



New Trends
in Psychology

How to Accept Yourself? 9 Tips to Love Yourself

Marilena Cristina Platon¹

Abstract: In our journey to happiness and personal fulfillment, one of the most important destinations is self-love. It's a delicate and often challenging process, but essential to building a healthy relationship with ourselves and others. In this article, we will explore what it means to accept ourselves, the connection between self-esteem and self-acceptance, the importance of self-love, and offer nine practical tips to cultivate love and respect for ourselves.

Keywords: self-acceptance; self-esteem; self-love

1. Introduction

None of us are perfect, and we all have something we'd like to improve, but loving and accepting yourself for who you are can get complicated. Discover how to learn to accept yourself as you are. Each of us has qualities and flaws, they are part of our being, personality and identity. It is easy to recognize and accept our positive aspects and within everyone's reach, for the vast majority. It's hard to accept your flaws and

¹ Student, Faculty of Behavioural and Applied Sciences, Specialization Psychology, Danubius University of Galati, Romania, Address: 3 Galati Blvd., 800654 Galati, Romania, Tel.: +40372361102, Fax: +40372361290, Corresponding author: mar67cris@gmail.com



Copyright: © 2024 by the authors.
Open access publication under the terms and
conditions of the Creative Commons
Attribution (CC BY) license
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

love yourself despite the negatives that belong to you. This can become a challenge for many people or a real inconvenience.

2. What does it mean to accept yourself?

Some people are able to accept their flaws, while others fixate on them and become their worst critics. So, what exactly does it mean to accept yourself?

- Being able to recognize what you are or what you are not good at doing;
- To be aware of the parts that build your being, positive and negative, and to be happy with who you are;
- Accept your own values, preferences, resources and feelings, intuitions and actions both present and past;
- Recognize your strengths without being overly vain about them;
- Learn to recognize your weaknesses without blaming yourself with an excessively negative attitude towards yourself;
- Have a positive attitude towards yourself, without feeling the need for constant approval from others;
- Being able to love and respect yourself despite your flaws.

The subtle link between self-esteem and self-acceptance

In psychology, the concept of self-acceptance may be a less popular research topic than self-esteem or self-confidence, but that doesn't mean it's any less important. Self-esteem is at our core: our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are intimately linked to how we see our dignity and worth as human beings.

What is self-esteem in theory?

In theory, self-esteem is the subjective assessment of one's own value and competence. It is related to how we perceive and evaluate ourselves in relation to personal and social standards.

Self-esteem theory holds that an individual's main priority in life is to find self-acceptance, and that this is often achieved through achievement along the way. In turn, fulfillment is often achieved through competition with others. Therefore, the logical conclusion is that competing with others can help us feel that we have

achieved better results by making us feel more proud of ourselves and thus improving self-acceptance.

While this theory represents a good understanding of self-esteem as we tend to experience it, it is unfortunate that we place so much emphasis on our achievements. Apart from competition and “winning” against others, there are many factors that can contribute to our sense of self-worth.

The importance of self-love

Self-love involves appreciation and respect for oneself. This includes taking care of your physical and mental health. Nowadays it’s hard to dedicate time to yourself, among the many commitments, it’s important to take time to nurture and treat yourself with love and kindness. According to the American Psychological Association, self-love means taking care of your own well-being and satisfaction.

If we consider that the first relationship is with ourselves, self-love is of fundamental importance and is the basis of relationships with others. Loving yourself allows you to live according to your values and make healthy choices in your daily decisions.

Self-love is essential to our well-being and healthy relationships with others. It helps us to know, respect and care for ourselves better. Confidence, self-respect, self-esteem and self-love are all closely related. By deepening our love for ourselves, we can, in turn, deepen the love we share with others.

How to learn to accept yourself?

Below are some strategies that can help you learn to accept yourself:

Embrace your own values: It is important to identify, articulate and embrace your personal values and beliefs. Thinking and acting in accordance with your values can help strengthen your sense of identity, improve your self-esteem, and facilitate your self-acceptance.

Set healthy boundaries: You may find that you need boundaries in different aspects of your life, such as work, relationships, time, and finances. Set boundaries and stick to them. Don’t let others violate your boundaries or take them for granted. This can help prevent mistreatment, which can be difficult to accept on a subconscious level.

Forgive yourself: If you’ve made a mistake, admit it and learn from it, but don’t always reproach yourself. Learn to forgive yourself for your mistakes.

Avoid self-blame: Recognize that you are not the cause of every negative situation you encounter. Try to be objective and evaluate other factors that may have played a role in certain circumstances.

Don't compare yourself to others: Try to be a better version of your former self instead of comparing yourself to others.

Focus on positivity: strive to see the positive in every situation. Instead of focusing on what you did wrong, try to identify at least one thing you did well. If you have a negative thought about yourself, change it and replace it with a positive one.

Write a journal: Keep a journal in which you write down your strengths and achievements, but also your weaknesses and disappointments. If you're having trouble accepting something, it can be helpful to write down your thoughts about the situation and what you could have done differently. This can help you make changes in the future and act more in line with your values.

Experience kindness love meditation¹: it can help you develop positivity, compassion, and equanimity². It involves thinking for yourself, appreciating yourself as you are, and saying affirmations out loud.

Go to therapy: It can be helpful to go to a psychologist or psychotherapist if you think that lack of self-acceptance disturbs your serenity, causes symptoms of anxiety or depression, interferes with your ability to eat or sleep, affects your work or damages relationships.

3. Conclusions

In the end, loving ourselves is an ongoing and profound process that requires patience, understanding and commitment to our own personal evolution and development. By applying these tips and cultivating an attitude of compassion and acceptance towards ourselves, we can begin to build a more fulfilling and healthy life, and this, in turn, will also influence our relationships with others and the world around us.

¹ It is a practice in which we focus on cultivating and extending the feeling of love and kindness to ourselves and others. During this meditation, we focus on affirmations and images that stimulate our sense of love and compassion, and then extend it to others. The goal is to develop a more empathetic and positive attitude toward ourselves and others.

² State of calm, tranquility, emotional balance.

Ultimately, self-acceptance can help you be happy and calm and lead to a sense of well-being. On the other hand, a lack of self-acceptance and a negative view of oneself can cause low self-confidence and a higher risk of developing conditions such as depression and anxiety.

References

- Ackerman, E. C. (2018). What is Self-Worth & How Do We Build it? *Positive Psychology*. <https://positivepsychology.com/self-worth/>.
- Field, B. (2022). 7 Ways to Practice Self-Love. *Very Well Mind*. <https://www.verywellmind.com/ways-to-practice-self-love-5667417>.
- Fielding, S. (2023). You Are Enough Just as You Are—but It's OK To Seek Self-Improvement Too. *Very Well Mind*. <https://www.verywellmind.com/you-are-enough-self-improvement-finding-balance-7093355>.
- Gupta, S. (2022). What Is Self-Acceptance? *Very Well Mind*. <https://www.verywellmind.com/self-acceptance-characteristics-importance-and-tips-for-improvement-6544468>.