

50 Ways to Leave Your Perfect

Breaking up with Perfect involves both initial repentance and daily choices. To keep the process going when the book is done or to reset when you feel yourself slipping back into the Pit of Perfection, implement one or two of these a day to intentionally choose relationship over perfection. (I know. I know. It's a list. You should take The List *out of* the girl but not a list *from* the girl!) These exercises include everything from serious spiritual disciplines to the downright silly. After all, walking away from perfection needs to include lots of laughing at ourselves.

1. Go through an entire day without any form of list. Wing it and enjoy!
2. Know you are uniquely made and deeply loved by God. You were never meant to be a cookie-cutter woman.
3. Leave your Spanx in the drawer today and rejoice in your lumps and bumps.
4. When you don't have an answer, admit it.
5. Remind yourself... Your God-created personality is meant to be the beautiful centerpiece of your soul.
6. Meditate on this: "In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling." (Exodus 15: 13)
7. Ask questions instead of pretending you know what someone is talking about.
8. Make a list of the events in your life that have shattered your picture of Perfect. Beside each, write something good that never would have happened without that event.
9. Repeat after me... I wasn't made to pursue Perfect. I'm most amazing when I'm pursuing Jesus.
10. Pick something out of your closet you loved when you bought it, but you've never worn. (I can almost guarantee you bought it when you were feeling brave but then second-guessed whether it fit your image.) Wear it today.
11. Meditate on this: "Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful." (I Cor. 7-9)
12. Eat a picnic with family or friends on the floor of your most formal (translation: never used) room tonight for dinner.
13. Don't make any extra plans today and determine you'll accept whatever assignment/activity/rest God brings.
14. Remember... your past doesn't mean you'll never be good enough. God has determined your worth, and you are a treasure.
15. Decide today... I'm trading in Perfect for God's love, nurture, forgiveness and healing.
16. Meditate on this: "Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you." (Psalm 63:3)
17. Make a date with a wise, loving, truth-telling friend today. Tell her she has permission to tell you the truth about your blind spots.

18. Tell someone a story today that reveals one of your quirks and laugh about it.
19. Intentionally plan a time of rest.
20. Start a journal where you record truths about God's character as you read the Bible.
21. Meditate on this: "Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." (Psalm 90: 12)
22. Say this out loud, "I will stop my pursuit of perfection so God can begin perfecting me."
23. Wear mismatched socks on purpose. Don't tell anybody, but giggle every time you think about it during the day.
24. Remind yourself... Your identity is in Christ not the roles you fill.
25. If you have kids, let them wear whatever they want to school today. Or, paint your fingernails a wild color just for fun.
26. Meditate on this: "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me." (II Cor. 12: 9)
27. Rejoice in God's greatness and your smallness.
28. Invite friends over spur of the moment. You're allowed to wipe down the downstairs bathroom but not to clean the whole house!
29. Examine a conflict you've been part of recently. How did it start? Was it because your expectations weren't met? Make a step to restore that relationship.
30. Identify one unrealistic expectation you have of someone you love. Let it go.
31. Meditate on this: "And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God." (Ephes. 3:17b-19)
32. Let your kids pack their own lunch today or pack a Twinkie for your snack break at work. (One day won't hurt, and we all deserve to act like kids sometimes!)
33. Assign someone in your group to make all the decisions for the night out. Go along for the ride.
34. Be honest with yourself about someone of whom you've been jealous. Pray blessings over their gifts.
35. Choose to put someone else first as you go through your day today.
36. Meditate on this: "...because by one sacrifice he [Jesus] has made perfect forever those who are being made holy." (Hebrews 10:14)
37. Look for an opportunity to let someone else have their way even when you're convinced your way is best.
38. Identify something you've used to create an image—a piece of clothing, an accessory, an activity, etc.—that doesn't match who you really are. Get rid of it, and replace it with something that's true to you.
39. Be aware of when you start striving for perfection today. Remind yourself to turn to God, pray, and rest in His perfecting work.
40. Don't make your bed today. Jump on it if you dare!
41. Meditate on this: "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love." (I John 4: 18)

42. Choose a spiritual activity today—prayer, Bible study, scripture memorization, silence/listening to God—to increase your internal being instead of worrying about the externals.
43. Sign up to volunteer serving a group of people very different than you.
44. Instead of going shopping with a friend today, plan a fun activity that focuses on relationship. (I.e. I'm celebrating with friends soon by buying some Depends and heading to a trampoline park!)
45. Clean out your closet with an eye for excess and things you've bought to create an image. Give them away to your favorite charity with a thrift store or leave them anonymously on a friend's porch who you know would be blessed and delighted.
46. Meditate on this: "Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. (Ephes. 3: 20-21)
47. Think through relationships you've ended over the years. Do you have regrets because you severed it when things just got too uncomfortable for you? Reach out to that friend with a card or email.
48. Take your calendar into your time with God. Ask Him to verify or correct your schedule.
49. Assess your service. Is your love tank overflowing into your tasks?
50. Meditate on this: "Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.... But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3: 12, 13b-14)