



LOVING OURSELVES: SELF-LOVE AND SELF-COMPASSION

Self-love (sometimes called “self-compassion”) is the belief that you are a valuable and worthy person who deserves to be treated with love and kindness.

Why is it important to love ourselves?

When we love ourselves, we feel good about who and what we are. It’s not being selfish. It’s about allowing ourselves the same love, kindness, compassion and support that we’d show our friends or family; and not judging ourselves too harshly. It’s important because it helps us to be stronger and happier people:

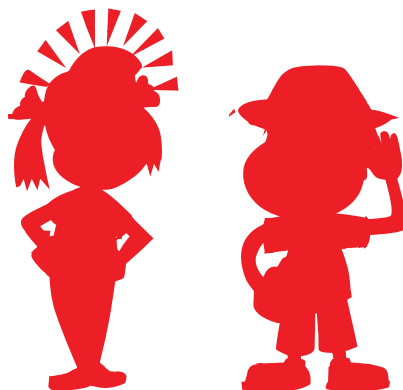
- We know that we can be kind to ourselves and ask for help when we need it
- We know that we can accept the love and kindness others offer us
- We feel more positive, and less anxious or worried, about life
- We bounce back from stress and set-backs more easily
- We find it easy to give love to others because we have a big store of it inside us.

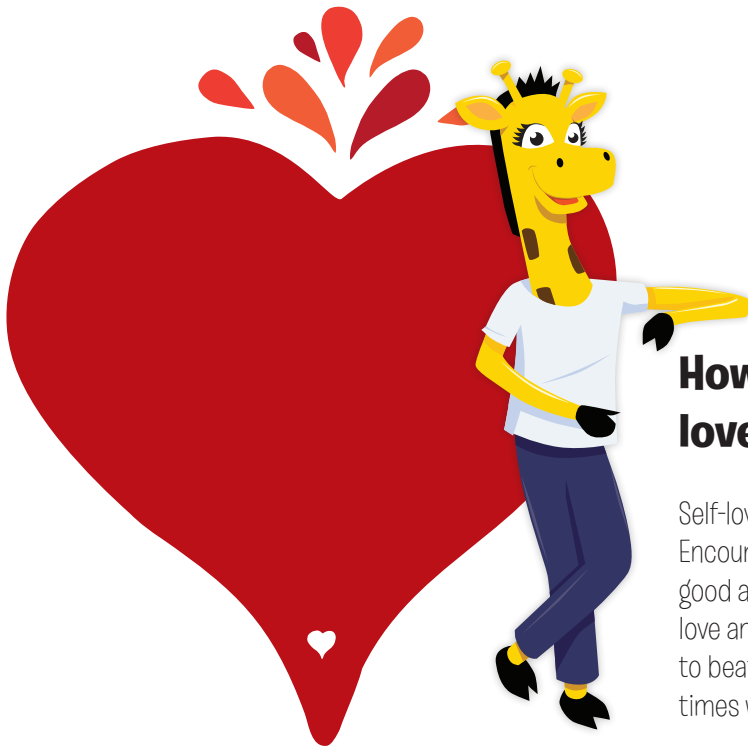


How can we practise self-love?

There are many things we can do to practise self-love and help it develop:

- Treat ourselves kindly and don’t judge ourselves too harshly
- Tell ourselves something really good and positive about ourselves each day
- Respect ourselves for who we are and what we are; if other people think differently, that’s OK too but we’re not going to let it worry us or get us down
- Make a list of all our achievements and happy things when we’re feeling really good: remind ourselves of these when we’re feeling down
- Admit we’re human: everyone makes mistakes and can learn from them
- Love our bodies by making sure they get healthy amounts of good food and exercise
- Learn to sometimes say “No”: we can’t always please everyone all the time
- Be comfortable asking for help if we feel we can’t deal with a situation on our own: we deserve the same support that we would offer others if they were struggling
- Have fun, find something to love in what we do each day, and enjoy being ourselves!





How can we help others to love themselves?

Self-love is similar to, but not the same as self-esteem. Encouraging our friends, family and classmates to feel good about themselves will develop both their self-love and self-esteem. We can also persuade them not to beat themselves up or blame themselves at those times when things don't go so well.

USEFUL LINKS

Life Ed factsheets "What is Self-esteem?", "What is Resilience?"

Pharrell Williams, 21 Nov 2013. "Happy" Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y6Sxv-sUVtM> 4 December 2017. Or

"Feelin' Good": Avicii (with images) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S565hk5T7SA> or Sheeran <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NGBpp5L5Alor>



REFERENCES



Huffington Post, 15 February 2017. "Self-love Must Come First: How to Love Yourself": author Joyce Marter. Retrieved from: https://www.huffingtonpost.com/joyce-marter/selflove-must-come-first-_b_9237282.html 4 December 2017.

Psychology Today, 29 June 2017, "8 Powerful Steps to Self-love": author Melanie Greenberg. Retrieved from: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-mindful-self-express/201706/8-powerful-steps-self-love> 4 December 2017.

Women and Children's Health Network, 14 November 2016. "Being Happy". Retrieved from: <http://www.cyh.com/HealthTopics/HealthTopicDetailsKids.aspx?p=335&np=287&id=2243> 4 December 2017.