

# Better Than Yesterday

A GUIDE TO BECOMING THE BEST YOU

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Blending Business and Education

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## **Become Your Own Best Friend**

People and relationships come and go. Throughout your life, you will cross paths with many different types of people, some permanent and some temporary. There are those you will build and foster meaningful relationships and those who will merely serve a specific purpose for the time being. Whatever the circumstance, you must remind yourself that none of these people will be with you forever. Only you can occupy that position.

Sure, people will come and go in and out of your life, but you can always count on you. But what does it exactly mean to become your own best friend? Well,

I'm glad you asked! I want you to think about one of your closest friends. Take a moment to reflect on that relationship including how you communicate, and the mutual level of love and respect that you share. The way you act towards your best, closest friend, is how you should towards yourself, because at the end of the day, you are somebody, too. Becoming your own best friend can grant you the confidence and courage to accept and appreciate who you truly are as an individual, regardless of what others may say or think about you. It will allow you to engage in more self-reflection and less self-criticism.

Mistakes will be an enduring part of your life. For example, when your best friend makes a mistake, I'm sure you don't belittle them or make them feel like any less of a person. Yet, whenever you make a mistake, you are quick to criticize and chastise yourself for a simple error that most likely can be corrected. I, too, am guilty of this, as I am my own worst critic. This can be a blessing and a curse. My point is, you wouldn't treat your best friend the same way you'd

treat yourself for making an error or mistake. So be kind to yourself just as you would towards a close companion. Furthermore, becoming your own best friend is highly beneficial in times of loneliness and isolation which we will all experience during our lives. Loneliness can be extremely difficult to endure. However, the good news is that you are never alone no matter how you may feel at a particular point.

I've actually had a lot of experience with this as a kid. I was heavily misunderstood, primarily by my parents. We rarely saw eye to eye on certain situations and I never really could go and talk to them about my thoughts and feelings. We never talked about drugs, alcohol, or mental health. We didn't talk about the birds and the bees or other common conversations expected from our parents. Physically, they were present, but emotionally they were absent. As a result, I would isolate myself the majority of the time and bottle up my feelings and emotions. Now, I'm not saying that this was a healthy coping mechanism, but it did teach me some things. Mainly, it

taught me how to appreciate being alone and how to become comfortable in my own company. I laughed and I cried with myself. I spent a lot of time getting to know Keishaun. And you know what I discovered? He was a pretty cool guy. I learned to cherish myself because, at the end of the day, I was all that I had. While these times were tough, I got a chance to meet one of my best friends in the whole world – me!

Another instance where I had to put these principles into practice was as a graduate student at West Virginia University. I enrolled in their sport management program after completing my undergraduate degree at Radford University in Virginia in 2019. During my undergrad years, I was widely-known throughout campus by peers, faculty, and other employees. Now I'm not one to toot my own horn, but I was that dude. You couldn't catch me on campus without walking or chopping it up with somebody. But when I came to West Virginia, it was a completely different story. I didn't know a soul and nobody knew me. I was alone. From my very first

day in Morgantown, I knew I had to figure something out. But this time, I wasn't there to make friends. My goal was to create connections that would benefit me in jumpstarting my career in the sports industry (although I did finally make a few friends). Even so, since the program's course material was hardly too challenging or time-consuming, I had quite a bit of down time on my hands. I had no other choice but to get in tune with myself and figure out how I was going to stay sane for the short time I was here. It wasn't easy at first, but the more I began to enjoy my own company in this unfamiliar territory, the smoother it became. I was my own best friend and our relationship was pretty incredible; and still is, to this day.

When you are your own best friend, you are encouraged to become more self-reliant, which can be beneficial to you in the many trying times of life. Being alone won't be as dreadful, because you are never alone. While relationships are a fundamental and essential part of our lives, there is nothing more

important than the relationship you form with yourself. Becoming your own best friend will help you to navigate life through the difficult times while providing an eternal companion you may have never known you had.