Getting Rid of Perfection
August 27

My life was consumed with never measuring up. I saw myself as never good enough. As a child, each time I tried to clean my room or assist in any other way, I was marched back to the task at hand and told it wasn't good enough, and to do it again. Maybe it was Mom's way of getting me to be more thorough, but what I heard was, it wasn't *good enough*. What I heard was, I needed to be perfect.

The older I became, the more rigid were my thoughts and actions. Convinced no one could work as hard as me, I became a critical, overbearing perfectionist. Everyone around me bore the brunt of my compulsion that they too must be perfect. It wasn't long before I was labeled an opinionated and boring know-it-all.

Al-Anon asks us to unveil the child within and return to the time when we first began to suffer from our labels. As we evaluate what we think we know about past situations and our mistaken beliefs, we embrace the pursuit of *progress*, not perfection. Today, we no longer have to take anything personally because we know that the labels others put on us, the standards they insist we live up to, say more about them than they do about us. They are their labels, not ours.

In recovery, we turn perfectionism over to a Higher Power where the weight of having to be not just good, but perfect, becomes as light as the air we breathe.

The more we focus on letting go of old perfectionist behaviors and our all-or-nothing thinking, the easier our lives become. We become free to embrace ourselves and others with a new gentleness that honors our imperfect selves. We acknowledge in peace, that we are now and always will be a work in progress. What a relief!

TODAY'S MEDITATION

Thank you, God, for doing for me what I could never do alone. You lifted the burden of trying to be perfect. I acknowledge now that perfect is for You alone.

"Perfectionism is not a quest for the best. It is a pursuit of the worst in ourselves, the part that tells us that nothing we do will ever be good enough that we should try again. "—Julia Came