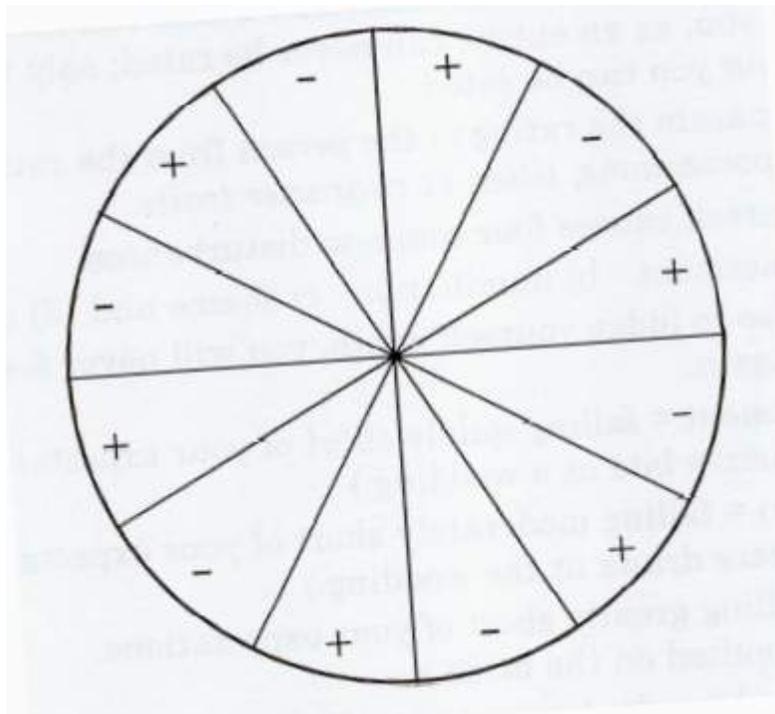


SELF-ACCEPTANCE EXERCISE

Instructions: This exercise is designed to help you challenge the belief that if you've failed at something, or if someone criticizes or rejects you, you are a totally hopeless failure.

To overcome your irrational thinking leading to low self-acceptance, complete the top half of the circle by filling in the appropriate spaces with pluses (+ 's) for the things you do well at work or school and with minuses (- 's) for the things you don't do so well. Then complete the bottom half of the circle by writing in things you do well and things you like about yourself, as well as things you don't do well or don't like about yourself.

WORK/SCHOOL



REST OF LIFE

To counter the tendency to put yourself down when things aren't going so well, ask yourself the following questions:

- Does this bad situation (mistake, failure, rejection, criticism) take away my good qualities?
- Does it make sense to conclude that "I am totally hopeless" because of one or more negative things that have happened?

THOUGHTS TO HELP INCREASE SELF-ACCEPTANCE

1. I'm not a bad person when I act badly; I am a person who has acted badly.
2. I'm not a *good person* when I act well and accomplish things; I am a person who has acted well and accomplished things.
3. I can accept myself whether I win, lose, or draw.
4. I would better not define myself entirely by my behavior, by others' opinions, or by anything else under the sun.
5. I can *be* myself without trying to *prove* myself.
6. I am not a fool for acting foolishly. If I were a fool, I could never learn from my mistakes.
7. I am not an ass for acting asinine.
8. I have many faults and can work on correcting them without blaming, condemning, or damning myself for having them.
9. Correction, yes! Condemnation, no!
10. I can neither prove myself to be a good nor a bad person. The wisest thing I can do is simply to accept myself.
11. I am not a worm for acting wormily.
12. I cannot "prove" human worth or worthlessness; it's better that I not try to do the impossible.
13. Accepting myself as being human is better than trying to prove myself superhuman or rating myself as subhuman.
14. I can itemize my weaknesses, disadvantages, and failures without judging or defining *myself* by them.
15. Seeking self-esteem or self-worth leads to self-judgments and eventually to self-blame. *Self-acceptance* avoids these self-ratings.
16. I am not stupid for acting stupidly. Rather, I am a non-stupid person who sometimes produces stupid behavior.
17. I can reprimand my behavior without reprimanding myself.
18. I can praise my behavior without praising myself.
19. Get after your behavior! Don't get after yourself.
20. I can acknowledge my mistakes and hold myself accountable for making them—but without berating myself for creating them.
21. It's silly to favorably judge myself by how well I'm able to impress others, gain their approval, perform, or achieve.
22. It's equally silly to unfavorably judge myself by how well I'm able to impress others, gain their approval, perform, or achieve.
23. I am not an ignoramus for acting ignorantly.
24. When I foolishly put myself down, I don't have to put myself down for putting myself down.
25. I do not have to let my acceptance of myself be at the mercy of my circumstances.
26. I am not the plaything of others' reviews, and can accept myself apart from others' evaluations of me.
27. I may at times need to depend on others to do practical things for me, but I don't have to emotionally depend on anyone in order to accept myself. *Practical* dependence is a fact! *Emotional* dependence is a fiction!
28. I am beholden to nothing or no one in order to accept myself.
29. It may be better to succeed, but success does not make me a better *person*.
30. It may be worse to fail, but failure does not make me a worse person.

