

## Self Acceptance

When I first started to overcome my social anxiety, I was struggling to make progress. A Dutch EFT expert asked how I was doing on self acceptance. At nearly the same time, I read an article on self acceptance by a psychologist in Australia (Steve Wells) who's also a tapping expert.

This led me on a tapping journey to self acceptance. As I started tapping on the things I did not accept about myself, my situation, my behaviour, my thoughts and my feelings, I gained tremendous relief and personal peace and freedom.

I've since concluded that in order to feel safe to be yourself socially, you want to fully and completely accept yourself. Because when you do not accept yourself fully, and you have parts of you that you do not accept, it's not safe to be yourself because only parts of yourself are OK to show to others, according to your judgment.

By accepting yourself completely, you make all parts of you OK. When all of you is OK, you no longer have to hide certain parts from other people.

To get there, start accepting the parts of you that you currently don't accept, or think are unacceptable. And accept all your behaviours, unwholesome thoughts, your situation, and anything else you find unacceptable. By doing so, you will experience an inner peace and freedom beyond what you ever thought possible.

## Exercises:

#1.

People often think that self acceptance, acceptance of negative thoughts and behaviours, and acceptance of current life situations is in some way bad, negative, or limiting.

Common thoughts are:

If I accept my situation, I will not be motivated to change anymore

If I accept myself, I will remain the way I am

If I accept my problem, I will be stuck with it forever

If I accept myself completely, I might give up improving myself

If I accept myself I am not a good person

If I accept those thoughts, I will act on them, or become that way

Not accepting of self is often believed to be a good thing, as beating yourself up internally might be more motivating to take action towards change.

This is not true.

Initial non-acceptance of your situation is helpful. You notice what you don't want, and you feel some negative emotion as a result of it. This makes you aware of what you don't want.

But when the frustration and annoyance about your situation perpetuates, its no longer helping you by motivating you towards what you want (positive change), but it adds to the pre-existing problem.

Now you have your problem, *plus* annoyance and frustration about it. This frustration and annoyance locks the problem in place.

Once you know you want something else, it's time to get clear on what that is (i.e. a satisfying social life with warm friendships and lots of fun and enjoyment), focus on that, get acceptance of what your current situation is, and move forward towards your goal.

Beating yourself up internally makes you lose confidence. Not accepting yourself causes shame.

When we feel good about ourselves, and confident about moving forward, we take the most action.

When we feel ashamed and bad about ourselves, and insecure about taking action, we remain stuck.

Acceptance empowers you. By not accepting yourself and your situation and your thoughts and behaviours, you are resisting what is. And as Carl Jung (the famous psychologist) said:

*“What you resist, persists”*

When you fear accepting yourself, as a result of these irrational thoughts and beliefs that acceptance is somehow bad, this will sabotage your efforts to gain self acceptance.

This fear of accepting oneself needs to be addressed first. You first need to get to a place of “accepting myself is good”. Once you are there, you are ready to start fully accepting yourself and your situation (and gain tremendous relief and freedom, as well as empowerment to move forward towards your goal).

A. Answer the following question:

*Why is it bad to accept myself, my situation, my behaviour and my thoughts?*

Your answers might be the different, or the same as the ones I have given you above.

Example:

If I accept my situation, I will not be motivated to change anymore

If I accept myself, I will remain the way I am

If I accept my problem, I will be stuck with it forever

If I accept myself completely, I might give up improving myself

If I accept myself I am not a good person

If I accept those thoughts, I will act on them, or become that way

B. Rate the following statement on a 0-10 scale:

*I am afraid to accept myself, my situation, my behaviour and my thoughts?*

C. Start continual tapping while stating out loud the thoughts of why it's bad to accept yourself, as well as the fear of accepting yourself, your situation, behaviour and thoughts.

Example:

EB: I'm afraid to accept my situation

SE: If I accept my situation, I will not be motivated to change anymore

UE: I'm afraid to accept myself

UN: If I accept myself, I will remain the way I am

CH: I'm afraid to accept my social anxiety

CB: If I accept my social anxiety, I will remain stuck forever

UA: I'm afraid to accept myself completely

LP: It's bad to accept myself completely, I'd be a bad person

WR: I'm afraid to accept my thoughts

TH: I'll act on them, or they will become true in my life

Etc.

**NOTE:** The example above is just one way of going about it. There is no perfect way to do it, nor can you do it wrong. As long as you are tapping while verbalising both the reasons for why accepting yourself, your thoughts, behaviour and situation is bad, along with your fear of accepting all of that, you're doing fine.

Keep tapping until you no longer fear accepting yourself and "accepting myself is good" feels true for you.

#2.

We have all sorts of negative judgments about ourselves. These may have been picked up from a wide variety of sources. The below exercise will eliminate these one by one. As you do, you gain more and more acceptance, and therefore more and more calm and confidence.

A. Answer the following question: "What do you not like about yourself?"

Write down your answers.

Example:

I'm a virgin  
I have social anxiety  
I cannot go for the jobs I want  
I am overweight  
I'm not funny  
Other people are more confident than me  
I avoid taking action  
I don't take enough action  
I think these weird and bad thoughts  
I do not do the things I should do  
I do things I shouldn't do  
I did some bad things in the past  
I have not achieved the level of success that I think I should  
My performance at some task/test is/was below some standard  
Etc.

B. Take one of the things you do not like about yourself, start continual tapping, and repeat the thing you don't like about yourself out loud at every tapping point. Notice any feelings, thoughts, and sensations that come up for you as you keep tapping and focus on them (either by putting your attention on them, or verbalising them out loud) and keep tapping until they disappear.

Example:

EB: I'm a virgin  
SE: I'm a virgin  
UE: I'm a virgin  
UN: I'm a virgin  
CH: I feel ashamed of it  
CB: I shouldn't be a virgin anymore  
UA: I'll probably never have sex  
LP: I'm so ashamed of it  
WR: This hot shame in my face  
TH: I'm a virgin

Etc.

Keep doing this until you can say the thing you don't like about yourself and feel no negative emotion about it anymore. Keep going until you're accepting that this is the way things are *at this moment in time*.

If you cannot get the emotion down, follow the advice in the troubleshooting below.

## **TROUBLESHOOTING:**

When a belief/emotion doesn't go down to a 0 of 10 (either in how you feel about it or in how true it feels):

A. There is most likely resistance to letting go of that belief/emotion.

This resistance can in most cases be neutralised by simply verbalising it. Below are some of the most common resistances. Simply state the resistance phrases out loud, one after the other, while tapping over the tapping points.

Resistance clearing phrases:

I don't believe I can let go of this belief/emotion  
I don't deserve to let go of this belief/emotion  
It's not safe for me to let go of this belief/emotion  
I'll be a different person if I let go of this belief/emotion  
It's too hard for me, I can't really let go of this belief/emotion  
I can never let go of this belief/emotion  
This belief/emotion is part of me  
I haven't got what it takes to let go of this belief/emotion  
I can't let go of this belief/emotion completely  
If I let go of this belief/emotion I'll lose my excuse  
I refuse to let go of this belief/emotion

*Example:*

EB: I don't believe I can let go of this belief/emotion  
SE: I don't deserve to let go of this belief/emotion  
UE: It's not safe for me to let go of this belief/emotion  
UN: I'll be a different person if I let go of this belief/emotion  
CH: It's too hard for me, I can't really let go of this belief/emotion  
CB: I can never let go of this belief/emotion  
UA: This belief/emotion is part of me  
LP: I haven't got what it takes to let go of this belief/emotion  
WR: I can't let go of this belief/emotion completely  
TH: If I let go of this belief/emotion I'll lose my excuse  
EB: I refuse to let go of this belief/emotion

After having mentioned all of the resistance phrases once, focus back on the belief/emotion and continue to tap until you are at a 0.

B. If the belief/emotion is not neutralising completely after the resistance tapping, there might be a, or some S.E.E.'s that need to be treated in order to let go of all the negative emotion associated to the thing you do not like about yourself.

To stay with the example of the virgin, you might have a memory where you were ridiculed for being a virgin. Perhaps several memories.

Find and then treat the key S.E.E.'s and then come back to the thing you don't like about yourself, and keep tapping until it clears completely. Use the clearing statements again if need be.

#3. Typically, our non-self acceptance comes from our childhood experiences where mom/dad/teacher/significant adult/significant peer/mentor did not accept us.

The generalised belief learned is “since they didn’t like me, I cannot be acceptable”.

While you have already cleared both the repetitive negative experience from childhood, as well as several key incidents from your past, it’s likely that there are still some key SEE’s where our negative view of ourselves was learned.

Perhaps a significant adult rejected us, or did not acknowledge us in desired ways.

To find out if that is still the case for you, dig a little bit in your past by finding SEE’s where you were not accepted. Ask yourself:

“When, how, and by whom was I not accepted?”

Treat key SEE’s that come up for you. As you do, identify the beliefs you learned or the generalisations you took from the experience (what did that mean to me? What did I learn that day? What did that say about me as a person?) that are now limiting you and tap on those too.

Put each negative belief statement into the set-up statement and repeat the entire belief statement at each tapping point. Keep tapping on this until the belief statement feels less true. Follow the links to other SEE’s and the thoughts that come up with them, and apply continual tapping to each in turn.

#4. I struggled for a while with intrusive thoughts. Trying not to think of them had been my strategy. It didn't work all that well. Instead I added tapping to it whenever they came up. This neutralised the intensity of the thoughts. When they no longer caused me any upset, I no longer feared thinking them and they no longer came up for me.

This exercise, along with adding tapping whenever unhelpful thoughts or behaviours come up for you, will bring you a lot of peace and relief.

A. Rate the following statement on how true it feels on a scale of 0-10:

*I completely accept myself 100%*

B. State out loud the following resistance phrases as you tap over all your points:

EB: I refuse to accept myself completely

SE: It's not safe to accept myself completely

UE: It's impossible to accept myself completely

UN: I don't deserve to accept myself completely

CH: I'm not worthy of accept myself completely yet

CB: I'm not a person who can or should accept myself completely

UA: When I accept myself completely I have no excuses anymore, I don't want to

C. Ask yourself:

What is unacceptable about my behaviour?

What is unacceptable about my thinking?

What is unacceptable about my life situation?

What's in the way of me accepting myself completely, 100% right now?

*Examples:*

I still have some social anxiety

I don't have a boy/girlfriend

I'm not as successful as I should be

I've wasted a lot of my past

I don't have a satisfying social life

Etc.

D.

Tap on all your answers given above. Start continual tapping, and get rid of all the emotional intensity connected to the reasons for why you do not accept yourself.