

# Post-Valentine's Day Blues? Be Your Own Favorite Valentine!

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When you think of Valentine's Day, your first thought is probably giving love and affection to that special someone. While loving others is obviously important, it's also important to love yourself. We often confuse "loving yourself" with negative connotations such as self-centeredness, vainness or selfishness, but in fact, science-backed research has found that loving yourself via having a healthy self-esteem is integral to a happy and fulfilling life. Here are some specific reasons why you should make it a point to boost self-esteem and love yourself.

## **It Can Improve Your Mental Health**

If you're always down and beat yourself up for every little mistake, it can take a toll on your mental health. Years of self-negative reinforcement can ultimately lead to depression, anxiety and other mental illness. However, having self-compassion has the opposite effect and tends to make you much more optimistic about life. In turn, this lowers your odds of having depression or anxiety significantly.

## **It Can Improve Your Physical Health**

When you feel good about yourself, it's often a natural catalyst for getting off the couch and going out to exercise. You're also more likely to ditch unhealthy habits like smoking and eating unhealthy comfort foods. Research has shown that loving your body and having plenty of self-esteem often leads to better health decisions!

## **You Can Make it Through Tough Times Easier**

Everyone is going to face some type of adversity from time to time. If you're a well-adjusted person with a healthy amount of self-esteem, it makes it much easier to persevere and keep going when things just can't seem to go your way. On the other hand, being a "downer," engaging in self-loathing and self-doubt tends to prolong problems because we tend to focus so much on the problem, we fail to focus on a solution. Basically, bouncing back from adversity has a lot to do with your self-compassion.

## **You'll Reach a Deeper Level of Happiness**

Studies also suggest that there is a correlation between self-acceptance and your overall happiness. When you're kind to yourself, you're likely to experience a higher level of satisfaction in life and attain a healthier, care-free attitude towards insignificant problems. Without worrying about, and letting the "little things" bring you down, you can view life as something to be enjoyed instead of endured.

Like the old adage goes, loving another starts with loving oneself. So, if you are down, or just having a tough week, try these tips for loving yourself more, and witness the experience the effects!