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Self-Acceptance, Growth and Learning

By Robert Elias Najemy

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Many people believe that they must be dissatisfied with themselves, or that they must reject themselves, or feel guilt or shame in order to have a motive for self-improvement or growth. They wonder, «If I accept and love myself as I am, what motive will I have for continuing to change, grow or improve? »

Accepting ourselves, as we are, is not a deterrent to continuing our efforts to learn, grow and improve ourselves. We can easily accept ourselves and still continue to improve our character and increase our knowledge.

The First Grader

Perhaps the example of children in grade school will help us to understand this. These children in the first grades of grade school do not reject themselves because they are not in a higher grade, or because they do not know as much, or are not as capable as those children in the higher grades. They accept themselves as they are, and are happy with themselves with their present level of abilities and knowledge.

Yet, no child would accept remaining in the same grade the next year or year after year.

In the same way, there is no conflict between accepting and feeling comfortable with our temporarily limited abilities and lower level of conscious, and our need to continue growing. It is natural to accept and love ourselves at his present stage of growth and simultaneously to attend to learning, evolving and improving ourselves

Self–Acceptance, Growth and Learning

Growth is a natural instinctual need. Scientists have discovered that when a person learns something new, this creates the excretion of endorphines and other positively reinforcing chemicals in the brain. Learning brings pleasure, when it is natural and not connected to fear of rejection and failure.

But there are yet other motives for action and growth, and these are love and the need for creativity. We need to love and to create, just as we need to sleep and eat. These are basic needs, even if they are higher on the need–hierarchy scale.

Thus, even if we do not have self–rejection or dissatisfaction as a motivating force, we will always have love and creativity as motivating forces to grow, create and produce.

Let us grow naturally without fear or self–doubt.

We are all in the first grade of the school of spiritual growth.

But we need to prepare ourselves to be in the second grade next year, and the third the year after and ?..

(Adapted from the "The Psychology of Happiness" by Robert Najemy available at <http://www.Amazon.com> and <http://www.HolisticHarmony.com>. This book and other writings can be viewed at <http://www.HolisticHarmony.com> where you can also download FREE articles and e–books.)

Robert Elias Najemy is the author of over 600 articles, 400 lecture cassettes on Human Harmony and 20 books, which have sold over 100,000 copies. He is the Founder and director of the Center for Harmonious Living in Greece with 3700 members. His book The Psychology of Happiness; ISBN 0–9710116–0–5 is available at www.amazon.com and <http://www.HolisticHarmony.com>. where you can view and download FREE articles and e–books.

Build Self–Esteem with Love Gifts

By Virginia Reeves

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Feeling good about yourself enables you to easily treat others well. Practicing the following seven tips will bring more happiness and joy into your life.

1. GIFT OF ACCEPTANCE. Show those around you that they are loved for what they are, not for what they do or even how much they try to please you. Acceptance builds self–esteem in both you and others. Offer guidance if asked and continually foster independence. Help others find happiness in their own way and you'll find that your level of joy increases as well.

Self–Acceptance, Growth and Learning

2. GIFT OF SELF–CONFIDENCE. This means trusting one's own abilities and talents and using them. To be proud of accomplishments and not shy about letting others know about them is another component. The understanding and acceptance that one does not need the approval of others all the time is critical to good mental health and emotional growth.

3. GIFT OF POSSIBILITIES. Anyone can do anything they want to do – if they're willing to work at it. This means acquiring the needed skills, taking risks, and reaching out.. Give to yourself and your loved ones and friends the gift of freedom to be anything rather than limiting imaginations by labels and rules. Permit everyone to dream and then help in whatever way you can to see the achievement of those dreams. Encourage love of learning and exploration of new ideas. Your influence will encourage you to do the same.

4. GIFT OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS. This support base allows a positive outlook to permeate whatever you do with your life. You learn from both the good and the bad, the happy and sad, the success and the setbacks. Interactions of all types are found, nurtured, and used throughout your life. They aren't always picture–perfect but that's part of teaching you how to develop yourself and the many capabilities you need to build self–esteem.

5. GIFT OF BEING A PERSON WHO HAS A SPARK and appreciation for all of life. Encourage those you care about to be fully alive by taking adventures, finding laughter and fun daily, expressing their creativity, and stretching themselves beyond their personal limits. Model a lifestyle that provides them with a positive guideline.

6. GIFT OF LIFE WITHOUT NEEDLESS WORRIES OR FEARS. Show others by practicing this way of life demonstrates that you don't just sit around and fret about problems. Rather, you tackle them. Be a doer; you'll be surprised at how others will follow your lead. Not only that, the "problems" may vanish when met head on or realistically pushed aside.

7. GIFT OF ACRONYMS. Sure, it sounds strange but it gets you thinking. Here's some ideas for the word love.
Loving Openly, Vivaciously, Enthusiastically
Liking Offspring Virtually Everyday
Little Oddities, Very Endearing
Life Offers Vibrant Energy
Laughter, Openness, Vitality, Excitement

In addition to giving these gifts to others, remember to give them to

yourself as well. Love gifts can be given away any time, to anyone, for the best reason of all, you care. The gifts of acceptance, self-confidence, possibility thinking and action, problem solving, and the supreme gift of finding happiness in the challenge of living comes from self-esteem love gifts. Give them freely, willingly, and with affection.

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