

Have you ever been so overwhelmed by your own inability to get stuff done, so frustrated by your ability to fail so easily that you've only been able to see yourself as a walking liability? Like you're a burden to everyone you come across? Like you'd be a better friend, sister, mother, \*insert relationship here\* if you were just better at...everything? Being human means having limitations and sometimes being human is just the worst.

## THIS IS SUCKER PUNCHED

I had a conversation the other day with a friend who was so frustrated that she wants to feel confident in her friendships and safe sharing the parts of herself that are scariest. She's realized it's important to her that her friendships can be equal parts fun, loyalty, and vulnerability, but she has no clue where to start or how to do it. She's not the only one. I hope you'll join us in my new course in October: *Courageous Community: Finally Create Vulnerable and Intimate Friendships*. We'll hang out once a week for four weeks, discussing how to confidently make new friends, go deeper with the ones you already have, and figure out how and when to do it. Registration is now open and will close September 29<sup>th</sup>. Registration is only open for a short time and I'm not sure when I'll be teaching this course live again, so don't miss your chance! Sign up now for \$149 or two payments of \$80 and you'll get to be part of 4 virtual meetups, recordings of each session, access to me via office hours, worksheets to help you process and plan, and lots of new friends! As always, there are several scholarship spots open because money should never be a barrier to becoming your best self. Find out more details at [BeckyLMcCoy.com/CourageousCommunity](http://BeckyLMcCoy.com/CourageousCommunity)

I distinctly remember sitting in counseling one day, frustrated with myself. I'd only been a solo parent for a few years and was struggling to juggle the responsibilities that come with parenting, keeping home functional and people fed, and giving myself and kids the time and space to process everything we'd just experienced. In the span of two years, I'd had two kids and lost both my dad and my husband to cancer. As I sat on the therapist's couch, hugging a pillow, tears streaming down my face, I admitted that I felt like I was tripping and falling my way through life. I was so discouraged that all of my organization and planning was not producing the straight-forward, predictable, and manageable life I wanted. Everything felt so hard and I wasn't sure I was doing any of it well. I wasn't sure I was even doing any of it marginally acceptably.

Not by my own standards, at least.

He chuckled to himself and let me kept talking.

“I JUST WANT TO BE AWESOME AT EVERYTHING ALL THE TIME,” I finally said in exasperation, “but I guess I can’t be awesome at everything all the time.”

I don’t remember exactly, but I think he laughed out loud.

“Oh, so you’re a schmuck just like the rest of us?”

Somewhere along the way, I came to believe that having weaknesses and imperfections was the absolute worst part of being human. Limitations felt like failures. And being human means having limitations. Did being human mean I was destined to be a failure?

Would I ever expect anyone else to be perfect? Nope.

Would I expect a baby to learn how to walk without ever stumbling? \*laughs\*

And yet...

After a lifetime of beating myself up, I decided I’m not doing it anymore. The thing is, having limitations isn’t a failure. Not being able to be awesome at everything all the time isn’t one either. And neither is being human.

\*sigh\*

What I didn’t realize was that acknowledging that limitations aren’t failures wasn’t even the real problem.

I imagine I’m a road and my weaknesses and limitations are potholes and frost heaves along the way; the totally normal and predictable evidence of nature and seasons and weather over time. And instead of repaving or patching the road, I’m throwing out some traffic cones or cordoning off those parts of myself.

CAUTION.

KEEP AWAY.

DO NOT ENTER.

I was acknowledging that it was okay to not be awesome at everything all the time, but I wasn’t being honest about the parts of myself that weren’t awesome.

I kept insisting I could figure out how to stay on top of laundry or get the dishes done before the sink AND countertop were full. But I couldn’t admit that my brain was just not going thrive on routines and habits. Once I admitted I have ADHD and those things were always going to be a challenge, I could look at my reflection and tell her she was doing just fine and she wasn’t a horrible human or mom for not being able to keep house in the way I thought I was supposed to.

Even still, any time I drop a ball, arrive late, forget about something or someone, or something turns out differently than I expected, I experience an incredible amount of shame and guilt for not doing better. It’s as if I feel like I was a full block of cheese and that every limitation is a bit of mold that needs scooping out, leaving me feeling like I’ve been cheated out of some of myself. But really I’m a block of Swiss cheese; I came with the holes - they’re features not

bugs.

Yea, I just made a cheese metaphor and I'm stinking proud of it. Like an aged provolone.

Get it? Stinky.

If I'm honest, I was afraid that being open about my limitations would cost me relationships. I thought people would think less of me. If people realized I was riddled with mold, they'd throw me away. As I've risked showing people my weaknesses, I've been surprisingly comforted by people wanting to come nearer, to be closer to me. This vulnerability has showed me that my limitations push me to be more creative - when I can't do something (or, let's be honest, can't do it the way I want to), I'm forced to imagine new ways of approaching both new and old challenges.

So if my limitations aren't signs of failure or something that drives people away and if my weaknesses challenge and inspire my creativity, why have I spent so much time resenting my humanity?

Two books that have helped me learn to be gentle with myself:

[Try Softer](#) by Aundi Kolber

[Glorious Weakness](#) by Alia Joy

If you're looking for a way to honor your limitations within relationships, come join me in the Courageous Community course. By the end of this four week course, you'll be confident in making new friends, be equipped to build deeper friendships, find clarity in when and how to practice vulnerability, and I bet you'll discover that you're already braver than you think! Registration closes September 29<sup>th</sup>, which is coming up fast, so be sure to head to [BeckyLMcCoy.com/CourageousCommunity](https://BeckyLMcCoy.com/CourageousCommunity) for more information and to register.

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If you found this episode encouraging or helpful, share it with a friend and remember: limitations aren't failures and neither is being honest about them. You're doing great.