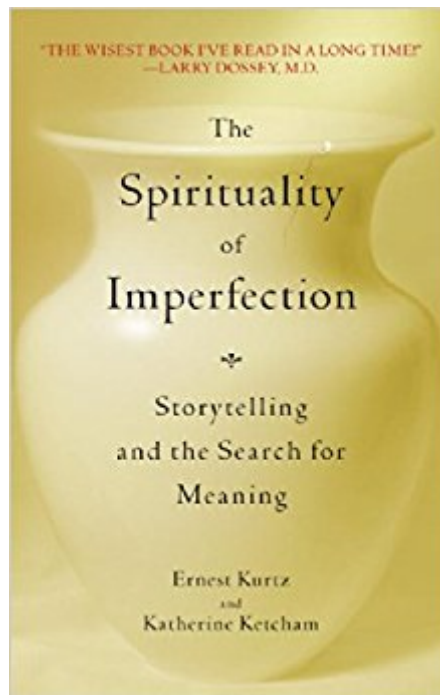


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# The Spirituality Of Imperfection: Storytelling And The Search For Meaning



## Synopsis

I Am Not Perfect is a simple statement of profound truth, the first step toward understanding the human condition, for to deny your essential imperfection is to deny yourself and your own humanity. The spirituality of imperfection, steeped in the rich traditions of the Hebrew prophets and Greek thinkers, Buddhist sages and Christian disciples, is a message as timeless as it is timely. This insightful work draws on the wisdom stories of the ages to provide an extraordinary wellspring of hope and inspiration to anyone thirsting for spiritual growth and guidance in these troubled times. Who are we? Why do we so often fall short of our goals for ourselves and others? By seeking to understand our limitations and accept the inevitability of failure and pain, we begin to ease the hurt and move toward a greater sense of serenity and self-awareness. The Spirituality Of Imperfection brings together stories from many spiritual and philosophical paths, weaving past traditions into a spirituality and a new way of thinking and living that works today. It speaks to anyone who yearns to find meaning within suffering. Beyond theory and technique, inside this remarkable book you will find a new way of thinking, a way of living that enables a truly human existence.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is to spirituality as riding a rollercoaster is to physics. It is not a read; it is an experience. Kurtz and Ketcham have managed to tell their own story in such a way that the reader is invited to share in that experience. Finding this spirituality of imperfection in Alcoholics Anonymous and the twelve-step program, K&K have scoured spiritual writings throughout history to find the words to

describe their experience. Boldface quotes and stories color almost every page. K&K find the essence of the spiritual in human imperfections and failure, in the inevitability of pain. Spirituality is not the evasion of consequences or errors, but rather learning how to live with them. They call trying to be perfect the most tragic human mistake. They are clear, spirituality is found in asking the right questions, not in finding the right answers. Perhaps every reader of this book will not be able to hear it's music. Perhaps only those who have been wounded by life, need it. Perhaps only those who have drunk deeply of failure will find nourishment here. All I know is that I did, and to Kurtz and Ketcham I will always be grateful.

from the author of DREAMING YOUR REAL SELF: A PERSONAL APPROACH TO DREAM INTERPRETATION; and DREAM BACK YOUR LIFE: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO DREAMS, DAYDREAMS, AND FANTASIES. I read THE SPIRITUALITY OF IMPERFECTION at the end of 1993, at the suggestion of a friend. I had hesitated to read it because it was "a recovery book" and I expected that designation to limit its benefits. What I found, however, were stories that confirmed that to grow we must be willing to fail and make mistakes. This is what it means to be human. With this book's encouragement, hope, and humor, I embarked on my speaking and writing career, willing to blunder and to learn from others. Since then, I have recommended and bought this book as a gift many times. I list this title in my handouts for nearly all of my self-help classes and in the bibliographies of the books I write.

This book was suggested while I was in an alcohol rehabilitation center when other more traditionally Christian literature didn't seem to fit my needs. This wonderful volume includes and incorporates the spirituality proposed in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous with the spirituality propounded at least in part in all of the major religions. It presents a fairly coherent argument that Bill W. was no less a prophet than those more widely accepted who came before. The universality of the fundamental truths described through hundreds of anecdotes and quotes from a host of sources has legitimized and given voice to 'what seems like' my own concept of spirituality. The volume is easily read cover to cover, or piecemeal as a vehicle for contemplation and meditation. I highly recommend this for those struggling with conflicted experiences in organized religion or church, or who feel the futility and emptiness of atheism. It could also be of interest to those with obsessive compulsive character traits or perfectionistic tendencies. My concept of God or a Higher Power is the bedrock of my recovery program and this book has given me great comfort and insight.

I have been sober for quite a few 24 hours, and during that time, I have read many spiritual books. I have learned from all of the books I have read; however my two all time favorites are The Spirituality of Imperfection and An Encounter With A Prophet.

This book successfully relates the spirituality of Alcoholics Anonymous, and its Twelve Step program, to the other major spiritual traditions of the world. It is related in such a way that the non member of these programs can appreciate the depth and importance of this movement for everyone. Alcoholics Anonymous has been praised by Aldous Huxley, Scott Peck and many other religious thinkers as possibly America's own contribution to the history of western spirituality. Kurtz and Ketcham do a fine job showing the uniqueness of AA's modern insights as well as their kinship to forms of spirituality which pervade the wisdom of many traditions from the early Christian Desert Fathers to the wizened Rebbes of the mystical Hassidim. The Spirituality of Imperfection tells this story with the colorful stories and parables of these various traditions. Some of the tales are wise, some funny and all have the quality of capturing our humanness in a form that is entertaining as well as instructive. These stories comprise a minor theme of our spiritual heritage, which celebrates our humanness and limitation as a source of wisdom, rather than "totalitarian" forms of spirituality which subjugate human experience to an obsession with abstract and antiseptic perfectionism.

This book was great and has something to offer all of us. It presents a very humanistic approach to spirituality. Although throughout the book "The spirituality of imperfection" is closely tied in with the spiritual teachings of Alcoholics Anonymous, you *\*TRULY\** need not be an alcoholic to apply and learn from the many lessons it presents. If, however, there are alcoholics in your family, you will benefit greatly from reading this as well since this book sheds light on the reasons why some people are never able to overcome their addictions- namely that when people equate sobriety with perfection they understandably see it as an overwhelming and unattainable goal. One of the most important things about this book is that it brings home the fundamental message that in order to grow spiritually, people must first be able to understand and accept their own nature as imperfect beings. This book covers so much ground and offers to teach so much about spirituality without ever being dogmatic. It is unifying as it reaches out to people of all religions, an accomplishment in and of itself. A must read. I know I'll be reading my copy for years to come.

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