

# I DON'T LOVE ME

## A GUIDE TO DEVELOPING A HEALTHY SELF-ESTEEM

T: +27 51 401 2853 / +27 58 718 5125 / +27 51 505 1989 / E: [scd@ufs.ac.za](mailto:scd@ufs.ac.za) / [scclqq@ufs.ac.za](mailto:scclqq@ufs.ac.za) / [scdsouth@ufs.a.za](mailto:scdsouth@ufs.a.za)  
[www.ufs.ac.za/kovsiecounselling](http://www.ufs.ac.za/kovsiecounselling)

*Inspiring excellence, transforming lives  
through quality, impact, and care.*



UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE  
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE VRYSTAAT  
YUNIVESITHI YA FREISTATA

# I DON'T LOVE ME

Lize van den Bergh



---

A person who does not set conditions for his/her self-worth has a healthier relationship with him/herself. A statement such as: "Yes, my boyfriend broke up with me, but this doesn't mean I am not worthy of love. It just means we did not work together and will probably be better suited with another person" means you have unconditional self-acceptance and self-love.

---

Most people have moments or days when they don't feel good about themselves. That is pretty normal. But, it can become a problem if it is more frequent than not. Naturally, a person might feel more negative about themselves at certain times in their lives, for example after failing a test or after a break-up. This is also normal. It is sometimes a natural process of figuring things out.

When you fail a test, feeling bad about it often leads to doing something different for the next test. You might be feeling bad about yourself, because you KNOW you didn't study hard enough. In this case, it is helpful, as it raises self-awareness. BUT, if this feeling is more permanent than fleeting, it does a lot more harm than good.

Being able to fully accept yourself, warts and all, is an important aspect of living a fulfilling life. If you are able to do this, you won't need to "conditionally" accept yourself. For example, a person who has a low self-esteem usually has conditions for him/herself:

*"IF I succeed at my test,  
THEN I am clever/worthy" or  
"IF I have a boyfriend THEN I am  
pretty/important."*

### ***Learn to accept yourself unconditionally***

It is important to get to know yourself and to know your strengths and challenges without judging them.

## WHERE DOES MY SELF-ESTEEM COME FROM?

Events in the past are most often to blame. Children are not born with low self-esteem. Some experiences that might have a negative impact on your self-esteem are:

- Having a critical parent
- Being abused (sexually, verbally, physically)
- Experiencing academic difficulties
- Romantic relationships (that ended badly / are unhealthy)
- Being bullied



***You have weaknesses, but you ARE NOT your weaknesses.***



## **HOW DO I LET GO?**

Holding on to past events does more harm than good. We often struggle to let go due to the emotional impact that this event had on us.

It is also easier sometimes to blame someone/something for us not succeeding in life. Refer to page 100: “Something in my past continues to haunt me” for more help with this.

## **SELF-SABOTAGE**

Long after the event / person is no longer in our lives, we often sabotage our own success / happiness because we often do not believe we deserve it. Some self-sabotaging behaviours are:

- Procrastinating
- Addictions (substances, shopping, relationships)
- Self-harm
- Negative self-talk
- People-pleasing
- Being submissive

***It is important to become aware of your own sabotaging behaviours, so that you can CHOOSE to live your ultimate life. The life you deserve!***

## COMMITMENT

Today, I commit myself to:

- Let go of my past
- Stop waiting for my life to get better
  - Choose action
- Focus on MY truth, values and beliefs, not those of others
- Love myself unconditionally

I choose to be kind,  
gentle and patient  
with myself.

I choose  
self-compassion.

I choose self-love.

List 5 things that you appreciate about yourself.

These can be physical attributes or personal characteristics.

1

---

2

---

3

---

4

---

5

---



Another way to create more self-love is to nurture and take care of yourself. By doing this, you are giving yourself the message that you are worthy of receiving love and care, just like anyone else. Here are some examples of self-nurturing activities.

Try to do one of these every day:

Spoil yourself with a cappuccino / milkshake

Get a massage / pedicure / manicure / haircut

***Go to the movies by yourself***

Take a walk in nature

Watch

Relax with a

Buy yourself

the

good book or

something

sunrise

soothing

special that you

or

music

can afford

sunset

***Have breakfast in bed***

Write yourself a kind letter filled with compliments and acknowledgment of your accomplishments



Keeping a daily self-esteem journal could help you focus your attention on positive things within and around you. You might realise that you do a lot of great things without thinking about them.

I felt proud when

---

Today I really enjoyed

---

I was kind when

---

A positive thing I witnessed

---

Today I accomplished

---

A compliment I received

---

I had fun when

---



Repeating positive affirmations is another way of boosting your self-esteem. Here are some examples:

- I am a valuable and important person
- I deserve to be alive
- I am kind to myself and others

**ADD YOUR OWN:**



# RESOURCES



## WEBSITES

[www.helpguide.org](http://www.helpguide.org)

## APPS

Simply Being  
Confidence Coach  
Pay It Forward  
Cognitive Diary  
Happier  
Build Confidence  
Self Esteem Building Guide

## CONTACT US AT:

+27 51 401 2853 (BFN)  
+27 58 718 5125 (QQ)  
+27 51 505 1989 (SOUTH)

[scd@ufs.ac.za](mailto:scd@ufs.ac.za)  
[scdqq@ufs.ac.za](mailto:scdqq@ufs.ac.za)  
[scdsouth@ufs.ac.za](mailto:scdsouth@ufs.ac.za)

## BOOKS

"The Personal Workbook for Breaking the Chain of Low Self-Esteem: A Proven Program for Recovery from LSE"  
by Marilyn J. Sorensen, Ph.D.

"The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook" by E.J Bourne

"The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are" by Brene Brown

"The Self-love Experiment: Fifteen principles for becoming more kind, compassionate, and accepting of yourself" by Shannon Kaiser