

FEEL BETTER ABOUT YOU

10 Steps to Greater Self-Acceptance

By Tina Thrussell

One of the many life-enhancing resources
available to you through



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We extend our thanks to the many wise people who have shared such brilliant words over the years. We are honored to share their thoughts with you in the form of quotations scattered throughout this publication.

Our appreciation is also extended to the many talented people who offered their feedback during the process of creating this book.

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10 Steps to Greater Self-acceptance

Step One: Be Grateful

"Count your blessings and you will be blessed."

The simplicity of this step may cause you to doubt its power to change your life.

It takes just one minute every day to express gratitude for the things and people you have in your life, but that one minute can make a huge impact.

Test it!

Write down a number that represents how you feel right now, on a scale of 1 to 10.

Now make a list of 5 things or people that you are grateful for in your life.

After you've written your list, write down the number that represents how you feel.

Nine times out of ten, you'll select a number higher after this simple little exercise. Why? Because focusing attention on all that you have to be grateful for — a warm bed to sleep in, clean water from the tap, your family, the ability to see, friends — shifts your thinking to a positive state. Thoughts affect feelings, so positive thoughts create positive feelings — happiness, peace, contentment, joy.

ACTION STEP:

Make it a daily practise to write down a minimum of 3 gratitudes.

The more you are grateful, the more you will have to be grateful for!

Step Two: Choose Your Attitude

"An optimist believes her dreams will come true; a pessimist believes her nightmares will come true."

Your attitude is your perspective on life.

Whether you choose to see all that goes wrong in any given situation, or choose to focus on what's right in any given situation, the fact is that you choose what you think.

Remember, your thoughts generate your feelings, so use your feelings as a guide to monitor what you are thinking. If you're feeling negative emotions — sadness, anger, disappointment, frustration — then it's a clue that you are focusing on thoughts that make you unhappy.

Looking for the 'gift' in a situation, rather than focusing on the 'terribleness' or looking for the 'lesson' that it has to offer will truly brighten your perspective on the world.

Choose to see the glass half full, rather than half empty, and you'll feel more positive and have greater hope for your future.

ACTION STEP:

Actively look for the gift in any situation. Stop complaining! Talk about what's right in your life instead of what's wrong.

Look at the bright side of life and that is what you will see!



Step Three: Acknowledge Your Achievements

"Confidence is the quality of being certain of your abilities..."

Acknowledging your achievements creates an awareness of all that you are capable of.

Recognizing what you have accomplished will build your confidence, rather than make you a braggart, as the adults in your life may have tried to tell you when you were a child.

Each of your achievements is a success, and each success you experience, no matter how great or how small, builds your confidence by reinforcing your belief in your abilities.

Too often we take for granted what we do, not realizing the significance of those tasks. An example is the mother who simply trudges through each day, arranging for a multitude of tasks to be completed and co-ordinating the children's schedules, without even thinking about

it. If she doesn't stop to acknowledge what she has accomplished each day, then she won't realize what amazing organizational skills she has developed through this process, or how reliable she has become.

ACTION STEP:

Take the time to write down at least 3 of your successes each day - even those that you take for granted, like following a self-care routine, cooking a nice meal for your family, or smiling at a stranger to brighten his/her day.

Acknowledge your success and you pave the way for even greater success.



Step Four: Watch Your Self-Talk

"You can build yourself up, or tear yourself down; the choice is yours."

You're not alone if you sometimes have negative thoughts about yourself.

You and I both have a little voice inside our heads saying things like "oh, you idiot! What did you do that for?" or "Who do you think you are!? You can't do that!"

That voice is often a replay of words you heard when you were a child. Please understand that just because someone said it to you, it doesn't mean it is true!

It's important to notice when that little voice is talking, because the more often you hear a certain message, the more you believe it. If you're telling yourself you're no good, you're going to believe it. To feel better about yourself you must replace that negative self talk with more supportive self

talk like "Hey! I'm smart — I can see I need to do this differently next time" or "Of course I can do that!"

ACTION STEP:

Notice when that little voice is talking, tell it to stop. Actually say "stop!" or "cancel that!" (or whatever phrase works for you) and then replace the negative thought with a more positive, supportive thought.

Offer *yourself* the support that you may not be getting otherwise and you'll quickly begin to feel better about you!



Step Five: Lighten Up!

"Laughter is the best medicine."

Instead of working at creating a good life for yourself, *Play* with creating a good life for yourself! Incorporate play and laughter into your day.

Life is far more fun when you quit taking yourself so seriously. Find the humour — the non-serious element — in situations. Share stories about your day and laugh at the things that went 'wrong'.

Take time for leisure, pleasure and relaxation — recreation time is time to re-create a balance in your life that allows you to enjoy it.

Flow. If you can't flow, then flee! (This means take frequent breaks from your tasks, duties and the people around you.)

"We must learn to give ourselves permission to blunder, to fail, and to make fools of ourselves every day for the rest of our lives."

Accept the fact that people make mistakes — even you. Mistakes are a wonderful thing! If you make mistakes, it means you're taking risks, and if you're taking risks, you're willing to grow.

Be flexible. Instead of getting stuck in your ways, be open to new ideas and new ways of doing things. This brings interest and variety to your life. (And prevents you from getting uptight when others do things differently from the way you would do them!)

ACTION STEP:

All of the above!

Lighten up and make laughter, rather than anger, your most common response to life.



Step Six: Practise the 90/10 Secret

"A person cannot directly choose her circumstances, but she can choose her thoughts and so, indirectly, yet surely, shape her circumstances."

Understand and live by this secret and it will change your life: 10% of life is what happens and 90% of life is how you react.

Stuff happens and you react and how you react determines what happens next. It's a simple law of reality: action + reaction = outcome.

Change the reaction to any action, and you change the outcome. You have the power to influence any situation.

Example: Your child spills a cup of coffee all over your brand new suit and you react.

Scenario One: You yell at your child for being such a klutz, crushing her confidence. She begins to cry, making you feel guilty and then angry. "Quit

crying!" you shout. You're both feeling awful and those negative feelings carry on throughout the day.

Scenario Two: You calmly say "honey, please pay attention to what you're doing and you'll find these kinds of accidents won't happen", empowering your child. "Let's just clean this up together and carry on." The scene is soon over and you both feel good.

Either scenario began with the same incident — the spilling of the cup of coffee — that 10% of life that is stuff that happens. Yet each scenario had a different outcome based on your reaction.

ACTION STEP:

Stop and breathe deeply before you say anything in reaction to a situation. After your deep breath, think about how you can respond to gain a positive result.

Remember the 90/10 secret is choosing how you respond to things outside of your control so you can create a happier life for yourself.

Step Seven: Acknowledge Your Strengths

Use what talents you possess: the woods would be very silent if no birds sang except those that sang best."

Focusing on your strengths will bring you the same confidence that step 3 — focusing on your accomplishments — does. It's ironic, because society focuses on the opposite — weaknesses. For example, school children are challenged to focus on becoming better at what they're not good at, rather than building on what they are good at. Step out of that mindset and shift what you're focusing on to shift how you feel. Instead of moaning about what you can't do, celebrate what you can do. You have certain talents and skills that allow you to be good at doing something — be it cooking, singing, organizing or painting. Rather than compare yourself to anyone else's talents or skills (there will always be someone with better skills or greater talent than you AND someone with far less than you)

acknowledge that you have strengths that allow you to do some things very well.

Recognize that your strengths go beyond your talent and skills. Think about all the qualities, characteristics, and traits that you admire in others. For you to recognize those traits in others, you must hold them yourself. And you hold them in a blend that makes you beautifully unique. Admit it! You are a caring, loyal (honest, dependable, responsible, fun-loving, etc) and loving person, too, just like the people you admire!

ACTION STEP:

Take a few minutes each day to write down your admirable qualities, characteristics, skills, talents and traits and accept them as part of you.

Just as you feel wonderful when you do what you love to do (honouring your strengths of talent and skill) you'll feel wonderful when you focus on what's likable about you!

Step Eight: Step Outside Your Comfort Zone

"Don't be afraid to expand yourself, to step out of your comfort zone. That's where the joy and the adventure lie."

The commonly used phrase 'comfort zone' refers to your space - the space that is familiar to you. That space has physical aspects — (for example, you like to keep 3 feet between you and whoever is talking to you) — mental aspects — (as in thinking about things in the same familiar way) — and emotional aspects. (An example might be that you only go out with people you know well, rather than risk the rejection you might feel in the process of trying to make new friends.)

It's tempting to stay inside your comfort zone because everything is familiar there and you feel safe. But staying in your comfort zone is like being stuck in a rut. Life can be boring when you never venture outside and stretch yourself. Yes, stepping outside your comfort zone means getting a little uncomfortable. Sometimes it's

downright scary! But it's worth the short term discomfort to experience new places, new thinking, new things and new people. Doing what's unfamiliar or uncomfortable is how you learn. Learning brings growth, excitement and vitality to your life. Once you've tried it the first time, it becomes more comfortable and eventually, a wonderful experience.

ACTION STEP:

Do something new that you've never tried before. (It may be as simple as walking in the rain without a raincoat. Or saying hi to a stranger. Or trying an ethnic food that you've never tasted before.) After you've tried it, pat yourself on the back for having the courage to try something new. Tell someone about your experience. Tell them what you liked and didn't like about it. Then repeat... on a weekly basis!

There are few things quite as satisfying as the feeling of pride you experience when you've learned something new.

Step Nine: Do What You Love to Do!

"To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment."

Doing what you love to do, not what you have to do, or should do, is one of the greatest gifts you can give yourself... and the world. Doing what you love, regardless of what other people think about it, is honouring who you are.

When you do what you love, the world seems shiny, bright and full of hope. Your troubles disappear as you lose yourself in the wonder of the moment. When you allow yourself the time and space to do what you love, you live more joyfully, which can only have a positive impact on everyone around you... making the world a brighter place.

ACTION STEP:

Lay on the floor with a big sheet of paper and some crayons. Play some soft, soothing music and

lose yourself in the memory of the things you loved to do when you were younger. Draw out the activities you did, the places you visited, and the things you dreamed about doing. Then pick one and do it within the next 30 days.

Bring true joy into your life by engaging yourself in the activities that you love.



Step Ten: Care Less About the Opinion of Others

"No one can make you feel inferior without your consent."

Have you ever given up on an idea because someone told you it was dumb and would never work? Did you ever believe someone who told you that you weren't smart enough, old enough, young enough, etc? Did you ever throw out a favourite old shirt because someone told you they were embarrassed to see you in it?

Too many people stifle their dreams, give up what they love, and lose their confidence over what other people say to them.

Whatever other people say to you is only their opinion, not truth. Therefore, care less about the non-supportive opinion of others! What matters is your truth. When you listen to your heart, you know what's right for you. You know what makes you feel good.

ACTION STEP:

The next time someone offers you an opinion that doesn't support you, thank them for their opinion and walk away. Tell yourself that it's just their opinion and you know_____. (Fill in the blank with what you need to hear to counter their opinion.) Eg. A co-worker says to you, "you weren't thinking of applying for that new position were you? It'll be too stressful for you to handle." You thank them for their concern and say to yourself "That's just his opinion. I know stress is all about how you handle a situation. I know how to let go. I would really enjoy this new position."

When you trust your own words rather than other people's opinions, you'll make better choices for yourself.



Be patient with yourself. As you adopt these steps to self-acceptance, you may feel like you're taking two steps forward and one step back.... feeling that you're slipping, just when you thought you were making progress.

Getting rid of a bad habit, like negative self-talk, can be quite challenging. Just when you think you've got the habit kicked, you relax and then find yourself falling into the same old patterns again.

You're not alone. That exasperating sense of having lost all that you'd gained is a common frustration for people who are actively seeking to make changes in their life, improve their lifestyle, and increase their success.

Tina and Neil Thrussell (the co-founders of Best U Can B Inc) have found, both through personal and professional experience, that the best way to keep moving forward, is to seek — and accept — support.

With any goal they've ever set and met, with any habit they've managed to change, their success was faster and easier when they sought support. They therefore encourage you to do the same... ask for help. Asking is a sign of strength, not weakness.

Even asking a family member or friend to support you in your challenge — to remind you about your goal to cut down on sugar when you reach for that next cookie or to call you and ask if you've scheduled time for that project you wanted to complete this week — can keep you on track with meeting your goal or challenge successfully.

Even more effective than family and friends is the support of like-minded individuals. People who understand your desire to make changes in your life that will bring you the confidence, happiness and success (whether it be in relationships, in business, etc) you desire in your life. Whether it's to eliminate an unsupportive habit or develop a new supportive habit, whether you want to finish up an unfinished project or learn to deal with your partner or kids without blowing up in anger, whether you want to discover what you want to do with your life or establish your own business...

the support of like-minded individuals who are actively taking steps to improve their own lives in some way will help you reach your desired goal sooner and with greater ease.

Tina and Neil know this works because they've been members of support groups led by professional coaches and have benefited greatly from these experiences, achieving their goals faster and with less struggle.

Their own increase in success, resulting from participation in these 'group coaching' environments, is what prompted them to develop ON TRACK.



ON TRACK is a program of monthly seminars specifically designed to provide you with tools for developing a positive lifestyle. At each session (held one evening each month) you will be introduced to new concepts and supportive habits. Through experiential exercises and conversation, you will gain insights into approaching life differently, to lessen your struggle and increase your success.

To help keep you on track with your personal growth and development, you will set intentions (mini goals) each month. To keep you accountable for meeting those intentions, you will connect with your ON TRACK 'partner' mid-month, providing the extra boost you need to complete your goals so that, at the next session you can celebrate your accomplishments with fellow members (like-minded individuals who are just as interested in your success as their own).

This is an important feature of the program, for acknowledging your accomplishments will build your self-confidence by allowing you to see your capabilities. This gives you the strength to face even bigger challenges.

What topics can you expect to explore at ON TRACK? As an example, the very first ON TRACK session back in February of 2005 was entitled "Clear the Clutter". Enlightening discussions revealed how clutter (both physical and mental!) drains your energy and hampers your progress. Ways of battling clutter were explored and the participants set intentions to clear up some of their physical clutter as well as complete undone tasks.

Erin exclaimed at the end of the night, "I didn't know what to expect, but this was great! I got a lot out of this evening!"

At the March session, everyone reported immense satisfaction with their accomplishments. One by one the women marvelled at the increased energy and positive feelings they experienced by clearing out stuff they no longer used and by completing the little undone tasks that they never seemed to get around to before. Tina and Neil provided chocolate to celebrate the successes of the newly energized ON TRACK members!

Get yourself and your life On Track!

JOIN ON TRACK TODAY

Check www.bestucanb.ca for the next session commencement date

or e-mail: info@bestucanb.ca.



Tina Thrussell is the co-founder of Best U Can B Inc, whose mission is to open doors for people, shifting the quality of their lives from 'good' to 'great'. Her greatest love is sharing information and watching people grow, and for this reason she writes inspirational works and remains the key facilitator for the company.



Testimonials from people who have been positively impacted by her presentations affirm that she offers fun, interactive learning. Her energy and enthusiasm are contagious. She speaks from her heart, touching lives through a variety of seminars, workshops, and weekend retreats, and through group coaching.

For more information about the transformational work of Best U Can B Inc, visit www.bestucanb.ca.

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