

Unconditional Self-Acceptance - USA

The Principle of **Unconditional Self-Acceptance -USA:**

I accept myself because I'm alive and have the capacity to CHOOSE TO better enjoy my existence. I am other than my behaviour.

I might, **if I CHOOSE TO**, rate a trait of mine or rate my behaviour, however **it is likely impossible to rate something as complex as my whole 'self.'** How might it help to try?

My 'self' consists of **innumerable traits and countless taken and potential actions**, rather than just this one, or two, or three, or four, etc.

I might CHOOSE TO strive for some progress - mainly to enhance the enjoyment of my existence, rather than to prove my "worth."

Being unable to do a task(s) to a standard, rather than making ME a 'failure,' shows that, at this time, I haven't developed a skill or ability to do it to that standard, **YET**.

I might CHOOSE TO accept myself even if I am unwilling, or find it very challenging, to change my 'character defects' - because there is no law of the universe that says I can't make that choice, anytime I CHOOSE TO. I might CHOOSE TO accept my humanness.

My acceptance of myself is very unlikely to come from pandering to an external source, or bowing to an external authority.

My **SELF-ACCEPTANCE** is better to come from within me - I am perhaps free to **CHOOSE IT** at any time.

Nick Rajacic

Self-Worth - What it is, and is not:

If I feel or think that I am worthless, I may be, and probably am, a victim of a culture that has told me that my worth might depend on my achievement and the judgment of another.

A feeling of worthlessness might beset me as a HUMAN in different ways.

For some it might be a very challenging experience, especially for those who experience common depression after a loss of love or approval. The same society which supports organized brutality in the form of football and boxing, might struggle to offer some helpful support to me, as a feeling HUMAN.

For some, who might have been programmed since childhood to base their worth on their accomplishment, they might be even more vulnerable to a feeling of worthlessness. Faced with an unrealistic expectation assigned to them by the society in which they live. My culture tends to tell me that what I do is more important, than what I am. **That's likely to be pretty unhelpful.**

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If I base my worth on an achievement such as productivity and advancement, I may dig myself into a depressive pit when I fall short of accomplishing some objective or goal - **as a HUMAN I am likely to fall short, at some point**, as well as sometimes do OK.

Some modest and reasonable STRIVING for achievement in my life might be likely to be helpful. It's probably a matter of moderation or balance, working sensibly within the limits of my time, talent, and opportunity. **A goal a bit out of reach, rather than out of sight.**

A five foot, six inch person is pretty unlikely to play Centre for a National Basketball Team, and yet they might be a wonderful school-teacher, or parent, or garbage collector!

David Burns, in Feeling Happy, wrote '**Consider the fact that most human beings are not great achievers, yet most people survive, and are reasonably capable of feeling happy.**'

When I CHOOSE TO base my worth on a positive or negative criticism from another, it might help to remember that this is merely a judgment by a person who doesn't have all the facts - **who has not yet been given the right, BY ME, to act as my self-appointed judge, jury and executioner.** When I CHOOSE TO partly determine my worth by such a judgment, my life will be an up and down roller coaster ride - this will likely help make my life feel less than happy. **My good attempt is good enough for me – until I can train myself to do better.** Mel Robbins said, **"I avoid accepting or taking on board criticism from someone, unless I would very happily swap my life and personality with them."**

So much for the common, distorted, twisted, damaging, hurtful, unrealistic, impossible and downright stupid definition of self-worth.

Albert Ellis has written extensively on this subject. He refers to 'The doctrine of variable worth.'

Here's what 'worth' might be really all about:

- **Worth is a philosophical idea, rather than a yardstick.**
- **Worth is better based on my ACCEPTANCE, rather than another's judgment.**
- **Worth is a constant, rather than a variable.**

My worth is not contingent on my performance, degrees, trophies, possessions, titles, money, behaviour, or the "judgment" of anyone.

I might simply **CHOOSE TO** recognize I have it, rather than judge or compare it.

My worth is intrinsic to me as a human being - distinguished as being a form of life.

My behaviour may be **helpful or unhelpful** and my accomplishments none, few, modest or enormous - **I am still me, a human being with a mind and will. I might, at any moment, turn my mind, will and hand to any task I CHOOSE TO – imperfectly, at first, and often.**

I might neither increase nor diminish my intrinsic 'worth.'

Among humans, rather than simply 'special,' I am proven to be unique.

I might consider letting go of my 'self-esteem' and consider working on **self-love**.

Letting go of an idea that involves rating, measuring, comparing myself to another, or judging.

Rather, I might CHOOSE TO accept myself for what I am, a diamond in the rough - maybe CHOOSE TO polish myself a little, once in a while.

Paul Hauck wrote a book on the subject of self-worth:

Overcoming The Rating Game: Beyond Self-Love: Beyond Self-Esteem.

Much recommended.

I might avoid telling another person, OR MYSELF, that I am 'worthless.'

If someone said to me, some of the things I say to myself, I might likely be insulted and probably would like to say something like, '**You have no damn right to say that!**'

Right! **Then, neither do I!**

Sometimes it appears a person who feels worthless, might also think of themselves as a 'perfectionist.'

Perfectionism is a nasty mind game, which sets up the 'self' as a 'certain loser.' It might be the 'First Major Must' at work – likely to debilitate me.

Someone recently said to me, 'I'm a perfectionist, you know.' I faked a sad and sympathetic frown and replied, 'Gee, I'm sorry to hear that,' then added, 'Just you and God, hey?'

My young friend was shocked. He frowned, took the point, and then experienced one of those delightful 'Aha' moments of enlightenment. It was a great moment for him, and my privilege to share in it.

Vince Fox

Intellectual Fascism:

Why might it be better to avoid rating my SELF or my essence? Albert Ellis provides a few more reasons:

1. Rating my SELF or my "me-ness" is an overgeneralization and is virtually impossible to do accurately. **I consist of literally millions of acts, deeds, thoughts and traits during my lifetime.** Granted, some may have been less than helpful – to put it mildly.

Even if I was 'spontaneously' fully aware of ALL these performances and characteristics, which I am unlikely to be, and was able to give each of them a rating - say, from zero to one hundred. How might I rate each one?

For what purpose?

And under what conditions?

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Even if I could accurately rate all my millions of 'things,' how might I get a 'mean' or 'global' rating of the 'I' who performs them – compared to ALL others in the world? **Not very easily!**

2. Just as my deeds and characteristics constantly change - today I play tennis or chess or the stock market very well and tomorrow quite badly - then so might my 'SELF' change.

Even if I could, at any one second, somehow give my totality a legitimate rating, THIS RATING WOULD KEEP CHANGING CONSTANTLY as I thought a new thing, did a new thing and had another experience.

Only after my death might I give my 'SELF' a final and stable rating. **How might I arrange to have that done for me? Put it in my Will? Replace 'I love you' with 'My Rating Is...' as I die?**

3. What might be the purpose of rating my 'SELF' - achieving ego aggrandizement or self-esteem?

Obviously, to make me feel better than another person; to grandiosely deify myself; to be holier than thou; and to rise to heaven in a golden chariot. **Nice work, if I can do it!**

But since self-esteem seems to be highly correlated with what Bandura (1977) calls self-efficacy, I might only have stable ego-strength when:

(a) I do well

(b) Know I will continue to do well

(c) Have a guarantee that I will always equal or best another in an important performance in the present and future.

Well, unless I am TRULY perfect, I'll likely require lots of luck on those aspirations!

4. Rating my "SELF" and insisting that I MUST be a good and adequate person will, unless I am, once again, perfect, almost inevitably result in me being:

1) Anxious when I may badly do anything important to me

2) Depressed when I do behave poorly

3) Hostile when another out-performs me

4) Self-pitying when a condition interferes with me doing as well as I think I should.

In addition to these neurotic and debilitating feelings, I may almost certainly suffer from a serious behavioural problem, such as procrastination, withdrawal, shyness, a phobia, an obsession, inertia, or an inefficiency (Bard, 1980; Ellis, 1962, 1971, 1973; Ellis and Becker, 1982; Ellis and Harper, 1975; Ellis and Knaus, 1977; Grieger and Grieger, 1982; Miller, 1983; Walen, diGiuseppe and Wessler, 1980; Wessler and Wessler, 1980). **I'll also likely be prone to an Unhelpful Addictive Behaviour.**

For these reasons, as well as others that I have outlined elsewhere (Ellis, 1962, 1971, 1973, 1976, 1988), rating or measuring my 'SELF' or my ego will tend to make me anxious, miserable, and ineffective.

Rating a performance of mine and comparing it to that of another might have real value because it might help me improve my efficacy and presumably increase my happiness. **I might CHOOSE TO rate an act of mine and attempt, non-desperately, to do better.**

For I may be happier, healthier, richer, or more 'achievement-confident' - confident that I might achieve - if I perform adequately. **I will not be, nor is it helpful to define myself as, 'a better person.'**

If I insist on rating my 'SELF' or my 'personhood' at all, which REBT advises me not to, **I am better to conceive of myself as being valuable, or worthwhile, just because I am human - because I am alive - because I exist – and am capable of thinking and doing 'stuff' – some of it helpful – some of it unhelpful – a lot of it, bits of both.**

Preferably, I'll avoid rating my 'SELF' or my 'being' at all - then I likely won't get into a philosophic or scientific difficulty.

Rather than using an inaccurate or over-generalized self-rating, such as 'I am a good person,' or 'I am worthwhile,' or 'I like myself,' I might perhaps instead say '**I am potentially helpful because I exist, rather than because I do something special.**' Then I might avoid rating myself in a rigid, bigoted, authoritarian, that is, fascist manner.

Albert Ellis

USA – from Arthur

Four aspects to look to be aware of:

- To what degree might I be **worrying** about what another person thinks of me?
- To what degree might I be **comparing** myself to another?
- To what degree might I be **labelling** myself?
- To what degree might I be **labelling** another?

How might I let this thing go just a little?