

Perfectly Imperfect

My mother died last year, a very painful and difficult thing to endure. Now that we are selling her house and going through her things, I keep hearing people make comments such as, “Your mom was so wonderful, so creative, so talented, so gracious...everything she did was so perfect.”

Why do those words sort of sting, I wonder? So I look at her things and find myself comparing and coming up short. Is my house nice enough? Do I have any talents? These questions don't normally plague me. I can be fairly content and feel pretty confident until I start scrolling through facebook, wondering why so-and-so is friends with so-and-so, and why I can't do such and such, etc.

I've always enjoyed writing—for fun and for informative articles, but lately I have fallen into this trap of thinking, “Well, I have nothing important or new to say, really...it's all been said better by this writer or that blogger or this guest columnist. Why can't I even write anymore?” I find myself wondering.

I've never been one to fall into the whole “Keeping up with the Joneses” phenomenon. However, the comparison trap is something that I can easily fall into. And we all do it: I wish I could be as fit or pretty or talented as she...

That's when it dawned on me: THAT can be the topic of my next article: comparing and coming up short (or “compare and despair”, as writer Jenni Schaefer puts it). My mother never pushed her taste on me or criticized my choices. Hearing those comments made me question all my homemaking skills. Comparing bodies and talents to others isn't something that we naturally do. The eating disorder voice convinces me that I have nothing to say or contribute.

We all have gifts and talents and things to contribute. Perhaps as an eating disorder recovery advocate, I am not as eloquent as some, but that's okay. They're my thoughts and ideas, and I do not have to prove my worth. I am me, perfectly imperfect.

-Susan Landry, LPC