

The Secret to Loving Yourself

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You're probably familiar with self-help books and talk show hosts who tell you to love yourself, but you may be wondering how to go about that. While your relationship with yourself is the most important connection in your life, it's easy to forget about nurturing it.

However, self-love and compassion are too important to neglect because they shape your experiences and relationships with others.

Protect your health and wellbeing by making positive changes in the way you think about and treat yourself.

Changing the Way You Think about Yourself

Maybe you're hard on yourself or you're so busy with external obligations that you rarely consider your personal priorities. Looking inward could help you to value yourself more.

These strategies will help you to think more highly of yourself:

- 1. Accept yourself.** Know that you are worthy of love and respect just the way you are this moment. **Embrace yourself with all your strengths and weaknesses.**
- 2. Clarify your purpose.** Invent your own definition of success. Ask yourself what a meaningful life means to you, even if that answer changes over time.

3. **Talk yourself up.** How do you speak to yourself? Choose words that are encouraging and uplifting. **Use your internal dialogue to build your confidence and manage your emotions.**

4. **Offer forgiveness.** Let go of the past so that you can move on. Take any decisions that you regret and turn them into opportunities to learn. Make amends where possible and resolve to handle things more constructively in the future.

5. **Avoid comparisons.** Facebook didn't invent social comparisons, but social media has increased the potential for envy and inferiority complexes. Try competing with your last performance instead of living up to someone else's standards. **You'll accomplish more if you dare to be yourself.**

6. **Think positive.** Looking on the bright side and being able to laugh at yourself makes you even more loveable. It also helps you to manage stress and deal with difficult circumstances.

Changing the Way You Treat Yourself

Do your actions match your beliefs? You might say you love yourself, but your actions could be sending a different message.

Try these techniques to treat yourself kinder:

1. **Practice self-care.** Develop habits that keep your mind and body fit and strong. Go to bed early and exercise each day. Eat a balanced diet and watch your weight.

2. **Pick friends wisely. Surround yourself with family and friends who encourage and support you.** Cultivate close relationships with others who share your

goals. Engage in deep conversations where you can share your feelings and receive validation.

3. Pursue your passions. Identify the activities that bring you joy and fulfillment. Block out time each day for something you love, whether it's a task related to your job or something you do in your leisure time.

4. Set goals. Give yourself something to strive for. Working towards realistic and challenging goals builds your confidence as you add to your achievements.

5. Maintain boundaries. Know your limits so you can define what behavior you consider acceptable. That may include physical boundaries such as needing your own space and psychological boundaries such as being entitled to your own feelings and opinions.

6. Advocate for yourself. Once you understand your needs, you can communicate them to others. **You'll grow more skillful as you practice** being direct and tactful in letting someone know if they cross your boundaries.

7. Seek support. Ask for what you need. Let others know specifically what they can do, whether you're looking for practical assistance like pitching in with housework or just a friendly ear to listen while you sort out your feelings.

Loving yourself can help you to enjoy more happiness, overcome challenges, and build healthier relationships with others. Make it a habit to treat yourself with kindness and respect.