

Have you ever worried what would happen if you had to be honest about your imperfections? Do you feel like life is sometimes a Jenga tower, balanced on some of your strengths with each weakness only precariously holding up the blocks above them? Do you acknowledge your weaknesses or do you prefer to pretend like they're not there? Are you holding your breath, waiting for one stressful, traumatic moment to make it all come tumbling down? What if there was a better way, one where we could be honest about our weaknesses and shore them up instead of just hoping for the best?

THIS IS SUCKER PUNCHED

If you're like me, you definitely tried your hardest to be awesome at everything all the time. And when you inevitably drop a ball or two, you beat yourself up. And you feel like the worst human ever when the balls you drop are friendships. Because friendship is one of those things you never want to ruin or fail at. But what can you do when you can't manage perfect friendships or all the friendships you do have are only at surface level and you can't figure out how to take it any deeper? 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 29th (Psst...that's next week). 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

Fun fact: "integrity" has always been one of my favorite character traits. When I was in high school I tried really hard to get people to use "integral" as the adjective version of the word instead of always describing people as "having integrity."

Nerd alert.

I know.

But I think even high school me knew that we weren't talking about integrity

enough.

People often quote C.S. Lewis when defining integrity instead of using a more formal definition: "integrity is doing the right thing, even when no one is watching." It's being the same person in private and in public. Someone with integrity has the same personality and character traits regardless of the people they are with or situations they are in.

I dream of a world where integrity is something everyone aspires to.

Stay focused, Becky.

I feel like most conversations on character focus on the positives. Being trustworthy, loyal, creative, kind, generous, and gentle are all absolutely lovely things. We should absolutely be known as people who practice those things and who are growing to do better each day.

But it's not the whole picture.

Integrity is not about being the best version of yourself all the time or growing above your weaknesses to only focus on your strengths.

What if we thought about integrity as embracing our wholeness?

I, Becky McCoy, am creative, determined, loyal, safe, and deeply loving. But I am also often disorganized, frenetic, forgetful, and inconsistent. I say that without any guilt or shame (although it is a bit nerve-racking to say that out loud) because I've seen magic that happens when I look at myself as a whole being, not just a summation of my positives. Just think: if you made chocolate chip cookies with only chocolate and vanilla but no baking soda or flour, you'd have a gooey mess and probably a smokey oven. Wholeness is important.

Stick with me here. We're all puzzle pieces within our communities (and I absolutely consider long-distance friends and online groups communities). If we only acknowledge our strengths, we are all puzzle pieces with only bumps. When we are honest about our weaknesses, we develop the hole sides (is there a better way to describe that? Probably, but I think you know what I mean). When we are honest about strengths AND weaknesses, we fit together.

Your strengths help my weaknesses and my strengths can fill in where there's space because of your weaknesses. When I tell someone "I'm finding it difficult to cope with this," I'm inviting them to exercise their strengths.

When we embrace the idea that integrity is just as much about our weaknesses as our strengths, we create opportunities to connect with each other. We acknowledge that we need each other and that we can meet each other's needs. Being honest about what we can do well and what we can't is like using all the ingredients in that chocolate chip recipe: the individual items come

together to make something really wonderful.

Psst...it's you. You're the thing that's really wonderful.

Here are two books that have helped me embrace my wholeness:

- [Bandersnatch](#) by Erika Morrison
- [Present Over Perfect](#) by Shauna Niequist

You'll find links to these along with a full transcript of this episode at BeckyLMcCoy.com/podcast/71

If you want to build friendships that can embrace imperfections, 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 29th (one week from the day this episode releases!), which is coming up fast, so be sure to head to 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: you are made of your strengths AND your weaknesses and that's what makes you wonderful. You're doing great.