sick to my stomach. I thought the world's going to end. I can't show my face at school without finishing my homework. So I very slowly, very quietly walked down the stairs and crept towards my mom, trying not to make a lot of noise. She was sitting at the kitchen table balancing her checkbook. It makes me me laughed because I've never balanced a checkbook in my life. But there's so many times I saw her balancing that book. My dad was at hockey. I know. So Canadian. Anyways, she looked at me almost like deja vu and asked me

what happened now. I got emotional and told her I forgot my homework at school and there's no way I can go to school the next day. I knew it was a long shot for her to let me stay home. And I was right. She won and I had to go to school the next day.

But she did help me try to solve the problem. She said, “Jana, don't you have all those get out of homework free cards at school? Just use one of those”. I got quiet and thought, “Oh, yeah. I do have those”. But see, this is the thing. I was collecting them. I never had any intention of using them, because I had every intention to turn in my homework every single day.

So for as long as I can remember, my goal has been to be perfect. That's what I've always aimed for. Something completely impossible to achieve. Because perfect doesn't exist. No one's perfect. But it's still hard for me. It's a challenge.

And I got to tell you, I double, triple, quadruple check every single thing I do.

Which is why I was so upset when I discovered I somehow uploaded the wrong podcast episode to one of the episodes, and it accidentally got published. Oh, my goodness. The horror. And guess what happened when I discovered this tragedy? My stomach dropped. I got that oh so familiar feeling in my tummy, and I immediately deleted the episode and then reposted it with the correct episode. Let me tell you, it took me a minute to breathe through it. I felt shame. But that's when the queen researcher of vulnerability and shame, the one and only Brené Brown, popped up in my head. And this quote came to mind: “If you put shame in a petri dish, it needs three ingredients to grow exponentially secrecy, silence and judgment. If you put the same amount of shame in the petri dish and doused with empathy, it can't survive”. So I had to take that quote and apply it to moi. I had to be empathetic and kind to myself.

I'm just so glad I didn't drop some F-bombs, because this is a clean show. Or that my phone didn't ring and you heard a juicy one sided conversation. And the truth is, no one died by listening to that episode. At least I hope not. It must have been hard to listen to, though. I kept repeating myself and I drank a lot of water. You could hear me clear my throat at one point. Even talking about it right now is so hard. But I'm human, and in the big scheme of things, it could be way worse.

So if you listen to that episode, my sincerest apologies for such a hard episode to get through. Certainly not my intention. The truth is, releasing regular podcast episodes is really a lot of work. But it brings me so much joy to be able to help RDs2Be achieve the last step of this long journey we're on, which is passing the RD exam. I

sometimes record episodes multiple times, or I do a lot of editing to make it sound smooth and easy for you, the listener, because I care about giving back to the RD community and I want to help as much as possible.

So I do my best to yep, make it and perfect as possible. So much for double, triple, quadruple checking my episodes. After all this, I just want to say don't worry if you make mistakes because you will at some point make a mistake or multiple mistakes, because that's just part of being human. You aren't less of a person. You aren't less worthy or deserving of being here as a dietitian. So thank you for being here, for listening to the episodes I put out there, for choosing this profession. Because you're going to be incredible. You already are.

And thank you for the kind messages I receive. I truly love connecting with other RD's and RDs2Bee. This community is so special and I'm beyond excited for you to be part of it. Dietitians, seriously make the best friends.

So with that, I say keep going. Keep doing you. And when perfectionism starts taking control of your life, remember you don't need to be perfect. It doesn't exist. But you do. And you're enough exactly the way you are.