



This issue builds resilience in...

Managing Stress

Realistic Expectations

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## Perfectionism, what's it costing you?

Parents today feel enormous pressure to achieve: *happy & contented children ✓ amazing relationships ✓ well nourished family ✓ clean and tidy home ✓ well cared for extended family ✓ 'Awesome' kids parties ✓ fit, healthy, vibrant and immaculately dressed ✓ gorgeous home ✓ financial security ✓* and the list is endless. Trying to keep all these balls in the air 'perfectly' all the time is contributing to the epidemic of stress, anxiety and depression in high functioning parents.

### What's so great about being 'perfect'?

It hides the fear. Fear of uncertainty. Brene Brown says that we perfect ourselves and our children to avoid shame or blame, to avoid feeling unworthy but according to her extensive research, it doesn't work. When the balls of perfectionism start to fall the common reaction is to numb the sense of failure with food, alcohol, addictions, medications or by trying to perfect someone else, usually our children or nearest and dearest. By attempting to live up to these 'perfect' expectations, enormous pressure is placed on everyone to be 'awesome' or 'the best' but it misses the point, which is to...

### ... belong and feel worthy of love and connection.

Do you judge whether someone is worthy of love (e.g. your children) by how perfectly they've completed a task or how clean they've kept their clothes? Would you love them less if they were having a 'bad hair' day? So often we place these types of expectations on ourselves to feel worthy of belonging, love and connection. It doesn't make sense.

### 15% holds the key...

A world acclaimed conductor, after suffering severe stage fright for over 35 years, trying to

perfect every performance, was told by his life long mentor that 85% was good enough. After spending years striving for 100% or more, he was at first aghast but then realised that 85% was achievable every time, if he rehearsed his orchestra enough. The rest was out of his control. 100% all the time is impossible, but 85% is very achievable. That extra 15% is what causes 90% of the stress, anxiety and depression and it's not even realistic. When he gave up the 15%, he gave up stage fright, sickness and fear and started having fun. His career, already stellar, jumped up a whole new level and for the first time he was relaxed in front of a full auditorium. Can you aim for 85% or less and be kinder on yourself and those you love?

- ✓ High functioning parents are falling prey to the perfection syndrome.
- ✓ Fear of shame or blame can cause perfectionism, drive families into over-achievement and cause disconnect.
- ✓ Take the 15% challenge and aim for 85% or less!

**"One of the symptoms of an approaching nervous breakdown is the belief that one's work is terribly important."**

Bertrand Russell