

One point away from perfection

Business



I can't believe I got an 89! That's one point away from that A- that I could've got... Sound familiar? Growing up as an Asian who, like almost every asian teenager out there, had a very strict mom, this thought has been through my brain more times than I can count. It's true that we've gotten used to the idea that we want to do well in school – it's been drilled in our brains, so that even if our parents aren't forcing us, we still have an instinct to get competitive and want the best grades in class. But getting too obsessed with anything -including grades- isn't healthy at all. Being obsessed causes unnecessary stress, which could lead to lower academic performance. That's exactly the opposite of what we should be doing.

When you get a bad grade, rather than obsessing over it and constantly beating yourself up, just look forward to the next test, and convince yourself that you will do better next time. Even if you end up doing horribly on the next test, you still learned from your mistakes, didn't you? It's not a complete loss. Perfection is a goal that every human instinctively tries to attain. That's why we get competitive, why we get jealous, why we get insecure. The truth is these things are only an illusion created by your brain. Everyone is different, all with their own flaws and things they're better at than other people.

Perfection doesn't exist in our society. 100 is just a number, those accidental math mistakes that cost you a three digit number for a grade, is not going to drag an A+ down to an A. If you've always done well, then the grade will turn out just fine. A lot of times, it's hard to get over that one nominal point in your grade. I get it.

It's annoying. It makes people go insane. But getting insane over one point is not going to get you anywhere. It's just going to make your brain go into a hiatus of rational activity, and make your academic performance worse the next time you are trying to take a test. So the best thing to do is to focus on the next performance. The next test.

The next competition. Tomorrow. The future. As long as your abilities are sound and your confidence in them unwavering, you will find that perfection isn't a goal to obtain: it's to do your best and be happy with what you got in return.