

Becoming an Improvanist

Which mental state do you think might serve better for growth and learning over a lifetime:

Perfectionism:

Striving for flawlessness and perfection, often accompanied by self-critical evaluations and concerns regarding others' evaluations. Perfectionism keeps us stuck in a state of overwhelm and frustration. It often stops us from even getting started on a project or vision.

Improvanism:

Recognition that forward movement often involves imperfections, and learning from these imperfections can actually benefit the overall process and help us improve more consistently.

Improvanism takes into account that we are, by nature, incremental movers. We don't teleport (yet), instead we move step by step, with some moving faster and some slower. This mindset embraces the journey and the individual steps that make up the whole. It allows us to recognize and celebrate the improvements we make along the way as a necessary part of success.

Thinking Short and Long

When it comes to starting out any new goal, it can be of great benefit to think both short and long. By this I mean that it's important to hold two perspectives: The long-term vision + short-term immediate steps right in front of us.

Many of us focus a bit too much on the great feeling of "summitting" and reaching our goal, and then get totally overwhelmed at all the steps and work it will take just to get to the top of the mountain. We see every step at once (and all the possible failure points along the way), and sometimes the task feels so big that we decide that not getting started is a better option than facing all that potential failure.

We want to do it perfectly right from the start, or not at all.

Seems a bit silly when I say it that way, right? It would be like a child watching their big brother or sister running around and deciding they want to do that as well. But they start to think about all the difficulty of pulling up...putting that one foot in front of the other...balancing...looking around...avoiding obstacles. "Waaaay too dangerous. I'll just stay here on the cozy carpet and crawl around. I'll become a master crawler!"

It may sound silly, but we do this all the time. We forget that learning something new is often messy and imperfect. We also forget how much joy can be found when we focus on just the next task at hand and let the rest of the steps come as we are ready for them. Learning to revel in this present moment.



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"Too many people spend too much time trying to perfect something before they actually do it. Instead of waiting for perfection, run with what you've got and fix it as you go."

~ Paul Arden