

Self-Acceptance: What It Is and How to Get It

Accepting yourself is the first step to building self-esteem. *It's not possible to feel positive about yourself if you can't even accept yourself.* Self-acceptance is the level of happiness and satisfaction you have with yourself.

Many mental health professionals believe that self-acceptance is necessary before change can occur. If you're feeling stuck, a lack of self-acceptance may be the first challenge to overcome. Accepting your flaws allows you to change them.

Learn to accept yourself and enjoy the person you are:

- 1. Let go of your parents' behavior.** Some parents are better than others. Overly critical parents don't have bad children, they're just lousy parents. There's little to be gained by giving your parents a hard time for their inadequacies. The solution is to forgive them and release yourself from the past.
 - Avoid judging yourself based on the parenting you received. *It's a reflection of them, not you.*
- 2. Volunteer.** There's no easier way to convince yourself that you're worthy of self-acceptance than to volunteer your time with someone that needs you. *Prove to yourself how great a person you are.* There are countless opportunities to volunteer in your community.
- 3. Be proud of your strengths.** It's hard to accept yourself if you're constantly reminding yourself of your weaknesses. List every positive thing you can about yourself. *Even the smallest positive attribute is worthy of mention.*
 - "I am a good person."
 - "I'm a great Mom."
 - "I am loyal to my friends."
 - "I'm a great listener."
 - "I have a great work ethic".
 - "I'm a amazing dancer".
- 4. Forgive yourself.** If you're harping on your past transgressions, self-acceptance will be in short-supply. Chalk your bad choices up to experience and move on.
 - Everyone does the best they can. There will always be moments where you're less capable than others. You can do better next time.
- 5. Let go of goals that will never be reached.** If you're 70 years old, and your childhood dream of becoming a ballerina is at the forefront, maybe it's time to change the scope a little. It's difficult to accept yourself when the life you're living is very different from your original



plans. There's a time to let it all go. Let the present moment be that time. ***Make new plans that are plausible and that excite you.***

6. **Eliminate negative self-talk.** You can't accept yourself if you're constantly insulting yourself. ***Give yourself a fighting chance*** to reach a state of self-acceptance. Speak to yourself the way you would a good friend. Be a friend to yourself.
7. **Be authentic.** When you put on a persona for the world, you're not giving others the opportunity to accept you as you are. How will you be able to accept yourself? When you're authentic, the love you receive feels infinitely more meaningful. Living honestly is terrifying, but surprisingly easy. People admire and respect those with the strength to be authentic.
8. **Recognize your worth to the world.** Fortunately, this isn't something that must be earned. You're born with it. How much could you contribute if you applied yourself? ***The world needs you.*** What could say more of your inherent value than the fact that the world needs you?
9. **Forgive others.** The ability to forgive others is proportional to your ability to forgive yourself. Practice forgiving others and you'll find self-acceptance comes much easier.

Self-acceptance is fancy word for tolerating yourself. No one is perfect. You accept your friends and family even though they're all flawed in a unique way. Give yourself the same latitude. ***Focus on your positive traits and forgive yourself for your flaws and mistakes.*** Accept yourself as you are.

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