

SELF ACCEPTANCE STARTER KIT

How to feel
empowered
regardless of outside
circumstances.



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What Is Preventing You from Becoming the Best Version of You?

Abraham Maslow believed that the highest level of human evolution is self-actualization, which is defined as 'achieving ones full potential' or "successful development and use of personal talents and abilities."

I believe that the purpose of our lives is to reach this level of achievement so we can share our talents, gifts, passions, and abilities with the world.

But how do you get there?

The Power of Self-Acceptance

When I was in my late teens and early twenties it came to my attention that I perceived myself very differently than other people did. I was much more critical of myself then they were. So I took some time to examine the issue and here is how I began.

First, you have to identify what's standing in your way so you can change it. Fears, limiting beliefs and the one most often discussed, low self-esteem are the primary roadblocks.

Actually, in my experience, self-acceptance is far more powerful than self-esteem, which can often be found lacking for reason's we'll discuss below.

Before I get into the specifics of the power of true self –acceptance and how you can attain it permanently for yourself, let's get into why self-esteem is often not enough.

I think the reason more people refer to low self-esteem as the culprit is because people are generally aware of their level of self-esteem while they may not be conscious of their fears and limiting beliefs.

What is Self-Esteem?

What is self-esteem? It is defined as "self-respect: confidence in your own merit as an individual." Synonyms include self-worth and self-image. However, I see self-respect and confidence/self-esteem as being different. I think you can respect yourself without having confidence/self-esteem.

Confidence/self-esteem is simply the way you present yourself to others and how you feel about yourself when taking on challenges.

Self-respect as the way you treat yourself and the way you allow yourself to be treated. But that's just my experience.

Anyway, one of the biggest problems with self-esteem is that it has become very closely linked with physical appearance. Whether it's because of media, advertising and celebrities, or because of having been teased as children, most of us tend to focus on and be self-conscious of our few physical flaws instead of evaluating ourselves as a whole.

You can build self-esteem or confidence by recognizing your strengths, skills, talents, and gifts. You can also build self-esteem or confidence by taking on challenges and increasing your ability to face and meet challenges, completing tasks, developing resilience and perseverance, increasing your ability to make decisions for yourself that are in your own best interest, and achieving successes.

Life is not really about success though; it's about learning and growing by trying, and feeling good about your efforts. However, if your physical appearance is still tied in with how you fundamentally feel about yourself, you will probably have a rough road. Bad hair days, break outs, weight fluctuations and so on will always happen and if you let them affect your self-esteem, (cause self-consciousness) you're still trapped.

Even if you have separated your physical appearance from your core self, self-esteem/confidence or the lack thereof are built during our formative years as the result of the actions and words of others, and what we tell ourselves about those actions or words.

To me, self-esteem is often based on achievements, success, and how much other people admire and respect you because of them. This makes it situation-dependant, meaning it can be built up by other people and events, and solidified by your mind (self-talk), and thus, it can be torn down by them too.

Your self-esteem can be shattered by loss, rejection, and/or perceived failure. Therefore, self-esteem can fluctuate along with the situations in your life; this is the other huge problem with self-esteem.

There are many negative effects of low self-esteem, as I know from experience, and I never learned how to improve my self-esteem, once and for all. Luckily, I didn't have to.

An Amazing Delivery

One day, when I was at a very low point in my life, I was, what I have come to believe, divinely delivered a way to achieve self-acceptance. And as I've learned, once it is achieved, self-acceptance is unshakable and eliminates the effects of low self-esteem while improving confidence; therefore, making it a more permanent and valuable goal.

To achieve self-acceptance, begin by practicing unconditional love and compassion with yourself. Start understanding yourself: your behavior, your motivations, your reactions, and why you think the painful thoughts and feel the painful feelings you do.

Be gentle and patient with yourself, we are all a work in progress. Commend yourself for taking steps to improve and grow.

Without self-acceptance, self-respect and self-love we generally won't be motivated to make changes because we don't believe we are worthy or deserving. And even if we do try, we are likely to sabotage ourselves.

Once we know we are deserving and worthy, we will be more likely to take steps toward self-preservation, self-nurturing, and self-improvement. When you feel better about yourself, it's easier to do better; to care more about taking care of yourself, and to care more about doing what's in your best interest and growth.

Self-acceptance will:

- Eliminate insecurities, defensiveness, denials, and excuses as you have accepted your "flaws," "weaknesses," "limitations" and "shortcomings," and have no need to defend them if another person points them out. So it eliminates hurt from criticism,
- Eliminate envy, jealousy, feeling inferior, and the egos' need to compare ourselves to and compete with others and what they have.
- Increase spontaneity, decrease inhibitions, sets the inner child free to play without fear of judgment or loss of outside approval (because it no longer matters).
- Allow you to be totally honest with yourself and others about your needs because you now understand what and who you are, and what you really need, (not what others have told you you need), without self-judgment or concern for the judgment of others
- Eliminates many fears
- Decrease the need to please other people to the detriment of yourself, so it decreases the incidences of overextending yourself, and therefore, decreases stress and increases your ability to say "no", which increases the amount of time you have to self-nurture and self-preserve.
- Allow you to be compassionate with yourself which leads to compassion for others. This compassion for others will allow you to adopt the skill to not take things personally, which eliminates your capacity to be hurt or offended by them.
- Allow you to have your wants driven by soul needs not ego needs, illusory needs, other peoples' wants or expectations, unmet needs from the past, or the need to correct or repay/avenge a past "wrong"
- Inspire you to develop healthy, productive coping/managing strategies, including stress management, and the desire for self-preservation; eliminates self-destructive behaviors because you value yourself
- Eliminate self-deprecating/negative self-talk
- Eliminate harsh self-blame for making mistakes. They are accepted as the learning experiences of a growing, imperfect person; a person in progress.
- Eliminate negative reactions to "shadow traits" in others because you've accepted them as part of yourself and you no longer fear being reminded of them, therefore, your relationships improve

- Increase the quality of your behaviors because your beliefs will change
- Improve decision-making because they will now be driven by what is your and others best interest; you will look for the win-win.
- Free you to take more risks because you can accept not succeeding
- Improve ones self-image
- Increase your ability to make other people feel better about themselves. When you accept yourself, it means you feel valuable and like yourself just as you are. When you feel this way you area free to/willing to make other people feel the same way by complimenting them, lifting them up, enhancing their self-worth/esteem. You are no longer afraid to build up someone else.
- Lead to acceptance of others and acceptance of life situations.
- Remain and cannot be affected by circumstances, including rejection, loss, failure, or betrayal (unlike self-esteem).

Confidence in one's abilities is easier to achieve than confidence in oneself. Feeling validated gives one confidence, but you don't have to wait for someone else to validate you; so, validate yourself, *regularly*.

If you don't love and accept yourself as you are, how can you believe that other people do, can or will? What I mean by this is that a lack of self-acceptance may cause mistrust or disbelief that other people love and accept you, causing you to sabotage your relationships with unproductive behavior and thus, become self-fulfilling.

It all starts with returning love to yourself; we can't give away what we don't have.

I'm not saying that you don't need self-esteem/confidence. I am saying you need self-acceptance more.

Why Self-Acceptance?

The road to peace, joy, good relationships, and good health is paved with self-acceptance.

The road to self-acceptance requires identifying then accepting (and embracing) or eliminating those aspects of yourself you don't like, identifying and putting to use your strengths, skills, talents, and gifts which will all help you develop self-esteem /confidence.

Who can you count on to always do what's in your best interest?

Can you count on yourself?

You are potentially the only person you *can* count on 100% of the time Also, you're potentially the only person on this planet who could get along with you 100% of the time.

Don't you think *that* relationship is worth some effort?

Most people will disappoint you and you can't control that (unless and until you eliminate expectations) but you can control/prevent being disappointed in and by yourself.

People love and accept you with all your 'flaws' and you love and accept other people with all their 'flaws,' so why should it be hard for you to love and accept yourself?

As a bonus, you will discover that as you progress in gaining self-acceptance, some of your undesirable behavioral traits will cease to exist. As self-acceptance and self-worth increase, those behaviors driven by fear, ego and pain will decrease.

A person is vulnerable to emotional pain in exact relationship to the degree of self-awareness and self-acceptance. –David R, Hawkins, M.D., Ph.D.

Get your self-acceptance today!

Better than Self-Esteem: Gaining Self-Acceptance

Steps 1 and 2

Acknowledge

Are you, shy, insecure and/or self-conscious? Do you lack confidence? Do you still hear the names you were called as a child in your head? Do you say them to yourself? Are you self-critical? Are you still carrying the pain or anger of being picked on? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then this exercise is for you.

I used this method myself when I was at the very lowest point in my life. I was feeling hopeless and very depressed. Some inner guide delivered this to me to improve the way I felt about myself, which would ultimately improve the way I felt about my life.

It freed me from my self-imposed prison of insecurity, self-consciousness and self-criticism/abuse. This was *the most important* growth-work I have ever done. *It changed everything!* May it do the same for you. (I believe I was given this exercise so I could share it with others.)

Names and criticisms can't hurt you when you are self-accepting, so ***please*** share this information with children and teens. It will help them avoid *so much* pain. Therefore, these exercises can be (and should be) used by adolescents, and can be made into games or used as discussions points with younger children with a focus on the positives. (For example: Play a fill-in-the-blank game taking turns. I like to _____. I am good at _____. I feel happy when I'm _____ ing.)

When doing it with adolescents, may I suggest that you do it *with* them. Make your list with them as a model and to make them feel less self-conscious about sharing, and it will probably bring you closer. Then make a list *for* them, sharing your view of their strengths and flaws/undesirable traits.

The earlier one develops self-acceptance the safer they will be from outside influences (peer pressure) and the earlier they will have the ability to make healthy decisions that serve their best interest, because they believe they are deserving or worthy.

It is essential that you be completely honest with yourself while doing this exercise. As Dr. Phil says "You can't change what you don't acknowledge."

You may want to use a new, special journal to begin this new way of feeling about yourself. This *will be* the start of a new chapter in your life, so why not mark it with something special.

You will want to keep the work you do with this exercise, as you will find yourself changing it and adding to it for a long time to come. In addition, it will be a record of your personal-growth accomplishments.

Use a separate page for each list.

The first part is easy, because if you're in need of self-acceptance, it means you don't like yourself very much, which means there isn't much about yourself that you approve of or enjoy. We are comfortable criticizing ourselves.

Step 1

Make a list of all the things you don't like about yourself. (The list will include things you don't like about the way you look, think, feel, and act, things you're afraid of and afraid to do or try, and so on. Be as specific as possible.

Do not use the phrase "I am" when describing yourself: this implies a permanent state of being, a label, and you will see that most of the items on your list will be changeable (some of your physical attributes may not be.) You may continue to add to the list as things you've forgotten or didn't realize come into your awareness.

Step 2

Make a list of the things you like about yourself. This will probably be a much shorter list than the first one. (For now!) As you accomplish removing things from list one (Step 4), you will start to see new things that you like about yourself. Add these to Step 2 and date them.

Once you have a reasonably-sized list, take a look at what's on it and see if you can identify a pattern or be able to categorize the items. This can direct you toward your purpose and your bliss. (Steps 7, 8 and 9)

This step asks you to do something we rarely, if ever, think about. I often wonder if it's in our nature to only focus on and think about what's wrong or missing. Perhaps it's because most of us have heard more criticism than validation, or because it would seem conceited.

Regardless of why, by spending some time thinking about what is good about you, you will raise your vibrational frequency and become aware of all the good within you.

Step 3

Body Image

Body-image and self-image *are not* the same; however, they have become entwined. Females tend to be self-conscious of body parts they don't like and any that have been pointed out by others. Generally, males will use body improvement as a method of improving self-image and attractiveness. It is imperative to build body-image so that self-image doesn't suffer.

Elective or cosmetic surgeries and enhancements have become common and the patients are getting younger.

Wouldn't it be great if we could all just accept what nature gave us and believe that we are in the perfect body for this life?

If you are self-conscious or have body-image issues, you probably say to yourself "I hate my body" or "I hate my face." But you *can't possibly* hate your *whole* body or even your whole face. You're likely referring to your appearance not any of the miraculous working parts that keep you alive and functioning.

Here is an exercise to prove that.

To keep track of your count, draw four columns in your journal, one column for each of the four point scores. Use tally marks to count. At the end, count up your tallies and see where you stand; which adjective describes the way you feel about the majority of your body parts.

Rank your body parts/functions using this scale:
1-strongly dislike, 2-dislike, 3-like, and.4-love.

Hair: Color Style Texture Quantity	Forehead	Eyebrows	Eyelashes
Eyes : color shape	Vision	Ears	Hearing
Cheeks	Nose	Sense of Smell	Lips
Smile	Tongue	Sense of Taste	Teeth
Gums	Jaw	Chin	Sense of Touch
Neck	Voice	Vocal Cords	Larynx
Arm Pits	Shoulders	Upper arms	Elbows
Forearms	Wrists	Hands	Fingers
Finger nails	Chest/Breasts	Nipples	Stomach
Navel	Back	Waist	Buttocks
Vagina Clitoris or Penis Testicles	Hips	Thighs	Knees
Shins	Calves	Ankles	Feet
Toes	Toe nails	Brain	Heart
Bladder	Pancreas	Esophagus	Skin
Lungs	Kidneys	Liver	Reproductive organs
Digestive system	Immune system	Central Nervous System	Spine Vertebrae
Bones	Height	Weight	Shape/build

(This is obviously not a complete list of all the systems and organs that make up the trillions of cells in your body, but there are enough listed to work with and make the point.)

If you can't find anything or only a few things on this list that you like about yourself, you may have significant body issues and should seek professional help.

Becoming aware of how many body parts and functions you actually have, and ranking them individually will help you realize that you have been over exaggerating when you say that you hate your body or face. More importantly, it will help you realize there are parts of you that you love, parts and functions that you're grateful for, and parts that you can change.

To enhance your confidence accentuate the parts of you that you love. There are plenty of tips on the web on how to dress, style and use make-up to enhance your best features.

I believe that our bodies need attention and appreciation as much as our souls do.

Be grateful for all the parts you have and for those that are functioning well. Don't wait for a dis-order or dis-ease to occur to make you acknowledge them. If they are not functioning well, be grateful for all the years they *did* function perfectly. Gratitude and love are very high frequency vibrations and are very healthy for your body.

Our relationship with our bodies should be no different than our relationships with people. They both deserve validation and appreciation, and they both function better when validated and appreciated.

The Science

Based on the fascinating work of Dr. Masaru Emoto in *The Hidden Messages in Water*, which shows the impact of high and low vibration thoughts, words and feelings on water, it is *imperative* that we refrain from speaking or thinking cruel, hurtful and hateful words, to or about ourselves and our bodies, as they may have significantly negative effects on the functioning and condition of our bodies, which are seventy percent water.

I recently saw a DVD based on Gregg Braden's book *Walking Between the Worlds* which demonstrated the same effects of high and low vibrations on a water droplet.

It is important to realize that when you say "I hate my body?" or any part of it, it negatively affects your energy, your health and your self-esteem in the same way it would affect anyone else you said it to.

For this reason, this exercise should definitely be done by you or anyone else you know who is dealing with any one of the *many* autoimmune diseases or ones with no known cause. (I looked it up and found a list of 155 autoimmune diseases. An autoimmune disease is when the body turns on or attacks itself. Why would someone's body attack itself unless the owner was attacking it first, with destructive beliefs, thoughts and/or words?)

The way our bodies function, what they do without our intervention (or asking), is miraculous! Treat yourself as the miracle that you are!

Once you have finished assigning numbers to chart three, go over it again and determine which parts of your body that scored one or two can be changed or improved.

Self-Consciousness

I was eleven years-old before my mother would allow me to shave my legs. I was very self-conscious of being hairy, even though no one ever commented about it. After I began shaving my legs, I remained self-conscious about my hairy arms. I used to call myself “monkey arms.”

Despite the self-consciousness and because it didn’t *seem* appropriate, it wasn’t until my thirties that I gave myself permission to shave my arms. The difference this made in my self-confidence was amazingly dramatic. How I wish I had done this sooner!

My point is, don’t let society dictate what is right for you. The better you feel about yourself, the better person you will be!

So, anything you don’t like about your body that you have control over changing, do it!

Parents should be sensitive to these needs in their children. Name-calling and bullying is often based on physical features, so anything that can be removed, improved or changed to keep from drawing attention will be a big help to the developing child.

Love yourself and your body and it will love you back with perfect health and functioning. You deserve it and you are worth it!

Meeting and Accepting Your Seven Bodies of Health

I am a complex individual with seven bodies of health that all need conscious attention if I am to have a healthy, fulfilling life with healthy, fulfilling relationships. The needs of my seven bodies require balancing and those needs that conflict need managing.

Everyone has different levels of need based on temperament, genetics, environment, childhood, and goals. When we were children our needs were dependant on others. As we mature, our needs *should* evolve into a self-delivery model.

Until then, my behaviors, thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions will all be based on the degree to which my needs were or were not met in childhood, and whether or not they are being met in each situation now.

It's unlikely that you are even aware that you *have* seven bodies of health (BOH) and that they all need management and attention. At best, unless something is wrong, you probably only attend to the obvious needs of your material bodies (financial, physical/biochemical/sexual).

In order to maximize the human experience, you must wake up to the fact that each of your bodies of health need to be optimized by elevating your beliefs, thoughts, words, and behavior. Understanding needs will help you understand behavior; understanding behavior will help you understand feelings. This works for your relationship with yourself and with others.

The seven bodies of health can be broken up into two categories: your invisible world and your material world.

Your **invisible world** is made up of the following bodies of health:

1. Energetic or Vibrational
2. Emotional or Psychological
3. Relational or Social
4. Mental or Intellectual
5. Spiritual/Creative

It is important to understand that your emotional and relational bodies can *only* be separated once you evolve to where you:

1. Have “outgrown” or evolved past the need for other peoples approval.

2. Don't take things personally.
3. Have gained unconditional self-acceptance and unconditional acceptance of others.
4. Aren't attached to outcomes; no expectations.
5. Are self-sufficient/self-reliant/independent, so you don't rely on others for meeting your needs.
6. Have eliminated judging.
7. Can express gratitude and appreciation freely.
8. Have a clear view of the abundance in each relationship. In other words, you can focus on what you have instead of what's missing or wrong. (no nagging, complaining, or criticizing)
9. Can see the lessons inherent in each relationship.
10. Have an understanding of and respect for mutual needs.
11. Can see another's growth and well being as being as important as your own.

Therefore, for the majority of the people on the planet, these two bodies of health remain inseparable.

Your **material world**:

1. Financial
2. Physical/biochemical/sexual

These areas are hard to separate, as satisfying many of your physical needs requires money. This includes your needs for shelter, heat, healthy food and clothing.

The vibrational body is the only body that doesn't have its own specific needs: its proper functioning is dependant on the health of the other invisible bodies. In other words, the health of the energy body relies on the needs of the other bodies being met.

The level of functioning of the energy body dictates the health of the physical body, and the health of the emotional/relational, mental, and spiritual/creative bodies all directly impact the energy body.

You can increase the health of your energy body by increasing the vibrational frequency of your beliefs, thoughts, words, behaviors, and feelings, and by resolving any unresolved emotional/relational issues

It is important to know that even if you eat healthfully and exercise regularly, if your energy/emotional centers (chakras) aren't functioning properly due to unexpressed, suppressed, or repressed emotional issues, unhealthy and unproductive thoughts, and/or living inauthentically, physical illness, dis-ease or dis-order *will* manifest within your physical body.

"What am I?" Affirmations

1. I am a vibrational/energetic being. I have a vibrational/energetic body of health and vibrational/energetic health to attend to.
2. I am a spiritual/creative being. I have a spiritual/creative body of health and spiritual/creative health to attend to.
3. I am a feeling being. I have an emotional body of health and emotional health to attend to.
4. I am a social/relational being. I have a social/relational body of health and social/relational health to attend to.
5. I am a thinking being. I have a mental body of health and mental health to attend to.
6. I live in a material world so I have a financial body of health and financial health to attend to.
7. I am a physical/sexual being. I have a physical and sexual body of health to attend to. The vessel that houses my essence, my spirit, makes this life possible.

My body deserves to be treated with honor and respect for transporting me through this life. It is also my personal messenger for self-chosen lessons; lessons of healing thoughts and beliefs to evolve the spirit within. If there is illness, disease, or dis-order within my physical body, I need to look at unresolved issues in my other bodies for the cause.

Though energy healing, clearing an energetic block, improving a stagnant flow or strengthening a weakness may alleviate the symptoms temporarily, if the emotional, mental, relational, or spiritual cause is not cleared, the same symptom will return or another will replace it.

All of my bodies interact with each other and their health is dependant on one another.

emotional/relational health + mental health + spiritual/creative health =
vibrational health → physical health

It is my sincerest hope that this information has not only changed your perception of what you are but that it also will change the way you think, behave, and treat yourself and others.

By improving the condition of your seven bodies of health, you will affect the functioning of all your energy bodies.

[It should be noted that according to energy-medicine research, there are seven energy bodies or layers. For the purposes of simplicity, I will be referring to the energy bodies in general when discussing it. I highly recommend that you read up on energy medicine to get the latest information.]

Accepting Your Vibrational Body

One of the necessary steps of self-acceptance is accepting the presence of all your bodies of health. Out of all the bodies of health, the only one you *may* have to work to accept is your vibrational body. So, here are the facts.

Fact: We are matter.

Fact: Matter is energy and light.

Fact: Energy vibrates.

Fact: Vibrations create sound.

Fact: Sound resonates.

Fact: Resonance finds and attracts like.

Fact: You draw to you the same level of energy you put out, high or low; this is resonance.

Fact: Thoughts and feelings are energy.

Fact: Words are energy.

Fact: Behaviors/actions are energy.

Fact: Beliefs are often subconscious. They surface in perceptions, thoughts, feelings, words, and behavior/actions. So, beliefs create energy.

Fact: Energy can never be destroyed. Energy is eternal.

It is not easy for most of us to believe in things we cannot see. Without the use of Kirlian photography* or unless you are a medical intuitive, visual clairvoyant or participate in training, most of us will never see an energy body. But we can *all* feel it if we tune in or if we have a powerful experience.

Caroline Myss related a wonderful story of a woman who had an out-of-body experience during a severe car accident. As she watched from above, she heard many people in the cars behind the accident complaining about the delay. But one woman sent out prayers for her, and she saw a white light shoot up from this woman and into her injured body. Then a voice told her it was not her time and she returned to her body.

She remembered the woman's license plate number and went to see her after she got out of the hospital. She felt compelled to bring her flowers and to say "thank you."

When I first heard this story, I was moved to tears for the proof of our energy body *and* the power of our thoughts and prayers. I have never forgotten it and am ever grateful to Dr. Myss for sharing this story.

Immediately following the first election of Barack Obama as president, many people described the mood of the country as vibrating. This *was* literally true.

The collective vibrational or energy level of the country *was* elevated by changing many people's thoughts and feelings of hopelessness and fear to the higher vibrational thoughts and feelings of pride, hopefulness/optimism, unity, and love. I felt it!

There have been two other experiences in my life where I can say I felt my energy body. The first was after a beautiful SCUBA diving experience. After divesting myself of my gear and getting off the boat, I was bouncing. I had a full body high that lasted for hours.

Was that euphoria as a result of the silent, basically meditative activity of SCUBA diving (heavy focus on breathing), or was it a connection made to the essential nature of my spirit vibrating in harmony with such a beautiful natural environment and experience?

The second time was during a conversation with a guy I was very attracted to who was part Native American. I should tell you that I have always felt connected to the Native Americans and believe I have spent many past lives as such, possibly as a shaman.

He was sharing a story of an experience in a sweat lodge. I felt my whole body vibrating the entire time. Was it him, the Native American connection, the story, or my past life resonating with the reference to a past experience?

Once we accept that we are pure energy, we must also accept what we know about energy; it cannot be destroyed, therefore, it is eternal. This means *we are eternal*.

We have been here before and most likely will be again (if we choose). Believing this, we can let go of a fear of death, and accept that we may bring memories, issues, illnesses, and fears (presenting as phobias) with us from past lives. Only by identifying them as past life experiences can we diminish their effects in this life.

Your energy or vibrational body surrounds all your other bodies; in other words, all your other bodies affect your energy or vibrational body. It extends further than your physical body, as far as your outstretched arms or possibly further, and

thus, comes into contact with other things, animals and people and with their bodies.

We are all connected by vibration, and until and unless we internalize this **fact**, we, as a species, will continue to live as separate, with violence, anger, fear and dis-ease.

You may wish to try this affirmation:

I am an eternal, vibrational being living a physical existence.

I am not my body. I am light and energy.

Close your eyes and feel the words. Connect with your vibrational body.

Accepting this part of you will allow you to involve it in your decisions and to consciously choose it as your driving force.

*If you require visible evidence, please check out Kirlian aura photos and do a little research on the subject. I first learned about and viewed it in Dr. Richard Gerber's book Vibrational Medicine.

Better than Self-Esteem: Gaining Self-Acceptance

Steps 4, 5 and 6

Accept It or Change It

By completing steps one through three, and meeting your seven bodies of health, you should be getting to know yourself quite a bit better. These first steps were the easy part, now comes the real work: **Change**.

Step 4

Now that you've finished list #1, review each item on the list and determine whether they are things you believe about yourself or are they things other people have told you are that you have come to believe as true.

Know this: Other people's opinions **are not** facts. Their opinions and comments may have hurt you but that doesn't mean you have to internalize them into your self-concept and take them for the gospel! You can **choose** to believe something else.

So, take each belief based on another person's opinion and create true and opposite belief, or counter-belief, and write them into list #2, after crossing them off step 1.

(If you need help creating a counter-belief, let me know.)

Step 5

Choose one thing on List #1 that you feel will be easy to change, conquer, eliminate, or overcome. Put it into your conscious mind that you want to change this. Create an affirmation that will help you remember or carry a dedicated reminder with you at all times.

When you have accomplished it, and *you will*, write the date of accomplishment next to it and cross it off the list in pencil (so you can still see what it was).

Accomplishments build self-trust, self-respect and self-esteem or confidence, so as you cross things of this list you will most probably find yourself adding items to List #2.

Step 6

Choose another, then another..... Eventually, you will see that some of them are part of what make you special and others are things that you do not want to change, things that you are comfortable with and thus, accept about yourself.

Some new behaviors (thoughts, words and deeds) may take a few weeks to become new habits, if practiced regularly. Some new behaviors require certain circumstances in order to practice, so you will have to keep them in your awareness for when those situations occur.

The lists in this exercise will help you improve your self-acceptance, self-respect and self-worth. They will help resolve conflicts within you because you will have made choices about what attributes to keep and which ones to change. They will also help you get to know yourself and discover your authentic self.

The things you love and are good at (Steps 7 and 8) tell you who you truly are and help you identify, if you haven't already, your purpose in life, your calling, your mission.

Our purpose is to love ourselves, to love what we do (and find a way to get paid for it) and share it with the world. When we can do that, our authentic light shines, and empowers and uplifts others.

Our life is always a work in progress. Be gentle with yourself as you endeavor to learn, grow, awaken and heal.

Gaining Self-Acceptance

Steps 7, 8 & 9

Finding Your Purpose and Your Bliss

These next steps are intended to help you get to know your authentic self , your creative-self and your spiritual-self, and to accept that self (with the possible exceptions uncovered in Step 9).

We are all here for a specific purpose, one that we may not be aware of. But fulfilling that purpose/mission/destiny is dependant on you knowing and using you unique combination of skills, gifts, talents, and passions to enhance the lives of others and the world. These strengths are your signposts to fulfilling your sacred contract; the plan *you* made before you incarnated.

There *is* something *only you can do* and it is your job to figure out what it is and have the courage to go for it.

Step 7

Make a list of all the things you love, things you're passionate about and things you loved as a child, including activities, sights, smells, sounds/music, tastes/foods, and feelings.

Things you loved, things you loved to do and dreamt of as a child were driven by your sacred contract.

The sense preferences list will help you decorate your living space as to surround yourself with things that increase your energy and thus, decrease your stress, as well as enhance your spirit.

This list may also help you uncover possible past life connections.

Step 8

Make a list of all the things you are good at; you strengths, talents, skills and gifts. This list provides you with a glimpse of the things you need to use to fulfill your birth vision/sacred contract/souls' mission.

Step 9

Make a list of the things you are *not* good at; what you perceive as your weaknesses, your limitations, things you believe you "can't" do.

Determine which of these things matter in pursuit of fulfilling your purpose, and determine which of these things do not matter.

Determine if the things that matter can be improved upon, learned or overcome. If they are roadblocks to what you believe is your purpose, then these are lessons and challenges you chose as part your accomplishments set for this lifetime.

Knowing your purpose gives you drive/motivation and it gives you a sense of peace and security knowing what you are supposed to be doing.

It is important to know that just as a book has many chapters and may have more than one plot point; your life may have multiple purposes. One may end (be fulfilled) leaving you open to pursue the next one. The first one may have taught you what you needed to learn to be prepared for the next one. (This is what happened for me!)

Endings are really new beginnings. Embrace the journey!

Reminder Tools

Reprogramming

While you are working on gaining self-acceptance, you will probably continue to have self-critical (self-abusive) thoughts. You have probably been thinking these thoughts for years and they are likely automatic. You have been programmed by other people's opinions and criticisms.

It is time to eliminate these habitual thoughts and to replace them with positive, empowering ones.

I have provided you with a set of **Affirmations or Beneficial Beliefs**. I ask you to take the first one or any one that appeals to you, and memorize it.

I also want you to copy it (or print out the following page on cardstock and cut) and carry it with you, as well as posting it in places you will see it.

The goal is to be reminded as much as possible to think these thoughts.

1. I am worthy of my own acceptance and approval.
2. I am lovable, valuable and deserving. I am worthy. I am a Divine creation of the Universal Spirit. I am loved and protected at all times.
3. I love and accept myself just as I am.
4. My best **is** good enough. I am good enough *just as I am*.
5. I deserve to be gentle with myself. I am a work in progress. I am an imperfect being striving to learn, grow, heal and awaken. I am evolving to become the best version of me.
6. I am on this planet, at this time, for a specific purpose.
7. I am an eternal, spiritual being having a physical experience.
8. I have seven bodies of health to attend to, not just one.

<p><i>I love and accept myself just as I am.</i></p>	<p><i>I am lovable, valuable and deserving. I am worthy.</i></p>
<p><i>My best is good enough. I am good enough just as I am.</i></p>	<p><i>I am an imperfect being striving to learn, grow, heal, and awaken. I am a work in progress. I am evolving to become the best version of me. I deserve to be gentle with myself.</i></p>
<p><i>I am on this planet, at this time, for a specific purpose.</i></p>	<p><i>I am an eternal spiritual being having a physical experience.</i></p>
<p><i>I am a Divine child of the universe.</i></p>	<p><i>I have seven bodies of health to attend to, not just one.</i></p>

Pocket Coaches

Pocket Coaches are portable reminders to change behaviors (thoughts, words and/or behavior).

The first *Pocket Coach* was born as a personal reminder for me in a time of significant stress and impending, unwanted change.

Since I worked as part of special education classroom team, I realized that the state of mind and behavior of my teammates could affect me as well. No matter how good our intentions were, emotions could easily sidetrack us.

So, I ended up sharing it with my teammates.

When necessary, I would pull one of them into the office or into the hall. I would explain what I had written and why, and ask them to read it aloud with me. This served to refocus and rebalance us, so we could return to do the best job possible.

It worked so well for me and my staff, that I started creating others.

Here are the ones I created for self-acceptance. Please carry them with you and use them often as part of the reprogramming process, as well as to lift you up when you are experiencing self-doubt, fear or any other self-sabotaging thoughts or feelings.

Self-Acceptance	I Am Special and Valuable	The Only Persons' Approval I Need Is My Own
<p>I am a work in progress. I am a complex being striving to evolve. I will never be perfect. But no one is. I have strengths, skills, talents, and gifts. I can choose to focus on what I have, what I am, and what I <i>can</i> do. I can choose to accept what I don't like about myself or I can choose to change it. Everything is a choice. I choose to love and accept myself!</p>	<p>I am one-of-a-kind. I am unique. I am the only one with my combination of skills, talents, gifts, and creativity. I have a purpose that only I can fulfill. No one else can do what I do, in the way that I can do it. I am valuable just because I exist. I am special. I am important to this world</p>	<p>The only persons' respect and approval I need is mine. I choose to value myself. I choose to approve of myself. I choose to behave in ways that enhance my self-respect.</p>

Step 10

Healing By Letting Go: Self-Forgiveness

Gaining self-acceptance is the first giant step toward achieving clearer perception and ending suffering. It also has the added benefits of healing many of our thoughts and our limiting beliefs.

Forgiving oneself is the final step in gaining *unconditional* self-acceptance.

It is also the first intentional step toward healing, and toward extending your acceptance out to others.

What we give to ourselves we extend to others.

and

What we withhold from ourselves we withhold from others.

...not forgiving others means that self-forgiveness and self-acceptance are absent. -Yvonne Oswald, Every Word Has Power

We have all done things we would take back if we could. We all have had people mad at us and hurt by us whether we are aware of it or not. We all deserve to be forgiven and we need to start by forgiving ourselves.

We are our own training ground.

- We can only learn to treat other people well when we learn to treat ourselves well.
- When we gain self-acceptance, we are open to accepting others, life and the universe.
- When we can forgive ourselves, we can learn how to forgive others, life and the universe.
- When we heal ourselves of all the judgment and criticism we inflict on ourselves, we can stop judging and criticizing others and want to help them heal.
- When we learn to love ourselves and accept ourselves unconditionally, we can then know how to love and accept others, life and the universe, unconditionally.

Resentment, anger and bitterness "held" towards others and the guilt, shame, regret and anger we "carry" towards ourselves –these are today's cancers; figuratively *and* literally!

They are vibrational poison.

Look at the terms used to describe some of the low-energy feelings created by not forgiving; the metaphors suggest that they *reside in* the body, such as:

- holding a grudge
- burning with resentment (or anger)
- blood boiling (in anger)
- boiling mad
- hard-hearted
- filled with rage
- s/he makes me sick

Where are you holding a grudge? In your heart? In your stomach? In your thoughts? Probably in all of the above, but also in your cells, in your blood, and in your chí (your life force energy). So, you are holding it in your physical and energy bodies.

If you are carrying shame or guilt, it negatively affects your beliefs about yourself and your self-worth. This now affects your choices and particularly what treatment you are willing to accept from others as well as yourself.

For the health of your physical and vibrational bodies and for the sake of your current and future relationships, isn't it time to let go?

What and How to Forgive Yourself

There are many different methods you can choose from to release the pain, cut the tether that binds you to the source of your pain and to your past, and let go of those painful thoughts and beliefs that no longer serve you. But really it all boils down to *choice*.

If you need convincing, I will provide you with as much evidence as I can.

- A. Start with things you did and people you have hurt, betrayed, let down, lied to...before your brain was fully developed and before you connected with your spirit. (Both of which may include your whole life up until now if you are younger than 26 years of age.) Before these two evolutionary steps occur, one does not generally have access higher levels of awareness.

The human brain, specifically the frontal lobe or frontal cortex, is not fully developed until around twenty-five years of age. The frontal cortex is the most evolved part of the brain and it is responsible for the following functions:

- Self-discipline/control
- Maintaining focused attention
- Long-term planning
- Evaluating long-term consequences
- Thought control
- Managing emotions
- Healthy decision making/choices

- Impulse control
- Delaying gratification
- Frustration tolerance

Therefore, you were being driven by instant gratification, the inability to control your urges and impulses, in addition to seeking satisfaction of unmet childhood needs while being unable to accurately predict the consequences of your behavior (thought, word, or deed).

The brain that is not fully developed cannot be held fully responsible for all its choices, can it? I think 26 should be the new starting date for adulthood, legally!

When we are given adult responsibilities and privileges, we think we're adults and are even treated as such by some people. Driving, dating, voting, getting married and finally, consuming alcohol are age-related privileges. Voting doesn't get too many people into trouble but the other four do!

And they make up a lot of the things you may need to forgive yourself for.

If we forgive children anything, wouldn't it be in our best interest to believe we were not finished developing until 26. With this knowledge we could have tried to be more aware. But we can't change the past. However we can use this knowledge to be gentler with people in our lives that fall into this category, including your past, current or future self.

Forgive yourself for:

- All the times you were acting from pain and not able to consciously think of being kind.
- Not being able to protect yourself or someone else
- For making the wrong choice for your health or safety
- For making the wrong choice when it came to keeping or telling a secret
- Putting your needs first (if they were your 'true' needs and not ego needs. If they were ego needs, forgive yourself for not recognizing that you were being controlled by your ego. Forgive yourself for not knowing better or if you did know better, for not keeping that knowledge in your consciousness. Know better, do better!)
- Putting your need to fit in/belong above your need to self-protect by giving in to peer-pressure.
- Things that you had no control over
- Not being kinder to yourself
- Not being perfect; for being fallible
- Not being stronger
- Being afraid
- Being human
- Not knowing you were an eternal spiritual being experiencing a physical life

The other piece of evidence is that you may not have had good role-models for "good" behavior. You may not have been taught healthy coping strategies and self-soothing for painful emotions. You may not have been taught to self-protect or may have only learned to self-protect. You may not have been taught boundaries.

All these factors should make it easy for you to forgive yourself (and others as well.)

How to Forgive Yourself

If at all possible, ask for forgiveness from the offended party. Hopefully, being forgiven will help you be able to forgive yourself.

If that's not possible or advisable, write a letter to them and then write back to yourself from them, from their point of view, forgiving you.

You may also ask or pray for forgiveness from a higher power. If you are religious, surrender your burden to your deity, in silence, spoken word or writing.

There are many 'releasing' or 'letting go' rituals and techniques.

- Literal release (balloons, sending ashes into the wind or the sea,)
- Emotional release: Talking out or journaling out your feelings and thoughts, or by writing letters.
- Visual imagery: Take the feelings created by not forgiving and put them in imaginary balloons, and release them.
- Vibrationally/Energetically: Professional or DIY energy work on your fourth/heart chakra using touch, sound, or color (green or pink) healing techniques.
- Mentally: Pay attention to your thoughts. When you "hear" any thought related to blaming yourself, guilt (internal anger), shame, or regret, replace them with gentle, compassionate thoughts, such as:
 - I deserve to be free of my past mistakes. I have learned from them and I *will* do better in the future.
 - I deserve and desire to be free of the pain my past has caused. I choose to let it go.
 - I choose to treat myself with respect and compassion.

Try saying these with your eyes closed and your hands over your heart. Engage your energy, feel your vibration, feed the words into your heart.

(You can also use any of the beliefs mentioned below.)

- B. Now forgive yourself for every thing you've done after that point, if you are older than 26.* Accept that at times you were acting from fear and/pain and therefore, unthinking/thoughtless. *Accept* that you are a work in progress and an imperfect human being.

*If you are younger, congratulations, you will have many more years of inner peace and well-being because you are evolving your to live as spirit sooner than most!

Without the psychological, neurological and environmental or "nurture" evidence you will need to rely on choice.

- Know it takes strength and courage to forgive, and you deserve it.
- Decide you will stop living with and let go of the pain.
- Know it's in the best interest of your physical, emotional, relational, mental, spiritual, and vibrational bodies of health

Choose to look at the situation from a higher perspective by:

- Looking at the intentions behind the action and recognizing that there was no ill-intent, just poor impulse control, frustration tolerance and/or unconscious, reactionary behavior fueled by pain or fear should make it easier to forgive in those circumstances.
- Perceiving the act that needs to be forgiven through a filter of love, compassion and understanding;
- Looking for the potential lessons inherent in the situation and the influence it had on our path. What path did it affect, create or deny? What was the severity of the outcome?
- Recognize that every challenge is an opportunity to learn, grow, heal and/or awaken. (And *never* stop learning and growing.) Look for the lessons of new paths to take or messages of values to be practiced.
- Understand that our behaviors, and our wants, are driven by our needs. When the ego is driving, people get hurt. Work towards putting your true essence in the driver's seat. Then your behavior will be driven by your compassionate, loving spirit, and no one will get hurt.
- Recognize that anger is fear, frustration or pain expressed. Answer the call for love, from yourself and others.

Hurt people hurt people. -Bill Cosby

- Believe:
 - I am work in progress. We are all a work in progress!
 - Everyone is doing the best they can with the tools, knowledge and presence of mind that have at any given moment. We are emotional beings. In situations where emotions are involved, anger, fight-or-flight instincts, fear and pain can override logical, conscious thought ("I didn't mean to say that.") Forgive your weaknesses and imperfections.
 - Everything happens for a reason.
 - Forgiveness liberates me.
 - Peace and happiness are way more important to me than being right or winning.

- I am a Divine child of the Universe. I deserve all the blessings this life has to offer and I choose to receive them.

You can use the above beliefs as mantras and affirmations, as well as the above replacement thoughts, to reprogram your subconscious mind. To increase the vibrational healing, let the words wash over and through you, say words aloud; feel the energy of the words.

Pocket Coach for Self-Forgiveness

Carry or post the following, and repeat it often, until you have completely forgiven yourself for all your perceived mistakes.

I Forgive Myself

Forgiveness is a choice I make
for my own healing.
I deserve to be forgiven.
Holding on to the past contaminates
my physical and energy bodies,
my present and my future,
and my relationships.
I choose to forgive myself
for what happened in the past
so I can live peacefully
in my present and
have a beautiful future.
I choose to forgive myself so
I can give *all of me* to the present.
I forgive my self for the times I was
weak.
I forgive myself for the times I was
reactive.
I forgive myself for not being perfect.
I forgive myself for being fallible.
I forgive myself *now*.

In Closing

Forgiveness and acceptance are expressions of love. Approval and belief are synonymous with acceptance. So, when you gain self-acceptance you also gain self-approval and belief in yourself, which includes confidence. I wish these and so much more for you.

May you gain the self-acceptance and self-worth that you deserve.

May you learn to love yourself unconditionally through this process so you may learn to love unconditionally in general.

May you find your own personal power and uncover your mission on this journey.

May you heed the wisdom of your angels and your body to guide you to what you need.

May you seek peace and the best outcome for all involved in every situation.

May you find inner peace, joy and unconditional love for yourself, others and the universe.

May you live in gratitude by focusing on all you have, not on what's missing.

May you uncover your light, let it shine and become a light in the world as you were born to be.

May you be blessed with the awareness of the beauty and abundance in your life.

May you always be safe, healthy, satisfied and existing with ease.

May you know that all these states I wish for you are possible!

Michele

If there is anything I can do to assist you on your journey, please contact me through my website <http://ReturnLove.org>.