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LDS MISSION PODCAST

Episode 65 - Breaking Free From Perfectionism

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Hey, What is up everyone? It's Jennie Dildine, the LDS mission coach and you are listening to the LDS mission Podcast, episode number 65. breaking free from perfectionism. Hey, I'm Jennie, the LDS mission coach. And whether you're preparing to serve a mission, currently serving a returned missionary or a missionary mama like me, I created this podcast just for you. Are you searching for epic confidence? Ready to love yourself and to learn the how of doing hard things? Then let's go. I will help you step powerfully into your potential and never question your purpose. Again. It's time to embrace yourself. Embrace your mission, embrace your life, and embrace what's next. Hey, everybody, and welcome to the podcast. I'm excited to be hanging out with you today. Today, we're going to talk about perfectionism. And I can't wait to share some stuff with you about perfectionism. But I don't know if you notice I created a new outro. For this podcast where I talk a little bit about some of the free stuff that you can get from me, it's an easy way for you and I to just work together right away or for me to work with your missionary right away. And get them some helpful tools. So I have a free training for preparing missionaries, which I think is also wildly successful and awesome to share with a missionary who's currently serving, it's easy to do if you want to download it or share it on a Google Drive or whatever. That would be an awesome thing to do. I've also created a free video series three tools for RMS to help in their transition home. The you can go to jennie.dildine.com, forward slash AR M tools all one word, an AR and an M and A tool. Plural to get that free video series. It's an awesome one, I boiled all of my best tools, down to those three videos for return missionaries, most returned missionaries, what I hear is, the best advice people give us just will stay really busy. And listen, it's not always the best advice. So I mean, it can be but just staying busy for busyness sake might actually have the opposite effect on a returned missionary that we want it to have. So highly recommend that you could go grab that free video series. You know, it's also possible you and I might just want to hop on a call. I've actually been having a lot of calls with missionary moms lately who want to talk about their missionaries who are out serving, or they're returned missionaries. And I listen, I'm here for at all, let's get you as much help as we can. Let's get your kids as much help as we can. Let's get the missionaries as much help as we can. In our mental and emotional well being super important. The mission, you guys, as you well know, presents a unique set of challenges. And so we I think we need to get more creative, and more innovative and more forward thinking about our solutions to those challenges that the mission presents. And I think we could really eliminate a lot of suffering if we did that. And we just got more of these tools out to more missionaries. So all of those freebies I include in the show notes every single week below this podcast, or you can just go to my

website, Jennie dildine.com. Remember Jennie is always spelled with an IE, there's even other free resources on there for you to Yeah, so if you want any of those, go grab them. They are awesome, and I want to share them with you. So let's talk about perfectionism, shall we? One of the things that was super interesting and fascinating to notice about preparing for this podcast was how I wanted it to be perfect.

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It's just so funny that I am recording a podcast about perfectionism and I wanted it to be perfect. I didn't even notice that this was the case until just like a little while ago, when I was kind of putting the finishing touches on what I wanted to share with you today. That I was like, Oh my gosh, I've been thinking that I needed this to be perfect. The podcast about perfectionism How hilarious is that, but I've gotten super good at like observing my brain. And now I'm just sort of like, okay, we're just gonna record the thing and get it out there. I think I sort of had this thought. And I've been wanting to record this podcast for a while because I know it's such a big thing with our missionaries. And because that spills over a lot into our return missionaries. In fact, I just got an email from a mom, who's hoping her daughter and I can work together when she gets home. And her daughter is already she's on the mission. And she's already worried that she's not going to be able to keep up on her spiritual habits, and stay busy. And all of those things, she's has this idea that she wants to keep a perfect habit going, right. So I see it all the way through the mission experience, I see it actually before missionaries leave this idea that they need to be the perfect missionary. And it just carries all the way through. So I think I just kept putting it off and putting it off, because I wanted it to be perfect. This episode about perfectionism. But here's one thing I want us to keep in mind. And this is one of my favorite quotes. And I don't know who said it. But hopefully today, by the end of this podcast, you will not let perfection be the enemy of the good. And this is what we do sometimes, right? Is we're so worried about getting something perfect. And we have a lot of context in our face, right and in our religion about how Christ was perfect, and we should be there for perfect as Christ was perfect. So we have a lot of context. And I think reasons that we believe that we need to be perfect. But hopefully by the end of this and after I share some things with you that we won't let perfect be the enemy of the good. In other words, we won't let our desire to be perfect. Get in the way of our ability to show up doing good. And this is what I finally had to decide with this podcast. I was like, we're just gonna get it out there. It's not going to be perfect. I don't even know. These are just some of my thoughts about perfectionism. And I'm sure there are tons more and I and I might even get some of them wrong. And you might have some that you don't even resonate with or don't make sense to you. Totally fine. I just decided, hopefully, there's some good here. And I'm not going to let perfectionism or perfection be the enemy of just getting the good out. Okay, so Ready or not, here we go.

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What I kind of came up with was five traps of perfectionism. And why I was sort of thinking of a trap is my family has sort of gotten into golf lately. And I think it's originally sort of started during COVID, actually. And it was the one place that you could sort of go I think a lot of people got into golf during COVID. Because you could go it was outside, you could hang out with your family. You could be active in that way. And so my husband sort of started golfing a lot. And then my oldest son, he's like, I actually really liked like golf and I want to get into golf and and then when my next oldest son, he also decided that he wanted to get into golf. In fact, he sent us sometimes we'll send pictures on Saturdays of kind of what we're up to, and he and his new wife were golfing. And so that was super fun to, to see. We have kind of a funny thing in our family where we say, Hey, we're a hiking family,

or we're a golfing family. Or we're a Star Wars family and it's sort of like a tongue in cheek sort of thing. Because, I mean, we're a golfing family insofar as like, some of us golf and some of us are okay at it. Same with hiking, some of us hike sometimes and we're okay at it. We're a Star Wars family in that we're kind of fake Star Wars fans. We don't know all the stuff but we kind of want to be Star Wars fans. Anyway, so it was just funny. That morning is My son had sent this picture of them golfing and then someone I don't remember who was like we're a golfing family and we're like, yes, absolutely. Golfing family, we'll take it. But that was such a side tangent, but let me Bring it back is the five traps of perfectionism I sort of thought like a sand trap when you're golfing. So if you hit a ball into a sand trap, it can be kind of hard to come out of that sand trap. It's a place where we can kind of get stuck, where we can sort of get in the weeds, where we can sort of make it challenging for ourselves to keep going and to keep showing up as the kind of person that we want to be. So I'm gonna list these five traps of perfectionism, I guess we could take it so far as to like movies where there's like, maybe even in Star Wars, this happened in Star Wars where there's sand and it actually like sucks you in. So then you're not coming back kind of situation. But for now, we'll just picture like the golf trap, and it just makes it really hard to keep moving forward, and to keep going along the course. Okay. So I'm going to dive into each one of these, let me just list them first. Five traps of perfectionism. Number one, a trap is that we sort of believe that perfectionism is a condition or a fact. Okay, and again, I'm going to come back and explain all of these numbers to one another. The number two trap of perfectionism is that the thing itself, meaning the thing we're doing is causing our emotions. And that can be a trap. Number three trap of perfectionism is, we sort of start to believe that there is a better way, or a worse way to do something. Number four trap of perfectionism is that our worth as a human happens in what I call our action line, meaning the action that we're taking or not taking determines our worth. That's number four trap. And number five trap is that perfection is a destination. Okay, so let's go back, rewind a little bit, start at the beginning, and we're going to walk through these, I'm going to walk through them, explain them at the end, I'm going to give you some solutions to get out of these traps. And then we're going to bring it all back together. Okay, number one, we sort of believe that perfectionism, or being a perfectionist is just a condition of the way we are or a fact. One of the very first things I teach my clients is the difference between facts and thoughts.

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Now, if you've been listening to this podcast for a while, you know why? Because what we start to understand is that the facts are the things outside of us, can't make us feel anything. But the way we think about something, does make us feel something. So our thoughts are those sentences in our mind, make us feel something. So the problem with deciding that we're a perfectionist, it becomes in our minds of fact. Now the definition of a fact is that we can prove it in a court of law, everybody would agree, there's no judgment or bias in it. It's all the stuff that happens outside of us. But I am a perfectionist is not a fact. I am a perfectionist, or I struggle with perfectionistic tendencies is a thought, or a belief. When we try to make it a fact that I'm a perfectionist, we lose access to being able to change it at all. We just think and start to believe that that's just the way it is. But how do we know that it's a thought and not a fact? Because we can't take a blood test? To find out if you're a perfectionist. And I'm sure many of you are saying yeah, Jenny, but I, I noticed that I do this and I want everything a certain way. And I really just need everything to be perfect all the time. And then I judge myself so it's not perfect, totally fine. But what you might want to understand is, it's not empowering to you when you believe you can't do anything about it. So you can You can believe that you're a perfectionist. And that, like you don't have a choice, basically. But that is not going to be useful to believe that you can't believe something else or change it if you want to. When we label ourselves and make certain things a fact, like, here's a couple other ideas like, I'm shy, or I'm just not good with people, or I'm weak, or I'm just not strong enough, these are all ones I've heard from limiting beliefs that I've heard from some of my clients or on strategy calls. I'm just a perfectionist.

When we treat those as facts, just like they are, we lose access to it, we become at the mercy of the quote unquote condition, instead of us being in charge of it. The other thing about perfectionism, you guys is if we put it as a fact, is it's sort of like a loaded word. We just add a lot of like, thoughts associated with the word perfectionist, there's a lot of thoughts associated with the word shy, there's a lot of thoughts and feelings associated with the word like I'm weak. Okay, so it's just hard to make any sort of traction, or any sort of change. When we make perfectionism, or being a perfectionist of fact, for all of the reasons that I've just listed. Again, we're going to talk about all the solutions here in just a minute. So let's move on to number two. Number two trap is that the thing itself causes our emotions. So we sort of believe if we teach the perfect lesson on the mission, or if we read our scriptures the perfect amount of time, or if we attend the temple with a perfect, like, how to tune or if we do anything perfectly, or make the perfect dinner, or get the perfect grade, we sort of believe that the grade or the dinner or the temple or the scriptures make us feel a certain way. We end up delegating the way that we feel to the thing that we're doing. But the things that we do, I know this is kind of be kind of mind bending for some of you, but the things that we do never cause our emotion. The only thing that causes our emotion ever is the way that we're thinking about the thing that we're doing. So this can be a huge trap with perfectionism. Because then we start to delegate the way we feel to other people into our behavior and outcomes, which often we don't have power over.

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Okay, number three, trap of perfectionism is we start to believe that there is a better or worse way to do something. Like it sounds a little bit like this, it would be better if I would, I don't know, perfectly cook the chicken? Or would it be better if I read my scriptures every single day with like a perfect intention? It would be better if I got 100% on my math test instead of 85% on my math test. But here's what we want to understand, is it we don't know if it would be better. Our brain kind of tells us it would be best if it was perfect. But but we don't actually know. One example I have for you is of my daughter is last year and they haven't really started assigning homework yet. But last year, at the beginning of the week, she'd take a pretest for her spelling words. And at the beginning of the week, if she got all of those spelling words, right, like, quote unquote, perfect. What would she learn? The answer is nothing. Now if on a couple of the words of the 20 words, if she like, you know, switched her I and II, like I tend to do a lot of times or if she forgot to put like, a silent pH or whatever. If she messed up a couple of the letters. Let's say on three spelling words. By the end of the week, what is she learned? She has actually learned how to spell three new words. So we sort of think it wouldn't be better if we just did it, quote unquote, the right way. But there's actually, we don't always know what the right way is, we don't always know that what we believe to be the better way would be a better way for someone else. So part of this trap is understanding and thinking that we know better than have our heavenly parents what our best way is that I have to do it perfectly. But if we did it perfect, we'd never learn everything, you know what the best way is, and what God's plan is for us to mess it up our spelling words all the time, so that we can learn some stuff while we're here. It's totally fine. And maybe if we're stuck in perfectionism, we're preventing ourselves from actually learning anything, because we're just trying to make it perfect, when instead, we could just surrender to the process of learning. Okay, number four, worth happens in our action line, that's a trap. Because if you go back and listen to one of my podcasts, it is called you can't change your worth. Worth, your worth is the same. It's constant, it can't go up, and it can't go down. But when we buy into this trap of perfectionism, we sort of believe our brain tricks us into believing that if we did it perfect, if we got the A, if we got into the school, if we taught the perfect lesson, if we shared the perfect scripture, then our worth goes up. But this isn't true, you guys, it totally flies into the face of what we have been taught from a very young age is that we are sons and daughters of our heavenly parents who have worth regardless of how we show up. I can't do anything to increase my worth, and I can't do anything to decrease my worth. And so when we tie our worth into how perfect we are, and how

perfectly quote unquote, we're doing everything will never feel like we have worth. This is the last one. Number five, that perfection is a destination. This is also a trap of perfectionism. We sort of believe that when we do something the right way that end product is perfect. Or that we will be perfect. And it's like a one and done type situation.

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But the problem with this right is it's never a one and done situation in this life. We're always learning and growing and moving forward. The idea that, okay, check, I got that done perfectly. Then, somehow that we've arrived, notice how that prevents us from growing. It actually prevents us from being willing to move forward and do something a little bit wrong or a worse way, or to feel some feelings. Instead, we can stop looking at perfect is a destination, or a result of something that we're doing perfect or not perfect. But we can just choose to believe that we're on a perfect journey. And I'm going to share more about that in our solutions. One of the things that I read on the church website is some of the definitions of being perfect. And listen, what if we've had it wrong all this time? What if we've been wrong about being perfect meaning, maybe perfect isn't something that you do, it doesn't change our worth? That there's a better or worse way to achieve perfection in the end? What a perfection is not just a way of being what if perfect, is what I found as a definition is being whole or complete. Now I like thinking about it this way because a whole journey or a complete journey in this life includes messed up spelling words. It includes things that we don't get right so that we can learn from those things and keep going Oh wait. I also love the idea of describing perfect as being whole and complete, because then like, two halves of a whole, not only are we going to feel some negative emotion, but we're going to feel some positive emotion and it's all good. Two halves equal a whole, I love also this description of being whole, because then there's two parts to it, me and my Savior Jesus Christ. With him, I'm halt by myself, I'm half one of the scriptures that kind of came to my mind was from second Nephi 31:19, where it talks about being in the straight and narrow path, and having faith in Jesus Christ unshaken faith in Him. And then it says, relying wholly upon the merits of Him who is mighty to save. I love that, that it says Holy and not like holy like h o l y, but holy like perfection being whole or complete. Meaning we can have complete and whole trust in Him, not just when we're doing things where we think is right, or we think is better. But we can have whole trust in Him, even when we feel like we're doing it completely wrong. And then it says in 20, wherefore you must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and all men. That is what I love is like the brightness of hope is not that we'll do it right. The brightness of hope is that we're gonna get a bunch of spelling words wrong. And if we love God, and trust Him and have hope in Him, then He is holy, mighty to save all of us, all the parts of us all the half's of us. And then I like in 21 It says, And now behold, my beloved brethren, this is the way and there is none other way, nor name given under heaven, whereby man can be saved. So listen, not even your name. You can't save yourself. There's none other name. And so, Perfection isn't a destination. It's a journey. And, and we're kind of the sounds pretty harsh. But we're sort of disregarding our Savior and what he's done for us, if we think we are the finisher of our faith, we are not the finisher of our faith.

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Jesus Christ is He is the WAY and there's none other way nor name given. So we can just let go of it, guys, we can let go of this idea that we have to do it perfect or even be perfect. Like him, he was perfect. And that's enough. And in the meantime, we're going to be here on Earth, getting all our spelling words wrong, and messing it all up. And it's totally fine. Okay, I have some solutions that I want to share with you. And then we're going to sort of wrap everything up. Okay, solution number

one, when we start to believe that we're just a perfectionist, meaning that we think it's a fact. What I want you to do, if you find yourself in this trap, is I want you to start to just be super factual and just call it what it is. So what I love for you to do is instead of saying, I got to get that lesson perfect, or I'm because I'm a perfectionist, I got to get that lesson perfect. I want you to make it super factual. Like I'm a little bit worried about the, the way I'm going to show up. I'm a little bit worried about the way I'm going to show up in that lesson. I'm a little bit worried about what I'm going to say. I'm a little bit worried that I might trip over my words. Notice how we're just being truthful about our thoughts and feelings about that lesson. Instead of like, I'm just a perfectionist, I want it to be perfect. Like, let's be specific about what our thoughts and feelings are instead of just defaulting to, I'm just a perfectionist. Okay, solution number two for when we are in the trap where we think the thing or our action is causing our emotions is I want you to take a step back and be like, No, how I show up in that lesson, or how I show up in my class is never the creator of my emotion. The thing that's creating my emotion is my thoughts about the lesson or my thoughts about the class, or my thoughts in how I showed up, it's my thoughts about myself are these things that create my emotions, we just take a little bit of power back from that perfectionistic idea that we have. Number three solution when we're in the trap, that we think there's a better or worse way to do something. What we can do here is we can surrender to Heavenly Father's plan, which was, by the way that we'd come to earth and mess it all up, we'd get all our spelling words wrong, a lot, so that we could learn some stuff. And the atonement, the miracle of it right is that consecrates, all of that for our good. And for our growth. Also just know there's not a better or worse way to do something, one of the things I thought of was, we like to roast broccoli in our house, we get like one of those big Costco bags of broccoli to have with dinner, and we kind of sprinkle olive oil and some coarse salt and a couple of seasonings, and then we put it in the oven and roast it. Well. I think the right way, the better way is to just roast it till it gets a little bit crispy. But my husband and a couple of my children think it should be black, mostly crispy black, almost no broccoli left. So this idea that this way is better if I do it perfect is better is actually just a thought to the same way. I think that it's better if it's not as black and my family thinks it's better if it's way black and charred broccoli. There is no better or worse way. There's just different ways to accomplish the things that we want to accomplish. To get out of this trap number four solution number four is that when we start to believe that our worth happens, and how we accomplish something, or how well we do something, just remember, you can't change your worth. You really can't like I think of \$100 bill if I had \$100 bill here, and then I like crumbled it up and I stomped on it, and I like ran it under the water a few times that worth of that dollar that \$100 bill doesn't change.

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Even if I tried to like put it next to another \$100 Bill, or make it better in some way I can't make it have more worth the same is true for you. I promise you, you are as worthy and whole and valuable as the day you were born. You can't change your worth. So it doesn't matter if you do it quote unquote, right or perfect. You can't change your worth. So when we get into trap number five, that perfection is a destination. I want you to remind yourself No wait. Perfection is a journey. I'm on a perfect journey right now to become more like my heavenly parents. I heard in conference a little while ago, someone say something like, oh, well, I made a lot of mistakes. And my journey hasn't and I haven't been perfect. And what I kind of want to say is actually yeah, like we don't know what's perfect. This is actually the perfect journey that all of us are on. So even though we haven't showed up the way we wanted to a lot of times are done the way that we thought it should be done. It's okay. That is a perfect journey. It reminded me of one of my son. He works in the MTC in Provo, as a supervisor. He was a teacher for a while, but um now he's a supervisor. It reminded me of this scripture, he said, or actually it's not a scripture it's a quote by Elder clean, clean being got klemming dot clumping got him probably saying it totally wrong. I should have looked it up. But I like the quote and I'm going to share it with you now. No matter what your current status is. The very moment you

voluntarily choose honest, joyful, daily repentance by striving to simply do and be your best. The Savior's Atonement envelops and follows you as it were, wherever you go. Living in this manner, you can truly always retain a remission of your sins. This is from Hosea 4:12. And then he says every hour of every day, every second of every minute and thus be fully clean and acceptable before God all the time. It's from his talk, approaching the throne of God with confidence. I love this so much because it speaks to this idea of Like, the journey we're on is already perfected through Christ because of what he already did. And so we don't, we can't make it any more or less perfect. We just have to be all in on the process of becoming more like our Heavenly Parents, which means it's messy sometimes. And it means that we get it wrong, a lot of times all of our spelling words wrong, so that we can learn stuff. But it's okay because of our Savior. And because what he's done for us, make sure you're aware of these five traps that will keep you stuck in perfectionism. Okay, number one, that we think perfectionism or being a perfectionist is just a fact. Number two, is that the thing itself causes our emotions. Never true, your outcome never causes your emotions. Number three, that there's a better or worse way to do something. Not true. That's a trap. Number four, that worth happens in our actions and in the things we do, also a trap not true. And number five, that perfection is a destination. Also not true. That's a trap. Perfection is a journey. And we're all on the perfect journey. So I just wanted to read the end of the Scripture again, real quick, from second Nephi 31:21. And now behold, my beloved brother, and this is the way this is the right journey, you guys. And there is none other way nor name given under heaven, whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God. Listen, we can rely wholly upon the merits of Jesus Christ, He's perfect. So we don't need to be we don't need to get caught and trying to make everything perfect. He is whole, he is what makes us whole. And we can, we can rely wholly on him wholly because he's the half that I don't have that makes me whole, holy because 50% of the time we're going to feel bad and half the time we're going to feel good. And two pieces of those halves make a whole hole because he's there for us the whole way through the whole journey,

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and we're on a perfect journey. Christ will make up for all of it. Savior Jesus Christ is mighty to save his atonement is mighty. And that is pretty good news. Am I right? All right, you guys. I hope that this podcast has helped you. I hope that it's helped you wiggle your perfectionism just a little bit loose. Let's all see if we can work towards not letting being perfect. Be the enemy of the good. Go do some good. All right, everyone have the most amazing week, take care. Serving a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints can present a unique set of challenges. And many of those challenges you might not even see coming. So you're gonna want a unique set of solutions. It's easier than you think to overcome worry and anxiety, serve the successful mission you've always dreamed up and navigate your post mission experience with confidence. That is why I created some amazing free goodies that I'm sharing in my show notes. Maybe you want to grab the free training for preparing missionaries, my video course for RMS or maybe you and I should hop on a free strategy call. If you're ready to take your preparedness to serve or your preparedness to come home to the next level. Then go grab one of those freebies. And in the meantime, no matter which part of the mission experience you were involved in. Just know that Jenny, the LDS mission coach is thinking about you every single day.