

Liking Yourself . . . A Lot!

It's a good idea to like who you are because you're going to have to live with yourself for the rest of your life. If you want to improve your self-confidence, here are some tips:

Believe the truth. List the things that you have going for you. Think about your desire for self-improvement, your ability care for others, how you get things done, your personality . . . flip over this page and look at the checklist of the other side. Check off the ones that are true about yourself. You might want to review them every day . . . and maybe work to develop other abilities that you want to have. We all have a mix of talents, so you won't have all of them, but you can feel good about your abilities.

Focus on the positive. If you're used to focusing on your shortcomings, start thinking about the really great parts of yourself may be a lot more important. When you notice that you are being too hard on yourself, remind yourself of all of the things that you like about yourself.

Progress, not perfection. People who try to be perfect will always be disappointed . . . it just isn't possible. Don't even think about being perfect, but make progress toward being who you most want to be.

Learn from your mistakes. . . . or maybe learn from the mistake that you see other kids making. You will make errors . . . everyone does. Mistakes are part of learning. Remind yourself that a person's talents are always developing, and everyone has different talents — it's what makes life fun.

Try new stuff. Experiment with different activities that will help you get in build new talents. Then be proud about the new things you can do.

Understand what you can change and what you can't. If you know that you're unhappy with something about yourself that you can change, then start today. If it's something you can't change (like your height), then start to work toward loving yourself the way you are.

Set goals. Think about what you'd like to accomplish, then make a plan for how to do it. Stick with your plan and keep track of your progress.

Take pride in your opinions and ideas. Don't be afraid to voice them.

Help out. Tutor a classmate who's having trouble, help clean up your neighborhood, participate in a *walkathon* for a good cause, or volunteer your time in some other way. Feeling like you're making a difference and that your help is valued can do wonders to improve self-esteem.

Give complements. The more that you share positive feelings with others, the more people are apt to do it to you. Avoid people who put you down! Seek out family and friends who really like you and support you.

Have fun. Ever found yourself thinking stuff like "I'd have more friends if I were thinner"? Enjoy spending time with the people you care about and doing the things you love. Relax and have a good time — and avoid putting your life on hold. Exercise! . . . you'll relieve stress, and be healthier and happier.

Quote: *Life isn't about finding yourself. . . it's about building the person you want to be.*



