

Robert J. Furey "So I'm Not Perfect. A psychology of humility"

p. xi R. May took a deep breath and said, "A man does not write a book when he knows something. He writes a book when he is struggling with something".

p.3 The curious paradox is that when I accept myself as I am, then I change – Carl Rogers

p.4 We seem to believe that the only direction is up. Consequently, people have a very difficult time accepting the dimensions of our being which are not constantly improving.

p.5 The attainment of greater humility is the foundation principle of each A.A's twelve steps.

p.7 Psychologically speaking, humility is the acceptance of our imperfection. It does not prohibit self-expression.

**p.8 Without humility we tend to place severe and unrealistic demands upon ourselves.**

We can never do all that we can imagine.

p.9 Our talents and limitations interact to produce a purpose in our lives.

The sin of which modern man is most frequently found guilty is that of "self-sufficiency". It is the belief that man is sufficient unto himself and needs no divine authority and guide. It is the certainty that man is capable of fathoming all secrets, of controlling all events, of mastering all situations, even of achieving a utopian society of peace and prosperity which would endure until the end of time.

**p.10 Humility provides one with a firm sense of self and a direction in life.**

p.11 If we do not accept our limitations, we do not accept who we are.

Humility involves accepting the aspects of our world which cannot be improved.

If I do not allow for my own imperfection, I will never really know myself.

**p.12 Accepting a humble attitude toward life means resigning from the constant competition to be the best. If happiness belonged only to the "best" person in the world, then there would only be one happy person; and that person would probably be very lonely.**

**p.13** our interpersonal relationships deepen when imperfection becomes acceptable.

p.14 Often we encounter individuals who base their self-worth on what they have rather than what they are.

**p.15 A secure identity begins in a secure environment. Family and friends need to provide a dependable and somewhat predictable environment for the growing child. As the child grows into adulthood, the security of the environment becomes incorporated into the inner self.**

This security can be described as the feeling 'I am somebody with a unique set of talents and limitations. And I can live with this'.

p.16 Chesterton summed it up accurately when he said, "It is always the secure who are humble".

How in the world did a nice emotion like pride get elected first of the seven deadly sins?

p.17 The proud yet humble man feels good about himself for who he is.

p.18 Humility keeps pride from turning into feelings of superiority.

Humility and pride compose a dialectic; each concept gives the other meaning. Without humility, pride becomes arrogance and conceit. Without pride, humility becomes passivity and complacency.

p.19 Bitter people usually vascillate between intense feelings of inferiority and equally strong feelings of superiority.

p.20 People age toward death and there are physical, psychological and emotional consequences to the aging process.

People need people. Birth involves two parents and a child.

p.21 Both the aging process and our need for other people are humbling experiences.

p.24 Healthy people do not feel defeated when they realize their need for other people.

p.25 The person with pervasive feelings of inferiority leads a tragic life. The only rewards he knows are intermittent feelings of superiority which really only serve as opportunities to release anger at others. This person rarely, if ever, experiences happiness and his hopes for the future are usually exaggerated fantasies.

**People who feel inferior have the attitude, "If people really knew me, they'd know just how terrible I really am". So they construct facades in an attempt to keep others from seeing how horrible they are.**

p.28 It's not easy for people with low self-esteem to ask for help. Asking for help means admitting the need for help. The façade then weakens and the individual becomes even more vulnerable.

**p.29 Experiences which convince us that we are not as good as, and consequently do not belong with, others are humiliations. The epitome of humiliation is the experience of being laughed at.**

p.31 People who feel inferior place themselves in a suffocating bind. These people live in a state of uncertainty. They are not sure what other people like, how other people feel, or how they should act. Consequently, they cling to any type of certainty they can find. The thing they are most certain about, however, is their inferiority. It is the one thing they feel has been absolutely proven by experience.

A humiliating experience leads to feelings of inferiority. Inferiority results from repeated humiliations. **Humility, on the other hand, results from acceptance of our imperfection.**

p.33 **In vast majority of cases, feelings of superiority are attempts to compensate for feelings of inferiority.**

p.35 **Talmud, in fact, states that humiliating someone in the presence of others is as heinous a crime as murder**

But if I hold on to the belief – “I’m better than everyone else” – I will remain forever alone.

p.37 A certain amount of vulnerability is an inherent part of life. Successful adjustment requires that humility replace illusion.

I’ve heard it said that the value of a relationship comes through self-expression.

p.38 When I display my individuality, I take a risk. I take the chance that who I am is not good enough. If I am not sure if I am good enough, I will leave the decision to others. I will let them decide how I should feel about myself. With young children, this situation is normal. **Adults need more self-acceptance.**

Children

p.43 **Before he can accept himself, he needs to feel accepted by others.**

p.45 **Some people spend their lives trying to please their parents. In many of these cases parental approval is held out like a carrot just beyond the person’s reach. Acceptance is always contingent upon the successful completion of the *next* task. This sort of parent-child relationship produces one of life’s most pathetic creatures – perfectionist.**

p.46 The loving parent encourages growth, though growth leads to freedom.

p.47 Low self-esteem children will tease or belittle the handicapped and the retarded.

p.51 **The teenagers’ greatest fear is a return to the dependency of childhood. His second greatest fear is the fear of the adult world.**

p.52 Kad likti paaugliu, reikia atidélioti visus suaugusio sprendimus. Santykiai turi likti laisvais ir neįpareigojančiais.

**If an individual cannot accept himself, he has not completed adolescence. As long as his opinion of himself is controlled solely by what other people think, he cannot enter adulthood.**

**When a person cannot accept himself, he becomes dependent on the acceptance of others.**

p.58 To say ‘I need something’ implies that I am not completely self-sufficient.

p.59 Without humility, we could not admit to having needs. We would only be able to face the ‘good’ things about ourselves.

p.60 Just facing a fact that one has made a mistake can be a tremendous lesson. Learning that one is fallible adds maturity to all future decisions.

p.63 Darbas ir asmeninis gyvenimas. Without a personal life, we risk losing our individual uniqueness and style. Our life force is our curiosity.

**p.64 The jealous person resents people who appear to be „better“ because they make him look „worse“. Again we see low self-esteem spawning a competitive life style.**

p.65 If we cannot accept our flaws, we will be jealous of anyone who reminds us of these shortcomings.

p.67 Often the feeling “I love you” is very similar to the feeling of intense gratitude. It’s like, “I love you because you’ve done so much for me”. I don’t think we could love someone if we didn’t allow ourselves to experience gratitude.

p.71 Many mental health professionals feel that once someone has reached the point of complete despair he has three alternatives: 1) suicide, 2) insanity or 3) dedicate himself to treatment.

**Despair can be an important part of the therapeutic process. It can signal the point where the client has dropped his façade and has begun to examine his real self.**

p.72 If we want to experience reality clearly, we need to open ourselves up to all emotions. If we fear certain emotions, we will fear certain realities.

p.73 Life is the story to which we do not want to know the ending.

One of the most dramatic personal events that occurs during adulthood is a shift in time perspective, when one starts thinking in terms of time-left-to-live rather than time-since-birth.

p.75 Older adults are less inclined than younger ones to use escapist fantasy as a means to deal with stresses of life.

The wise and humble person leaves this world feeling he is flawed and yet feeling no shame.

p.76 Samuel Dresner:

When our own ego is the constant center of all our concern, decisions and actions, and when our own selves are the shining hub in which are set the numberless spokes of life, around which all our thoughts, feelings and encounters revolve in a never changing whirl of self-centeredness, then we have blinders over our spiritual eyes.

p.77 As long as we placed self-reliance first, a genuine reliance upon a Higher Power was out of the question.

p.79 Lisl Marburg Godman

The more complete one’s life is, the more... one’s creative capacities are fulfilled, the less one fears death... **People are not afraid of death per se, but of the incompleteness of their lives.**

p.80 The fear of death is not innate. It is a learned phenomenon.

p.83 People who deny death are usually unclear on their missions in life. They seem to live with the attitude, "I'll decide later".

p.85 Whenever a person feels his fate is completely beyond his control, suicide is a possibility.

p.87 The question, "If I had my life to live over, what would I do differently?", is a very therapeutic one.

History only records individuality. Posterity only accepts one's uniqueness. We are remembered for how we were different from the rest. If we live a life of conformity, we leave little behind us when we die.

p.88 The more we feel our lives count for something, the less we fear death. We are not running away from death when we pursue life. Indeed, death encourages a vigorous pursuit of life.

p. 90 Mourning is a process of coming to terms with something we cannot do.

**p.91 Healthy mourning requires that we admit to ourselves and to certain people in our lives that we are hurt and that we need support. Bereaved individuals who feel they must remain "the strong one" are likely to have a difficult time.**

p.92 Death, especially a sudden death, leaves us with an intense feeling of how unpredictable life is.

Grief also contains anger. In many people, in fact, the intensity of anger surpasses that of sorrow. This is especially true in the early phases of mourning.

p.101 When low self-esteem remains, serious problems can arise. Chronic and severe low self-esteem results in shame. The person who feels ashamed of himself will continue to shy away from people.

It is virtually impossible to bolster one's self-esteem while isolated from other people.

**If I feel guilt, I feel remorse for WHAT I HAVE DONE.**

**If I feel shame, I feel remorse for WHO I AM.**

**We cannot, however, accept ourselves if we believe we are unlovable.**

p.103 We become ashamed of ourselves when we do not accept the limitations which we cannot change.

The healthy individual, whether he be disabled or "normal", feels proud for what he can do and humble for what he cannot.

p.104 Acceptance by others precedes the acceptance of self. If one grows up feeling rejected by others, he is likely to eventually reject himself.

**p.105 The most popular form of discrimination against the disabled is avoidance.**

p.106 The most insidious (tyliai plintanti kaip užkratas) form of self-esteem is that which is based on the pain of others.

Bigotry (fanatizmas, nekvestionuojamas savo teisumo laikymasis) represents an attempt to praise one's self without accepting one's self. It is a way of being "better" without necessarily being "good". The majority of bigots have little self-esteem.

**p.108 Keeping significant dimensions of ourselves locked inside leads to loneliness. Loneliness describes the feeling that no one really knows me.**

**We keep such secrets if we feel that other people would not accept us if they *really* knew us.**

**People who can look back on relationships where they were genuinely accepted have an important advantage in life.**

p.110 Obese people live with the prejudice that equates fat with lazy.

People don't need to be accepted by everyone if we know we are, or have been, loved by someone.

**p.113 When I demand that I be perfect, I become ashamed that I am not. A compulsive desire for perfection does not lead to perfection. It leads to shame.**

p.116 Without humility, pride swells to arrogance. Without pride, humility fades into passivity and inferiority.

**p.119 When we attempt more than we can accomplish, we encounter failure. Failure represents the potential consequence of ambition. The fear of failure can destroy ambition.**

If our educational institutions expect to promote lifelong learning, they need to sensitize individuals to those aspects of life which are rich in information. Failure is one such area.

p.120 The basis of laziness as well as many forms of mental illness is a person's refusal to face difficult experiences – past, present and future.

p.121 I began chapter one by defining humility as the acceptance of one's own imperfections.

p.122 We feel the need to know when we realize that we do not know. We ask questions when we can accept that we do not know. We feel proud when we learn. We feel humble when we find new questions.

**p.123 Humility keeps our egos from getting in the way of our senses. A humble person can see and hear and feel more clearly.**

**Reality can be terrifying. Erich Fromm once wrote, "Free man is by necessity insecure; thinking man is by necessity uncertain".**

p.124 Humble people can live with the knowledge that there is more power in the universe than they can attain.

