



ACCEPT WHO YOU ARE

Self-acceptance is our satisfaction or happiness with ourselves and is necessary for good mental health.

When we're self-accepting, we're able to embrace all facets of ourselves—not just the positive. We can recognize our weaknesses or limitations, but this awareness in no way interferes with our ability to fully accept ourselves.

It's only when we stop judging ourselves that we can secure a more positive sense of who we are.

Perhaps more than anything else, cultivating self-acceptance requires that we develop more self-compassion. Only when we can better understand and pardon ourselves for things that earlier we assumed must be all our fault can we secure the relationship to self that till now has eluded us.

Self-Acceptance vs. Self-Improvement

Self-acceptance has nothing to do with self-improvement. This process is not about "fixing" anything in ourselves. With self-acceptance, we are just affirming who we are, with whatever strengths and weaknesses we possess.

We can't ever feel totally secure or good enough so long as our self-regard depends on constantly bettering ourselves. Self-acceptance is here-and-now oriented, not future-oriented. Self-acceptance is about already being okay, with no qualifications, period. It's not that we ignore or deny our faults or frailties, just that we view them as irrelevant to our basic acceptability.

It's possible to accept and love ourselves and still be committed to a lifetime of personal growth. Accepting ourselves as we are today doesn't mean we'll be without the motivation to make changes or improvements that will make us more effective, or that will enrich our lives. It's simply that this self-acceptance is in no way tied to such alterations. We don't have to actually do anything to secure our self-acceptance: We have only to change the way we look at ourselves.

"Happiness and self-acceptance go hand in hand. In fact your level of self-acceptance determines your level of happiness. The more self-acceptance you have, the more happiness you'll allow yourself to accept, receive and enjoy. In other words, you enjoy as much happiness as you believe you're worthy of."

Robert Holden, *Happiness Now!*

How to Start Practicing Self-Acceptance

- Become aware of negative thinking patterns and consciously redirect them to positive thoughts
- Accept your imperfections
- Use positive self-talk
- Disregard what other people might think about you or your decisions
- Re-examine residual feelings of guilt and self-criticisms
- Bring compassion and understanding to each aspect of the self-acceptance process
- Look in the mirror and say, "I love you" to yourself
- Write in a journal
- Forgive yourself for past mistakes

Source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/evolution-the-self/200809/the-path-unconditional-self-acceptance>