

Chapter 1

See Yourself as Perfect the Way You Are

How can you most effectively get what you want...and be more liked for it? To begin with, think of yourself as being perfect the way you are. You may not always be correct but you are perfect. This is very important. Why? It means that all of the good about you is perfect, all of the bad about you is perfect, the mistakes you make are perfect, etc. In short, you are perfect simply by being *you*.

If you see yourself from this perspective, you can then focus your attention on what others are telling you. This is crucial. It helps you to better decide what their words mean to you. Then you would know what to do. You would know how best to react, instead of being defensive or rejecting of what is said to you - whether it is “good” or “bad”. This implies that everything about yourself is perfect *for you*. You may not be seen as perfect by other people, but you are perfect to yourself. Conversely, you must also view other people being as perfect for who they are - good, bad, or indifferent.

Why is this so important? If you see yourself as bad or imperfect, you then see yourself as “wrong” and become unhappy with yourself. No one likes to be wrong. To see yourself as perfect prevents you from judging yourself or feeling

defensive. Then you can focus on the issue itself rather than try to figure out who was right and who was wrong. In other words, seeing yourself as perfect as you are precludes being defensive. It lets you really hear what the other person is saying. If you don't see yourself as perfect, you will inevitably become defensive and not listen to what issue or issues are being raised. This will create problems in your dialog. Others will feel they have to work harder to prove their point or get their message across. These types of ordinary conversational processes almost always lead to an argument or disagreement, often needlessly.

But when you see yourself as perfect, you prevent this from happening, provide a better avenue to hear the issues, and reach satisfactory solutions. Even if you've made a mistake or have done wrong, when you see yourself as perfect, you allow the person to help you correct the problem. You change your "perfect wrong" to a "perfect right;" and the other person helps you do this and feels much better.

However, if you do not see yourself as perfect the way you are, the other person may try to manipulate you. How? Firstly, by making you feel guilty, which exerts unnecessary pressure on you. Most importantly, you may be locked into a mind set which resists change, attack the other person, or try to explain the reason for your behavior. This leaves you open to being judged or reprimanded for doing wrong. This inevitably leads to conflict and unhappiness.

Furthermore, if you don't see yourself as perfect, your self-esteem is lowered, which can zap your energy and drive. Then you begin to feel depressed. In effect, you are turning the anger, frustration, and bad feelings in on yourself. Then you try to change what you don't like about yourself and try to correct

your mistakes. But when you view yourself as perfect as you are, you can focus on your needs as opposed to trying to change yourself. This is a positive use of energy.

The point to remember is: when you are ready to make a change, you will do so! You cannot change before you are ready. For example, if you regard some behavior of yours as bad and try to change yourself, the other person will try to change you the way they think you should be changed. This makes you defensive. Moreover, this process could continue indefinitely and ultimately irritate you. Again, see yourself as perfect, then focus on getting your needs met!

To illustrate: say you have a fear of heights and your friends invite you to join them on the top of a very tall building to view the city. If you refuse, they might call you “chicken.” This is a form of manipulation. To handle this, you could say, “Let me be chicken.” This statement has a dual effect. Firstly, you are telling the person what to do to make you happy: to let you be. Secondly, it implies that you are perfect the way you are. If you are chicken, you are a perfect one! This prevents you from being manipulated and puts you in control of what you want. Further, you are instructing others on what to do to please you. Thus, you avoid becoming defensive. You stay focused on what you want. If they challenge, saying: “You always spoil the fun.,” you still stay focused on what you want. You might respond: “Let me spoil it. Go ahead and let me wait for you here.” You are focused and clear on what you want. “Let me spoil it.” implies that you are perfect the way you are. This is a simple example of getting what you want!

Conversely, if you see the other person as being bad or having flaws, you will try to change them and create a problem.

See others as perfect as well as yourself. In fact, see yourself surrounded by perfect people. We are all perfect people living in an imperfect world. Worldly imperfections create problems between people and cause them to do things they might not otherwise do. Does this mean you have to like or accept people's choices or behavior? No. It simply prevents you from judging, evaluating, or condemning others. Moreover, it enables you to focus on helping that perfect person please you or make you happy.

Your focus is always on getting *your* needs met rather than proving others right or wrong, etc.

Always Perfect But Not Infallible

Some people have told us they find it hard to think this way because they make mistakes. We all make mistakes. We've all heard the phrase, "Nobody is perfect." Even when you make a mistake, you must see yourself and your mistake as perfect. Perfect, but not necessarily correct. Mistakes arise from pressures, stressful experiences, or specific circumstances. Circumstances are not perfect, but you are. For your own emotional health and well being, you must correct your mistakes.

Let's take this point another step further. Let's say that you arrive at ten a.m. for a 9:30 a.m. meeting. Is that being perfect? Yes! You arrived to the meeting late perfectly. And you will deal with amending or rectifying your lateness perfectly as well. But your perfection at *being you* is intact.

Why is this concept so important? Despite your behavior, the mind set to see yourself as perfect precludes

feeling guilty. It frees you to assume responsibility for your actions, eliminates the need to become defensive, or to justify what you have done. Whatever you have done, you have done being perfect as you are.

Assuming this mindset of being perfect as you are also helping the other person to be clearer about their problem with your behavior. It allows them to focus on the problem instead of trying to verbally attack you or explain why you were wrong.

Double Benefit

Thus, the value of seeing yourself as perfect the way you are has a double benefit: It prevents you from being manipulated, forced, coerced, or persuaded by others. It also helps them deal with you in a positive and constructive manner, and to stay focused on your issue or what you want. If someone is negative or judgmental toward you, it won't be an issue if you see yourself as perfect the way you are. You now have a solid platform on which to work from to help others satisfy your needs and please you as well as themselves. Essentially, this mindset protects you from being susceptible to adverse statements, feeling judged, or from becoming defensive. Seeing yourself and others as perfect gives you the *power* to stay focused. Specific ways to do this are discussed in great detail in the Chapter entitled Anger.