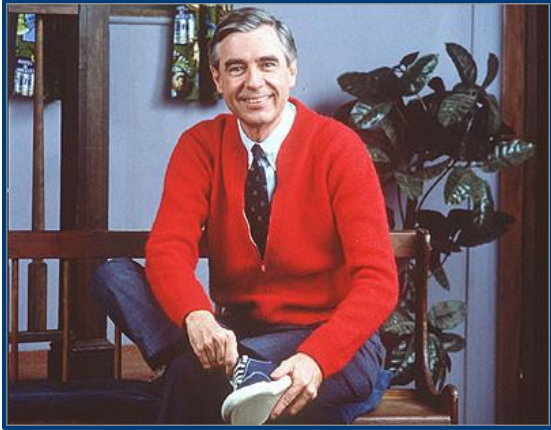


# The Penalty for Perfection



In the book *The World According to Mister Rogers* (Hyperion), children's television star Fred Rogers passed along the following story about the value of getting things wrong as well as right.

An apprentice carpenter applied to a veteran master carpenter for a position on the older man's crew. As the master questioned the young worker about his experiences and skills, the young man's pride was visible. He had done this perfectly and that perfectly.

Finally, the master asked the apprentice whether he had ever made a mistake. The young man answered proudly that he had not, and he waited expectantly for a job offer.

He was surprised, to say the least, when the master carpenter said that he would not be hiring the skillful apprentice. His reasoning was shockingly practical: "When you do make a mistake, you won't know how to fix it."

It's only through handling real-life errors that you convince people that you can handle them.

There is wisdom in the master carpenter's conclusion. We can all look back on our lives and see how we have benefited – although we may not have thought so at the time – from mistakes we have made. Mistakes often deliver important life lessons.

The same can be said of adversity that may come our way. We can grow as a result of the experience. The situation has the potential of making us tougher and/or smarter.

That's why life is such an incredible classroom.

*Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing (James 1:2-4 ESV).*

– Beecher Hunter