

Why be worth-conscious?

The question of *what enables us to see more clearly into the nature of our pain and the stories we construct about it* is inspired by a quote from Jon Kabat-Zinn about mindfulness. In our book, *Understanding Self-Worth: A Guide to Worth-Conscious Theory and Psychotherapeutic Practice* (Daigneault & Brown, 2026), we introduce and define several important concepts, including being worth-conscious and having a lost-worth story (LWS). Being worth-conscious means that we believe we are worthy as human beings, and we understand the equity of human worth in our interactions with others. Having an LWS refers to the belief that self-worth can be lost; it is a personal story that often begins in childhood, where the denial of self-worth can develop as a pattern within a system that fails to recognize or honor an individual's inherent value.

The child growing up in a family system that routinely denies their self-worth may unknowingly adopt a story about why they did not deserve to have their self-worth acknowledged and affirmed, thereby passively accepting the experience of being unworthy or conditionally worthy. Mindfulness is the practice of paying deliberate, non-judgmental attention to the present moment. Cultivating mindfulness can be a valuable practice for many people. However, for some adult clients, this mental practice may trigger feelings of unworthiness, which they have been avoiding or are reluctant to revisit. Being mindful gives them access to the mental space that holds both helpful and unhelpful beliefs. This mental space also includes the container of their LWS, which likely holds uncomfortable and possibly painful emotions.

It is essential to acknowledge that we value the practice of mindfulness when used appropriately to support good mental health and overall well-being. Additionally, we offer an important aspect to consider while purposefully accessing our consciousness with a worth-based lens (i.e., self-worth as a birthright). Birthright self-worth (BSW) is the inherent value that exists within all human beings that can be honored by others. In essence, we can visit the landscape of our mind with the intention of affirming our self-worth. The subsequent step is to engage with whatever is present within us, approaching it with openness and without judgment.

Being worth-conscious and affirming our self-worth are fundamental aspects of the human experience that contribute to our well-being, growth, and meaningful connections. Moreover, consciousness about our worth allows us to align our actions with our values and to live authentically and purposefully. Prioritizing awareness of worth (i.e., being worth-conscious) before practicing mindfulness allows us to ease into the space where our LWS is already written and awaiting. Bringing a renewed, worthy mindset to the first attempts at being mindful can be helpful. It is like taking a flashlight into a cave where a dark story has

prevailed, but where there are many more walls to write healthier messages on. Eventually, we may locate the oldest part of the cave and discover evidence that our BSW has been with us from the beginning of our story.

We are glad you joined us,

Dawna Daigneault & Chris Brown

About the Authors:

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To learn more about Worth-Conscious Theory or to purchase *Understanding Self-Worth: A Guide to Worth-Conscious Theory and Psychotherapeutic Practice*, visit <https://understandingself-worth.com/book>.

