Mindfulness 120

17 Ways to Be Kind to Yourself

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Want to be happier? Start by being kinder to yourself.

Elizabeth Gilbert writes in her bestselling book, “Eat, Pray, Love”, that one day she walked into a building in New York City in a hurry. She was dashing toward the elevator, when she caught a glimpse of herself in a mirror. However, she didn’t immediately recognize herself. Instead, she thought: “Oh, look! I know her. She’s my friend.”

Gilbert moved toward her own reflection with a smile, ready to hug this person, when she realized that she was looking at herself. Later, she remembered this incident one day when she was in Rome. She felt sad and alone, but thinking of that day in New York brought her some comfort. She was journaling and she wrote the following at the bottom of the page:

“Never forget that once upon a time, in an unguarded moment, you recognized yourself as a friend.”

In order to recognize yourself as a friend, you have to be kind to yourself. If you’re not sure how to do this, you’re in the right place.

17 Ways to Be Kind to Yourself

Below you’ll discover 17 ways to be kind to yourself.

**1. Carve Out Some Time For Yourself.** Every day carve out some time for yourself and do something that brings you joy. You can draw, journal, write short stories, play a musical instrument, or do anything else that you love to do. Be kind to yourself by giving yourself some “me time” each day.

**2. Give Yourself Recognition.** Often, we’re quick to acknowledge the achievements of others, but slow to acknowledge our own. That has to stop. Become aware of your own achievements and give yourself recognition.

When you do something you’re proud of, stop for a minute and dwell on it. Praise yourself and relish the achievement. Complement yourself. Pat yourself on the back and say the following: “Kudos to me!”

**3. Cultivate Your Inner Advocate.** We’re all familiar with the inner critic. It’s that little voice in our heads that’s quick to judge and is always ready with a put down. Well, it’s time for your inner critic to meet your inner advocate.

And who exactly is this inner advocate? It’s another voice in your head: the one that defends you. When your inner critic comes at you with ridicule and scorn, your inner advocate jumps in and presents arguments on your behalf. While your inner critic is against you, your inner advocate is for you.

**4. Forgive Yourself.** We all mess up. Look at the following:

* Maybe you did something in the past that you’re not proud of.
* Perhaps you failed to stand up for yourself and you let someone else get the better of you.
* You may have missed a great opportunity because you got scared.
* Maybe you failed to follow through on an important goal.

If you’re angry at yourself, you need to show yourself kindness: stop blaming yourself, resolve to do better from now on, and forgive yourself.

**5. Take Good Care of Yourself.** One of the best ways to show yourself kindness is to take good care of yourself. Get enough sleep, eat fruits and vegetables, and get some form of exercise on a regular basis. In addition, choose a way to release stress, be well groomed, and look after your appearance.

**6. Respect Yourself.** Self-respect is valuing yourself for who you are, and not allowing others to dictate your value. It’s trusting yourself, thinking for yourself, forming your own opinions, and making your own decisions. In addition, it’s refusing to compare yourself to others.

Finally, self-respect is about keeping your promises to yourself and following through on what you tell yourself that you’re going to do. Be kind to yourself by deeply respecting yourself.

**7. Treat Yourself.** I’m not advocating shopping therapy, or consumerism. However, if you see something that you really want, treat yourself. If it’s expensive, save up for it. You don’t have to wait for someone else to give it to you as a gift. Give it to yourself.

**8. Soothe Yourself.** Did you have a tough day? Did you get into an argument with a co-worker or a friend? Did you bomb your presentation? Was it one of those days in which everything that could wrong, did go wrong? Be kind to yourself by soothing yourself. Do the following:

* Soak in a hot tub. Add scented bath oil.
* Give yourself a scalp massage. Rub your feet.
* Make yourself some hot cocoa with little marshmallows in it and sit back with a mystery novel.
* Lock your bedroom door, turn on some music, and dance around in your underwear.

After all, nobody knows how to soothe you better than you.

**9. Remind Yourself of Your Good Qualities.** Maybe you’re a little heavier than “the ideal body type”, but you have long, lustrous hair. Maybe you’re not great at sports, but you’re an ace at math. Maybe you have a tendency to be melodramatic, but you have a great sense of humor.
Always remind yourself of your good qualities.

**10. Lift Yourself Up.** When you fail, make a mistake, or do something wrong, you have two choices. You can tear yourself down, or you can lift yourself up. People who are kind to themselves choose the latter.

Tell yourself it’s going to be OK. Give yourself a morale boost by reminding yourself of your past successes. Then, come up with a plan for dealing with what happened, and take action.

**11. Tell Yourself, “I Am Enough”.** We’ve all had times in our lives when we’ve thought, “I’m not good looking enough, or smart enough, or strong enough to get what I want.” Stop it with the “I’m not enough” self-talk and replace it with the following;

* “I’m enough, just as I am.”
* “I’m worthy.”
* “I deserve to be happy.”
* “I deserve to have everything I want.”

In addition, tell yourself that nothing has to happen to make you worthy. You are already enough.

**12. Honor Your Dreams.** People who respect themselves–people who are kind to themselves–honor their dreams. That is, they don’t downplay their dreams by labeling them as silly fantasies. Instead, they take their dreams seriously by turning those dreams into goals, and creating a plan for achieving those goals.

**13. Find the Sweet Spot Between Acceptance and Striving**. Part of being kind to yourself is acknowledging your potential. As was stated in the previous point, you should know what you want and go after it. However, never being satisfied with where you are, or with what you have achieved so far in life, is being unkind to yourself.

Be kind to yourself by finding the sweet spot between being happy with who you are, while taking action to become even better.

**14. Stop Trying to Be Perfect.** People who set a [standard of perfection for themselves](https://daringtolivefully.com/overcoming-perfectionism) are setting themselves up for failure. After all, perfection is unachievable. Can you think of anything more unkind than making success impossible for yourself?

Instead of setting a standard of “perfection” for yourself, aim to improve, one step at a time.

**15. Show Yourself Compassion.** In the book, [How to Be Your Own Best Friend](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0345342399/ref%3Das_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0345342399&linkCode=as2&tag=marelonlin-20&linkId=RHR42NF6WCM74W2X) by Mildred Newman and Bernard Berkowitz, the authors recommend that you befriend yourself by showing yourself compassion. The best way to feel compassion for yourself is to imagine that someone you love is feeling hurt. Look at the following:

* What would you say to them?
* How would you treat them?
* How would you reassure them?
* How would you make them feel cared for and loved?

Now, do that for yourself — [show yourself compassion](https://daringtolivefully.com/self-compassion).

**16. Believe In Yourself.** Part of being kind to yourself is wanting the best for yourself. And in order to get the best, you have to believe in yourself. Have faith in your own abilities and in your own judgment. Think highly of yourself: believe in yourself.

**17. Accept Yourself.** Accept yourself as you are. You have strengths, and you have weaknesses. Sometimes you succeed, and sometimes you fail. Sometimes you’re right, and sometimes you’re wrong. Allow yourself to fully be who you are.

Conclusion

There’s only one person in the world you’ll always have a relationship with, and that’s yourself. Therefore, you better start making sure that you’re a good companion to yourself. [Live your best life](http://marelisa-online.com/how-to-live-your-best-life/ebook.php) by being kind to yourself. You can get started with the 17 tips explained above.