

Explorations: Finding Beauty in Imperfection

“If you look closely at a tree you’ll notice it’s knots and dead branches, just like our bodies. What we learn is that beauty and imperfection go together wonderfully.” Matthew Fox



Photo Credit: Branches, photo by Trevor Wilson, January 18, 2014, (CC BY 2.0), <https://www.flickr.com/photos/65349437@N00/12017273943>

Questions for Reflection

Do you agree with Matthew Fox that a tree is a combination of beauty and imperfection?

When you think of trees, how do you separate beauty from imperfection?

How does this combination of a tree’s imperfection and beauty change through the seasons of a year?

Is it possible that there is more beauty in imperfection than in perfection? (*This is the foundation of wabi-sabi in Japan.*)

Exploring Wabi-Sabi—Beauty in Imperfection

Worth Reading

The Beauty of Imperfection by Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat at <http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/features/view/18360/the-beauty-of-imperfection>

Illuminating the Beauty in Our Broken Places by Omid Safi at <https://onbeing.org/blog/omid-safi-illuminating-the-beauty-in-our-broken-places/>

Wabi Sabi: The Art of Imperfection by Robyn Griggs Lawrence at <http://www.utne.com/mind-and-body/wabi-sabi>

Worth Watching

Wabi-Sabi by Cristóbal Vila (Length 4 minutes, 8 seconds) This exquisite video explores beauty in Japan. Link: <https://vimeo.com/184212106>

For Children

Video: *What is Wabi Sabi?* Japanese Lesson 9 - (Length: 4 minutes, 30 seconds)

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iuwL01Q5Wpo>

Wabi Sabi by Mark Reibstein (Author) and Ed Young (Illustrator) (October 2008)



Wabi Sabi, a little cat in Kyoto, Japan, had never thought much about her name until friends visiting from another land asked her owner what it meant. *At last, the master / Says, "That's hard to explain." And / That is all she says.* This unsatisfying answer sets Wabi Sabi on a journey to uncover the meaning of her name, and on the way discovers what wabi sabi is: a Japanese philosophy of seeing beauty in simplicity, the ordinary, and the imperfect.

Video: LIBR 271A, K. Franke, *Wabi Sabi*, reading at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=699uLKMqSow> (Length: 6 minutes, 3 seconds)