

a monthly newsletter from

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helping people create happier, more passionate lives!

Giving Yourself Approval, not just Improval

Approve: To speak or think favorably of; to pronounce or consider something to be agreeable or good; to judge something favorably

Improve: To bring into a more desirable or excellent condition; to increase the value of; to turn around, to make better

Most of us are not very good at giving ourselves approval. For anything. Not for the way we look, not for the way we interact. We don't always approve of our food choices, of our communication choices, or of our decisions in myriad aspects of life. We don't always approve of the way we think. The ways we react to certain situations drive us crazy. Overall, self-approval is rare.

The thing that comes much easier to us is what I call "self-improval", which is a term I use to describe the overwhelming desire to change nearly everything about myself. The list of things which I tend to give self-improval is as long as my arm. Actually, it also includes my arms (bat wings, you know).

When it comes to my desire for self-improval, I can be unrelenting. I suspect you are the same. Instead of focusing on the things about yourself that are wonderful and awesome and beautiful and perfect, you focus on all the things you think need some sort of "improving".

Let's look at how we are as a society - we watch DIY and Home Improvement shows. We hope against hope to win the "transformation lottery", or to see some "makeover fairy" fly into our lives. Whether it's improving our home, our bodies or our souls...we spend time, energy and money trying to "fix" it.

The only time we tend to approve of what we have is when we compare it against someone who has less. Sometimes we learn of people whose situation is something we consider "worse". Only then do we feel appreciation for our circumstances.

Wouldn't it be nice to spend at least a little bit of energy appreciating yourself, your life, your home, your relationships? Wouldn't it be awesome to accept, approve and even admire all aspects of our lives exactly as they are? How would it change your outlook? I have found that letting go of my desire to constantly change myself and accepting me as I am is a huge relief! It frees up my energy to do things that are really meaningful and uplifting.

Please understand. I have no issue with people who desire changes in their lives. In fact, I've built a career on supporting people who want to change. But, I also want to see people give themselves love and approval for who they are and where they are, right now, exactly as they are.

Let's try it. I want to see you give yourself some approval. Right here, right now. Take this moment to let go of a bit of your desire for self-improvement and let's put a little effort into self-approval.

PLAYTIME

Five quiet minutes. That's all I ask from you. Take the next 5 minutes and just explore these sentences. Complete them as many ways as you can (and if you can't come up with answers for some, give yourself approval for that anyway!):

- I feel happiest when I am ____
- I feel proud about my ____
- When it comes to my body, I really like my ____
- Something I did well today is ____
- I really excel at ____
- I feel confident about my ____
- I am talented at ____
- Something I do better than most people is ____
- I make a difference by ____
- I love my ____
- I can easily embrace the fact that I ____

You are perfect, complete and whole. Exactly as you are, right now. Congratulations!